

In The Matter Of:

*BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL*

November 13, 2013

*Sharon Hill Court Reporting
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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

#4 CAPITOL MALL
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201

November 13, 2013
VOL. I

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PANEL MEMBERS:

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell	ADE Commissioner/Panel Chairman
Ms. Deborah Coffman	Chief of Staff
Dr. Megan Witonski	Asst. Commissioner-Learning Services Panel Asst. Chair
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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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Welcome to the, I guess, second Charter Authorizing Panel meeting, and this one has a little bit longer agenda. It will take more than 30 minutes. I don't have a report from the Chair at this time, so I'll ask Ms. Mary Perry to come up and provide us with our annual update on the application cycle.

REPORT-2: UPDATE ON THE CURRENT CHARTER APPLICATION CYCLE

MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. Thank you. I have a very, very brief update on the current charter application cycle. Of course, you're here today to conduct hearings, today and tomorrow, for open-enrollment charter applicants wanting to open schools in 2014-2015. There were four district conversion applications that were submitted to the Department by the October 31st deadline, and they will come to the Panel for hearings at the January board meeting. And with that, I will go over -- you do have a packet in front of you, a black packet of information. When we get to the point where you're about to hear the -- conduct the hearing for the first charter I'd like to at least share with you what you have in that packet. It pertains to open-enrollment and district conversion applications, not to the amendment

1 process.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Ms. Perry. Any
3 questions from the Panel? Okay.

4 CONSENT AGENDA

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And I believe, again, all
6 panel members are presents today, so we'll move on
7 and look at our Consent Agenda. There are two items
8 on the Consent Agenda, the minutes from the August
9 21st meeting, as well as the annual reports for the
10 Academics Plus Charter School Virtual Academy and
11 Benton County School of the Arts. Are there any
12 questions on the Consent Agenda?

13 MR. HOY: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, Mr. Hoy.

15 MR. HOY: On the minutes, the title for the
16 division I'm in, it says Academic Accountability; the
17 official is Public School Accountability, for the
18 record.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Ms. Perry, did you
20 hear that?

21 MS. PERRY: No, sir. I'm sorry. I did not hear
22 what Mr. Hoy said.

23 MR. HOY: Okay. In the minutes, for my division
24 it says Academic Accountability. That should be
25 Public School Accountability.

1 MS. PERRY: Thank you. We'll make that change.

2 MR. HOY: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions? If not,
4 I'll entertain a motion for acceptance of the Consent
5 Agenda.

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: So moved.

7 DR. WITONSKI: Motion.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion from
9 Mr. Hernandez. We need a second.

10 DR. WALTERS: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second from Dr. Walters.

12 All those in favor say aye.

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Motion passes. The Consent
15 Agenda is adopted.

16 A-1: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

17 AMENDMENT: ARKANSAS VIRTUAL ACADEMY (ARVA)

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That leads us to Action Item
19 A-1, Request for Open-Enrollment Public Charter
20 School Amendment: Arkansas Virtual Academy. Ms.
21 Perry.

22 MS. PERRY: Good morning. On the Action Agenda
23 today you have several current charters and they're
24 appearing before the Panel requesting amendments to
25 charters. All of these, except one, are requesting

1 waivers of laws and/or rules and it may be important
2 for you to identify the effective dates of the
3 approved amendment requests, especially those
4 pertaining to waivers. I believe that it is safe to
5 say the only other request that is not waiver
6 specific pertains to an enrollment increase requested
7 by KIPP and, of course, they're requesting that that
8 be effective for the 14-15 school year. So you will
9 want to note that there are some legal comments in
10 your packet of materials that were uploaded at the
11 end of the waiver request documents that were
12 submitted by representatives of the current charters.
13 Kendra Clay would like to come up now and go through
14 the hearing process and these will be the hearings
15 that we conduct both for the amendments and then
16 followed by that for the charter applicants.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Ms. Perry. Ms.
18 Clay.

19 MS. CLAY: Good morning. As Ms. Perry said,
20 these will be the same procedures that you follow for
21 the amendments and the hearings of the application.
22 All persons with the exception of attorneys who are
23 going to speak today need to be sworn by our court
24 reporter. The charter applicant or charter-holder
25 will have 20 minutes to present its case, either for

1 amendment or for approval of its application. Then
2 any parties opposed to the amendment or the
3 application will have 20 minutes. And then the
4 charter applicant or charter-holder will have an
5 additional five minutes at the end to respond to any
6 argument that they would like to. At that point you
7 as the Panel will have time for discussion questions
8 and then you may make a final decision here today.
9 You can also defer the vote, if you'd like for the
10 applicant to have technical assistance or to do any
11 other thing and come back to you at a later time.

12 Now if anybody votes against an amendment or an
13 application we'll need to do a roll-call vote and the
14 person will need to state the reasons for voting
15 against the amendment or application. Thanks.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Ms. Clay. Okay.
17 Ms. Perry, would you like to give us a summary of the
18 first item, A-1, please?

19 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. The first action item is
20 a request for Arkansas Virtual Academy, an open-
21 enrollment charter school, to waive -- they're
22 seeking permission to waive a rule that was -- a
23 recent rule. And I want you to know that ARVA is a
24 school that was approved in October of 2004. They're
25 approved to serve students in K-12 with a maximum

1 enrollment of 3,000 and they're appearing before you
2 today to request amendments to the current charter.
3 And Mr. Scott Sides is here.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Who all will be
5 speaking on this matter? We need to swear you in.
6 Mr. Sides, are you the only --

7 MR. SIDES: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- individual? Okay. Do
9 you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth?

10 MR. SIDES: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. I didn't get a
12 cheat-sheet, Ms. Sharon. Mr. Sides.

13 MR. SIDES: Thank you, Commissioner, and good
14 morning. We're requesting a waiver because our board
15 members are spread around the state. You will see
16 from the amendment request that we hold a waiver from
17 Arkansas Code 6-13-619 from this recent legislative
18 session. Act 559 of 2013 requires that meetings are
19 to be held monthly and requires that board members
20 shall be physically present to be counted for
21 purposes of a quorum and to vote. Because our board
22 members are spanning a geographical distance from as
23 far northwest as Fayetteville to DeQueen, all the way
24 to West Helena, it would be difficult to have an in-
25 person quorum for purposes of a vote. And so we're

1 requesting that Arkansas Code 6-13-619(a)(1)(a) and
2 Arkansas Code 6-13-619(c)(1)(a) be waived for those
3 two reasons.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Any questions? And I
5 know this was a new language change in the law. Mr.
6 Boardman, do you have a question?

7 MR. BOARDMAN: So you plan on having meetings by
8 telephone conference or what?

9 MR. SIDES: Yes. We will meet remotely through
10 a sort of WebEx type forum -- it's actually
11 Blackboard -- and also by conference call.

12 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. And the plan would still
13 be to meet once a month; it's just that you would
14 meet remotely?

15 MR. SIDES: Well, our bylaws say quarterly.

16 MR. BOARDMAN: Quarterly.

17 MR. SIDES: We generally meet more than
18 quarterly. On some occasions it wouldn't be every
19 month. It's not a set week, I suppose -- a set day
20 on a set week each month. But there are many things
21 to be done, so we are meeting almost monthly.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions by the
23 Panel? Mr. Sides, do you remember or were there any
24 conversation that your organization or other
25 organizations had with the sponsor of this

1 legislation and the affect it may have on charters
2 such as yours that have boards that are dispersed
3 across the state?

4 MR. STATE: When this legislation came forth I
5 do not believe there were conversations around that.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Smith, would you
7 like to speak to that?

8 MR. SCOTT SMITH: Just on that point, we did
9 talk to the sponsor of the legislation and we pointed
10 out that it didn't make sense in some ways for
11 charters because charters had already obtained
12 waivers from the requirements that board members have
13 to reside in the district. Because, as you know, we
14 have not only for them but KIPP and others that have
15 board members all over the state, maybe even from
16 other places outside of Arkansas, such as ResponsivEd
17 and some others. We had that conversation initially
18 but it didn't change this.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Who was the sponsor of that
20 legislation, do you know?

21 MR. SMITH: Senator Key. And so I think it was
22 just everything was moving so fast with it and you
23 know how it goes; some things got through.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Thank you, sir. Any
25 other questions by the Panel? Okay. So you have a

1 request for a waiver, amendment waiver for this
2 charter, with Arkansas Virtual Academy.

3 DR. WALTERS: I have a question.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

5 DR. WALTERS: I guess just a point to make sure
6 that I do understand. So you're not asking to waive
7 that you will meet. You're just asking that it not
8 be in person; it will be through some type of
9 technology. Correct?

10 MR. SIDES: This is correct. And it wouldn't be
11 on a standing monthly basis.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions or
13 clarifications? If not, I'll entertain a motion.

14 MR. HOY: Motion to approve.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion to approve
16 by Mr. --

17 MS. CLAY: Dr. Kimbrell.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'm sorry. Yes, ma'am.

19 MS. CLAY: I'm sorry. We need to ask if there's
20 anyone that would like to speak against.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'm sorry. You are
22 absolutely right. I forgot to follow my procedure.
23 Mr. Sides doesn't need his 20 minutes. Is there
24 anyone who would like to speak against this
25 amendment? Seeing none, anything else, Mr. Sides,

1 you'd like to add before we move on?

2 MR. SIDES: Thank you. I would only clarify
3 that we do hold a waiver already from Arkansas Code
4 6-13-619. This is specific to the new language which
5 came from this previous legislative session.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Now I think we're
7 through our process and since there's no one else to
8 speak I'll entertain a motion now. Mr. Hoy, would
9 you like to --

10 MR. HOY: Motion to approve.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion to
12 approve by Mr. Hoy.

13 DR. WALTERS: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Dr. Walters. All
15 those in favor say aye.

16 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed? Motion
18 passes. Thank you, Mr. Sides.

19 MR. SIDES: Thank you.

20 A-2: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

21 AMENDMENTS: KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Perry, A-2.

23 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. These are some amendment
24 requests from KIPP Delta Public Schools. The KIPP
25 Delta Public Schools was first approved by the State

1 Board of Education on March 11, 2002. The charter is
2 approved to serve students in K-12 with a maximum
3 enrollment of 1,550. KIPP Delta is appearing before
4 the Panel today to request amendments to the current
5 charter. I would like to say that the expansion
6 request that they are making is specific to the
7 Blytheville school and they currently only serve 4-8
8 and now they're asking to add the high school grades
9 as well and to increase the enrollment specific to
10 KIPP. And then they're asking for the waiver of the
11 same piece of legislation that Mr. Sides requested
12 for ARVA, as well as another piece. And Mr. Shirey
13 is here to speak to you this morning on behalf of
14 KIPP.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Can I have any
16 and all that would be speaking on this action item,
17 A-2, to please stand, raise your right hand. Do you
18 swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
19 but the truth?

20 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. I got a cheat-
22 sheet.

23 MR. SHIREY: Good morning, Commissioner --

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Good morning, Mr. Shirey.

25 MR. SHIREY: -- and Panel Members.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You have 20 minutes.

2 MR. SHIREY: I hope to not take that long, but I
3 do have a -- let me see if I can -- can we show that
4 on the screen? So I do have a quick presentation
5 just to walk through; we're requesting three things
6 this morning. The first one is to expand our
7 operation at Blytheville from grades 4-12 to add
8 grades -- excuse me -- from 4-8 to add grades 9-12.
9 So that would increase our cap to 810 students in
10 Blytheville; it would increase our cap to 1,910
11 between Helena and Blytheville. Currently, we have
12 57 8th graders who are anxious about where they'll
13 attend school next year and we're hopeful we can
14 continue to serve them through high school and on to
15 college.

16 You can see just a -- we serve a high-needs
17 population in Blytheville; 79% qualify for Free and
18 Reduced Lunch, compared to 61% state average. Last
19 year, in grades 4-7 we actually outperformed the
20 local school district in 100% of tested areas. And
21 you can see the chart behind me just comparing
22 Blytheville students to state and Blytheville
23 students to -- KIPP Blytheville students to the state
24 and then KIPP Blytheville students compared to the
25 traditional district there. Again, we outperformed

1 the local district in all areas. And as our students
2 got older and they are with our program longer they
3 began to outperform the state as well, as you can
4 see, at 6th and 7th grades. I'm sorry, the laser
5 pointer on this is not working but I know you can see
6 the chart. And then while we don't have high -- this
7 is -- sorry -- this is more data showing the same
8 thing. And then the next slide, we did not have --
9 we obviously don't have a high school in Blytheville
10 to do any comparison but we do have a high school in
11 Helena, and so you can see how our high school in
12 Helena compared to the state and to Blytheville.
13 Again, our high school in Helena was close to state
14 averages or above state averages, and then
15 outperformed Blytheville Public Schools as well.

16 And then again the big thing that we just
17 emphasize is getting kids to and through college.
18 Right now, we have 80% of our alumni -- I mean, our
19 high school who are enrolled in two- or four-year
20 colleges, are persisting, and it goes up to 87% when
21 you include military. We look at the traditional
22 districts in that surrounding area. About 50% of
23 students from Blytheville Public Schools go on to
24 college; however, 70% of that 50% goes on to a two-
25 year community school and then only 30% of that 50%

1 goes on to a four-year college, which means in the
2 best case scenario 15% of the students from
3 Blytheville Public High School are starting in a
4 four-year program. And we think that the community
5 deserves more options with more college focus.
6 Again, this is the 80% persistence I talked about.
7 It goes up to 87% of our 120 graduates with military
8 in there.

9 So that's on the Blytheville piece. I don't
10 know if you want me to pause and respond to questions
11 on that or go through the other two requests first?

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Why don't you go ahead and
13 go through the other and then we'll come back.

14 MR. SHIREY: Okay. The second one, for the same
15 reasons that Scott cited, we are requesting a waiver
16 from 6-13-619(c)(1)(a). We do have a board which is
17 dispersed throughout the state. We already have a
18 waiver on the monthly meetings. We do quarterly
19 meetings right now, with monthly committee meetings.
20 When we do our quarterly meetings we have high
21 attendance face-to-face but from time to time we do
22 need to call an emergency session or bring the board
23 together on short notice to make a vote. And so
24 being able to do that through phone or technology,
25 WebEx, is pretty critical. But, again, a lot of the

1 same reasons Scott mentioned so I won't go through
2 that again.

3 And the last one is around advanced placement
4 training. So, Arkansas Code 6-15-902(c)(2), which
5 requires our teachers to teach advanced placement
6 courses, to go through a particular -- a very
7 specific training. We actually think the Advanced
8 Placement Summer Institute is quite good, but there
9 is KIPP training that's done at the national level we
10 send our teachers to and there's sometimes a conflict
11 there. But, again, we don't ever want to deny
12 students an AP opportunity because we were unable to
13 get someone through the Advanced Placement Summer
14 Institute.

15 In your packet there is a description of the
16 KIPP training that's offered, which is I think
17 equally robust and just as effective, and so that's
18 the main purpose for our requesting that waiver. And
19 those are the three requests.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You had some others here.
21 Are they going to speak specifically about --

22 MR. SHIREY: They're here just in case you ask
23 me --

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

25 MR. SHIREY: -- tough questions, then I can get

1 some help.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Is there anyone
3 -- Scott, are you -- Mr. Shirey, are you complete
4 with your --

5 MR. SHIREY: Yes, sir.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- presentation? Okay. Is
7 there anyone wanting to speak against the amendment
8 for KIPP? Seeing none, is there any follow-up then,
9 Mr. Shirey, that you want to finish with before we
10 start our questions and answers?

11 MR. SHIREY: No, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Very good. I'll open
13 it up for the Panel for questions. Ms. Perry, is
14 there anything else you would like to add?

15 MS. PERRY: If you're moving to approve these
16 amendments, I just want it to be on the record that
17 the amendment for expansion would be effective in the
18 14-15 school year and the other waiver requests would
19 be effective upon your approval.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I would suggest that
21 we take the time to ask questions and get answers to
22 your questions on each of the three specifics, and
23 then we'll take each one of those independently as
24 actions. So I'll open up the floor for questions to
25 the Panelists and begin with Mr. Hoy.

1 MR. HOY: A question on the training for your
2 AP.

3 MR. SHIREY: Yes, sir.

4 MR. HOY: I assume at this point since the
5 waiver is not in place you've gone through the
6 regular training AP route. Is that accurate?

7 MR. SHIREY: Yes, sir.

8 MR. HOY: Okay. The next question then is a
9 follow-up to that. Do you have an intent to maybe
10 track the percentage of students that score 3 or
11 above on the --

12 MR. SHIREY: Absolutely. We participate with
13 AIMS and we continue to take advantage of the
14 trainings and some of their programs and continue --
15 we want to take advantage of that and that's a big
16 deal. We track all of that.

17 MR. HOY: Okay. Well, then in relation to that
18 it would be nice to be able to at some point come
19 back and -- when you have to come back before the
20 Board and let us know what happened in terms of
21 percent with 3 and above before you switched and
22 after.

23 MR. SHIREY: Yes, sir. We'd be glad to do that.

24 MR. HOY: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So you are a part of AIMS?

1 MR. SHIREY: Yes, sir.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So, and it's not that you --
3 the opportunity presents itself and the option is
4 there that your teachers may not go through the AP
5 training; you just don't want to have that be an
6 issue if it conflicts. Or are you just not going to
7 do any AP training? I guess I'm just trying to get
8 some clarification.

9 MR. SHIREY: No. We'd prefer the flexibility to
10 be able to -- again, if we have -- for instance, if
11 you have a teacher that goes through the Summer
12 Institute and then for whatever reason is dismissed
13 or doesn't make it through the school year, we don't
14 want to be out of compliance in denying our students
15 an AP course. So sometimes we've had school leaders
16 step in because they're the only ones who have been
17 trained through the Summer Institute. If we have the
18 flexibility to go through some of the other high
19 quality training, particularly the KIPP training,
20 then I think we'll be able to serve our students
21 better.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you for that
23 clarification. Questions? Dr. Walters, we'll just
24 go around.

25 DR. WALTERS: Okay. A clarification, I guess,

1 sir. You are asking for the waiver; you still want
2 to give the weighted credit for GPA if they've not
3 had the training. Correct?

4 MR. SHIREY: Absolutely.

5 DR. WALTERS: Okay. This may be --

6 MR. SHIREY: And we want our teachers to have
7 training. I want to be very explicit in that. So
8 it's not -- it's just, again, flexibility in how we
9 get the training so we can get as many teachers
10 trained as possible. And if there's ever a conflict
11 between, you know, the national KIPP trainings and
12 the local state trainings just to have that choice.

13 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Kimbrell, this may be a
14 question for ADE staff, I don't know. But I just
15 wondered if we've heard from the college board about
16 do they know anything about the training that KIPP
17 provides and do they feel it's comparable? I don't
18 know if you've heard anything, Ms. Perry.

19 MS. PERRY: I do not have any information on
20 that.

21 MR. SHIREY: I don't know, but I know that
22 several other KIPP schools use this as -- use the
23 KIPP national training as their training and have
24 found it effective. And I've not heard of anyone
25 running into barriers in terms of accreditation or

1 anything in other states.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez, any
3 questions?

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: No.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

6 DR. WITONSKI: How many times has the national
7 KIPP conference conflicted with AP training?

8 MR. SHIREY: I don't know that off the top of my
9 head. Typically, again, there's that -- a lot of the
10 training we do -- and it's sometimes the national
11 conference but sometimes it's our own training,
12 because we do a lot of our teacher development over
13 the summer and then we have national KIPP
14 conferences. So it just depends trying to work all
15 that in. Usually, it means we've got to give up
16 something and so it's for flexibility. Again,
17 sometimes if we send them to the Summer Institute it
18 means they're missing our own professional
19 development. But, again, we've had good experiences
20 with it but it's just around that flexibility.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Have you had any
22 conversation with the new director of AIMS about this
23 at all? Did you run this by Dr. James or Ms. Anthony
24 when you were --

25 MR. SHIREY: I have not spoken specifically to

1 Dr. James. He called me, asking what our intent with
2 AIMS was and I assured him that we wanted to continue
3 to participate in AIMS but did not specifically bring
4 this issue to him.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And if I remember correctly,
6 one of the cornerstones of the AIMS program is that
7 AP training and that rigor that comes with that
8 specific training that is done through AIMS. So --

9 MR. SHIREY: Right. Well, again, this is just
10 -- this is on the particular -- the three-day --

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right.

12 MR. SHIREY: -- or four-day Summer Institute.
13 You know, they do the one-day sessions. There are
14 many other services which AIMS offers, which are
15 incredibly valuable.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

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

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

19 MS. COFFMAN: Earlier, you mentioned that you
20 had 57 students in 8th grade --

21 MR. SHIREY: Yes, ma'am.

22 MS. COFFMAN: -- that would be moving hopefully
23 to 9th grade?

24 MR. SHIREY: Yes, ma'am.

25 MS. COFFMAN: What is the impact that you see

1 possibly for the Blytheville schools or other area
2 schools in that area? Possibly three more students,
3 is that the anticipated number of 60?

4 MR. SHIREY: I think -- I mean, although we've
5 requested a cap up to 90 we anticipate it being 55 to
6 60. I mean, just for comparison, when our school in
7 Helena first had -- had its first 8th grade class it
8 was actually 41 students and it ended up being about
9 35 in that first 9th grade class. So Blytheville has
10 a little bigger numbers, we've learned from past
11 experience, and we're doing a little better job our
12 first run. But we want the flexibility to -- just so
13 we don't have to come back all the time. If we want
14 to go to a two or three classroom model to a three or
15 four classroom per grade level model, we want that
16 flexibility. But we anticipate being around 60
17 students.

18 MS. COFFMAN: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

20 MR. HOY: Yes. In the legal notes from the
21 attorneys, there seems to be some additional waivers.
22 They seem like you would have to request if you were
23 going to -- particularly request this waiver of 6-15-
24 902(c). It seems like in their notes they've got
25 that Section 4, teacher training of the ADE rules,

1 would have to be waived as well and Section 4-
2 03(c)(i) of the ADE rules would have to be waived as
3 well. Were you aware of those particular issues?

4 MR. SHIREY: I was not aware.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Are those additional -- Ms.
6 Clay, would you like to -- are those additional codes
7 that would still create that requirement?

8 MS. CLAY: It's very similar language to the
9 language in the waiver that they did request. It's
10 also found in those two rules. So what we do when we
11 go through and look at these is we try to go back and
12 if the applicant or charter did not request waivers
13 that have exactly the same language where that they
14 would need to fully effectuate the waiver, is the
15 language you see quite a bit, then we help them out
16 and say, "If you get this waiver, you also need a
17 waiver of these additional items so that you don't
18 have one piece of it waived but then you're still
19 technically required to follow other pieces of rules
20 or statutes."

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Would that mean they have to
22 come back for additional waivers before the Panel?

23 MS. CLAY: No. You all can do that at this time
24 and that's why they're in there, so you can address
25 them and they can be granted at this time.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy, did you get your
2 question answered now?

3 MR. HOY: Yes. So now the follow-up question I
4 guess would be: would you like to request the
5 additional waivers as recommended by ADE staff?

6 MR. SHIREY: Yes, please.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

8 DR. WALTERS: I have a question for Legal.
9 Kendra, I guess I just want to clarify -- I think
10 we've had this come up before, but I want to make
11 sure. When we extend the grade levels, like 8th
12 grade going into 9th grade, those students can remain
13 and they don't have to go through the open lottery?

14 MS. CLAY: That's correct.

15 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Just wanted to double-
16 check. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

18 MR. HERNANDEZ: (Shaking head from side to
19 side.)

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

21 DR. WITONSKI: (Shaking head from side to side.)

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Shirey, talk to me -- in
23 your application there's some statistical information
24 about the demographics of the Blytheville area, as
25 well as some of the other districts that are

1 surrounding. What -- and I couldn't see -- you're
2 too tall -- see the --

3 MR. SHIREY: It was funny looking at a screen
4 and seeing my head in the way of the presentation.
5 That would have been awkward.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. And I don't know what
7 we'll do about that. Gail and Kevin someday --
8 remodel the auditorium, yeah. Maybe we can move this
9 over to the big building and get to use all their
10 neat stuff. Maybe we can mount that TV up on a wall.
11 Your percentage of low socioeconomic for Free and
12 Reduced at the current Blytheville campus, what is
13 that percentage?

14 MR. SHIREY: It's at 79%.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's the 79%.

16 MR. SHIREY: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It wasn't Blytheville as a
18 whole, as a community?

19 MR. SHIREY: No. And it's hard to get
20 Blytheville's number because they use Provision 2,
21 100%. I mean, the actual -- they serve -- 100% of
22 their students are served free lunch but I don't --
23 that's different than the percent that would actually
24 qualify.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Yeah. They're

1 Provision 2.

2 MR. SHIREY: Provision 2.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I don't know if anybody
4 looked to see what their baseline was in the last --
5 I believe it was in the 80's at that time, but I'm
6 not sure. I think there was some conversation. Mr.
7 Boardman, additional questions?

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

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

10 MS. COFFMAN: No.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We have three
12 different items that we would be taking into
13 consideration. So I'd like to make sure that each
14 Panelist has your questions answered and then we
15 would take these beginning as presented by Mr.
16 Shirey. First, would be the expansion of the
17 Blytheville school from a 4-8 to a 4-12.

18 MR. SHIREY: Yes, sir.

19 DR. WITONSKI: Can I ask?

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski, yes.

21 DR. WITONSKI: So that -- from what I
22 understand, that would be -- beginning in 14, that
23 would be adding grade 9 and then you would progress
24 up each year after that. Correct?

25 MR. SHIREY: Correct.

1 DR. WITONSKI: Thanks.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Any other questions?
3 If not, then in the matter of the expansion from the
4 current 4-8 system to 4-12, with a cap going to 810.

5 MR. SHIREY: Yes, sir.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'll entertain a motion.

7 MR. HERNANDEZ: Motion.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion to approve.

9 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Dr. Witonski. Any
11 other further discussion or questions? All those in
12 favor of the motion say aye.

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?
15 Okay. So Part 1, expansion and cap increase, has
16 been approved.

17 MR. SHIREY: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: In the matter of the waiver
19 on the law concerning board members and attendance,
20 actual attendance at the board meeting, are there any
21 questions? I'll entertain a motion.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Motion.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Motion by Dr. Witonski.

24 MR. HOY: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Mr. Hoy. All

1 those in favor say aye.

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed? Item 2
4 passes.

5 And Item 3 is the waiver of the advanced
6 placement training with the additional rules and regs
7 and statutes that were pointed out by Legal. Any
8 questions on that? If not, I'd entertain a motion.

9 MR. BOARDMAN: Motion.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Motion by Mr. Boardman.

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Mr. Hernandez.

13 All those in favor say aye.

14 (MAJORITY CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?

16 DR. WALTERS: No.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Dr. Walters, one no.

18 Motion passes.

19 MR. BOARDMAN: She has to explain --

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Oh, I'm sorry. Yeah, that's
21 right. I'll get this one of these days. Okay. So
22 we'll have to do a roll-call vote. I guess I'll do
23 that from here and we'll just go around the room.

24 Mr. Hoy?

25 MR. HOY: I vote yes. I vote yes. I do have a

1 comment. I think I understand the caution that Dr.
2 Walters may bring before you, and that's making
3 certain the College Board is okay with this
4 agreement. But I think that would be something that
5 the school would need to take up. So, I still vote
6 yes.

7 MR. SHIREY: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

9 DR. WALTERS: I vote no and I think a lot of
10 KIPP. I think you're doing wonderful things. I feel
11 that this amendment, with the information that we
12 have about the training, I don't think we have enough
13 information to make an informed decision. I also
14 feel that College Board and the AP program is a
15 nationally recognized program and I think without
16 having some information from them I'm not comfortable
17 in voting yes at this time.

18 MR. SHIREY: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Hernandez?

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

22 DR. WITONSKI: I vote yes.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

24 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

1 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Kendra, do I have to vote?

3 MS. CLAY: No, sir.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I vote yes anyway.
5 Okay. Motion passes.

6 DR. WALTERS: Did you add the petition --

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. And that's what I
8 asked for a motion on, on those two.

9 MR. BOARDMAN: Yeah.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I mean, I think -- who had
11 the motion on that? Mr. Boardman, that was part of
12 your motion?

13 MR. BOARDMAN: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, I did, when I asked
15 about the advanced board training that the waiver
16 would be on that law, as well as the others that were
17 pointed out by Legal, and I just didn't have those in
18 front of me.

19 MR. SHIREY: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I can't scroll that fast,
21 apparently.

22 MR. SHIREY: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
24 Shirey.

25 A-3: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

1 AMENDMENTS: NORTHWEST ARKANSAS CLASSICAL ACADEMY

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Ms. Perry, Action
3 Item 3.

4 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. Actually, the next three
5 action items, A-3, A-4 and A-5, come to you from
6 three different charters but they are operated by the
7 same sponsoring entity, Responsive Education
8 Solutions. They're coming to you with waiver
9 requests. They are not identical waiver requests,
10 however, so let me make sure that you are aware of
11 that. The applications for Northwest Arkansas
12 Classical Academy, for Premier High School-Little
13 Rock, and Quest Middle School-Pine Bluff were
14 approved in November of 2012 by the State Board.
15 They're in their first year of operation. Dr. Mary
16 Ann Duncan is here to address the Board on all three
17 of these issues.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Since they are
19 different we'll take each one individually and work
20 through each one with the same process. Can I have
21 all that would be -- and the first issue is the
22 request for Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy --
23 all those that would be speaking on this action item,
24 if you will please stand and raise your right hand.
25 Okay. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole

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truth and nothing but the truth?

(ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Okay. Dr. Duncan.

DR. DUNCAN: Good morning, Commissioner Kimbrell --

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Good morning.

DR. DUNCAN: -- and Members of the Panel. Thank you for seeing us today. We come before you with a request regarding the Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy. You received, prior to this meeting, the copies that were sent in for request by our attorney and by our company. We'd like to begin with Northwest and cover each one at a time and then take any questions that you may have. Regarding State Board of Education rules, in an effort to clean up and effectuate some of the things that were requested at the time the charter was originally granted, we are coming back today to ask for a waiver of the ADE rules governing school zoning and the ADE rules governing school election reimbursement. Under Superintendent, Principal and Teacher Certification, we did ask for waivers at the time that the schools were granted, under 6-17, regarding licensure. We are coming back today to ask for the complete ADE

1 rules governing education licensure for additional
2 flexibility, not to exceed the federal mandate of
3 highly-qualified, which naturally we will always
4 meet. Also, regarding Standards for Accreditation of
5 the Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts
6 regarding Principals, 15.02, an exemption there also
7 for licensure, with the exception again of highly-
8 qualified. We're also asking for a waiver of 6-17-
9 201. We did ask for some waivers originally
10 regarding personnel policies. This is specifically
11 requested as a clean-up because we are an at-will
12 entity, and so that would then cover the at-will
13 clause that we currently fall under. For Title 6 of
14 the Arkansas Code, we request for 6-17-111. We had
15 already received a waiver for 6-17-117 and thought
16 this would be inclusive of that. And so in cleaning
17 up again and in looking at verbiage between law and
18 looking at verbiage between standards we're
19 requesting that. Also, 6-17-201, Personnel Policy
20 Requirements, 6-17-211, and 6-17-1001, Minimum Base
21 Salary. Also included in that would be 6 -- just 6-
22 17(12), which would be the minimum in law, which
23 again is a continuation of things that we requested
24 when the school was first opened. However, to
25 effectuate all the waivers and have a complete

1 package we are requesting a waiver of those at this
2 time.

3 It came to our note that in an application that
4 will be heard by this Panel tomorrow and in
5 requesting some of the personnel policy waivers that
6 we requested already and are approved already by our
7 existing schools -- it was made known to us by note
8 from the attorneys' office that we should also have
9 requested ADE rules governing personnel policies,
10 salary schedules, and documents posted on the
11 district website, including some of the other waivers
12 we've asked. So as under Scott Shirey's and with the
13 assistance of the Legal Department any additional
14 waivers that we feel -- that the Department feels are
15 necessary we would like to go ahead and effectuate
16 those also to keep us from taking up your time to
17 coming back up here again and doing this again.

18 Under Academics, Northwest Arkansas is seeking a
19 waiver for pre-AP under 6-16-1204. This is due to
20 the fact that it will give us the flexibility that we
21 need. NWACA is a very specialized school and is in
22 partnership with Hillsdale College, who has come and
23 done extensive training at the school in classical
24 arts and classical instruction and classroom
25 instruction regarding that. So, again, this is just

1 to request for flexibility to offer as needs and
2 student interests dictate. With regard to 6-21-303,
3 we are also going to seek a waiver of reimbursing
4 educators for materials, as our educators have the
5 flexibility to request any and all materials that
6 they needed. So that way it will come straight from
7 our district office and they will not have to be out
8 any of their pocket money and waiting for
9 reimbursement.

10 Regarding Standards for Accreditation,
11 basically, we were looking at 9.0, which is
12 Curriculum, naturally, which would be inclusive of
13 9.03.4, which would include the 38 units of credits,
14 again, to give flexibility in NWACA's specialized
15 program that they offer. And this is strictly for
16 scheduling. And also 19.04, which would be summer
17 school and adult education programs.

18 Under Title 6, Support Services, we are asking
19 for a waiver of guidance counseling, media services,
20 health and safety. To the extent that it provides us
21 flexibility, for example, to contract with private
22 services for counseling or to contract with private
23 services for health, such as LPN's, et cetera. It's
24 been very difficult to find certified licensed nurses
25 since we came into the state. That would at least

1 give us the flexibility to contract with medical
2 services for an LPN, et cetera on our campus.

3 With regard to Standards for Accreditation for
4 Support Services, again, that ties in with 25, which
5 was just mentioned. Again, flexibility. And then,
6 under Title 6, under Miscellaneous, we're requesting
7 a waiver of 6-11-129 to the extent that we are a
8 public entity and at any time anyone can ask for any
9 information and it be given to them immediately as a
10 public entity. Under 6-17-201, Committee for
11 Exemption, we're asking for an exemption of the
12 committee for each school district for personnel
13 policies. And that ties in with prior personnel
14 policies and personnel items that we had discussed in
15 our original application. For 6-17-2802, NWACA is
16 seeking an exemption from this provision, to the
17 extent that it will allow us flexibility needed to
18 work in conjunction with Hillsdale College, which
19 does work and do -- come down and provide
20 professional development, continuing instruction
21 development, and working along the classical model in
22 the classrooms. And then, 6-21-304, in the matter of
23 making purchases, we're requesting for a waiver of
24 that for purchases between \$1,000 and \$50,000 to
25 obtain bids in each instance, which would be an

1 estimated purchase price equal or to exceed \$50,000.
2 So we're asking for a waiver of the \$10,000. And
3 then 21, of the Standards of Accreditation, we're
4 seeking a waiver just as a clean-up also as far as
5 transportation and food services. All of our schools
6 offer the CNP program and all have been approved and
7 all are running quite well at this point in time.
8 USDA regs are very tight and we do follow those. And
9 we provide no transportation at this time for our
10 students, as was outlined in our charter.

11 So you have before you the request for waivers
12 for the Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy. That's
13 the end of my comments at this time, sir.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Is there anyone
15 else from your organization wanting to speak?

16 DR. DUNCAN: Not at this time, sir.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Anyone wanting to
18 speak in opposition to this -- any of these
19 amendments? If not, then -- and I see none -- we'll
20 begin with questions and we'll start with you, Ms.
21 Coffman, and go the other direction.

22 MS. COFFMAN: Dr. Duncan, the last item that is
23 listed under the Title 6-Miscellaneous, what is the
24 reason to exceed the bidding amount?

25 DR. DUNCAN: It allows more flexibility as a

1 district. We fall under a 501(c)(3) that also has
2 large financial interests with buying and vendors and
3 can carry on with more flexibility with that. We
4 have a board that is very tight and oversight of our
5 finances are seen to and guarded on a regular basis.
6 So, basically, it's just to provide more flexibility
7 regarding contractual and bids. Flexibility is
8 bottom-line.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: In this statement that you
10 have of the manner of making these purchases you say
11 that you'll either use a state-approved vendor or
12 obtain a minimum of three quotes. So it's really
13 just flexibility or is it just not having to go
14 through the bidding process?

15 DR. DUNCAN: I'm looking at the verbiage on
16 that, sir. Well, actually, three quotes would be an
17 option to the bidding process as it's listed here.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Three quotes and three -- I
19 mean, there's a difference in seeking bids on items
20 between \$10,000 up to \$50,000 or between \$1,000 and
21 \$50,000. There's a difference in getting quotes and
22 then getting bids in the process. My concern with
23 this is, again, these dollars are state dollars.

24 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: They're tax dollars being

1 spent on students in our state and there was a reason
2 for this law and why public schools would adhere to
3 these bidding requirements. So I have some grave
4 concerns of granting that waiver myself.

5 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you, sir.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman, did you have a
7 follow-up question on that? Then, we'll circle back
8 through.

9 MS. COFFMAN: No. Circle back around.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Boardman?

11 MR. BOARDMAN: Yes. I just lost mine on here
12 but I'll -- so we might come back. But I do -- it
13 seems like there's a lot of requests for flexibility
14 but not much explanation of why you need the
15 flexibility, I guess. But as we talk -- you're going
16 to come back around. Correct?

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, sir. We'll have
18 several rounds until all of -- until you've exhausted
19 all of your questions. So, let me ask a question
20 then and go back to the beginning. Under Title 6,
21 Employee Compensation, Leave and Breaks, you're
22 seeking a waiver of 6-17-211, Use of Personal Leave
23 When an Administrator or School Employee is Absent
24 from Campus. Can you give me a reason why anyone
25 would want to have that waived? I mean, it's a

1 pretty specific piece of legislation that just
2 requires that any administrator who is off the campus
3 of the school fill a leave form out, identifying why
4 they're off-campus and what they're doing while
5 they're off-campus.

6 DR. DUNCAN: Well, basically, sir, in our
7 personnel policies we have leave time, personal leave
8 time, and we have sick time. The thought was that
9 this might tie in also with part of 6-17, Minimum
10 Teacher Sick Leave Law.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: This particular statute is
12 specific though to administrators being off-campus
13 and completing a leave form. Having been real
14 familiar with this piece of legislation when it was
15 passed, it was in order for there to be transparency
16 about the administrator and their requirement to
17 notify the public and the rest of the staff as to
18 what their business is if they're not on campus. So
19 I know that we've had some conversation around this
20 in the last couple of months. So I have some
21 concerns as to why there would be a need for less
22 transparency for an administrator than another
23 employee of the district.

24 DR. DUNCAN: And there are policies that would
25 be required to fill out leave information, and since

1 it's a public entity that is public knowledge as to
2 the fact that they are required to do so under our
3 personnel policies.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, then why would you
5 seek a waiver?

6 DR. DUNCAN: Just to allow for additional
7 flexibility regarding that.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, if it's in your policy
9 why would you -- I don't understand why you would
10 seek a waiver of that if it's currently in your
11 policy.

12 MR. BOWMAN: Dr. Kimbrell --

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Please identify yourself.

14 MR. BOWMAN: Chris Bowman, General Counsel for
15 Responsive Education Solutions. On a lot of these,
16 when you're looking at the personnel policy, we tried
17 to group them into different categories as far as
18 personnel policies, the leave. A lot of things that
19 Dr. Duncan alluded to is the fact that we are trying
20 to come in here and effectuate things we thought we
21 already had gained through our first application
22 round. As relates to this, we have personnel
23 policies that we have in place with a lot of our
24 schools, 65-plus schools in a couple of states. A
25 lot of this really is simply saying flexibility so we

1 don't have different standards for different areas.
2 So when you look at something like this where we're
3 saying, "Can we have particular flexibility in one
4 area," it's because we have a practice that's in
5 place right now that's working for us. If someone
6 has to take time off for a certain reason, they would
7 let the HR Department know; they'd fill out that
8 paperwork, so-on and so-forth. And then if we come
9 across anything, now that we've gotten our first few
10 months of operation -- if the campus director or the
11 headmaster comes back to us and says, "Hey, did you
12 know about this; it conflicts with current policy and
13 how we do things," we're trying to come in and create
14 some sort of consistency. So all of these laws that
15 we ask for waivers for -- when this legislation was
16 passed somebody had a very good reason for doing it;
17 they thought it was going to accomplish a specific
18 goal; and it was to fit this particular educational
19 model. When we come in with this charter school
20 application, we say, "Here's an alternative
21 educational model that we have in operation. We hope
22 that you're going to approve it, as we have it
23 described." Now what we have to do is we have to not
24 only describe the educational model, but then go
25 through all the rules and regulations and try to

1 figure out where does this conflict with existing law
2 and ask for waivers so that we can make sure that we
3 can do this model that we've described. Going
4 through the first round, we went through and we
5 thought we caught all of them. Some of the things
6 that we described in our educational model do
7 conflict with some of these statutes and we're coming
8 back to say, "Yes, we know they're very important;
9 someone put it in there for a reason, for a
10 particular educational model." Now we're coming back
11 to say, "If it's possible, if there is any
12 flexibility that we can be allowed, can we just
13 implement the policies we have in place on this?"
14 This would be one of those. So we do have a process
15 where a certain amount of leave is given to
16 employees. If they want to take leave, they let the
17 HR Department know about it; they fill out the proper
18 paperwork, so-on and so-forth. So, really, there's
19 nothing more to this. If the waiver is denied, it's
20 simply a matter of just doing a little bit more
21 paperwork; something a little bit different in this
22 particular instance than we do in other places. So,
23 I'll be back up and down as we go -- but really,
24 that's about it. There's not much more to it than
25 that. The additional flexibility really is that. We

1 describe it in the educational program. We're doing
2 this in other places. We're trying to get
3 consistency from spot to spot, really nothing more,
4 nothing less.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Bowman.

6 MR. BOWMAN: Yes, sir.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski? Oh, Mr.
8 Boardman, she's going to yield back to you.

9 MR. BOARDMAN: Well, I don't know. I think I
10 understand what you're saying but it seems like what
11 you're asking for is the flexibility and the lack of
12 consistency instead of consistency. Because what
13 you're doing then is you don't have any rule on this.
14 You've got a rule but then you're asking for the
15 flexibility not to follow your own rule. Am I
16 misunderstanding that?

17 MR. BOWMAN: On this one, sir -- on this
18 particular one, yeah, that's not what I was trying to
19 convey. What I'm saying is we did have a policy in
20 place and that policy regarding how an administrator
21 or headmaster would actually take advantage of their
22 leave in our opinion would be inconsistent with
23 what's written here. So they're trying to say -- we
24 could be wrong, but we're saying, "It looks like it's
25 inconsistent here, so to the extent that it is

1 inconsistent we need a proper waiver for this."

2 That's all it was. That's all.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

4 DR. WITONSKI: In terms of personnel policies,
5 what do you have in place currently?

6 DR. DUNCAN: We have -- first of all, we have a
7 personnel policy that covers both certified and non,
8 inclusive of administrators. We have a personnel
9 policy book that was developed and worked on with the
10 input of our staff, inclusive of all employees, our
11 HR Department, our board, along with looking at any
12 equitable laws for whatever state we happen to be in
13 to follow along with -- in line with that. Actually,
14 the way our policies are set up now and the type of
15 flexibility this would provide is probably a more
16 immediate response should something need to be
17 changed, as per personnel requests that goes through
18 review; that can take place immediately. So we have
19 a pretty extensive personnel policy handbook, pretty
20 extensive personnel policies period that have been in
21 existence for a number of years.

22 DR. WITONSKI: So specifically --

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Microphone.

24 DR. WITONSKI: I'm sorry. On 6-17, the
25 Subchapter 12 for Teachers Minimum Sick Leave that's

1 in place right now in your current policy, is in
2 accordance with state law?

3 DR. DUNCAN: Right now our current policy is
4 different in that in Arkansas -- when you go from
5 school district to school district you can carry a
6 large number of days with you and have that go
7 toward. We would like the flexibility to let any
8 employees know that would like to be employed with us
9 that we need to review that because that's quite
10 costly for a charter school on the budgets that we're
11 on, and just work with those employees up-front and
12 let them know up-front what we're looking at
13 regarding the sick leave policies.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We'll just go around and
15 just try to take a question at a time, if that's
16 okay. Mr. Hernandez?

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: No.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

19 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Duncan, I'm sure that you have
20 this but I just want to make clear that the waiver
21 for license everyone understands that we cannot waive
22 a license for special education teachers.

23 DR. DUNCAN: That is correct.

24 DR. WALTERS: Okay. I get a call from a charter
25 school every year that was not aware of that whenever

1 they had their Standards visit, so I just wanted to
2 go on record and make sure everyone understood that.
3 So, thank you.

4 DR. DUNCAN: I understand that. All of our
5 special education teachers are certified. We work
6 with the Arkansas Public School Resource Center and
7 Donna Broyles to insure that all guidelines for
8 special education are in place, that anyone certified
9 is certified, and that we follow all federal and
10 state laws regarding special education instruction.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

12 MR. HOY: Good morning, Dr. Duncan.

13 DR. DUNCAN: Good morning, Mr. Hoy.

14 MR. HOY: Under your Miscellaneous waiver
15 request again, I'm looking at the one 6-11-129;
16 that's data accessible on the website. And your
17 rationale for saying that is that patrons that would
18 like that information it actually would be provided.
19 That is true, I suspect, of any public school in the
20 state. But the idea of having it on the website
21 makes it accessible for people without having to
22 specifically ask for it and/or wait on it to be
23 transferred to them. Tell me why you would need that
24 waiver for that information -- specifically, it seems
25 to be financial data -- why you would need that

1 waiver to keep it from being required to be posted on
2 your website?

3 DR. DUNCAN: Just for flexibility, sir. As we
4 go into other arenas in other states, that will
5 become quite a daunting task to make sure that that
6 is done and listed on all websites, according to
7 different specific state regs in various states. The
8 best way to be is just to be very clear and very open
9 and if anyone wants or needs any information at all
10 we're very forthcoming with that.

11 MR. HOY: Follow-up?

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes.

13 MR. HOY: I don't know if I understand the
14 conversation about the other states, but I was
15 thinking specific to Arkansas --

16 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

17 MR. HOY: -- because the statute is specific to
18 Arkansas in terms of some specific things regarding
19 budgets and financial data that all schools in the
20 state are required to have and to report on the
21 website, and I think we're doing that because we're
22 trying to be transparent. It seems like when we
23 decide not to place it on the website and to be able
24 to put it in someone's hand it seems to be less
25 transparent to me. And I'm trying to make certain I

1 understand how that is not necessarily less
2 transparent.

3 DR. DUNCAN: Correct. I see your point. And,
4 again, it's for flexibility for us as an entity and
5 if that was something that the Panel so chooses not
6 to grant we understand.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Let me -- there are just
8 numerous -- and, Ms. Clay, you may want to correct
9 me. But it looks like we're going to have to go
10 through each of these individual requests one at a
11 time and vote on each of those. I mean, you've got a
12 request for State Board of Education rules, Standards
13 for Accreditation for principals --

14 MS. CLAY: I think you could do it one of two
15 ways. You could either take it as a package, either
16 in whole, or a package pulling a few out. Or if it
17 would be easier for the Panel to go through waiver by
18 waiver and statute and rule by rule, that may be
19 easier to handle on this one.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think we're going to have
21 to do that because there's -- I know a couple that I
22 have questions about and some of the others I've
23 noted I've got questions specifically. So if we
24 could, let's do the questions in order so we can work
25 through the process here. So does anyone have

1 questions on the State Board of Education rules
2 that's in the request around an exemption requiring
3 superintendents, principals and teachers to be
4 certified or licensed? I know Dr. Walters wanted to
5 go on record about special education. But do we need
6 that specifically stated, Ms. Clay?

7 MS. CLAY: No. That's a federal requirement
8 that you wouldn't have the authority to waive anyway.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Very good. I like
10 things we can't waive. All right. So any questions
11 on that? Okay. 15.02 around principals, an
12 exemption requiring principals to be licensed or
13 certified? Okay. Title 6 under Certified Personnel
14 Policy and Committees, any questions on that one?
15 Title 6, Compensation, Leave, Breaks -- I've asked
16 the question about personnel leave. Were there any
17 other questions on that or any follow-up that anybody
18 had on that? We'll try to get some semblance to
19 this. And then I think there were some other rules
20 that may fall under Compensation and Leave that Legal
21 brought up. Is that right? I think Salary Schedule
22 Rules. So we would have to add that one also?

23 MS. CLAY: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Any questions about
25 that? Academics, Title 6, 6-16-1204, seeking a

1 waiver to offer pre-AP courses. Any questions?
2 Okay. You've got a question? We'll just take them
3 as you've got questions. Dr. Witonski.

4 DR. WITONSKI: So for the exemption to offer
5 pre-AP courses that would be so students would not
6 have the option in this particular charter to enroll
7 in a pre-AP course?

8 DR. DUNCAN: That is not correct.

9 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

10 DR. DUNCAN: It gives the charter the
11 flexibility that they need regarding offering and
12 scheduling specifically within the classical model
13 that we work with Hillsdale College on. Students
14 would readily have access to it. It's strictly for
15 scheduling flexibility purposes.

16 DR. WITONSKI: And the expenditure piece is
17 referring to -- you're saying that materials and
18 supplies would be provided as requested from
19 teachers?

20 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, ma'am.

21 DR. WITONSKI: And then those would be requested
22 by the district, not the teacher, because of the
23 reimbursement process?

24 DR. DUNCAN: Correct, ma'am.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Back to the pre-AP

1 courses then, I'm not sure that I've heard -- your
2 question was would students have the opportunity to
3 take pre-AP courses. I didn't -- your answer, Dr.
4 Duncan, was that for flexibility and work with the
5 Hillsdale College, they work within that program. So
6 does that program offer pre-AP courses?

7 DR. DUNCAN: At this point with the Hillsdale
8 College it's centered around classical, which does
9 the AP. However, in looking at students' interest
10 and flexibility for the scheduling they've requested
11 a waiver of pre-AP as it pertains to student
12 flexibility and need.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So if --

14 DR. DUNCAN: Strictly for scheduling.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- that particular group of
16 students, there was no request or need for a pre-AP
17 course to be taught then you wouldn't be required --

18 DR. DUNCAN: We would not offer it. Correct,
19 sir.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any other questions on that
21 section?

22 DR. WALTERS: I have a question.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am.

24 DR. WALTERS: Okay. On the second bullet, I
25 guess I just want to understand because it says

1 "reimbursing teachers for personal expenditures."

2 But that is actually the statute that's what we call
3 the 500 Rule.

4 DR. DUNCAN: Correct.

5 DR. WALTERS: The elementary teachers are given
6 \$500.

7 DR. DUNCAN: Correct.

8 DR. WALTERS: So that's what you're talking
9 about is you're asking for a waiver to not give each
10 of the teachers the \$500 for classroom materials.
11 Correct?

12 DR. DUNCAN: Basically. Because as a larger
13 entity we're able to buy in bulk and thus, save money
14 on the cost for those materials and supplies based on
15 teachers' needs and classroom needs for instruction,
16 particularly along the lines of the Hillsdale model.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions on that
18 particular section?

19 MS. COFFMAN: I have one.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman.

21 MS. COFFMAN: Dr. Duncan, as we look back at 6-
22 16-1204 about the pre-AP courses, how are you
23 insuring that the students are getting a rigorous
24 curriculum if the pre-AP courses are not being
25 offered? What are you offering that's more rigorous?

1 DR. DUNCAN: The classical curriculum that is
2 offered through Hillsdale is quite rigorous, as
3 required by Hillsdale College. There are a very
4 large number of requirements by Hillsdale in order
5 for us to even partner with them to make this school
6 successful. And if you would like, I would gladly
7 get you a list of those. I do not have them with me
8 today, but I will gladly get you a list of those.
9 Our staff went through extensive training this summer
10 working with Hillsdale, who came into Arkansas and
11 worked with us and has continually come back since as
12 is part of our partnership with them. That is
13 currently very successful in one of our other
14 classical schools that we have elsewhere. Their
15 program is very rigorous, offers things from a wide
16 variety of points, such as classical studies of the
17 founding fathers, Latin, working through literature,
18 Plato, Socrates, very intensely. And I would be most
19 happy to provide that to you, if you would like.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Now that then sparks a
21 question. In the classical curriculum model that you
22 -- this school is using, how does that integrate with
23 Common Core State Standards?

24 DR. DUNCAN: Well, as part of working with
25 Hillsdale -- and, naturally, one thing we want to

1 make sure is that it does align with Common Core,
2 which is the reason why NWACA is also participating
3 in NWEA testing, as is all of our schools, so we can
4 look at that and student growth immediately as a
5 predictor of where they're at regarding Common Core
6 in order to be successful with that curriculum and
7 know everything required by that curriculum. So
8 NWACA is one of the three schools we have in-state
9 that participates under NWEA. We've just finished
10 our first round of tests and have our results of
11 those and have looked at those as a predictor on how
12 those students will do on Arkansas tests, which are
13 swinging and being modified for the Common Core. And
14 for those students at this point in time, just on
15 those preliminary results from the first round of
16 testing, they're quite favorable and look very good.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Other questions
18 on that particular section under Academics?

19 MR. HOY: I do have a question --

20 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

21 MR. HOY: -- and you'll have to pardon the lack
22 of intelligence on this one. Where is Hillsdale
23 College?

24 DR. DUNCAN: Hillsdale College is in the
25 northeast and -- excuse me, the state escapes me.

1 MR. BOWMAN: Michigan.

2 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you. Michigan. I have not
3 been there myself, but I would like to.

4 MR. HOY: Okay. Then a follow-up. So the pre-
5 AP courses that the student will take if there's a
6 need will be offered through the college that's in
7 Michigan?

8 DR. DUNCAN: Actually, it will be offered
9 through the Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy, in
10 conjunction with the assistance of Hillsdale College.
11 Our partnership with them is quite extensive, as I
12 said. They are very rigorous. They do not readily
13 go into partnerships with charter schools or any
14 other traditional school system. It's a very
15 rigorous process to be approved by them, even for a
16 partnership.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Additional questions? And
18 we can move to Standards for Accreditation, if there
19 are questions under the three requests there: 9.0,
20 9.03.4, and 19.04. Any questions from the Panelists
21 on that? I'd like to ask -- particularly, you're
22 asking for an exemption from 9.0 in the Standards,
23 which is the entire curriculum requirement?

24 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir. And if there's any
25 hesitation on that, this is just to go along with the

1 flexibility we need for the Northwest Arkansas
2 Classical model. If there is any hesitation on the
3 Panel regarding that -- the basic two we're
4 interested in would be 9.03.1 and 9.03.4, which is
5 highlighted below that.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, yeah, I had real
7 concerns about giving any school a waiver of our
8 curriculum requirements under what we expect schools
9 to be able to provide student opportunities for.

10 DR. DUNCAN: Understandable.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And then, in particular, the
12 38 units of credit -- I don't believe that we've gone
13 in that direction ever with a charter. We have one
14 charter who is similar in its mission as yours who
15 has to offer the 38, but they have to have a plan in
16 order to do that. It doesn't have to be taught. But
17 that's not what I'm seeing here. Any exception to
18 insuring that those 38 are available -- they're just
19 requesting -- you're requesting that you offer the
20 courses necessary for 22 units. So if your school is
21 just going to offer 22 units and there are no other
22 options, where does that leave a student? And then
23 that's what our goal is, is to protect the ability of
24 a student to have options beyond just 22 required
25 units. And so it gives me great concern that we

1 would provide the opportunity to lower that
2 expectation of what we require all schools currently
3 to be able to be taught. So --

4 DR. DUNCAN: And if I could --

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- that's my comment.

6 DR. DUNCAN: If I may clarify, sir?

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

8 DR. DUNCAN: Specifically what we're looking at
9 is the point that they be taught annually. So we're
10 asking for flexibility of scheduling and that might
11 not be clear in the second part of that verbiage.
12 But if you look in the first part of it it says "to
13 the extent that it requires 38 units to be taught
14 annually," we're just asking for flexibility on the
15 scheduling and we'd be glad to go on record for that,
16 sir.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, so how do you insure
18 that the 38 units are taught for every group of kids
19 who are going through there? There could be kids who
20 enter that with only one year of educational need,
21 two years of educational need. So there may never be
22 an opportunity for a student to take chemistry 'cause
23 it may not be taught the year that they're there or
24 the two years that they're there.

25 DR. DUNCAN: Well, currently, sir, the reason

1 why we're requesting this now is we do not have
2 secondary at this point in time. This is in
3 preparation for doing that. As is allowed in our
4 charter to follow-up and add grades, we want to
5 insure that when we're putting that in there that we
6 allow for a cohort group to go through and get the
7 appropriate courses needed. Now for students that
8 transfer in, naturally, that's a special situation
9 and we would want to insure that any student that
10 entered, that needed additional options for that
11 particular student to graduate would be allowable and
12 we would make that available to them. This is
13 particularly just for scheduling as we build that
14 first cohort group up into secondary.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So bring me up to
16 speed -- and I apologize for not doing my homework.
17 What grades are you currently serving at Northwest
18 Classical?

19 DR. DUNCAN: We're currently elementary, sir.
20 We serve no secondary students at this time.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Grades what?

22 DR. DUNCAN: K --

23 MR. BOWMAN: Eight.

24 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, K-8.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: K-8?

1 DR. DUNCAN: Just verifying. Yes, sir.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But you -- and you can go
3 beyond --

4 DR. DUNCAN: We do have permission under our
5 charter --

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right.

7 DR. DUNCAN: -- to extend to secondary grades.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right. So can I ask, you
9 know, when the plan is to do that? Are there plans
10 to extend as this cohort -- do you have 8th graders
11 now currently enrolled?

12 DR. DUNCAN: We do.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Are you going to add 9th
14 grade next year?

15 DR. DUNCAN: That is currently under review by
16 our entity. We look -- we go through each year at
17 this time of year to look for grade expansions for
18 the following year. That is before our executive
19 team at this time to make the decision for that. It
20 has not been finalized. I will say at this point in
21 time it looks favorably that it will be, and should
22 it be then we would like to go ahead and prepare
23 everything that we need to do for that.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So as you add a 9th grade
25 group, what you're saying -- or seeking is that you

1 only have 9th graders there. But in order to have
2 that you have to offer all 38 -- or teach all 38?

3 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. That brings more
5 questions to my mind. Mr. Hoy.

6 MR. HOY: Yes, sir. And this may be one of
7 those questions. I am now concerned that if that's
8 the case as we phase in schools that start to add 9,
9 10, 11, 12, would that be the same issue with every
10 charter school that adds a grade?

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I don't know the answer to
12 that. I mean, Ms. Perry, do you know, such as KIPP-
13 Blytheville, have they sought the same waiver? Ms.
14 Perry, go ahead. I'll ask Ms. Perry to answer that
15 question.

16 MS. PERRY: Actually, the waiver has not been
17 granted except in cases where there's a phase-in of
18 the grade levels so that the charter will offer all
19 38 units by the time it has its first 12th grade
20 class or when the charter will meet the content
21 requirements, that it will meet it through imbedded
22 courses. That's how it's been done before. Kendra
23 is nodding in agreement behind me.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So this goes beyond
25 that though. Ms. Perry, in your opinion -- Ms. Clay,

1 in your opinion, this goes beyond that? I mean, this
2 is just asking for a complete exemption.

3 MS. PERRY: I don't think that they've asked for
4 that, you know, with the specialized language in it.

5 MS. CLAY: Yeah. The way the waiver is written
6 in the amendment request it was 9.0, which is the
7 entire curriculum section of the Standards. That is
8 beyond just the 38 units.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right. But if you just look
10 at the 38 unit issue, it's not specifically as
11 flexibility until --

12 MS. CLAY: That's correct. It's not written as
13 a phase-in approach. It's just written as a blanket
14 waiver of the 38.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Mr. Hernandez?

16 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Just -- I'm trying to
17 maybe clarify what you're asking for, is that you're
18 saying basically that in moving forward, when you do
19 have all classes in place, that you will be offering
20 all 38 classes. But in the scenario where possibly
21 you have 9th through 12th grades, you're offering the
22 38 and nobody signs up for a music class or a choir
23 class, then you're not obligated to force a kid to be
24 in that course?

25 DR. DUNCAN: Correct. We are offering.

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: So all 38 courses will be
2 offered; they just won't -- they may not make --
3 whereas now, the regular public school under this you
4 have to make a kid be in that course. Not only does
5 it have to be offered, they also have to have one
6 registered in that class. Is that correct?

7 DR. DUNCAN: That is correct.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Is there any way to require
9 and to insure that the offer is actually an offer? I
10 mean, that's my concern.

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: I don't know. I was just trying
12 to clarify what -- I think what she was asking.

13 DR. DUNCAN: And we would be glad to rescind the
14 waiver for all of 9.0. Basically -- you know --
15 we're basically looking at 9.03.4 and, with some
16 latitude, 9.03.1.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. The three under
18 Standards for Accreditation, any other questions on
19 those by the Panel? Any additional clarifications
20 needed?

21 DR. WITONSKI: 19.04 for the summer school, what
22 is the -- what would be the process for students who
23 need remediation?

24 DR. DUNCAN: Our school has the flexibility of
25 scheduling within the school day to do immediate

1 remediation, whether a student needs extended day for
2 that or also whether a student needs Saturday school
3 for that. So it's providing those as options for
4 summer school. So, again, it's flexibility.

5 DR. WITONSKI: So if a student was in a course
6 and the course ends -- what is the school year term
7 for --

8 DR. DUNCAN: Currently, for Bentonville, it
9 mirrors the Bentonville School District.

10 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. And who is the director of
11 the Bentonville campus?

12 DR. DUNCAN: Mr. Tim Peterson.

13 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Tim Peterson?

14 DR. DUNCAN: Yes. He is the director.

15 DR. WITONSKI: And then you're serving in the
16 capacity of --

17 DR. DUNCAN: Vice President of School
18 Operations.

19 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. So in that particular
20 situation, if you have a student that failed a
21 course, for whatever reason, and that wasn't
22 compensated through the Saturday process or
23 remediation through the school day, what would be
24 that student's option?

25 DR. DUNCAN: We have several individualized

1 programs that could also assist in remediating.
2 We're not saying we would not offer summer school; we
3 would like the flexibility for scheduling to see how
4 many of our students at that time would need summer
5 school. Our whole point would be for students never
6 to get to the point of needing summer school by what
7 we already have in place. So, again, it's just
8 scheduling flexibility, naturally, not saying that we
9 would not do what's needed to meet the needs of
10 students.

11 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman.

13 MR. BOARDMAN: Yeah. So you want the
14 flexibility but you -- have you had any students
15 right now attending on a Saturday?

16 DR. DUNCAN: I believe they have had some, sir.

17 MR. BOARDMAN: Have you had any students fail
18 courses?

19 DR. DUNCAN: No, sir. This is their first year
20 and their first semester.

21 DR. WITONSKI: And I guess that goes back to my
22 initial concern. At this point with this being the
23 first year, and we are in November, I don't know that
24 the data is there to know if you're going to need
25 summer school at that point or not. So what would be

1 that thought process?

2 DR. DUNCAN: Well, I think that is the thought
3 process, that we don't know any data at this point.
4 So if we're not -- if we don't have any students that
5 qualify under that, we don't want to be held to be
6 mandated to do so. However, if that is needed we
7 will. As I said, we've already completed our first
8 round of testing to see exactly where our students
9 are at at this point in time. All of our students
10 participate in the NWEA and so we know pretty well
11 right now where students are at with the courses
12 they're currently taking well ahead of time.

13 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy.

15 MR. HOY: All right. You're saying that you're
16 asking for the waiver of 9.03.1, which is all of the
17 Smart Core requirements?

18 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'm sorry. I guess that's
20 not in the request --

21 MR. HOY: But it was under the whole 9.0.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. Under the whole 9.0.

23 DR. DUNCAN: Correct, sir. And so if we're not
24 able to get all of 9.0 or 9.03.1, basically, what we
25 were looking at is 9.03.4. So just to clarify, we're

1 looking at 9.03.4.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

3 DR. DUNCAN: And if I've confused you about
4 that, my apologies.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So not 9.03.1, but
6 9.03.4?

7 DR. DUNCAN: Correct, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

9 DR. DUNCAN: Just for the record.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So the three that you
11 have are the three that you're asking for, that are
12 on your request, written request that was provided to
13 us?

14 DR. DUNCAN: Correct.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: 9.0, 9.03.4, if you don't
16 get 9.03, include that, and then 19.04 --

17 DR. DUNCAN: Correct, sir.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- in the Standards? Okay.
19 Other questions on those? Mr. Hoy.

20 MR. HOY: So the 9.03.4 is on the grades 9-12
21 curriculum. And is that so that you can look at the
22 phase-in and not offer the 38, or is that for another
23 reason that you're asking for the entire K-12
24 curriculum piece?

25 DR. DUNCAN: Basically, for 03.4, we're looking

1 for the phase-in of 9th grade.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions on Standards
3 of Accreditation? If not, I'd move to Support
4 Services. There are requests of the waiver of
5 Chapter 25, Library Media and Technology Act, and
6 then Support Services. And I'm not sure -- Ms. Clay,
7 I'd like to ask the question of you in this. It
8 says, "To the extent that it requires specific
9 support services." So this involves all of the
10 guidance counseling, media services, health and
11 safety services. So aren't there some health and
12 safety issues that we can't waive?

13 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir. It's actually the Health
14 and Safety Codes, which are found outside of Title 6.
15 So the health and safety issues within Title 6 you
16 are able to waive.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. And so this is about
18 just nursing services, et cetera?

19 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I just wanted to make
21 sure.

22 DR. DUNCAN: And, again, we currently have
23 licensed nurses at all of our campuses. We would
24 just like the flexibility to contract with LPN's as
25 there's been a lot of difficulty in finding licensed

1 nurses for those positions. Same with Library/Media
2 Specialists; they are at a premium in this state. We
3 were able to find part-time, as is listed in our
4 application, but it's been extremely difficult and we
5 have a lot of technology at our students' hands which
6 carries with them volumes of books. Regarding
7 Guidance Counseling, naturally, like any other public
8 school, including many charter schools, we would like
9 the flexibility to contract should guidance
10 counseling services be needed, as with many other
11 traditional charter schools.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And those requests were not
13 in the original application?

14 DR. DUNCAN: They were not, sir.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

16 DR. DUNCAN: And so, again, this is clean-up on
17 some of the things that came up in the original
18 application.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any other questions on
20 Support Services from the Panel?

21 DR. WITONSKI: And so you currently have a part-
22 time nurse that is assisting?

23 DR. DUNCAN: Yes.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. And then you have -- you
25 said you have an on-line library for students?

1 DR. DUNCAN: They have access to that. However,
2 at this point in time we do have Library/Media
3 Services, as outlined in our charter application.
4 But it's looking like it's going to be difficult to
5 keep them and it was extremely difficult to find
6 them.

7 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions on Support
9 Services? Dr. Walters, did you have one?

10 DR. WALTERS: No.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Then we'll move to
12 Miscellaneous, Title 6. I think, Mr. Hoy, you'd
13 already asked the question about 6-11-129, which was
14 the website. Any additional questions by the Panel
15 there? Okay. Dr. Walters.

16 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Duncan, on the third bullet,
17 6-17-2802, on tests, you say that -- you're asking
18 for the waiver; you seek the flexibility to evaluate
19 staff to insure successful implementation of the
20 school's unique education program. However, there
21 was no documents that showed us what system you are
22 using. Can you tell me what rubric, what model you
23 are using to evaluate teachers?

24 DR. DUNCAN: We're currently using the classical
25 model that Hillsdale utilizes. It utilizes a lot of

1 (unintelligible) within it. However, the classical
2 model itself lends itself to a little bit different
3 rigor under Hillsdale. They also assist in coming in
4 to look at our instructional programs, what our
5 teachers are doing in our classrooms, professional
6 development, et cetera. And I would be glad to
7 provide that to you, if you'd like.

8 DR. WALTERS: I would like to see the rubric.
9 And I understand that you're -- it's a new charter;
10 there was a process that districts could ask for a
11 waiver under Tests. We have a charter that I know
12 received that waiver but there was a rubric and there
13 was a process and it's in statute what we look at.
14 And so that can be done but we don't really have any
15 information right now to look at what that process
16 is.

17 DR. DUNCAN: Okay. Well, we'd be glad to
18 entertain that down the line. All of our current
19 teachers and staff are going through the training.
20 We work with Barbara Hunter Cox to assist and provide
21 training, and she has provided that training at all
22 three of our schools, to all of our staff. We would
23 just like the flexibility to also include things that
24 are naturally applicable under Hillsdale.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman, do you have a

1 question?

2 MR. BOARDMAN: I guess that would help. I think
3 on some of these if we didn't just ask for
4 flexibility though, we said, "We want to not use this
5 but use this" -- so, in other words, give an
6 indication of exactly how you're going to use it.
7 Because the way I read this, unless I'm wrong, when
8 you're asking for flexibility you can use anything
9 you want. You don't -- you plan on using the
10 Hillsdale model but in the request it's just asking
11 for flexibility and it doesn't state what you're
12 going to use. So I think that's the problem that
13 we're having with some of these.

14 DR. DUNCAN: I understand.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So that would help, I think,
16 if we knew -- if you said, "We don't -- we want a
17 waiver not to do this but to do this," not just to
18 say "flexibility."

19 DR. DUNCAN: Understandable, sir.

20 MR. BOARDMAN: We'll go through these one at a
21 time, I guess, in a minute when we vote.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes. Do you have a
23 question, Mr. Hernandez?

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. On your committee for
25 each school, pertaining to your personnel policies,

1 if you're not having a committee locally to work and
2 make revisions, what are you -- what is y'all's
3 process for updating or revising your policies?

4 DR. DUNCAN: I think it's done annually. Mr.
5 Bowman, would you like --

6 MR. BOWMAN: Well, the process we go through
7 every year, probably right around January or so, we
8 end up going to all of the campus directors that we
9 have using that system and we put out this blanket
10 request for feedback. We have, in essence, campus
11 directors, regional directors of academics,
12 operations, so-on and so-forth, and then we have
13 department heads at our central admin. office. We
14 put out this blanket request and we say, "We've been
15 functioning under this for nine months now. What
16 problems have you seen that come across your desk?"
17 I get them from legal and there's other things that
18 show up. I say, you know, "Hoy has had this issue or
19 that issue," and we gather all those together and
20 then we have the board review these. We start seeing
21 consistency, of course. There's some things that
22 come up time and time again. We put it in front of
23 the board and say, "Here's what's being requested
24 from the field in flexibility and here's what the
25 proposed changes are. What would you like to approve

1 or not approve?" They go through that one step at a
2 time. Whatever ends up getting approved by the board
3 we put in the next round of changes.

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: And that's like -- you're saying
5 it's a global policy for all of your districts that
6 you operate?

7 MR. BOWMAN: Well, it depends. Actually, in
8 this case what we did was we -- since it's our first
9 year in Arkansas, we took what we had in place with
10 other schools that was unique to each educational
11 model, used it as a basis. Then we tried to adapt
12 that to Arkansas law and regulation, and then get
13 that insight from different organizations here, and
14 that provides our baseline, as it were. So we'll go
15 through that process come this next year. That's
16 what we've done for our handbooks and we're just
17 following the same process here.

18 MR. HERNANDEZ: But your preference is to have
19 it to kind of where all of your schools have kind of
20 similar policies. That's why you're asking for some
21 of these waivers?

22 MR. BOWMAN: That's right. That's correct, sir,
23 wherever it's feasible. Of course, each state has
24 its own uniqueness, so --

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions involving --

1 the last one was the accreditation for -- under
2 Auxiliary Services and Transportation. You said you
3 participate in C-M-P. I wrote that down because I
4 didn't know what that was.

5 DR. DUNCAN: Child Nutrition Program.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: C-N-P?

7 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I wrote M. Sorry.

9 DR. DUNCAN: I'm sorry.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No. Thank you. Any other
11 questions? Okay. Any further comment, Dr. Duncan,
12 that you would like to make before we then go back
13 and -- we'll have to address each one of these
14 individually or as groups maybe, as they're grouped
15 in our request.

16 DR. DUNCAN: Understandably so, sir. Again, a
17 lot of this is just showing some of the things that
18 we requested for earlier. Some of it is also showing
19 up to build consistency across all of our schools, as
20 Mr. Bowman said, to the extent that it's allowed by
21 each state. We currently have 68 schools in Texas,
22 and so working for some type of consistency is
23 certainly something that would assist us as an
24 entity.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Okay. So I

1 think the best way to look at this is to go to the
2 beginning. And under Superintendent/Principal/
3 Teacher Certification Licensure, State Board of
4 Education rules, they're asking for the exemption --

5 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Kimbrell?

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- for that. Yes, ma'am.

7 DR. WALTERS: Is there not something on the
8 first page?

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Oh, I may not have read the
10 first page. Hang on, I'll get it here. I'm sorry,
11 there is. Yes. State Board of Education rules on
12 board zones and election reimbursement -- and then
13 was there one other one under that? Okay. Those two
14 then in the first waiver request.

15 DR. WALTERS: I move to approve.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion to
17 approve the waivers under the State Board of
18 Education rules governing -- there's three?

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: On the second page.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's under Licensure.

21 MR. HERNANDEZ: Oh, okay.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: First section is General
23 State Board of Education. I've got a motion to
24 approve those two waivers.

25 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I've got a second by Mr.
2 Boardman. All those in favor say aye.

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Those two pass.
5 We'll move then to Superintendent/Principal/Teacher
6 Certification and Licensure, State Board of Education
7 rules, Standards for Accreditation, Employee
8 Contracts, Compensation, Leave and Breaks. What
9 would be your pleasure? You want to take each one of
10 those individually or can we group them in any way?

11 DR. WALTERS: Can we do licensure together?

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we've got the two
13 licensure State Board of Education rules under
14 Educational License and Standards for Accreditation,
15 under Principals. Those two waiver requests. Do I
16 have a motion?

17 DR. WITONSKI: Motion.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion to
19 approve. Do I have a second?

20 MS. COFFMAN: Second.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Ms. Coffman. All
22 those in favor say aye.

23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?
25 Okay. So we have those two waivers approved.

1 Employee Contracts, under Title 6-Certified Personnel
2 Policies and Committees. Do you want to take that
3 one separately?

4 DR. WALTERS: Move to approve.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Got a motion to approve.

6 MS. COFFMAN: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Got a second by Ms. Coffman.

8 All those in favor say aye.

9 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
11 That waiver is approved. Employee Compensation,
12 Leave and Breaks -- you've got one, two, three, four,
13 five sections of the Code. Are there any sections --
14 or any concern on any of those? Okay.

15 MR. HOY: Dr. Kimbrell, the concern you voiced
16 about the leave for administrators that still is a
17 concern.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Anybody else have
19 concerns? I mean, we can take them one at a time or
20 we can take them as a group.

21 DR. WALTERS: Can we pull that one out?

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So pull that one out
23 and we'll look at 6-17-111, 6-17-201, 6-17-1001, and
24 6-17 subchapter Teachers' Minimum Sick Leave Law.

25 DR. WITONSKI: Motion to approve.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion to approve
2 those waivers.

3 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second. All those in favor?

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?
7 Okay. You want to deal with 6-17-211 separately
8 then. Is there a motion to approve or deny? We'll
9 have to do a voice vote, if there is, if we're going
10 to deny that waiver request.

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Make a motion to approve.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have a motion to approve.
13 Do I have a second?

14 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a second. All those
16 in favor say aye.

17 MR. HOY: Question.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Question, yes, Mr. Hoy.

19 MR. HOY: The question simply is this: this is
20 an issue of logistically how we go about documenting
21 administrative leave, but if we do document it and
22 it's just a matter of the specifics of how we
23 document it, I don't necessarily see why this is an
24 absolute necessary waiver for the benefit of the
25 children of the district. If you could close that

1 gap for me, I would feel better about voting for this
2 particular motion.

3 DR. DUNCAN: Mr. Bowman, do you have any
4 comments?

5 MR. BOWMAN: So really on a lot of these we're
6 just saying, "Is this waiver going to make it so that
7 the students are learning better or learning more
8 information?" The gap really isn't there. It's more
9 or less saying there's an administrative process
10 that's already in place that we're following. And
11 when we're going through the different statutes we
12 happened to see this one and it's inconsistent with
13 what we currently do. So we can absolutely -- with
14 any of these we can put in additional processes, make
15 sure we have different regulations, and go about it
16 accordingly. So there's no -- I can't close the gap.
17 I can't say by doing this the students are going to
18 benefit from this. I'll say the administrative
19 process will -- that we're already following in other
20 schools and if everything else will be the same it
21 will make things easier along those lines. But if
22 there's a concern about certain transparency with
23 this particular item, by all means, we can change the
24 procedures that we currently have in place. That
25 wouldn't be an issue. It would just be something

1 different, that's all.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: When you look at the actual
3 statute it defines what "personal leave" is. It also
4 then defines what a "school function" means, and then
5 it requires each school or district to have a set of
6 personnel policies. So that's why I brought up the
7 concern about waiving this one, is just the history
8 of knowing what the intent was and knowing why it was
9 put into place, to protect and create transparency
10 for the public to know what was going on when people
11 were not in their building. So that's why I brought
12 my concern up.

13 MR. BOARDMAN: So if this is not waived, they
14 will continue to have the policy that they have in
15 place?

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: They -- whatever that policy
17 is would have to --

18 MR. BOWMAN: Conform to this.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- conform to this --

20 MR. BOWMAN: Yes, sir.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- with the definitions, et
22 cetera, which are two definitions, one being what is
23 defined as personal leave and one is defined as a
24 school function. The rest of it then is just
25 requiring that they have a policy.

1 MR. BOWMAN: Right. And our policy for all of
2 our Arkansas employees is posted on-line for
3 everybody to see, the general public.

4 MR. HOY: So then I guess my last question on
5 this particular point is: can you assure that this
6 will still be just as transparent as the other
7 procedure that's required under state law? Because
8 if the transparency is there I don't think I would
9 have a problem with you doing slightly different, as
10 long as it's still transparent.

11 MR. BOWMAN: To be candid with you, whether it's
12 as transparent as what's currently required by
13 statute is probably a subjective opinion. But here's
14 what I can say: I can say that our process by which
15 leave is requested by employees is a transparent
16 process. So if you -- if anybody wanted to see what
17 that process was they can go onto the website; they
18 can see the employee handbook and they can see what
19 that process is. And if they have any other
20 questions, of course, open records. But I don't know
21 that I can sit here and say, "Oh, yes, it's
22 absolutely going to be as transparent as the current
23 policy," because that might differ among the members
24 of the Panel and myself, as well.

25 MR. HOY: Thank you.

1 MR. BOWMAN: Sorry.

2 MR. BOARDMAN: But going on down the line -- you
3 say that this is on your website, this policy, but
4 then aren't you asking for a waiver not to put that
5 on your website?

6 MR. BOWMAN: I understand what you're saying.
7 Yes, I'm just saying it's currently on the website.
8 We have it there. And, of course, it's always
9 available in the open records, so it's always
10 available to anyone who needs to see that.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We have a motion and
12 a second on the floor. Any additional questions or
13 discussion from the Panel? If not, all those in
14 favor say aye.

15 (MAJORITY CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.

17 DR. WALTERS: No.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All right. Roll call. Mr.
19 Hoy?

20 MR. HOY: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

22 DR. WALTERS: No. I can't see the relevance
23 that it has so that the waiver is needed.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

25 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

2 DR. WITONSKI: Yes.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

4 MR. BOARDMAN: No. I also don't see the really
5 need for this and -- I just don't see really a need
6 for it. I think we need to keep what we've got until
7 something is provided for sure to take its place.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

9 MS. COFFMAN: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Four yeses, two no's. My
11 vote wouldn't change the outcome. The waiver is
12 granted.

13 I hate to tell the audience this but we've got
14 several more we have to vote on. But before we do
15 that we're going to take a break 'cause some of us
16 are old and have to go to the restroom.

17 DR. DUNCAN: Some of us are young and still have
18 that.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We will reconvene -- if
20 you'll look at that clock back there, it says 10:15.
21 We will take 10 minutes, so please at 10:25, Panel,
22 be back at your seats and we'll get started.

23 (BREAK: 10:15-10:30 A.M.)

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'll call the Panel back to
25 order and we'll begin working through the next set.

1 Dr. Duncan, do you want to come back up in case there
2 are questions? I don't know that there will be any
3 other questions but we'll go through this. Okay. So
4 we had gotten down to Academics, I believe, Title 6
5 code. There are requests for implementation
6 exemptions for pre-AP and rules on teacher personal
7 expenditure or classroom supplies. Can we take that
8 one? Is there any concerns with 6-16-1204 and 6-21-
9 303?

10 DR. WITONSKI: I still have a concern over the
11 flexibility for the pre-AP courses in terms of what
12 the alternative would be. And I understand that you
13 were discussing that Hillsdale -- is that correct?

14 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, ma'am.

15 DR. WITONSKI: -- is offering those. But the
16 documentation of what that is, in terms of what --
17 what would be the counterpart to that?

18 DR. DUNCAN: I will be glad to provide you a
19 copy of the curriculum, if you'd like. And,
20 actually, it's just flexibility on scheduling in and
21 of itself.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Maybe if we can modify that that
23 scheduling would be flexible maybe I would be more
24 comfortable with it. It reads similar to that
25 curriculum 9.0, just --

1 DR. DUNCAN: Not as much meat in it as you would
2 like. We would be glad to modify that to say
3 flexible scheduling --

4 MR. BOARDMAN: So --

5 DR. DUNCAN: -- if that would assist.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

7 MR. BOARDMAN: So what it would have, instead of
8 saying that you would like to waive the requirement
9 to offer you would like to waive the flexibility of
10 scheduling to offer it?

11 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir, if that would assist.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

13 MR. HERNANDEZ: So, make sure I'm -- are all
14 schools -- this may be a question for you. Are all
15 schools required to offer and have pre-AP courses
16 right now?

17 DR. WITONSKI: I think that what my concern
18 would be is that a child not having access to
19 something. And it's similar to the conversation
20 we've had with the evaluation is the comparable piece
21 that would go with that. Without seeing it, I'm not
22 sure. I would feel more comfortable if we had an
23 opportunity to have a chance to review what that
24 comparable piece would be.

25 MR. BOARDMAN: I'm probably lost here too. Have

1 we defined pre -- all pre-AP classes? I didn't know
2 that we -- I'm lost. I'm sorry.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, I've got 16-1204 and
4 it's the implementation of the advanced placement
5 courses and "school districts shall offer pre-
6 advanced placement courses to prepare students for
7 the demands of advanced placement courses." And then
8 it has sections that we have to approve those courses
9 and, of course, content instruction, et cetera. So
10 what they're asking is the exemption of that
11 particular statute, and there's quite a bit in there,
12 actually, with that entire thing. It doesn't just --
13 you're asking for the rules, exemption of just the
14 rules on -- I'm sorry -- you're asking for a waiver
15 of 6-16-1204. Correct?

16 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So that also not only
18 includes pre-AP but also includes the statutes around
19 the four AP courses.

20 DR. DUNCAN: If you would like us to amend the
21 verbiage to include "flexibility of scheduling," we
22 would be glad to do so.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I would suggest that we
24 either deny this request and ask them to resubmit a
25 different amendment, if they wanted to be more

1 specific because 6-16-1204 goes well beyond just the
2 pre-AP courses. So if we granted a waiver of the
3 entire code you're waiving the requirement of AP
4 courses being offered. So, yes.

5 MR. HERNANDEZ: I just want to make sure if we
6 do send that back that what we're getting back or I
7 guess asking for something to clear our vision. So
8 for a student -- let's say a student wants to take
9 pre-AP math, a pre-AP math class. Will that course
10 -- if they want to take it that will be available to
11 them --

12 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

13 MR. HERNANDEZ: -- not by a certified pre-AP
14 teacher?

15 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

16 MR. HERNANDEZ: Or will there be some other
17 parallel Hillsdale College, if you will, version of
18 the pre-AP that's not necessarily adopted by the
19 College Board or anything like that?

20 DR. DUNCAN: We have not asked for a waiver of
21 AP certification as such. And I don't want to allude
22 to other states but I will say in other schools that
23 we offer AP in those areas our teachers are AP
24 certified according to the regs for that area. And,
25 again, if there is any hesitation on this we'd be

1 glad to -- you know -- if you'd like to go ahead and
2 deny it, we'll bring it back to you at a later time
3 with specifics.

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: And so you're not asking to not
5 teach it ever; just teach it as it's needed?

6 DR. DUNCAN: Correct.

7 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, what they're asking
9 for is a waiver of the entire statute. Ms. Clay?

10 MS. CLAY: Dr. Kimbrell, one thing to keep in
11 mind -- and we may see this on some other
12 applications or amendment requests -- is at times we
13 -- the authorizer has granted partial waivers of
14 statutes. Even though it appears here that they're
15 requesting the whole statute, it would basically be a
16 qualifier on their waiver sheet that would say "6-16-
17 1204 offering pre-AP courses." So you do have the
18 ability to narrow that down yourself without then
19 specifically saying 6-16-1204(a). You'll see it both
20 ways and this may come up again throughout the next
21 couple of days.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I would suggest then that as
23 we work -- Ms. Perry, as we work with charter
24 applicants for amendments and applications, that we
25 ask them to be very specific as to what their

1 requests are when it comes to waiving statute. I
2 mean, as I said, 6-16-1204 is quite an important
3 piece of legislation in this state and waiving the
4 entire piece -- and what we have here, if you don't
5 look at the entire piece in its totality, we would've
6 been waiving all requirements around AP. So in the
7 future as I guess point of privilege I'd ask that we
8 work on that with our applicants.

9 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir.

10 DR. WITONSKI: So this would be 6-16-1204(a)(1)?

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. Let me just ask this
12 question. Do I have a motion to approve or deny 6-
13 16-1204 as a request?

14 MR. HOY: I would make the motion to deny,
15 because I think the request is too broad.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion to
17 deny the request. Do I have a second?

18 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a second. We'll have
20 to do a roll call vote on this. So all those --
21 well, we'll start over here with Ms. Coffman. If we
22 deny the request, Ms. Clay, we would have to state
23 the reason for denying. Correct?

24 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So let me get a place

1 to write my notes. Okay. We have a question.

2 MR. HERNANDEZ: In this, if we do deny this, is
3 this -- are we going to basically send this back to
4 them to bring us a revision or are we going to deny
5 it like this but entertain looking at it as a
6 piecemeal -- being able to -- like Ms. Clay stated,
7 be able to look at a portion of it?

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think that's left up to
9 the Panel. I mean, right now, what we have is a
10 request of this nature. If you want to do the work
11 to make the decision as to what the request is, then
12 you can do that and we have that ability.

13 Okay. So we have a motion to deny and a second
14 to deny. Ms. Coffman?

15 MS. COFFMAN: I vote to deny because the request
16 is too vague.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So yours is a yes
18 vote --

19 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. Correct.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- on the motion? Mr.
21 Boardman?

22 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes also. I think it
23 needs to be clarified. And since it really is not
24 going to be in effect this year anyway because
25 they're not doing 9th graders or 10th graders, so I

1 vote to deny -- I mean, I vote yes. I'm sorry.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Ms. -- Dr. Witonski?

3 DR. WITONSKI: I also vote yes, knowing that we
4 need to narrow the scope.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes. We need more
7 clarification.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

9 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes for all the reasons
10 that have been given.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

12 MR. HOY: I vote yes for all the reasons that
13 have been previously stated.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. In regards to 6-16-
15 1204, the request for waiver has been denied.

16 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you, sir.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think y'all understand
18 what our concerns are.

19 DR. DUNCAN: Certainly. Very much so.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. 6-21-303 is an
21 exemption for the revisions to reimburse teachers on
22 the cost of classroom materials up to \$500. Any
23 questions? If not, I will entertain a motion.

24 DR. WALTERS: Motion to approve.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion to approve

1 by Dr. Walters.

2 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Mr. Boardman. All
4 those in favor say aye.

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any opposed? Motion passes.

7 Then we'll move to Standards for Accreditation.

8 We have a request for 9.0, Curriculum, exemption from
9 that set of standards under 9.0.

10 DR. WITONSKI: Motion to deny.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have a motion by Dr.
12 Witonski to deny.

13 DR. WALTERS: Second.

14 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second from Dr. Walters.

16 Any discussion? All those in favor -- well, we'll
17 have to do a roll call. Mr. Hoy, we'll start with
18 you.

19 MR. HOY: I vote yes to the motion. I think
20 that the request is too vague and encompasses all of
21 the sectional curriculum and I don't think we should
22 waive all the sectional curriculum.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

24 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes on the motion for the
25 same reasons. And also I think maybe if you'll go to

1 the standards and be a little bit more specific it's
2 something that could be looked at. But I think this
3 is way too broad in scope.

4 DR. DUNCAN: We understand.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes to deny because it's
7 too broad.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

9 DR. WITONSKI: I vote yes, motion to deny, and
10 look forward to hearing the specifics on what you
11 would like to deny in that section.

12 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you.

13 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes for the same reasons.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

15 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes for the same reasons.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. The request for 9.0
17 is denied.

18 9.03.4, 38 units of credit, seeks an exemption.
19 That requires that all 38 units be taught annually.
20 They're requesting flexibility to offer these courses
21 necessary for the student to obtain the required 22
22 units.

23 MS. COFFMAN: I make a motion to deny.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have a motion to deny.

25 MR. HOY: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Have a second. We'll begin
2 with -- any questions, additional questions? Okay.
3 We'll begin with Ms. Coffman.

4 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes to deny. When you come
5 back we'd like to see a plan.

6 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. COFFMAN: So flexibility is -- I'm all for
8 flexibility and I would be very much in favor of
9 flexibility when there is a plan.

10 DR. DUNCAN: Understood.

11 MS. COFFMAN: We'd just like to see a concrete
12 plan.

13 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

15 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes also. You know, we're
16 mixing here flexibility and consistency, and I think
17 I understand what you're saying. But we also have
18 consistency in the public schools, so if you want to
19 do this we need a plan. We need some -- we need to
20 know what that consistency is going to be.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

22 DR. WITONSKI: I vote yes for the same reasons.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes for the same reasons.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

1 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes for the same reasons.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

3 MR. HOY: I vote yes because I think that the
4 specific request does not address what was expressed
5 in terms of the comment. I think that we agree that
6 we're looking for a phase-in, and this particular
7 request does not seem to be in line with phase-in. I
8 would suggest that if you're going to bring this
9 particular request back -- and maybe some
10 consultation with the Charter School staff -- you
11 seem to have the language that you need. It might be
12 good to bring this one back so that you can get
13 something approved that would allow for the phase-in,
14 which is what this seems to be.

15 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you, sir. Appreciate your
16 comments.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So 9.03.04, Request
18 for Exemption is denied.

19 Request for waiver of 19.04 in the Standards,
20 entertain a motion.

21 MR. BOARDMAN: What is that?

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: This -- I'm sorry -- this is
23 the summer school and adult education programs.

24 DR. WALTERS: Motion to approve.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Have a motion to approve.

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MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Got a second from Mr. Hernandez. All those in favor say aye.

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed? Waiver is granted.

Move to Support Services, a request for Chapter 25, Library/Media and Technology Act. Any questions or concerns? Can we also put into that one Support Services? We have a question.

DR. WALTERS: And this question may be for Ms. Perry or for Ms. Clay. I don't really have a problem with this, but can we -- if we approve this waiver, is there any way that we can ask them to provide us an end-of-the-year, at some point, an invoice or something, some kind of document showing us, you know, that they have contracted with services so that we know that these services are being provided?

MS. CLAY: Yes. You can make that request of them and either set a timeframe for the report or by the end of the year or at the last meeting of the Panel of the year, however, you want to do it.

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any other questions or discussion? If not, I'll entertain a motion.

DR. WITONSKI: I do want to note that it would

1 need to also be inclusive of 6-18-706, which is the
2 section on school nurses. Based on this waiver, that
3 would need to be included also.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's 6-17 --

5 DR. WITONSKI: 6-18-706.

6 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All right. There's a
8 question. Mr. Hernandez.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: And this may be for Ms. Perry
10 also. Do we currently have other charters that are
11 doing this waiver?

12 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. This is not terribly
13 uncommon.

14 MR. HERNANDEZ: Do we also request that they
15 provide invoices for showing that their services have
16 been --

17 MS. PERRY: No, sir. That has not been
18 requested in the past.

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, again, you know, your
21 motion -- if you have a motion that you'd like to
22 make, you have to take action on this particular item
23 -- well, two items, I guess, Chapter 25 and then the
24 Support Services under the Standards.

25 DR. WALTERS: I make a motion to approve. I

1 would like by September of, I guess, 2014 I would
2 like to see the end-of-the-year expenditure report on
3 these services, health services, counseling services.

4 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion to
6 approve the waiver with the stipulation that by
7 September 2014 a report showing the expenditures for
8 the services in counseling and health services -- is
9 that correct?

10 DR. WALTERS: (Nodding head up and down.)

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- be provided.

12 DR. DUNCAN: We'll be glad to do so, sir.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Any questions? All
14 -- question?

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Just to make sure -- 'cause I
16 like for us to try to be consistent -- that we do
17 that with anybody else coming forward that requests
18 this waiver that we make a note of that, that we also
19 get the invoices from the other new charters --

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, the motion wasn't
21 invoices. The motion was for an expenditure report
22 that shows --

23 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. And, again, that can
25 be done on each individual one based upon what the

1 Panel wants to do. Okay. So we have a motion and a
2 second. Any further discussion?

3 DR. WITONSKI: Yes. I'd like to denote that we
4 need to add the 6-18-706 to be included with this.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So --

6 DR. WITONSKI: If that's permissible by the
7 applicant.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Let me ask. Again, Dr.
9 Walters, we have an amendment to your motion. Are
10 you acceptable?

11 DR. WALTERS: I am.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we will accept
13 that as inclusive of 6-18-706 also. So we've got a
14 complicated motion, don't we? So the motion is to
15 approve the waiver of Chapter 25 and Support Services
16 with the stipulation that -- or with the expectation
17 that the school will bring forth the expenditure
18 report showing expenditures for guidance and
19 counseling and health services in September of '14,
20 inclusive also of statute 6-18-706. All those in
21 favor say aye.

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?
24 Motion passes. Those waivers are granted.

25 And then we move to Miscellaneous, Title 6. We

1 have 6-11-129, that's accessibility on the website of
2 the data; 6-17-201, which is the committee on
3 personnel policies and in the school district; 6-17-
4 2802, teacher excellence and support system; and 6-
5 21-304, manner of purchasing and bidding. So, okay,
6 you have a question for Ms. Perry. I would suggest
7 that we take these individually. Okay. So, Ms.
8 Perry, there is a question from Dr. Witonski.

9 DR. WITONSKI: So, Ms. Perry, on 6-11-129, data
10 being accessible for other charter schools in the
11 state, what is the consistent practice?

12 MS. PERRY: 6-11-129, that's the posting on the
13 website. There is one charter that I'm aware of that
14 has a waiver for that statute. And I looked and
15 there were no others, the existing charters.
16 Recently, we looked at that as it came up from
17 another department asking that same question.

18 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

19 MR. BOARDMAN: Is that the first one --

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes. The first one is 6-11-
21 129. We'll take these separately. That is an
22 exemption for posting and for listing the information
23 on their website.

24 DR. WITONSKI: I'd like to make a motion to
25 deny.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion to deny.

2 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second. Additional
4 comments, questions? All those in favor of the
5 motion -- we will have to go around the room. Okay.
6 We'll start with Mr. Hoy. Mr. Hoy? The motion is to
7 deny.

8 MR. HOY: I vote yes to the motion. I think
9 it's an issue of transparency. It would be easier
10 for most patrons to access that information simply by
11 going to the website than to ask for that particular
12 information.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Dr. Walters?

14 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes on the motion. I don't
15 see the purpose for the waiver. It's on the website,
16 I think, to make things easy for parents and also for
17 transparency, so I don't understand the purpose of
18 the waiver.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Mr. Hernandez?

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote no, simply because we've
21 granted this waiver to a charter previously.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Dr. Witonski?

23 DR. WITONSKI: I vote yes due to transparency.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

25 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes for the same reasons.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

2 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes for two reasons. One,
3 I believe we should be transparent to taxpayers.
4 And, number two, it is our moral duty to be
5 transparent with our information so that others may
6 learn how to better educate children. And so we
7 should all be working toward that goal of better
8 educating children and therefore, we should be
9 transparent.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So motion passes;
11 we've denied that request.

12 6-17-201, this is seeking a waiver, an exemption
13 from the mandates of content distribution revision
14 effective date, and I think the date for personnel
15 policies, and they're seeking flexibility in that
16 area under 6-17-201.

17 DR. WALTERS: Motion to approve.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion to approve.

19 MS. COFFMAN: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a second from Ms.
21 Coffman.

22 MR. HOY: Question.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Question.

24 MR. HOY: In 6-17-201, it also says et seq.,
25 which means it includes all of the other applicable

1 statutes that follow, does it not? And, if so, it
2 includes 6-17-202, 6-17-203, 204, 205, 206. Am I not
3 correct on that?

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Clay?

5 MS. CLAY: That is correct. The et seq. means
6 "and the following sections." So 6-17-201 would be
7 all of the 6-17-2 whatever the number is after that.

8 MR. HOY: 211.

9 MS. CLAY: 201 through 211. Yes, sir.

10 DR. DUNCAN: And we currently have a waiver of
11 6-17-203 that's already been previously granted to
12 us.

13 MR. HOY: And the reason I hesitate at this
14 particular time, Dr. Kimbrell, is because I don't
15 know that I've had an opportunity to go through all
16 of this, because I just noted that, and see what all
17 we're talking about waiving, because we are talking
18 about quite a bit. So it might be --

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You've got grievance
20 procedures; you've got personnel policy committees.
21 Some of it isn't applicable 'cause, you know, it does
22 deal with school districts.

23 DR. DUNCAN: Mr. Hoy, we do have a very
24 formalized grievance process that is readily
25 available for parents and staff, alike. It is well

1 laid out in our employee handbook and in all of our
2 students' handbooks, and it is available on-line and
3 in hardcopy for all.

4 MR. HOY: Dr. Kimbrell, I've reviewed the title
5 and -- the titles, and they don't seem to conflict
6 with what they have said previously, so --

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we have a motion
8 and a second to accept -- to grant the waiver. Any
9 additional questions or -- okay. All those in favor
10 say aye.

11 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Waiver is granted.

13 6-17-2802, Teacher Excellence and Support
14 System. I'm ready for a motion or discussion.

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: I make a motion to deny.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have a motion to deny by
17 Mr. Hernandez.

18 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Dr. Witonski.
20 We'll start with you, Ms. Coffman, in denial of 6-17-
21 2802.

22 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes because we do have a
23 process in place to ask for a waiver or to provide an
24 alternative evaluation model.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

1 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes also, although I think
2 we'd all be agreeable to looking at an alternative.
3 But for this motion I vote yes.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

5 DR. WITONSKI: I vote yes and look forward to
6 looking at what the alternative model would be.

7 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you.

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes. Just need to see an
9 alternative model.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

11 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes for the same reasons.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

13 MR. HOY: I vote yes for the same reasons.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. The request for the
15 waiver is denied.

16 6-21-304, Purchasing, asking for an exemption
17 under the code requiring bidding in instances in
18 which the estimated purchase price shall equal or
19 exceed \$10,000.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: I make a motion to deny.

21 MS. COFFMAN: I second.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Motion to deny and a second.
23 So we'll start on the other end. Mr. Hoy? The
24 motion is to deny.

25 MR. HOY: I vote yes. It's a matter, again, of

1 transparency. A bid over \$10,000, I don't know why
2 we don't necessarily want to bid those and I didn't
3 hear a reason other than flexibility. I don't think
4 that that was an appropriate reason, for me, at this
5 particular time.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

7 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes on the motion for the
8 same reasons. And I think, you know, as long as we
9 are talking about state money, I think we need to be
10 mindful of the bidding process and as Mr. Hoy said, I
11 could not -- did not hear a reason that this waiver
12 would be pertinent to daily operations or to student
13 learning.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes. I think we need to
16 keep in order with our current procurement policies.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

18 DR. WITONSKI: I vote yes for the same reasons.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

20 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes, same reasons.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

22 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes for the same reasons.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So 6-21-304 request
24 is denied.

25 And so we move to Standards of Accreditation

1 under 21.0, Auxiliary Services, and I believe that's
2 the last one. Am I correct?

3 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir. You are correct.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any motion?

5 DR. WALTERS: Motion to approve.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Have a motion to approve.

7 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second to that motion by Mr.
9 Hernandez. Any questions, discussion? All those in
10 favor say aye.

11 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
13 Ms. Clay, you are recognized.

14 MS. CLAY: One other housekeeping issue. On the
15 note that you see at the end of your agenda item, the
16 ADE Rules Governing Personnel Policies, Salary
17 Schedules and Documents Posted to District Websites,
18 you all denied the website posting portion, so they
19 would not need that entire rule. But it appears they
20 would need Sections 4 through 8 of that rule to cover
21 the waiver of the personnel policy and salary
22 schedules that you all didn't grant.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So they would need a
24 waiver from -- can you state that for us again?

25 MS. CLAY: Sections 4 through 8 of the ADE Rules

1 Governing Personnel Policies, Salary Schedules and
2 Documents Posted to District Websites.

3 DR. WALTERS: I move what she said.

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

5 MR. HOY: Question. Has the charter requested
6 that we approve that?

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I also have another
8 question. I mean, they stated that they have
9 personnel policies, that they have salary schedules.

10 DR. WITONSKI: Ms. Clay, is it inappropriate,
11 although the -- we've asked for information be posted
12 on a website, could we ask for those items to be
13 included, whatever their procedures and practices
14 are, for those to be listed on the website?

15 MS. CLAY: The way that the waiver of these
16 rules would work, they would still be required to
17 follow all the website posting requirements. And the
18 Sections 4 through 8 just cover the personnel policy
19 and salary schedules. Section 9 is where the website
20 posting requirements come in.

21 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

22 MS. CLAY: So they still would be required to
23 follow all the law and rules on website postings.

24 DR. WITONSKI: With the exception of those
25 areas, salary schedules --

1 MS. CLAY: No. They would --

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think we're confused.

3 MS. CLAY: Okay. Right. They would still be
4 required to post all of that. They just wouldn't be
5 -- this rule is a little strange in that it covers an
6 overly wide range of topics.

7 DR. WITONSKI: Yes.

8 MS. CLAY: They would still be required to post
9 all of those items that are required, but they
10 wouldn't be required to follow the law relating to
11 the personnel policy committees and the salary
12 schedules that are in the statute.

13 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we have a motion
15 to also include in their waiver Section 4 through 8.
16 And is that -- and as Mr. Hoy asked -- and I
17 apologize, Dr. Duncan, I didn't even give you a
18 chance to answer.

19 DR. DUNCAN: That's perfectly fine, sir. And
20 we're hoping to expedite the next two action items
21 through discussion on this one --

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy --

23 DR. DUNCAN: -- if it's permissible with
24 everyone.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Did you get your question

1 answered, Mr. Hoy?

2 MR. HOY: Yes.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So we have a motion to
4 accept 4 through 8, Sections 4 through 8. All those
5 in favor say aye.

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
8 Okay. Section 4 through 8 then also is approved.
9 Thank you, Dr. Duncan.

10 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you.

11 A-4: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

12 AMENDMENTS: PREMIER HIGH SCHOOL OF LITTLE ROCK

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And we'll ask Ms. Perry to
14 come and bring forth the next one, please.

15 MS. PERRY: The next item is a request from
16 Premier High School-Little Rock for many of the same
17 waivers that you just discussed, but not completely
18 identical.

19 DR. DUNCAN: Commissioner Kimbrell, with
20 permission and if this is allowable by Legal, I would
21 like permission to rescind every waiver request for
22 Premier that was currently denied under Northwest
23 Arkansas, in the need to expedite time. I know
24 others are here today and they have other needs and
25 requests also. So, first of all, I would like to ask

1 the Committee's -- the Panel's latitude to deny the
2 Premier waivers -- to rescind the Premier waivers
3 that were denied in Northwest. And then there are a
4 couple of different new ones, very few, and I'll be
5 glad to cover those separately in and of themselves,
6 with permission of the panel.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have the charter school
8 representative asking to I guess pull down or rescind
9 the requests for the waivers that are in this
10 application or amendment that were the same that were
11 denied in the previous one. And so I need a motion
12 to accept that.

13 DR. WITONSKI: Make a motion -- and thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion from Dr.
15 Witonski.

16 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And a second from Mr.
18 Boardman.

19 MR. BOARDMAN: Yea.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So those are rescinded.

21 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you, sir. I greatly
22 recognize the personal time.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Let me also --

24 COURT REPORTER: We need to vote.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Oh, I'm sorry. All those in

1 favor say aye.

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
4 I'm sorry. Thank you, Miss Sharon.

5 DR. WALTERS: Mr. Chairman, may the Panel also
6 -- the amendments that were approved for the other
7 charter, may we go ahead in one group and approve all
8 those?

9 DR. DUNCAN: That would be absolutely wonderful.
10 And with that exception, I think there's three --
11 three or four minor ones that I'll be glad to bring
12 to you separately.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Clay? Yeah, we need to
14 follow our procedures.

15 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I understand that.

17 MS. CLAY: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So what we can do now
19 is you can make your presentation because I will also
20 need to recognize -- and again, you've already been
21 sworn in but I need to ask if there are others in the
22 audience or out in the hallway, within earshot, that
23 will be speaking on this request also. Is there
24 anyone else that will be speaking? I'll need to
25 swear them in on Premier High School. We don't have

1 to swear attorneys in. We trust y'all. Okay. So,
2 Dr. Duncan, we'll give you an opportunity to present
3 Premier High School's amendment.

4 DR. DUNCAN: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And then --

6 DR. DUNCAN: With Premier High School, the
7 additional requested amendment/waiver is one that is
8 standard for charter schools and that is 10.02, our
9 waiver of class size and teaching load for Premier
10 High School. It's a very individualized program
11 based on student need. And that comes under
12 Standards for Accreditation.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'm still trying to find it
14 on my -- got it. Okay. So let's -- why don't we
15 talk quickly about that one --

16 DR. DUNCAN: Sure.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- and we'll vote on that
18 one, then we'll discuss those others.

19 DR. DUNCAN: Premier High School is a very
20 individualized program for students, teens, that need
21 that individualized environment in order to be
22 successful and graduate. So practically speaking,
23 10.02 actually doesn't even fall into the scheduling
24 process for this type of instructional environment.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. What questions from

1 the Panel? We're looking at the Standards for
2 Accreditation waiver 10.02 around class size and
3 teaching load, looking for an exemption. Any
4 questions? If not, I'll entertain a motion.

5 MR. BOARDMAN: Make a motion we approve.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Motion by Mr. Boardman to
7 approve.

8 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second from Dr. Witonski.
10 All those in favor say aye.

11 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
13 That waiver is granted.

14 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You also have additional
16 requests that are there and I think we had some
17 earlier discussion, Dr. Walters, about those. Do you
18 want to make a motion?

19 DR. WALTERS: Yes. I make a motion that we
20 approve all of the waivers.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'm sorry. I haven't asked
22 if there's anyone who wants to speak against. I
23 didn't see anybody who wanted to be sworn in, so --
24 Ms. Clay is squirming back there. She's hiding from
25 me. Anyone who would like to speak against these

1 amendments to Premier High School? Seeing none, then
2 we'll move forward -- and I apologize for my lack of
3 continuing to follow the process. Dr. Walters?

4 DR. WALTERS: I move that we approve all waivers
5 that were approved for Northwest Classical Academy --

6 DR. DUNCAN: Northwest Arkansas Classical
7 Academy.

8 DR. WALTERS: -- and the inclusions that were
9 added, for example, for the health and counseling
10 services, that the report all would be the same
11 stipulations on all motions that were made.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Clay, are you okay with
13 that or do we need to go through each one?

14 MS. CLAY: No, that's okay.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So under -- yes, if
16 you'll restate your motion, we'll test you right here
17 and then we'll get a second.

18 DR. WALTERS: I move that we approve all waivers
19 from Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy with the
20 stipulations that were included in all motions that
21 were approved.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I have a motion from
23 Dr. Walters. Do I have a second?

24 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second from Dr. Witonski.

1 Any discussion or questions? All those in favor say
2 aye.

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
5 So those waivers are granted.

6 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think that completes
8 Premier. Is that correct?

9 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir. It does.

10 A-5: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

11 AMENDMENTS: QUEST MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PINE BLUFF

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So, Ms. Perry, do you want
13 to bring forth the third?

14 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. The third set of waivers
15 from Responsive Education Solutions are waivers
16 requested for Quest Middle School of Pine Bluff.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Again, do we have anyone --
18 all those that are wanting to speak for or against,
19 or in support or in opposition, please be sworn in.
20 Anyone else besides Dr. Duncan? And you've been
21 sworn in, Dr. Duncan, so --

22 DR. DUNCAN: I have, sir.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- we'll give you your 20
24 minutes on this one.

25 DR. DUNCAN: And I'm going to make this

1 relatively short and sweet also, sir. I would like
2 to ask the Panel to grant latitude to rescind all
3 waivers that were denied in the Northwest Arkansas
4 Classical Academy and in the Premier, as it applies
5 to this request.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Panel, you've heard
7 the request of the applicant on their amendments. Do
8 I have a motion?

9 DR. WITONSKI: I have a motion.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: A motion to accept the
11 rescission of all those that were denied.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And a second. Any
14 discussion or questions? All those in favor say aye.

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed?

17 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

19 DR. DUNCAN: That being said, if you look under
20 the academics portion for the waivers of request for
21 Quest Middle School-Pine Bluff you will find a couple
22 of new ones, the first one being 6-15-902(a), grading
23 scale. This is a more rigorous grading scale we
24 would like to go to. In Arkansas, there is an A, B,
25 C, D, and F grading scale. With ResponsivEd there is

1 an A, B, C, F grading scale; 69 and below is
2 considered an F. This was something that was a slip-
3 up on our part as I do believe it was approved in our
4 other two applications within this state. Somehow we
5 neglected that.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. The request is to
7 seek an exemption from the grading scale and you
8 heard an explanation of what that grading scale would
9 be. And apparently it was in the other two.

10 DR. DUNCAN: I'll double-check that, sir.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Dr. Walters, would
12 like to ask for clarification.

13 DR. DUNCAN: It is.

14 DR. WALTERS: Since -- and I know what Dr.
15 Duncan said, that it was, but since it's not listed
16 here should that become -- is that going to be a part
17 of the record that -- because if we give the waiver
18 from the scale they may decide that a 70 to 100 is
19 going to be an A. I understand that they're trying
20 to go the other route but just waiving it without
21 having that, does that open up anything here?

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, I think what they're
23 seeking is an exemption from that requirement so that
24 they can have the flexibility to do their grading
25 scale as they need to. So, yeah. I mean, the answer

1 to your question I think you're absolutely right.
2 Did you check, Dr. Duncan, on the others?

3 DR. DUNCAN: I did. I just looked at the one
4 for Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy, 15 -- 6-15-
5 09 -- 902(a) was approved on July 11, 2013, by the
6 State Board, without comment because it was
7 understood -- and part of the notes I'm sure at that
8 time that it is a more rigorous grading scale. And
9 the same thing for Little Rock Premier. It was also
10 approved on July 11, 2013, sir.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Mr. Hoy.

12 MR. HOY: An observation. Quest-Pine Bluff,
13 this is a middle school. Correct?

14 DR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

15 MR. HOY: Okay. 6-15-902(a) is specifically
16 speaking to the secondary schools. So I was
17 wondering about the specific nature of why you needed
18 this particular waiver for a middle school?

19 DR. DUNCAN: I believe there is some discussion
20 at some point of time depending on the success of
21 this school in the cohort groups and, naturally, the
22 need in that community for maybe expanding that.
23 That would keep us from having to come back at some
24 point in time. But your point is well taken, sir,
25 expanding that to additional grades.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Perry.

2 MS. PERRY: Quest Middle School was approved to
3 move to high school. We had discussion, in fact,
4 about the name, when they would plan to, and brought
5 forth the original application to move into high
6 school.

7 DR. DUNCAN: And, again, though it is in our
8 plan this is an area of great need and we're being
9 very, very protective of how it has grown. So at
10 this point in time we're not even considering
11 expanding Quest for next year into secondary. But
12 when and if the time down the road comes that we feel
13 it's appropriate -- and we may feel it's more
14 appropriate toward the end of the year -- just at
15 this time of the year it's a little bit too early to
16 tell -- we would not like to have to come back before
17 you to ask for that again.

18 DR. WITONSKI: If you don't mind, I have a
19 question for Ms. Clay.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure. Ms. Clay.

21 DR. WITONSKI: I understand from the notes that
22 were included that typically this type of grant for
23 grading scales are for elective courses only, not for
24 core areas, until the charter has established their
25 --

1 MS. CLAY: That's happened in past practices.
2 Ms. Perry, that qualification was not given for the
3 ResponsivEd schools last year. Is that correct?

4 MS. PERRY: No, it was not.

5 MS. CLAY: No. So Dr. Duncan was correct in
6 saying that there was a waiver given for all courses
7 for their grading scale previously. It had been a
8 more limited waiver but it was expanded in the last
9 application cycle.

10 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We have a request on
12 6-15-902(a), on the grading scale. I'll entertain a
13 motion.

14 MS. COFFMAN: I make a motion to approve the
15 waiver with the stipulation that the proposed grading
16 scale is more rigorous than the scale provided by
17 state statute.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You've heard the motion. Do
19 I have a second?

20 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So the motion is to
22 accept with the stipulation that the grading scale be
23 more rigorous than the current that's in law. All
24 those in favor say aye.

25 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed? Waiver
2 as stipulated, Dr. Duncan, is approved.

3 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you, sir. Regarding 6-16-
4 102, School Days and Hours, because going in and
5 looking at the needs of the students, as I've said,
6 we've already completed our first round of MAP
7 testing with those students. So we already know that
8 we're working on several areas with them and looking
9 at a more individualized program because the need is
10 definitely there to be more individualized. We would
11 like to ask for a waiver of 6-16-102. I believe we
12 also previously Premier High School was approved
13 which is more like this same type of model in some
14 aspects. A waiver was asked for 6-16-102 and granted
15 based on the fact that it is a more individualized
16 environment that we're now having to provide based on
17 the needs of those students and the results on the
18 first round of MAP testing.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Questions? Mr. Hernandez.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: So when you say changing the
21 school day to accommodate individual needs, are we
22 talking about a longer school day or shorter school
23 day, or both?

24 DR. DUNCAN: It could be both, sir, based on the
25 student's academic progress and how they're doing. I

1 would imagine the majority -- and I am saying imagine
2 the majority, that most of these students might be
3 more extended.

4 DR. WITONSKI: And in terms of waivers needed to
5 extend your school day, you don't need that?

6 DR. DUNCAN: Correct. However, there are some
7 students that we have pinpointed. They're a much
8 smaller number, but there are students we have
9 pinpointed there that are doing well and for those we
10 don't -- you know -- we want to be able to
11 individualize and not just do one blanket time from
12 beginning to end.

13 DR. WITONSKI: So for the waiver that's being
14 requested in 6-16-102 it would be to shorten the
15 days, less than six hours, since you don't need a
16 waiver to lengthen the day. Correct?

17 DR. DUNCAN: Correct. Only as it's needed by
18 individual student basis.

19 DR. WITONSKI: And so what would that day look
20 like if you have a student that needed less than six
21 hours? How many hours would that encompass?

22 DR. DUNCAN: That depends on how well the
23 student is doing. We have some students that are
24 going into a knowledge-based unit process which we've
25 aligned with Common Core, that also follows along

1 with MAPS. And some students work at a much, you
2 know, more rapid pace because their understanding and
3 knowledge base is already there and much larger than
4 other students.

5 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman, do you have a
7 question?

8 MR. BOARDMAN: I think a second on this -- it
9 would be acceptable then to try to put a stipulation
10 on here similar to the financial one that we did a
11 while ago, that at the end of this we'd like to know
12 how many students were shortened, how long it was
13 shortened, and what kind of grades they had.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: How do you do that? I mean
15 --

16 MR. BOARDMAN: Well, I think on this -- I guess
17 my thoughts on this would be if they were progressing
18 well and the day would be shortened then we should
19 know what grade they made in the course and also if
20 they took one of our tests what their -- whether they
21 were proficient or not proficient if the day was
22 shortened.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Does that mean the day may
24 be shortened for a two-week period or six-week period
25 or -- I think that's what they're asking for is --

1 DR. DUNCAN: May I answer?

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- flexibility in working
3 with these -- I'm sorry, I'm trying to answer for
4 you. Go ahead, Dr. Duncan.

5 DR. DUNCAN: May I make a comment? When we
6 asked for this same waiver for Premier no stipulation
7 was granted. And in the past with the majority of
8 charters that have asked for this waiver no such
9 stipulation was added to it, sir, with all due
10 respect.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, we understand that but
12 we're in a whole different world today.

13 DR. DUNCAN: We understand, sir. Just
14 clarifying.

15 MR. BOARDMAN: On Premier, how many were
16 shortened and how many are -- you know -- roughly?

17 DR. DUNCAN: They're currently in the middle of
18 their current first semester, sir. I would not --

19 MR. BOARDMAN: You would not --

20 DR. DUNCAN: I would not do a guesstimate on
21 that without getting the exact numbers.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

23 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Duncan, I've slept since the
24 application first came up, so if I'm wrong please
25 correct me. But if I remember right, when the State

1 Board was reviewing this application one of the
2 things that, you know, we looked at was the area
3 where the school is located and we looked at test
4 scores of the students that this school is serving.
5 And, you know, let's -- you know -- they weren't at
6 state average, let's say. So I guess your point
7 about, you know, that has not been stipulated before,
8 you are correct. But my knowledge, when we give a
9 shortened time it's been on more of what I would call
10 more like an ALE program and those were high school
11 students. This is a middle school. I'm not exactly
12 sure how that works with middle school and I guess I
13 have some concerns when we're looking at students
14 that are very likely behind and below grade level
15 saying that they don't need to be there, especially
16 with it being a blanket waiver like that. And that's
17 my concerns.

18 DR. DUNCAN: Understandable.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

20 MR. HOY: Just I guess somewhat in line with
21 what Dr. Walters just stated, I was concerned about
22 the shortened day for middle school students. I can
23 understand it for Premier High School, even if it
24 were work-related type things and they were way
25 ahead. But in middle school I don't necessarily see

1 that as something that we would normally perpetuate.
2 What I also think is if the students are ahead would
3 we not want to utilize that time for enrichment
4 activities rather than simply say, "You've learned
5 enough?" And, therefore, I would need something to
6 make me feel comfortable about why we would need to
7 shorten a day for middle school students.

8 MR. BOWMAN: Mr. Hoy, you've just hit on why I
9 stood up to begin with. So on this, when they get to
10 the high school level that's when it's most needed.
11 You either have life circumstances that get in the
12 way, they have jobs, they have other
13 responsibilities, and you have to try to work with it
14 and facilitate the education they need. So what we
15 can do on this, to really meet what we intend for it,
16 anyway, you can have this apply just to the 9th and
17 12th grades and that would be fine. That's going to
18 apply also for other requests as far as the number of
19 --

20 MR. HOY: If you would amend the request to that
21 nature, I would feel much more comfortable.

22 MR. BOWMAN: We'd like to amend this request to
23 reflect 9th and 12th grade.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we've got a
25 request for flexibility -- or a waiver of the school

1 day hours under middle school -- or, excuse me, only
2 at the extension of 9 through 12 --

3 DR. DUNCAN: That is correct.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- when that occurs. Mr.
5 Hernandez, did you have a question?

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: I just had a question.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: And this is for Ms. Perry. Do
9 we have any middle schools now that have this waiver,
10 that are just middle schools?

11 MS. PERRY: I can't answer that off the top of
12 the head. I do not recall any but I would not fare
13 to say that I'm positive about that.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Additional questions? Yes,
15 Dr. Witonski?

16 DR. WITONSKI: No.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So I'll entertain a
18 motion based upon an amended request.

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: I make a motion to approve the
20 request as amended.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We've got a motion to
22 approve.

23 MR. HOY: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second by Mr. Hoy. Any
25 further discussion or questions? If not, all those

1 in favor say aye.

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?

4 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: The waiver is granted.

6 DR. DUNCAN: I'll not go into 6-16-204, as it
7 was one that was denied in prior. So there's no need
8 in taking the Board's time on that. On 6-18-211,
9 Mandatory Attendance, this is basically for
10 flexibility also as it pertains to that school should
11 it grow into the secondary grades. So I would like
12 to bring that request to you with the amendment of
13 making sure that it's listed. It would be specific
14 for 9 through 12 only, as applicable, as was the
15 waiver we requested for Premier prior.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Questions? You've heard the
17 explanation in expansion. Looking at 6-18-211,
18 that's the Mandatory Attendance, grades 9 through 12,
19 dealing with the planned instructional time. Yes,
20 Dr. Witonski. Oh, I'm sorry. Mr. Hernandez.

21 MR. HERNANDEZ: So, and this is just maybe a
22 question for Kendra, Ms. Clay. So basically, because
23 we approved the shorter school day for high school
24 kids, did we need to approve this also?

25 MS. CLAY: Yes, because they are two separate

1 statutes. And while I'm up here I would also remind
2 you that if you do grant this waiver a waiver of the
3 rules accompanying this statute is also necessary of
4 the ADE rules governing mandatory attendance for
5 students in grades 9 through 12. But, yes, you need
6 a waiver of all of them.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Additional questions? A
8 motion?

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: I make a motion to approve this,
10 also a waiver for the ADE rules concerning this.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we have a motion
12 to approve the waiver of 6-18-211, as well as the
13 rules that govern 6-18-211.

14 MR. BOARDMAN: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Have a second from Mr.
16 Boardman. All those in favor say aye.

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?
19 Waiver is granted.

20 DR. DUNCAN: I believe that's all we have for
21 you. I would like to take a moment to thank the
22 Panel today and thank you for your latitude for the
23 additional discussion and the questions. Should we
24 come before you again we will make sure things are
25 more detailed. And thank you for your time.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. There are other -- I
2 believe we need to take care of the other pieces,
3 vote pieces, because I can't remember what we've done
4 and what we haven't done in this one.

5 MR. BOWMAN: I think what we have left is to, if
6 we could, approve this request, what we've gone
7 through in Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy and
8 Premier.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Okay. So I'll
10 entertain a motion to approve those waivers that were
11 approved in Northwest and Premier in the first two
12 rounds.

13 DR. WITONSKI: I make a motion.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Motion to approve.

15 MR. HOY: I'll second.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Have a second from Mr. Hoy.
17 All those in favor say aye.

18 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
20 Very good. Thank you. I appreciate y'all's hard
21 work and --

22 DR. DUNCAN: No, thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- your patience with us, as
24 this is a learning experience for us and for all of
25 those out there sitting, texting me, telling me to

1 hurry up -- Tripp.

2 DR. DUNCAN: Thank you very much.

3 MR. WALTER: Seriously?

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You showed up. Okay. We'll
5 move -- you've got to laugh.

6 A-6: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
7 AMENDMENT: ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR INTEGRATED ACADEMICS AND
8 TECHNOLOGIES (SIATech)

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We'll move to Action Item A-
10 6, Open-Enrollment Charter School Amendment: Arkansas
11 School for Integrated Academics and Technologies.
12 Ms. Perry.

13 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. This is an amendment
14 request by Arkansas School for Integrated Academics
15 and Technologies, more commonly referred to as
16 SIATech, to request relocation. The State Board of
17 Education approved the application for SIATech on
18 January 14, 2011. The charter is approved to serve
19 students in grades 9 through 12, with a maximum
20 enrollment of 275. And they are appearing before the
21 Board to request an amendment to the charter, but
22 there is some -- a little background here. The Board
23 approved the change in address for the school May 13,
24 2013, and the charter then submitted a lease for
25 Commissioner approval with an address different from

1 what was approved by the Board. Both addresses were
2 on the frontage road of I-30, and so Ms. Katie Tatum
3 is here to speak to the Board.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Before you come, let me see
5 if there are any individuals who are here to speak
6 against this amendment. If not, Ms. Tatum, if you
7 would come forward and let me swear you in. Now
8 you're the only one who will be speaking? Oh, Mr.
9 Bell is also here. Okay. So if you would raise your
10 hand: do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth
11 and nothing but the truth?

12 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Yes, ma'am.
14 Thank you.

15 MS. TATUM: Well, I'm not quite sure,
16 Commissioner, on how to proceed since you guys have
17 that letter in your packet where it was signed by Dr.
18 Kimbrell and Legal, requesting for us to move ahead
19 with a different address. The change for the address
20 was this location is only 0.6 miles from the Job Corp
21 Center, which we service, still service those
22 students. The original 8030 address was
23 approximately three miles away from the Little Rock
24 Job Corp Center. So this transition has been -- it
25 has been favorable for us and we'd be allowed to grow

1 and reach community students, which open-enrollment
2 charters are supposed to do as far as being in
3 compliance. So we're just requesting an updated
4 address.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think the -- Ms. Clay, if
6 I'm correct, the Board used to -- the school State
7 Board had to approve a relocation of the charter and
8 they approved the relocation of the charter with a
9 different address than they actually got the lease
10 for. And so now we have to approve that address?

11 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir. That's correct.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So that's why you're
13 here.

14 MS. TATUM: Yes, sir.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And so any questions?

16 DR. WALTERS: Just I assume -- I believe I read
17 in the letter that you've gone to the City, you've
18 gotten all permits, Fire Marshall, all --

19 MS. TATUM: Oh, yes, we had all that before.
20 Yes, ma'am.

21 DR. WALTERS: I have a motion to approve.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Dr. Walters, motion
23 to approve.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez has a second.

1 Any further discussion or questions? If not, all
2 those in favor of the motion say aye.

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign?
5 Change approved. Thank you, ma'am.

6 MS. TATUM: Thank you. Thank you.

7 A-7: REQUEST FOR DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
8 AMENDMENTS: WASHINGTON ACADEMY IN THE TEXARKANA SCHOOL DISTRICT

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Now we move into I
10 think conversion charter?

11 MS. PERRY: No, sir. We do have one -- well,
12 yes, sir, it's a conversion charter asking for an
13 amendment request.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes.

15 MS. PERRY: I apologize. This is Washington
16 Academy in its first year of operation as a Texarkana
17 School District conversion charter. And the charter
18 is approved to serve grades 9 through 12, maximum
19 enrollment of 160. And they are requesting
20 amendments and this is a waiver request. Mr. Taylor
21 is here.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Taylor, you are here on
23 behalf of the charter and the district. Anyone else
24 here to speak on this amendment? Okay. Mr. Taylor,
25 if you'll raise your right hand: do you swear to tell

1 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

2 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, sir. Please come
4 forward and present your request.

5 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner and the
6 Panel for hearing us today. Washington Academy
7 charter school would like to request for Arkansas
8 Code 6-5-1004, 6-17-309, 6-17-401, 6-17-902, 6-17-
9 919, which all refer to the certification of
10 teachers, and also Arkansas rule governing
11 educational licensure. We request the above waivers
12 because the educational model under which we operate
13 requires the flexibility to hire teachers who are
14 certified and may not be certified but are highly
15 qualified and would meet the highly qualified statute
16 of the NCLB Act of 2001. We do want to also
17 recommend -- or amend our application to state --
18 where it states to have a bachelor's degree from an
19 accredited university and a valid Arkansas teaching
20 certificate that would require endorsement for
21 subject and levels to reflect and state they have a
22 bachelor's degree from an accredited university and a
23 valid Arkansas teaching certificate to a subject that
24 is assigned, that meets the alternative education
25 option of multi-subject that demonstrates full HQT,

1 which because we are also an alternative campus we
2 want to make sure that all of our teachers meet the
3 highly qualified teacher qualification and our
4 technology lab teacher is a certified teacher as
5 well, not particularly certified in every subject but
6 a certified teacher that will be valid in running the
7 computer lab class. This is our request.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Perry, do you have
9 something else?

10 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. They actually will also
11 need to request a portion of 15.03 in the Standards
12 for Accreditation that deals with licensure and
13 renewal pertaining to teachers.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So everybody
15 understands? Again, exception 15?

16 MS. PERRY: 15.03, the part there that deals
17 with teachers, if they're agreeable.

18 MR. TAYLOR: Yes. We want to request that as
19 well.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And so you have the request
21 before you and this has to do with the licensure for
22 the teachers in this first charter school. I'll
23 entertain --

24 DR. WALTERS: Can I ask a question?

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure. Questions of Mr.

1 Taylor?

2 DR. WALTERS: Mr. Taylor, I just want to
3 understand. So what you're asking for is that they
4 don't have to have a teaching license; they have to
5 be highly qualified, but no license. Right?

6 MR. TAYLOR: Basically, yes, realizing we're
7 going to hire certified teachers though. I think the
8 problem is, you know, alternative ed. sometimes --
9 and I've been a principal at a middle school, junior
10 high and also a high school, so I have some middle
11 school and junior high teachers who are very, very
12 good teachers but who are not certified in grades 9
13 through 12. But in an alternative situation I would
14 like them to have the opportunity of teaching that
15 subject that they are, you know, certified in, which
16 they will be HQT, highly qualified, to teach but not
17 necessarily high-school certified. Yes, ma'am.

18 DR. WALTERS: And I'm fine with that, but I
19 guess a little concern I have is that you've taken
20 out the language of having a bachelor's degree. I
21 understand about we don't care about them having the
22 license.

23 MR. TAYLOR: No.

24 DR. WALTERS: But --

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No, that's still there.

1 MR. TAYLOR: No, that's still there.

2 DR. WALTERS: Oh, I'm sorry. It's at the end.
3 Okay. I'm sorry. I'm good. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any other questions? If
5 not, I'll entertain a motion.

6 DR. WITONSKI: Motion to approve.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have a motion to approve
8 from Dr. Witonski.

9 DR. WALTERS: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second from Dr. Walters.
11 Any other further discussion? If not, all those in
12 favor say aye.

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All those opposed like sign.
15 Motion passes. Mr. Taylor, thank you.

16 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you all.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Continued good luck.

18 Okay. As we get ready to start the process of
19 the open-enrollment applications, I believe we have
20 three of those?

21 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: What's the pleasure of the
23 Panel? I mean, it's 11:35. These are typically --
24 especially the first one for some because some of you
25 have never been through this. You want to take a 30-

1 minute lunch and then come back? Well, one of the
2 problems is we find out that it's difficult for
3 others to leave -- yeah. But I want to be very
4 cognitive of the people who've traveled, that we want
5 to do -- you know -- we want to get it over with as
6 soon as possible. But I think we're looking at quite
7 a bit of time on this first one, as you go through
8 the first one, 'cause there's a couple of you who've
9 never been through this process, even the old process
10 of the interviews. So I would suggest we take a --
11 let's say a 40-minute break. I mean, I don't mind
12 doing 30 minutes but the people out in the audience
13 will have a difficult time unless Tripp brought
14 enough for everybody.

15 MR. WALTER: It's in the van out back.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It's in the van out back,
17 the food truck. Did you get the food truck brought,
18 Tripp?

19 MR. WALTER: Absolutely.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Absolutely. That's what we
21 ought to have is a food truck. Let's do this: let's
22 come back at 12:10 and begin again and we'll work all
23 the way through until we finish. Again, I apologize,
24 we're learning as we go; and I apologize for those of
25 you who've had to travel so far.

1 (LUNCH BREAK: 11:37 A.M. - 12:17 P.M.)

2 A-8: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
3 APPLICATION: CAPITOL CITY LIGHTHOUSE CHARTER SCHOOL, NORTH
4 LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We're ready to begin our
6 second phase, I guess, of the Charter Panel's work
7 today, and that is the open-enrollment charter
8 applications. We have three of those. And we will
9 begin with Capitol City Lighthouse. Ms. Perry.

10 MS. PERRY: Could I make a few opening remarks,
11 please?

12 CHAIRMANR KIMBRELL: Yes.

13 MS. PERRY: Get a few things on the record. I
14 do want to let you know what you have in this folder
15 that I told you I'd come back to, you have on the
16 right-hand side all of the legal desegregation
17 analyses that were done by our ADE legal staff. On
18 the left-hand side you have two maps. One shows you
19 where all of the district conversion and open-
20 enrollment charters are located throughout the state,
21 and the other one shows you the open-enrollments
22 only, since that's who you're dealing with today and
23 tomorrow. So we thought that would be helpful.

24 I would like to run through a little bit about
25 the process of what's happened to get us to this

1 point, with your permission, Commissioner, to get
2 that on the record a little bit so folks will know
3 what we've done and what has been looked at today.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am.

5 MS. PERRY: Prior to the charter applicant
6 hearings, as we're conducting today, I want to let
7 you know a little bit about the process before the
8 applicants come to their hearing before the Charter
9 Authorizing Panel. Once the applications are
10 received they're reviewed by ADE staff from various
11 divisions. That group is known as the Charter
12 Internal Review Committee. In addition to staff from
13 the Charter unit, this committee is comprised of
14 staff from other units as well, including Legal
15 Services, Curriculum and Instruction, Standards
16 Assurance, Fiscal Administrative Services, Special
17 Education, Gifted and Talented, and Child Nutrition,
18 and others if the application is such that someone
19 else needs to look at it. For example, one or two of
20 the applications you're going to be considering today
21 and tomorrow have an ALE component and the ALE staff
22 took a look at those applications for us. Careful
23 review and initial evaluation of each section of the
24 application occurs by that staff. Based on the
25 rubric provided in the packet, each section is

1 evaluated; usually, they're in three areas or three
2 ways to be evaluated: meets the standard partially,
3 meets the standard, or does not meet the standard.
4 Remaining questions or concerns are identified by the
5 committee. If there are any, they're noted and the
6 review is sent to the applicant. The applicant then
7 reviews our comments and they respond. Again, the
8 Charter Internal Review Committee is reconvened to
9 discuss the responses and re-evaluate. It is
10 important to note that an evaluation of Meets the
11 Standard makes no distinction other than based on the
12 rubric the response meets the standard. You've got
13 the applicant packet in front of you, the summary
14 information and basic information, followed by a
15 mission statement taken from the application. You
16 have some information about the district in which the
17 charter would be located there that states the -- and
18 we do have some information there that's on the 2012
19 ESEA information I can give you. Since the packets
20 were made up the 2013 information was made public and
21 I can share that with you, if you need it, but I
22 wanted you to know that. And you've got the
23 percentage of students who qualify for Free and
24 Reduced or Reduced Price Lunches in that piece. You
25 also will see issues that remain unresolved by the

1 Charter Internal Review Committee, or in some cases
2 additional issues that came up as a result of the
3 response. You've got a list of documentation in
4 support of our opposition to the charter, if there
5 was any. And the guidelines for submitting the
6 applications limited the number of petitions and
7 letters of support that should be included so your
8 packet on NOVIS would not go on and on for many other
9 pages. You do have a list of things that are
10 included and you will also see that some of them will
11 say "available for review." I want you to know, we
12 have those in our office. They're available for
13 review here. We saw what was submitted. We asked
14 for them and at a later point they submitted them,
15 other petitions. So when you see the number of
16 signatures on petitions or other letters of support
17 names are listed they are on file in our office
18 should anyone want to see those.

19 The last thing is the waiver request in that
20 summary document. Following that is the ADE review
21 document with applicant's responses in red. The
22 initial evaluation on each section from the internal
23 review committee is highlighted in yellow and if
24 there was a change when we re-evaluated it's off to
25 the side highlighted and in parenthesis. It says

1 that it was based on response. You'll see a
2 different evaluation and based on response. Then,
3 you have the original application as submitted by the
4 September 3rd deadline and in a few instances some
5 other documents and they are labeled with separation
6 sections. With that, if there are no questions on
7 those procedures we're ready to go with Capitol City
8 Lighthouse Charter School and Ms. Lenisha Broadway is
9 going to begin the presentation for Capitol City
10 Lighthouse Charter School. And I will tell you that
11 the superintendent from North Little Rock, as well as
12 others from North Little Rock, are wanting to speak
13 as well on the application.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. I will remind
15 everybody the procedures on which we will follow.
16 The open-enrollment charter school applicant will
17 have first 20 minutes to present its case to the
18 authorizing approval panel. Any parties opposed,
19 combined, will have 20 minutes to present its case.
20 And then the open-enrollment public charter school
21 will have 5 minutes to respond to any of those
22 arguments. And then the question-and-answer session
23 will begin at that point. So, can I ask any of those
24 who are here to speak on the Capitol City Lighthouse
25 application please stand and be sworn in. Please

1 raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell the
2 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

3 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Please be
5 seated. Yes, ma'am, we're ready.

6 MS. BROADWAY: Good afternoon.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Good afternoon.

8 MS. BROADWAY: I'm Lenisha Broadway and I'm the
9 regional vice president for Lighthouse Academies of
10 Arkansas. I am responsible for all operational
11 systems, compliance with state regulations, and
12 insuring that the Lighthouse Academies educational
13 model is implemented in all of our schools in
14 Arkansas. Today, we stand before you to request
15 approval for an open-enrollment K-12 school in the
16 city of North Little Rock to open August 2014. Just
17 to give you a little bit of background about who we
18 are, Lighthouse Academies, we are a national
19 nonprofit organization whose mission is to prepare
20 students for college and to prepare them to graduate
21 from college. We currently have 20 schools in seven
22 states and one in the District of Columbia. We came
23 to Arkansas in 2009, to the city of Jacksonville,
24 where we opened a K-6 campus with 344 students. And
25 now we have three campuses in the city of

1 Jacksonville and one in the city of Pine Bluff,
2 Arkansas, where we service over 1,100 students.

3 So with me today I have Dr. Anderson, who is the
4 senior vice president of Lighthouse Academies,
5 Incorporated, where she's responsible for the mission
6 and vision that we implement in all the region one
7 schools, and those schools are in Oklahoma, in New
8 York, in D.C., and in Arkansas. So she has a wide
9 range of schools. I also have Mr. Norman Whitfield,
10 who is the principal of Jacksonville Lighthouse
11 Charter School; Ms. Amanda Crowder, who is the
12 director of teacher leadership; I have Ms. Susan
13 Forte, who is the board president; and I also have
14 Chris Bell, who is with our financial services. So
15 our board -- other board members were here today, but
16 they had to leave but they are a very unique crowd of
17 individuals. They have community development
18 experience, as well as financial and educational
19 experience.

20 So just to give you a little bit more background
21 about me, I did work in the North Little Rock School
22 District for 13 years. I served as the principal at
23 a conversion charter school there in North Little
24 Rock, in the city, when they had Ridge Road Middle
25 Charter School. So I definitely know the need of the

1 students and the families in that community. So we
2 believe that in order for students to have career
3 options they have to be prepared for college. So
4 with that being said, we base some data on the need
5 for us to be in North Little Rock from the last data
6 from the Arkansas Department of Ed. So 40% of North
7 Little Rock students live in poverty; 73% do graduate
8 from high school; however, out of that 73%, 52% is
9 required to take remedial courses, which leaves 23 --
10 21% who are prepared for college. So that was, you
11 know, a big "ah-ha" moment just looking at that data
12 and knowing that they're graduating but they need
13 remedial classes once they go to college. So, also,
14 we're looking at the latest data that's posted in
15 North Little Rock. We see that they have two
16 Priority schools and nine Focus schools. Capitol
17 City wants to join the network of Lighthouse Academy
18 schools and the sister schools in Arkansas. So when
19 I talk about our model, we do have a model and within
20 our model we have five instructional goals: one is
21 that scholars will take rigorous courses; two,
22 scholars will learn at an accelerated rate; three,
23 external indicators will help us track students that
24 are on the right path to graduate from college; four,
25 our scholars will graduate on time; and, five, 100%

1 of our 12th grade students will be accepted into at
2 least one four-year college. So those are our
3 instructional goals.

4 Now as a part of our model we focus on certain
5 things. One is more time on instruction; two, arts
6 infusion; three, standards driven, research-based
7 planning. We have a college focus. We have student
8 services that we focus on; teacher development that
9 we focus on; media services; technology; and the big
10 one is assessments to drive the instruction. So we
11 really focus on all of those areas, as well as
12 promoting a safe and healthy and nurturing
13 environment.

14 With that being said, our proposed facility is
15 on 800 North Maple Street in North Little Rock. It's
16 a four-story building that's not in use right now and
17 it's owned by Regions Bank. It is over 30,000 square
18 feet. And we also received support from Aldermen
19 Debbie Ross and Beth White 'cause they sponsored us
20 on the conditional use of our other property that
21 we're proposing as well.

22 So, basically, we are excited about the
23 partnership to come into North Little Rock to help
24 with the educational need there. So if you all have
25 any questions we're ready at this time.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Is that -- so you're
2 finished with your presentation?

3 MS. BROADWAY: I am.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So who will be --
5 Mary, you've got something else?

6 MS. PERRY: I just wanted to let you know that
7 there are also representatives from the Little Rock
8 School District --

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

10 MS. PERRY: -- here, as well.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Okay. So those
12 in opposition, who would like to go first? Mr.
13 Rodgers.

14 SUPT. RODGERS: Commissioner Kimbrell and
15 Members of the Charter Panel, first, I want to say
16 that in North Little Rock we are not opposed to
17 charter schools or any form of school choice. And
18 actually with me today is Dr. Beth Stewart, Rosie
19 Coleman, and Michael Stone, who are with our
20 district. And they are with me and they are going to
21 be speaking against Capitol City Lighthouse Charter
22 School. Today, we are asking this panel to deny this
23 application because it does not meet the need or a
24 need for the North Little Rock community and the
25 students of North Little Rock. Actually, in the last

1 few days our board has voted on a resolution opposing
2 that and the reason you don't have that or the data
3 that we're going to share with you today is because
4 the North Little Rock school was not properly
5 notified about the application and the information
6 that we needed to provide. Actually, if you'll look
7 about two-thirds, maybe a little -- two-thirds of the
8 way in the application, our notification went to, via
9 email, North Little Rock Superintendent, North Little
10 Rock School District, J. Guess at pcssd.org. So, it
11 went to Jerry Guess and we were never notified. So
12 only recently was I made aware of this charter school
13 and did not have a chance to attend the meeting or
14 put the information together until recently. We have
15 at this time though -- we have looked through the
16 applications; we've looked at previous applications
17 of this charter organization through the
18 Jacksonville/Pine Bluff applications, and we have
19 concerns. And the concerns are that the applications
20 don't appear to be complete and they're full of
21 errors and information that is not correct. Another
22 concern we have is the application is requesting
23 waivers in the area of teacher certification and
24 Standards of Accreditation. The application fails to
25 provide basic transportation, campus media or

1 technology needs, and services for at-risk students
2 living in the North Little Rock area. The North
3 Little Rock School District does address these needs.
4 Actually, the elementary schools in the areas that
5 this charter school will be going or being placed is
6 -- Boone Park, Seventh Street, and Lynch Drive are
7 the primary schools and they are all achieving
8 schools. We believe the application fails to address
9 the essentials for charter schools in Arkansas by not
10 providing different and innovative teaching methods
11 and providing students with expanded choices in types
12 of educational opportunities that we do in North
13 Little Rock. Additionally, it was mentioned that the
14 school would be located on Main -- just off of Main
15 Street, which is actually four blocks from our high
16 school. When I spoke to the mayor for the City of
17 North Little Rock and the police chief they did not
18 realize when this was approved by the City that this
19 application was going to be a school, and they too
20 are concerned about the traffic congestion. As you
21 know, North Little Rock is combining all of our high
22 schools in one location and we are preparing for
23 that, but the City was not prepared for the traffic
24 congestion that's going to be caused by these kids.
25 And these kids, it appears, will not have

1 transportation provided for them, as we do in the
2 North Little Rock School District.

3 Last, Dr. Stewart will provide data that shows
4 North Little Rock students are performing at the same
5 level or higher than both the Jacksonville and Pine
6 Bluff Lighthouse Charter Schools and has made much
7 greater progress in the last four years. What the
8 Lighthouse Charter is proposing does not meet a need
9 in our community or a challenging, innovative program
10 of study, which is being provided by the North Little
11 Rock School District for our students. We also found
12 in one of the applications in the petitions -- we
13 started looking at names and we just had those the
14 last few weeks. We're concerned about some of the
15 names that signed the petitions. There appear to be
16 students signed in there and we have one of our own
17 staff members, actually on my leadership team, whose
18 name is on there. She said she never signed the
19 application. So we are questioning the validity of
20 the application, the signatures, the petitions. And
21 I actually have an affidavit from that employee right
22 here, which I was not able to provide, that says that
23 "I never signed the petition or letters in support of
24 Lighthouse Charter." So, again, we question that.

25 At this time I'll turn it over to Dr. Stewart

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for her to provide some data.

DR. STEWART: Good afternoon. Today, I want to talk to you about our concerns with the Capitol City Lighthouse Charter. This is the application that you guys have in your packet and in the tabs in this that I have marked are indications of duplications from one charter application to the next. So what you see is this application, the current application. This is Jacksonville's application that was in 2008; in 2010, Pine Bluff's application; and then, last year, they put forth an application for Southwest Little Rock. It is, as you can tell, a lot the same. So we really question whether Lighthouse understands what innovation is about because by definition "innovation" is something different. As we delved into the application, we noticed that Lighthouse Charter really has eight main tenets, one of them being art infused education. And, yes, some would say that's innovative and different until you look at North Little Rock, because we currently have A-plus -- we use the A-plus school model, so we're already using art in the core curriculum. And we're not only integrating that, we're using STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and changing that also to include the arts so that we are esteemed

1 schools. So for that tenet there's no educational
2 need for this charter school in North Little Rock.
3 So then the second tenet, college prep curriculum,
4 great, everybody wants college prep curriculum. This
5 tenet focuses around AP courses, which is very
6 respectful. The issue here is that AP is a state
7 requirement. There's no innovation there. North
8 Little Rock not only offers AP but we are one of five
9 in the state that offer IB classes. So, again, under
10 this tenet, there's no educational need for this
11 charter. In fact, it may even be a step backwards.

12 So, their third tenet, more time, extended
13 school day and year. Again, North Little Rock offers
14 extended day, extended time, although I will say
15 that, you know, it's not always about extended time
16 and extended day. I mean, as you noticed on our
17 posters down here, we can show that because these
18 applications are so similar we feel that we can make
19 a correlation between Jacksonville and Pine Bluff --
20 Ray, would you hold those up where they can see
21 those? We feel that there is a -- we can make that
22 correlation because it's the same thing. There is no
23 difference when you look at those schools. We would
24 hope that they would be able to provide something
25 better for our students. We're the same -- we're

1 hitting the same or we are doing better. So, again,
2 no educational need for this charter.

3 Tenet four for them, data driven decisions. You
4 know, North Little Rock began data driven decision-
5 making in 1986 when we bought Pacer. I find it hard
6 to believe that Lighthouse would have more data than
7 the school and state are currently analyzing. This
8 type of instructional decision-making is at the core
9 of what -- of who we are and what we do as a
10 district. But then again, this application asks for
11 a waiver from reporting that data for the first year
12 because of lack of data. Is that being transparent?
13 So under that tenet, there again, I will say there's
14 no educational need for this charter.

15 So their fifth, standards-based planning and
16 instruction. Lighthouse proposes backward decision
17 of lesson plans and writing units. And, again, this
18 is not innovative and this tenet says nothing about
19 integrating technology, about digital resources, and,
20 again, is not innovative. Just to give you a small
21 glimpse of what's going on in North Little Rock,
22 we're building integrative unit; we're using
23 backwards design, with technology skills such as
24 building iCourse and uploading those to iTunes.
25 That's not in this application. Under this tenet

1 there's no educational need.

2 So the sixth tenet, coaching, development and
3 PD. Again, this is not an innovative approach.
4 There's no mention of current learning strategies,
5 such as personalized learning, digital native
6 learners and/or preparing teachers on how to prepare
7 students with acceptable use of technology skills.
8 North Little Rock is doing all of those things. So,
9 again, under this tenet there's no educational need
10 for this charter.

11 So their seventh one, social and emotional
12 development. Lighthouse Charter focuses on five main
13 traits of this: self-discipline, humility,
14 intelligence, nobility, and excellence. This
15 approach is better known, "character education."
16 We've been doing that for a long time. Matter of
17 fact, we've been doing it longer than what Lighthouse
18 has even been in existence, in 2003. So, again,
19 under this tenet there's no educational need for this
20 charter.

21 Their eighth tenet is curriculum and
22 instruction. The application states that they'll
23 align their curriculum to standards in Common Core.
24 Well, I hope so because that's what the law says.
25 So, again, there's no educational need for this

1 charter because we're doing that.

2 Lighthouse says that they have five main goals,
3 and they stated that in their application: rigor,
4 accelerated rate, academically on track for college
5 success, graduation on time, 100% acceptance in at
6 least one four-year college. We're already working
7 on those goals. Under these goals there's still no
8 educational need for this charter. So you know what,
9 really for me what's happened is it raised a lot of
10 questions. Lighthouse, where is your empirical data
11 that proves the promises that you've made in your
12 application? You're a national charter school. Do
13 you have students everywhere that have at least one
14 four-year college acceptance? Do you have a 120%
15 growth per year in math and reading? The schools
16 that you've indicated are in Priority and Focus.
17 That data is there. Why did you fail to list your
18 plans for programmatic audit in your application?
19 That appears to be a lack of transparency. Why would
20 a school that is adamant that they can do better,
21 although that is not what the data indicates, want to
22 waive an annual report? I understand that you
23 wouldn't have trend data for your schools, for that
24 particular school. But if you're doing such a great
25 job why wouldn't you want to share all of the

1 information that you have? What resources will you
2 be providing to special education students? You know
3 what, what is the truth here? Are we really talking
4 about students that you'll allow to stay as long as
5 they're not too involved or expensive? And how many
6 really involved special ed. students do you currently
7 serve? But my biggest concern are my poverty babies
8 because, you know what, you're not going to provide
9 transportation and those kids are going to be
10 crossing the street and those are the kids that have
11 no coats and no gloves and we constantly are trying
12 to get them warm clothes. But it's going to be okay
13 to let them walk in the rain and in the snow. Again,
14 no educational need in our area. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Let me remind everybody --
16 and, Little Rock, you may want to weigh-in on this; I
17 don't know how much you've got -- but we're at seven-
18 and-a-half minutes left.

19 DR. GLASGOW: Could we have maybe two minutes?

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, sir. We'll make sure.
21 But, North Little Rock, I would suggest that you make
22 this quick.

23 MS. COLEMAN: Okay. Good afternoon. I'm Rosie
24 Coleman. I'm Elementary Director for North Little
25 Rock. And I just want to share with you a little bit

1 about why there is no academic or educational need
2 for a charter in North Little Rock. North Little
3 Rock School District already meets the academic needs
4 of all of our students, no matter their race, creed,
5 color, or Zip Code. It is imperative for us to teach
6 children, and all children. And so right now they
7 said that we had two schools that were Priority.
8 Boone Park Elementary and Lynch Drive Elementary and
9 Glenview Elementary, schools that are over 90%
10 African American and Free and Reduced Lunch students,
11 have all been named as achieving schools. And
12 Seventh Street, with the same demographic, is one
13 year closer to making that Achieving status. Now the
14 flexibility requirements determine what the labels
15 will be. And when they gave us our AMO and told us
16 what we need to be considered Achieving or Priority
17 or Focus, according to that criteria we continued
18 working and focusing on those things that would help
19 us to improve the academic achievement of our
20 students. We didn't begin that work; we were already
21 working on it and we will work with all of our
22 students. So why is there no academic or educational
23 need in North Little Rock? First and foremost, we
24 have a team of highly qualified teachers and
25 administrators who are professionally trained each

1 year to hold all of our students accountable to have
2 high expectations for teaching and learning. They
3 don't just get out there and begin teaching, but they
4 make every decision based on data, numerous kinds of
5 data, formal and informal. We always have and we
6 always will. And prior to writing a lesson plan so
7 they can resource -- and definitely before standing
8 before our students to teach a lesson -- the teaching
9 staff pours over this data to plan prescriptive
10 lessons for the individual needs of all of our
11 students. We differentiate instruction as well
12 because we know that all students do not learn at the
13 same pace, the same level, the same way. And so we
14 prescriptively plan for those students using a
15 backwards design approach, asking ourselves the
16 question, When this lesson has been taught
17 effectively what should our students know and be able
18 to do once the lesson is over? We also ask, What are
19 we going to do if they didn't learn it? And we ask
20 ourselves, What are those next steps? North Little
21 Rock School District has one or more technology model
22 classrooms in every elementary school and our
23 students are so skilled in technology that our third
24 and fourth graders presented at the TCAL conference
25 last year. We have literacy and math coaches who

1 help teach us to strengthen their instructional
2 skills and help with interventions for students who
3 struggle in literacy and math, as well as reading
4 recovery, after school programs, and we always look
5 at best practices. Our teaching staff just received
6 \$25,000 in innovative teaching grants from the North
7 Little Rock Education Foundation for Resources to
8 make lessons more creative and innovative for their
9 classrooms. And we have teachers in every school who
10 are nationally board certified. We also have A-Plus
11 Arkansas in Boone Park Elementary and Pike View
12 Elementary. North Little Rock School District always
13 and will forever continue to put our students first
14 and educate them in an environment that is filled
15 with rigor and relevance and keeping in mind that
16 they will be college and career ready when they leave
17 us. We continue to challenge all thinking and come
18 up with innovative ways to bring our students to the
19 next level, collaborating in PLC's, grade level team
20 meetings, and, finally, those resources, human and
21 supplies and materials, to figure out together what
22 is best for our students and what we need to do to
23 meet the educational needs of them. There's no
24 educational need for a charter school in the North
25 Little Rock School District because we meet the need

1 already, bell to bell, with rigor and relevance and
2 real world activities. Thanks, but no thanks; we
3 have no educational need and we never will because we
4 can't stop thinking about and responding to the needs
5 of our students and what we need to do to meet that
6 need and how we can make their lives more meaningful.
7 We know a lot of people say, "All kids can learn."
8 And that's true. But in North Little Rock, we say,
9 "All students must learn." It is a must that we
10 educate our own students. We are and will continue
11 to do the job that we're paid to do and that we love
12 to do and we are succeeding in meeting the
13 educational needs of our students. We've got this
14 under control. There's no educational need. We're
15 doing what the State asks, and more. We are
16 experiencing success. The proof is in the data which
17 shows our students' performance is the same or better
18 than Lighthouse Charter.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Stone, you have two
20 minutes remaining.

21 MR. STONE: Does that include the two minutes
22 that Little Rock has?

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'll give them some time.
24 North Little Rock has got two minutes and four
25 seconds.

1 MR. STONE: Good afternoon. My name is Michael
2 Stone. I'm Executive Director of Student and Equity
3 Services in the North Little Rock School District.
4 I'm here today to stand in support of our district's
5 position that there is no need for a charter school
6 in North Little Rock. Some of my responsibilities is
7 to -- are to insure the safety and equity of
8 students. Students in North Little Rock School
9 District are provided with the necessary
10 transportation to and from school. This service is
11 to help insure students' safe arrival to school and
12 back home. It also provides equal access to the
13 educational services that we offer. Sometimes
14 charter schools will not provide transportation for
15 its students. By not providing that transportation,
16 safety and equity becomes problematic. First,
17 students whose parents that simply cannot drive them
18 to school, they'll walk. This becomes a major safety
19 concern for North Little Rock students. We offer
20 transportation to our families, especially those who
21 are crossing streets that are heavily traveled. Main
22 Street and Pike Avenue are two examples of this as it
23 relates to safety for our students getting to and
24 from school. A recent traffic analysis report shows
25 that 13,000 vehicles pass through the intersection of

1 23rd and Main Street, and anywhere between 19,000 and
2 21,000 between 17th and Pike and 10th and Pike daily.
3 Once we finish our high school, we're projecting
4 about 2,500 students which will increase that traffic
5 in the area of Main Street and also we're going to
6 have teen drivers, which is a problem also. The
7 students and families of North Little Rock School
8 District are encouraged not to walk and to cross
9 streets that are heavily traveled, such as those.

10 My primary -- my second point is equity. If
11 students are walking to school -- are not allowed to
12 walk, and parents cannot provide adequate
13 transportation, then there's a limitation on who can
14 be served at that school. The North Little Rock
15 School District serves all of its students and
16 provides the necessary transportation for students to
17 be served. It does not matter what location or area
18 that they live in; they have the same opportunity to
19 safely arrive to school and receive an adequate
20 education. The North Little Rock School District
21 appreciates anyone who wants to work with our
22 students but we see no need for a charter school to
23 be within the North Little Rock School District.
24 We're doing our job and we're doing it well.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Stone.

1 Little Rock?

2 DR. GLASGOW: Good afternoon. I'm Dennis
3 Glasgow, Associate Superintendent --

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Glasgow, is give minutes
5 enough? Do you need more than that?

6 DR. GLASGOW: No, no. Just a few minutes.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We want to make sure you
8 have plenty of time.

9 DR. GLASGOW: Just a few minutes will be fine.
10 Thank you. I would really like to --

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'm sorry. They were asking
12 if y'all have been sworn in and I said yes, everybody
13 was sworn in.

14 DR. GLASGOW: Yes, we have. Thank you. I don't
15 want to cover the same ground that's been covered
16 thus far. Our school board did debate this issue at
17 the last board meeting and the board voted to oppose
18 the charter Lighthouse application. And some of the
19 reasons that the board gave, one of them was related
20 to the budget. If you'll look at the budget, in year
21 two there's a \$25,000 amount that is -- that they --
22 the incoming money out-distanced the expenditures
23 that they have. So if they don't enroll the full
24 number of students, or if the percentage of Free and
25 Reduced Lunch students falls below 70%, they very

1 likely could not meet the monetary targets for year
2 two. What happens -- it happened to us a couple of
3 years ago; we had a charter school in our district
4 that went financially bankrupt, I guess, and all
5 those students came back to us at semester. And when
6 they came back to our school we found that they had
7 not received a quality education at that charter and
8 that put some of our students at risk. So we are --
9 certainly, our board was worried about that. Also,
10 they thought it was odd that the teacher job
11 announcement, qualifications for a teacher, said that
12 the K-8 teachers will report to a position that's
13 called a Director of Teacher Leadership. If you'll
14 read that particular position, you'll see that that's
15 a coach and that the primary duty of that position is
16 to provide coaching activities for the teachers to
17 support them. We find it odd that the teachers are
18 reporting to the instructional coach position rather
19 than to the principal. We feel the principal should
20 be the -- provide the leadership for the school and
21 that's probably not a good arrangement. And the last
22 thing, as a North Little Rock representative said, we
23 looked at the data that's already available on the
24 ADE website. We looked at the three Lighthouse
25 charters in Jacksonville, the one in Pine Bluff.

1 There were 24 different AMO's among the different
2 grade levels for those and we found that they met AMO
3 12 times and they did not meet AMO the other 12 times
4 among those four schools. The times that they did
5 not meet AMO they were 20 to 30 points below the
6 stated AMO. So we're concerned that they can't meet
7 their achievement targets. And really those are the
8 only things, other than the things that North Little
9 Rock said.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Dr. Glasgow.
11 Anyone else in opposition want to speak? Ms. Perry,
12 I know you want to make some clarifying comments?

13 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. I want to talk about the
14 sending of the application to North Little Rock. I
15 spoke with Superintendent Rodgers a few weeks ago and
16 realized that the application had been sent to an
17 email address that we had posted on our website. It
18 was not the superintendent's address but, apparently,
19 it is a teacher in North Little Rock's address. So
20 North Little Rock didn't even get a bounce-back --
21 excuse me -- Lighthouse didn't get a bounce --
22 probably did not get a bounce-back that it did not go
23 through. And we've since corrected that address on
24 our website. When they came through and I saw where
25 things were sent I didn't really look at the email

1 addresses and compare them to what we had on our
2 website as well. So I think that may explain why
3 North Little Rock did not timely receive the
4 application.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And that -- Ms. Perry, let
6 me make -- clarify for some of the other Panelists.

7 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That is the responsibility
9 of the applicant to inform the school districts in
10 which --

11 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. They were asked during
12 this application cycle, when they submit the
13 application electronically via email to the
14 Department, to also send it to the superintendents of
15 districts that would be likely to be affected.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Do we also not -- have we
17 not in the past practice notified the districts that
18 have --

19 MS. PERRY: They're notified in the hearing
20 letters, when the hearing letters go out, later than
21 when we have the application.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: When do the hearing letters
23 go out?

24 MS. CLAY: Two weeks ago.

25 MS. PERRY: Probably about two weeks ago, that

1 they went out for all the amendments and the
2 applications. They went via email and via regular
3 mail. Of course, it should have been delivered
4 faster via email.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Perry, hang on. I think
6 Dr. Witonski has a question for you.

7 DR. WITONSKI: This is actually for Mr. Rodgers
8 and maybe also Ms. Perry.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, let's -- if you have
10 something for Ms. Perry, let's ask and then we'll
11 begin with --

12 DR. WITONSKI: It's about -- yeah.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- with the rest of this.

14 DR. WITONSKI: So the letter that is dated here,
15 that's included in our packet, is dated June 24th
16 that was sent to Dr. Guess, addressed to the
17 superintendent of North Little Rock, which is Mr.
18 Rodgers, not obviously Dr. Guess. If that were the
19 case and that two weeks were notified, would they
20 have then known about this only two weeks ago?

21 MS. PERRY: Well, that particular letter that
22 you're talking about that was sent in June, that is a
23 copy of the notice of intent to apply.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

25 MS. PERRY: If you back up in the packet, there

1 is indication that the letter was sent to the prior
2 superintendent --

3 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

4 MS. PERRY: -- at the end of June, when they
5 sent that notification to the Department. So that
6 was just the letter of intent which they are required
7 to send as well, the letter of intent to apply. And
8 then when they actually apply they're required to
9 send the application out as well.

10 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

11 MR. HOY: Dr. Kimbrell?

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

13 MR. HOY: At the appropriate time I would like
14 to direct a question to our legal counsel in terms of
15 where this puts us legally.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I think now would be
17 an opportunity to do that.

18 MS. CLAY: Do you have a specific question or
19 are you just wanting to address the general
20 circumstances?

21 MR. HOY: The general circumstances and where
22 that puts us legally. Is this something that allows
23 us to go forward with the process or is it something
24 that ties us up?

25 MS. CLAY: Yes, sir. We believe it's something

1 that allows you to go forward with the process. Like
2 Ms. Perry said, the letter of intent was sent to a
3 previous superintendent. Sending an application to
4 the superintendents, there is not a -- I don't
5 believe, Mary, there's a timeframe on that. It's
6 anticipated to be when you submit the application to
7 the Department you also submit it to the affected
8 districts. In this case, although, yes, it is the
9 responsibility of the applicant to make sure that the
10 superintendent could get that information, the
11 Department's website had bad information and that's
12 what the applicant relied on. So I don't think this
13 is something that prevents you all from moving
14 forward on the application, but just keep that in
15 mind on the timeframe as North Little Rock addressed.

16 MR. HOY: I guess one other clarifying question:
17 in terms of the letters of intent, the way I
18 understand is you can send a letter of intent without
19 necessarily following through on the application. So
20 a letter of intent may not necessarily indicate that
21 you're going to but that you intend to. I was
22 wondering if that is accurate. And, also, I was
23 wondering in terms of notification actually being
24 received, do we not require Certified letters? I
25 suspect that we do not.

1 MS. CLAY: We do not. This year, we actually
2 moved to an on-line submission of the application
3 where the applicant submitted it electronically to us
4 and then we in turn allowed them to submit it
5 electronically to the affected districts. So most of
6 this took place by email. I believe there were a few
7 instances where email -- it couldn't go through by
8 email and so they did mail a copy. And you had
9 another question before that that I've forgotten what
10 it was.

11 MR. HOY: It was just about intent and actual
12 filing, because the two seem to be distinct.

13 MS. CLASS: Oh. The letter of intent, yes, sir,
14 is exactly as it says. Early in the application
15 cycle entities send in a letter that they are
16 considering applying for a charter. Not all of those
17 follow through and actually apply.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any just general questions
19 about the process? If not, Mr. Rodgers, may I ask
20 you a question to just -- do you feel -- with the
21 late application coming in did you have and your
22 district have opportunity to I guess prepare and be a
23 part of this process? Or do you think that --

24 SUPT. RODGERS: Absolutely not. We actually --
25 I actually -- 'cause I looked; I thought maybe it did

1 go to the previous superintendent or to a wrong email
2 address. I had our technology department spend quite
3 a bit of time looking and searching and we found
4 nothing that showed that we were notified by
5 electronic mail. The only thing I saw, when I found
6 out about the process, was going through the
7 application and saw where it was sent to North Little
8 Rock School District via email to Jerry Guess. So --

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Right. But, I mean --

10 SUPT. RODGERS: No.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Given the opportunity of 20
12 minutes to present your side, taking all the 20
13 minutes, what would you have done differently if
14 you'd have had a month-and-a-half?

15 SUPT. RODGERS: We'd have spent -- we would've
16 gone to the hearings, if we'd known about them. We
17 would've --

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: The public hearings?

19 SUPT. RODGERS: Public hearings.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

21 SUPT. RODGERS: We would've had our board and we
22 would've spent some time discussing it. And we would
23 -- in your packet today you would've had information
24 from her, because when I spoke with Mary Perry to the
25 question about the application, where do I find a

1 copy of it and to speak to her why we weren't
2 notified -- we did figure out that my email was wrong
3 on the ADE website, which is -- I understand that.
4 That's fine. But when I did see that Jerry Guess's
5 name was in there I knew that we had a problem and we
6 didn't have time to prepare. We didn't have time to
7 give you our information in adequate time.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You're talking about in the
9 packet itself?

10 SUPT. RODGERS: Right. And we could've spent
11 more time but we had short notice to go through the
12 application and come up with reasons why we think
13 this is not good for the North Little Rock School
14 District or the community.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Dr. Witonski, I
16 think -- Mr. Rodgers.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Rodgers, I'm sorry, you just
18 stepped away and I have a follow-up question. In
19 your opening statement you discussed that the city
20 had heard from this proposed charter early on and
21 they did not have a clear understanding of what was
22 approved?

23 SUPT. RODGERS: No.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Do you mind clarifying?

25 SUPT. RODGERS: I just spoke with the mayor and

1 the police chief and they didn't have a clear
2 understanding that this would be a school in this
3 location, which is in close proximity to our high
4 school. And they already knew that we're having
5 traffic issues there, especially -- you heard the
6 figures from Michael Stone. And with increasing that
7 campus from about 1,225 students we know the traffic
8 is going to be much greater and it's just in walking
9 distance. It's actually four blocks from the front
10 door of our high school and that is a safety concern
11 with the city, but they didn't realize -- the mayor
12 didn't and the police chief. Now there may be
13 another alderman that knew that, but they did not
14 realize that this was going to be a school in close
15 proximity to our high school.

16 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Clay?

18 MS. CLAY: One thing that I've been asked to
19 address is in the charter school rules -- and I don't
20 know if y'all have a copy of these in front of you,
21 but in 6.01.7 any decision by a local school board
22 approving or disapproving application must be made
23 within 45 days of the board's receipt of the
24 application. And if the board -- if the local school
25 board takes no action or disapproves the application,

1 the applicant has a right of immediate appeal to you.
2 So the rules do authorize the local board to make a
3 decision within 45 days, but basically what happens
4 when they do that is it speeds up the process to get
5 to you all. So just keep that in mind as part of the
6 process that goes on before it gets here to you.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think you need to clarify.
8 We're all a little bit confused on that.

9 MS. CLAY: Okay. The rules say that any
10 decision by the local board has to be made within 45
11 days of the local board's receipt of an application.
12 We do not think that that's fatal to the application
13 if that does not happen. With the remedy for either
14 a decision to disapprove or no decision is that the
15 applicant gets an immediate right of appeal to you
16 all. So basically, they could have -- if the
17 decision to disapprove or not approve, if not made in
18 that 45 days, they could have gotten here to you all
19 faster because there's another provision that
20 requires you all to hold a hearing within 45 days,
21 another 45 days of when that decision should have
22 been made. I don't think it affects your decision
23 and how you proceed on the application, but just know
24 that that is part of the process for application and
25 the local board and how much time they have to make a

1 decision on the application when they receive it.
2 That didn't help?

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I don't even know that that
4 helped a whole lot but -- okay. Yeah. But the
5 bottom line is in our legal counsel's position it
6 doesn't keep us from moving forward with this process
7 of looking at this application?

8 MS. CLAY: That's correct.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. All right. We would
10 now move back to the applicant and provide the
11 applicant I believe in the rules five minutes.

12 DR. ANDERSON: Okay. Good afternoon.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Anderson.

14 DR. ANDERSON: I'm Phillis Nichols-Anderson.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am.

16 DR. ANDERSON: I'm the -- I'm senior vice
17 president for Lighthouse Academies region-wide. I'd
18 like to respond to some of the points that were made
19 and clear up some of the issues that have come
20 forward. I'd first like to respond to the
21 duplication of the charter. We are a model. We do
22 -- we are a network of schools. We do have a model,
23 so we definitely will see some of the same things in
24 the application. We do differentiate for every
25 community that we serve. And so, definitely, if they

1 will look closer at the applications that have been
2 presented and that have never been rejected or denied
3 you will see differentiations based on the need of
4 those communities. I also would like to address the
5 issue of the petitions and the notion that somebody
6 signed that didn't sign. We submitted petitions that
7 had over 400 names and phone numbers on those. We
8 did all of our best effort to make sure that those
9 were legitimate. We provided contact information for
10 each individual that signed those petitions. As far
11 as arts infusion and that they're doing that already,
12 I had the opportunity to bring Lighthouse to Arkansas
13 in 2009, and we were the only ones doing arts
14 infusion, arts integration. We celebrate the fact
15 that North Little Rock is also now doing that,
16 because we do see that as a lever to student
17 achievement and another way to assess student
18 learning. So we have no problem with the fact that
19 they are doing that. But A-Plus you have to apply to
20 be an A-Plus school and we employ arts specialists
21 that are on staff, that integrate the arts into the
22 core curriculum areas every day. It is not a special
23 program; it is not an arts program; it's not advanced
24 program. It is actually integrating the arts into
25 the core content areas where there's collaboration

1 between the arts specialists and the core content
2 teacher. So I do want to differentiate the
3 difference between what they're doing and what we're
4 doing.

5 I do want to address the issue around the fact
6 that the mayor didn't know where the school was going
7 to be. We actually went through a process of going
8 first to the Planning Commission of the North Little
9 Rock School District and met with them about the
10 facility. They actually came out to visit where the
11 facility -- the proposed facility is. We then
12 secured the support of two aldermen of that
13 particular ward, who went back and presented that
14 also to the City Council and it did pass. So we feel
15 like we did everything that we needed to do in order
16 to inform everyone and make sure that they know, and
17 we do feel that the city was aware of where the
18 school is. And it actually faces Maple Street, not
19 -- it actually faces a residential area, not Main
20 Street. Then the notion that we're not going to
21 provide transportation, we do have funds in the
22 budget for -- to provide a bus. As you know, we do
23 not receive transportation funds from the state and
24 so that is a challenge for us with all of our
25 schools. We do provide transportation at Pine Bluff

1 Lighthouse Charter School as well.

2 I think in terms of our academic achievement we
3 are excited about the progress we've been able to
4 make. Normally, students come to us three grade
5 levels behind. Last year, Jacksonville Lighthouse
6 Charter School met growth for all students in
7 literacy. They met -- African Americans met the AMO;
8 Hispanic students met the AMO in growth for
9 Jacksonville Lighthouse Upper Academy. In literacy,
10 we met AMO in growth for all students. And ELL met
11 AMO and students with disabilities met growth. We
12 also met growth for all students in literacy. We're
13 so excited to be celebrating the fact that Pine Bluff
14 Lighthouse Upper Academy is one of your 137 achieving
15 schools after only two years in operation there. So
16 I do want to clear up that as far as what we're doing
17 academically.

18 I also want to point out one thing that Ms.
19 Broadway did not point out is that we provide 160
20 hours of professional development. We -- our
21 teachers work 20 additional days. Our students -- so
22 in addition to our students going a longer day and a
23 longer year, we also invest a lot into teacher
24 development because we know that teachers make a
25 difference and that is definitely where we need to

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put our efforts.

We are really trying to serve the community in North Little Rock. We don't have a lot to say about Little Rock School District. We never intend to serve the children from Little Rock School District; that's why we wanted to come to North Little Rock. And we appreciate their comments and their feedback as well. As far as what our model is and who reports to who, that's our model and that works for us. So the Director of Teacher Leadership will also be certified as an evaluator and does really work with the teachers around teacher development, grade level meetings. Our principals do work with teacher leaders in developing them for aspiring leadership and also evaluates all of the teachers in the building. So I want to clear up that misconception also. I can't think -- I think I've covered just about all of the -- as far as saying that there's not an educational need in North Little Rock, I'm a parent of a North Little Rock high school graduate. My child attended Lakewood North Little Rock High School. So there is a need. And until all children are achieving at a proficient level there will always be a need for parents to have additional choices. And that's the thing that charter schools offer is a

1 choice. If parents don't want to take advantage of
2 our organization and what we're offering, they don't
3 have to.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Anderson, thank you.
5 That's your five minutes. I do have one question for
6 you. Your comment about that charter schools do not
7 receive any transportation funding -- transportation
8 funding is included in the matrix.

9 DR. ANDERSON: Okay.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You receive all 63 -- it's
11 the same transportation funding that all school
12 districts receive, with the exception of isolated
13 schools and the three districts in Pulaski County.

14 DR. ANDERSON: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So I do want to make sure
16 everybody understands.

17 DR. ANDERSON: I stand corrected. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You get the same dollars per
19 student in the foundation that you can use as you see
20 fit.

21 DR. ANDERSON: Okay.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Flexible spending. Thank
23 you. Okay. So, Panel, we're to the point in which
24 you now can begin to ask questions of either the
25 applicant, the school districts, staff. We'll begin

1 that process. We'll just begin with Mr. Hoy and go
2 around the room.

3 MR. HOY: Question, philosophical of sorts, I
4 think for North Little Rock School District. I
5 believe in the Pulaski County area, Mr. Rodgers, your
6 district was one of the few that decided to opt in on
7 the student choice.

8 SUPT. RODGERS: Absolutely.

9 MR. HOY: So you seem to have no issue with
10 competing with other schools for students, but you
11 seem to have with this particular applicant. Is
12 there a reason?

13 DR. ANDERSON: We have --

14 SUPT. RODGERS: I'll let her --

15 DR. ANDERSON: I was like, "No, we don't have a
16 problem."

17 SUPT. RODGERS: And, actually, as our board did
18 approve the resolution the other night. We wanted
19 that to be known that North Little Rock does not have
20 a problem with school choice and we welcome that, we
21 welcome the competition. We have a problem with this
22 application. We have a problem because we -- after
23 -- our short period of time that we've been looking
24 at the application we think that some of the facts
25 are wrong. There's not -- there are not innovative

1 programs in here. Things that they are saying about
2 North Little Rock and what we're not providing we are
3 providing. We're providing our students an exemplary
4 education and we feel like -- based on this
5 application we are asking you to deny this because
6 the application does not meet the needs of North
7 Little Rock students.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters.

9 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Kimbrell, is there a way -- I
10 am trying to pull up the performance reports and for
11 some reason they're not coming up. I was wanting to
12 look at Pine Bluff and Jacksonville and see if they
13 have other schools. I think that's something that we
14 would -- I would like to look at. Is there any way
15 we can get a copy of those or --

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Perry says she has
17 copies that she can provide. Do we have the '13
18 data?

19 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I just -- I would like to
21 see that. And I guess my question is: Dr. Anderson,
22 on your statement you said that, you know, your
23 vision is that students are going to make gains of
24 20% more per year than the average.

25 DR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh.

1 DR. WALTERS: Is that part of your national
2 model?

3 DR. ANDERSON: It is. It's measured by NWEA,
4 which is an assessment tool that measures growth.
5 And so, as I mentioned earlier, most of the time
6 children come to us three grade levels behind. And
7 so our philosophy and our notion and our thought is
8 in order to move children to grade level we have to
9 move them more than 100% a year. So our goal is to
10 move them actually 120% per year. And those that are
11 in the lowest quartile our goal is to move them 150%
12 as measured by NWEA.

13 DR. WATKINS: Okay. So you're not talking about
14 state --

15 DR. ANDERSON: We're not talking about state.

16 DR. WATKINS: It's growth on NWEA?

17 DR. ANDERSON: Yes. And also, if I can, while
18 she's passing that out, I want to address the issue
19 of them not receiving the charter application. We
20 were directed in our instructions to send the
21 application and all notices to the contact
22 information on ADE -- ADE website. So that's what we
23 did. Whatever the letter is within the application
24 is the incorrect letter we actually sent to the
25 previous superintendent on June 28th, a letter of

1 intent that also notified them of the public hearing
2 as well.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: In reference to your budget,
5 there is reference made about a charter school that
6 opened and then closed and some students had to go to
7 a different one in semester. Because you're a larger
8 group, if you don't meet your mark are there other
9 funds available to supplement to keep the school
10 going?

11 DR. ANDERSON: There are. Yes, there are.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski, questions?

14 DR. WITONSKI: So in looking at this, going
15 forward, from Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy and then
16 Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter -- and I believe I
17 have the names of those correct -- as you look
18 particularly in math on our page -- and I don't know
19 if they have a copy of this, Ms. Perry, but that
20 might be helpful for Dr. Anderson to see what we're
21 seeing. In terms of meeting those growth and those
22 AMO standards, what are the thoughts or next steps
23 and how will that infiltrate and change the things
24 that you'll do in this particular charter?

25 DR. ANDERSON: So, absolutely. So last year, we

1 did not meet the expected AMO in literacy. And what
2 we've found is that our scholars did not perform well
3 on the conventions and so what we did was to use a
4 variety of instructional supplemental resources to
5 lift up that area. We use Imagine and Open Court
6 Reading which does not do a good job of addressing
7 those things. We also implement a writing initiative
8 and we saw those scores raise. We actually met the
9 AMO in literacy this year. And in Pine Bluff we
10 actually met it in math but not in literacy. So what
11 we do is we do analyze -- and then actually in terms
12 of the math what we've found is that our scholars did
13 not do well on the open responses. And so one of the
14 things that we do, including parents and teachers and
15 the community, is to discuss the data, analyze the
16 data, and come up with an action plan, a literacy
17 action plan, a math action plan that actually lets
18 every scholar that scores below proficient and a list
19 of services that that scholar is going to need. We
20 also run a Standards Not Mastered report that is also
21 used to guide instruction around our extended
22 learning opportunity program that we offer to our
23 scholars after school. They receive push-in/pull-out
24 and on Saturday schools. So those standards not
25 mastered actually drive the pacing guides for

1 remediation and supplemental services to move them.
2 We also use formative assessments and we use biweekly
3 assessments as well to get more real-time data around
4 what scholars know, what they don't know. We use our
5 grade level meetings and our data to talk about this
6 and we make adjustments to our curriculum, our lesson
7 plans, whatever needs to be adjusted in order to move
8 those scholars there. We do -- we are on the Air
9 Force Base; we do experience some attrition in some
10 student mobility there on the Air Force Base, so we
11 do have about 20% of our scholars that may leave or
12 come within that school year. So, you know, we have
13 to face that challenge as well. Making sure we have
14 some consistency, that's one of the things. So we
15 say around -- having scholars for three years because
16 we do want to have them there.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

19 MR. BOARDMAN: Dr. Anderson, some of the numbers
20 --

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Microphone.

22 MR. BOARDMAN: How long has the Pine Bluff --
23 how long have you been in existence in both Pine
24 Bluff and Jacksonville?

25 DR. ANDERSON: This is our third year in Pine

1 Bluff --

2 MR. BOARDMAN: Third year in Pine Bluff.

3 DR. ANDERSON: -- and we're in our fourth year
4 in Jacksonville. Flight Line, third year. Flight
5 Line is actually on the Little Rock Air Force Base.

6 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. I was just wondering -- my
7 first glance -- I'm kind of looking at some of these
8 numbers. But it looks like Pine Bluff is actually
9 doing better on their AMO's than Jacksonville, but
10 Jacksonville has been in existence longer?

11 DR. ANDERSON: I don't think that Pine Bluff is
12 doing better. I think that this was the first year
13 for Pine Bluff with the upper academy. And if you'll
14 see the percentage, the level of -- the percent
15 proficient you can see the big difference in the
16 percent proficient in Pine Bluff as opposed to that
17 in Jacksonville, where in Jacksonville one of the
18 classes was 90% proficient, where in Pine Bluff we're
19 struggling with getting them to the 50% proficient.
20 It just depends on how the children come to us, where
21 they are.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

23 MS. COFFMAN: Dr. Anderson, I have several
24 questions.

25 DR. ANDERSON: Okay.

1 MS. COFFMAN: One was a comment you made that
2 this is a model but you differentiate for the
3 community. Could you expand on how you plan to
4 differentiate for this community?

5 DR. ANDERSON: Well, I think that it's really
6 based on -- and thank you for that question 'cause it
7 allows me to address the issue they brought up about
8 the annual report as well. I think that once we
9 actually get the scholars and we know where they are
10 and what their needs are we make adjustments based on
11 those needs. In Jacksonville this past year we made
12 huge adjustments in our curriculum. We've been using
13 Saxon math as part of our model since we started and
14 we moved to My Math to address the more rigorous
15 Common Core standards, but also to address that
16 population. But that may not be necessarily
17 something we do in Saxon. Saxon math works well for
18 those scholars that are behind and that need to
19 repeat those standards for them to get that
20 foundational academic support. So that's how we
21 adjust the particular curriculum. We don't have per
22 se a set curriculum like we used to have at one
23 point. At one point all of our schools used Saxon
24 math; all of our schools use Open Court Reading; all
25 of our schools use FOSS Science. At this point now

1 we have the ability to use the curriculum that we
2 feel would best meet the needs of those particular
3 scholars. And that's one thing, also, in
4 Jacksonville, we use the College Board's Springboard
5 curriculum that does prepare them for college. It is
6 a middle school curriculum for pre-AP. All of our
7 teachers are pre-AP certified, attended training,
8 College Board training to address the level -- in
9 Jacksonville, we have a huge range of abilities. We
10 have scholars that are performing very well; we have
11 scholars that are performing in the middle; and
12 scholars that are not. And so we do try to
13 differentiate to make sure that we also have a
14 curriculum that can move those scholars that are at
15 the high end up, as well as move everybody to the
16 next level. So that's one way we differentiate.
17 Arts infusion is arts infusion everywhere.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Go ahead, Ms. Coffman.

19 MS. COFFMAN: So I have several. So in your
20 conversation just now you talked about curriculum
21 that would be used primarily as an intervention
22 curriculum for students, as you noted, that would be
23 behind grade level expectations. What is your
24 curriculum for all students on grade level? What is
25 your curriculum there?

1 DR. ANDERSON: Well, My Math and Saxon is the
2 curriculum for all students. We use Saxon K-4 for
3 math; we use Open Court Reading and Imagine in K-4
4 for math. What I spoke to earlier was that when we
5 see that there is a gap in what they know and what
6 they're able to do, and then we analyze the
7 curriculum to see if there's a gap there. We do get
8 other instructional resources to lift up the
9 curriculum. So what I spoke to earlier was that we
10 saw that our scholars did not perform well on the
11 conventions and so we got -- we used sentence
12 combining to -- and we initiated writing initiatives
13 so that we could address teaching of some conventions
14 through writing and we saw our scores raise.

15 MS. COFFMAN: I'm looking at the sample 3rd
16 grade and sample 5th grade schedules and I'm noticing
17 computer time one day a week. Could you address how
18 technology will be infused in the curriculum?

19 DR. ANDERSON: Sure. Absolutely. Thank you for
20 that question. For our CPA, we actually have a one-
21 to-one laptop program. All of our 9th and 10th
22 graders have laptops. When we use those, they use
23 those -- we use online curriculum and online
24 resources as a part of our academic program. All
25 Lighthouse schools have a media center with computer

1 labs where we use online resources. We use IXL. We
2 use Reading Naturally online services to address
3 those scholars that are behind in reading
4 comprehension. And we also use it to assess. NWEA
5 is actually taken online, as we prepare to move to
6 assessing scholars online using state assessments.

7 MS. COFFMAN: What is your plan for technology
8 instruction in elementary grades?

9 DR. ANDERSON: That is in elementary grades. So
10 I talked about the one-to-one laptop program for our
11 high school students, but in the elementary grades we
12 do use our computer lab, the IXL program. We also
13 use a little hand-held device called Teacher Mates in
14 our K-2 program, which is kind of like, you know, one
15 of the hand-held games where they put on and they
16 actually get support in literacy and in math. And
17 the teachers use that during small groups in
18 differentiation to support what's being taught and to
19 address scholars where they are. So --

20 MS. COFFMAN: Okay. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Anderson, what --
22 probably the question -- they're visiting a lab once
23 a week. So what is the purpose of the lab? And as
24 these students now are going to be assessed using
25 these tools how do you create this familiarity with

1 those tools if they're in there once a week for, you
2 know, a period of time and you're going to be
3 spending a great deal of time assessing their ability
4 on the Common Core standards next spring -- well, not
5 this next spring but the spring after? So what is
6 the approach for learning and the use of this
7 technology in your elementary program?

8 DR. ANDERSON: Well, I think we have a blended
9 learning approach. So do you all go once a week as
10 part of -- do you want to talk about that a little
11 bit? This is the principal of Jacksonville
12 Lighthouse Charter School.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

14 MR. WHITFIELD: All right. Good afternoon.
15 Norman Whitfield, serving as the K-6 principal, 7-10
16 principal for the CPA. We actually have a computer
17 lab schedule that's stacked. Okay? So each class
18 will get no less than an hour a week in the class.
19 That's the static schedule. And then teachers also
20 have flex schedules where they can schedule times in
21 the computer lab throughout the week. Okay? So the
22 computer lab isn't maximized just to the one hour of
23 static schedule. Okay? But that's the very minimum
24 that we want to make sure that every class is in
25 there at least one hour. And then the DTL's work

1 with the teachers based on the needs of the students
2 to schedule in extra flex time based on the needs.
3 So if it's a math need, IXL; if it's a literacy need,
4 Read Naturally; if they're preparing for NWEA, we
5 give them flex time for NWEA. We actually have our
6 kindergarten start at the beginning of the year
7 learning which button to push. We have some great
8 kindergarten teachers. Both won awards yesterday for
9 NWEA growth; 100% of their students met NWEA targets
10 of 120% or more. And they teach them to push the
11 button. There's a magic button and you learn how to
12 push the button, learn how to put the earphones on.
13 So it's a gradual release process where we get
14 students to learn how to use technology. A big part
15 of our program is retention of scholars. So if we
16 get them in kindergarten and we introduce them to
17 technology in a very systematic way, by the time they
18 get to 5th grade, 6th grade, 7th grade, 8th grade,
19 9th grade, they've been using technology in various
20 ways. So we don't just rest and depend on that one
21 hour in the computer lab, but that one hour in the
22 computer lab is very rich because they are using
23 programs that are targeted toward their individual
24 growth. We also use our technology programs and our
25 ELL program, or afterschool program, our remediation

1 program. So far, students that have the greatest
2 growth they are actually on computers 45 minutes per
3 day in their intervention classes with their
4 intervention teachers. So that's 45 minutes of IXL
5 and 45 minutes of independent work, small group work.
6 ELL happens twice a week, so that's more 45-minute
7 sections for students who are further behind or that
8 are at-risk to use those technology resources as
9 well.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Let's start back with Mr.
11 Hoy and we'll work back around. Remember, you can
12 ask questions of any of the applicants or school
13 districts represented.

14 MR. HOY: Yes, sir. The direction I'd like to
15 go this time is in the direction of your mission. So
16 it seems essentially that you are looking at
17 preparing kids for college. With that in mind, I see
18 that what you're using to measure that with is 100%
19 being accepted. What I'm wondering about is the
20 staying power of the students once they arrive in
21 college, so that would be one of the questions. And
22 I know that since you're just four years in that
23 might not be something you can answer at least from
24 an Arkansas standpoint at this particular point, but
25 maybe you can give me a global perspective in terms

1 of the Lighthouse organization. But also in terms of
2 your graduating seniors, I know you spoke a little
3 bit about the graduation rates and I know while you
4 may not have the graduation rates yet, you probably
5 have preliminary graduation rates and may have looked
6 at them. And I was just wondering if you did not
7 mind just giving us a share on what you are looking
8 at preliminarily, knowing that it may change. And,
9 lastly, in terms of your end-product, I know you're
10 looking at all of your students taking the AP exams
11 but I was wondering do you also track what percentage
12 of them make three's or above on your AP exam? And
13 if so, what those numbers might be like?

14 DR. ANDERSON: So I don't have that information
15 'cause we don't have any students taking AP exams
16 yet. We have several that are enrolled in pre-AP
17 exams. In terms of our graduation, we've had two --
18 for Lighthouse Academies, we've had two graduating
19 classes that 100% graduated and 100% were admitted
20 into college. We are looking at, right now, how to
21 measure and track their performance while they're in
22 college. So there's a software, the Novia software
23 that we use to actually keep track with our graduates
24 and how they're doing there. That's as far as we are
25 with that. There's so many variables around whether

1 or not people -- students are successful in college
2 or not, so we're not -- we haven't gotten to the
3 point where we are able to actually predict -- or if
4 they have a goal around performance yet. We're
5 getting to that point.

6 MR. HOY: Okay. I can see that for Arkansas
7 specifically --

8 DR. ANDERSON: Right.

9 MR. HOY: -- but I was thinking more globally in
10 terms of your organization outside the state of
11 Arkansas, as well.

12 DR. ANDERSON: Right. We do have a software in
13 place where we are tracking. We just graduated our
14 first class --

15 MR. HOY: Okay.

16 DR. ANDERSON: -- in May. Uh-huh.

17 MR. HOY: Gotcha.

18 DR. ANDERSON: Yeah. We just graduated our two
19 first classes in May of last year. Now you had three
20 other questions. Can you remind me of what the
21 second one was?

22 MR. HOY: Oh. One was the pre-AP, which you --

23 DR. ANDERSON: Okay.

24 MR. HOY: I mean, you can't give what you don't
25 have yet. One was the graduation rate, which you are

1 doing preliminary -- I think you actually answered
2 all three of them at this particular point, so I'll
3 wait for my turn --

4 DR. ANDERSON: Okay.

5 MR. HOY: -- to come around again before I ask
6 another one.

7 DR. ANDERSON: I can actually kind of respond to
8 that a little bit more about how our scholars are
9 doing in Jacksonville. We do say that 95% of our
10 scholars are on track to graduate from high school in
11 four years at this point based on credits that they
12 have achieved. And 85% of the 9th graders met
13 college readiness benchmark as measured by their
14 score exam. So we do give the scholars the Explore,
15 the Plan, the PSAT, SAT and Ready Step. We actually
16 also give them Ready Step, which is College Board, in
17 7th grade and 9th grade.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

19 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Anderson, I have a couple of
20 questions about curriculum. The units that you've
21 provided as part of the application, it seems like
22 they're theme related, the language arts lesson
23 plans. Is this a model -- this is a model that all
24 of your schools use -- is that correct? -- in the
25 other states as well?

1 MS. CROWDER: Hello, I'm Amanda Crowder. I'm
2 the director of Teacher Leadership for Jacksonville
3 Lighthouse CPA. And, yes, all of our teachers use a
4 lesson plan template that they are required to fill
5 out for each school and what you see in front of you
6 is what all of our teachers are required to do. It
7 is a model.

8 DR. ANDERSON: Was that your question?

9 DR. WALTERS: Well, no, actually, it seemed to
10 me like that they were -- all the language arts --
11 and it may just be from what you've given us. It may
12 be this sample. I don't know.

13 MS. CROWDER: Yes, it's just the sample.

14 DR. WALTERS: But it seems like they're theme
15 based. My question was: so you're saying that they
16 develop these lesson plans or is this a model
17 curriculum that's given to them?

18 MS. CROWDER: The teachers develop their
19 individual lesson plans based upon the curriculum
20 they use. 'Cause we develop our -- the data that we
21 have from each of our students is not set. So what
22 we do in a language arts class for one 5th grade
23 class might not necessarily at Flight Line be the
24 same thing that's being done at the Jacksonville on
25 Main Street because it depends on where our students

1 are performing on the biweekly assessments for that
2 standard.

3 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And my second question was
4 -- and I may have missed something, but you were
5 talking about Saxon is your math curriculum for K-4?

6 DR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh. We use Saxon for K-4
7 now.

8 DR. WALTERS: Is that all that you use for your
9 math curriculum?

10 DR. ANDERSON: No. We use -- we supplement with
11 IXL. We do use Saxon. We do -- we have found that
12 Saxon worked well for us until it got to the upper
13 grades and so now we use My Math for the upper
14 grades. But we use a variety of supplemental
15 programs to lift up the curriculum and to review and
16 remediate and to also offer opportunities for parents
17 and scholars to work at this at home, as well. We
18 also use ConCademy; we use a variety of additional
19 instructional resources.

20 DR. WALTERS: Okay. I guess -- it's been a
21 hundred years ago since I was in the classroom and a
22 principal, but we used Saxon and Saxon is good for
23 what I call dribble practice. But Saxon does not get
24 to any higher levels of thinking. If that's your K-4
25 curriculum, that is a concern.

1 DR. ANDERSON: That -- well, it is our K-4
2 curriculum. But what we had to do was bump it up a
3 level for all of our students. So the 4th grade has
4 used the 5th grade, and it does give -- because of
5 how our scholars come to us it does give them that
6 fundamental practice that they need in math. Because
7 we know what a scholar doesn't know in 3rd grade will
8 show up again in algebra. If they don't learn how to
9 multiply and divide, it will show up again in
10 algebra. They won't be able to pass that. So the
11 paradigm, thinking around that, is that we want to
12 make sure that they have those fundamental skills and
13 Saxon does a good job of doing that. But we also do
14 a good job of differentiating and meeting the needs
15 of those high performing scholars, meeting the needs
16 wherever they are through push-out/pull-in and giving
17 them enrichment activities.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. To kind of piggyback off
20 Mr. Hoy's and Ms. Walters' questions regarding
21 college and college readiness, and also math, being a
22 former high school math teacher I was kind of looking
23 at some of these test scores for your high school in
24 Jacksonville and noticed that a lot of the
25 proficiency scores were at the 30% to 40% range. And

1 to me that's a little bit concerning. I was just
2 wondering what are y'all doing in Jacksonville, and
3 moving forward if you were to do this new charter --
4 what would you be doing to address those or some of
5 the practices you have in place to try to insure that
6 those kids are going to college and have a good solid
7 math background and have that staying power when they
8 get there?

9 DR. ANDERSON: Did you say for the high school?

10 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

11 DR. ANDERSON: Okay.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: The 9-12.

13 DR. ANDERSON: SO what we found with -- and so
14 actually what the data will tell you is that those --
15 that the majority of our 8th graders taken Algebra I
16 in 8th grade. So what you found with those 9th
17 graders that were taking Algebra I, zero percent of
18 those scholars were proficient the year before. So
19 what you see is progress in their proficiency level
20 for those 9th grade students. And so one thing that
21 we've done and one thing that I talked about is we
22 definitely did change our math curriculum. That's
23 why we shifted to Springboard for math and literacy
24 for those courses, to offer them that rigor. And
25 another thing we did was professional development.

1 We invested the money to send them actually to the
2 College Board training, a four-day, week-long
3 training in Dallas this past summer to give the
4 teachers the skills that they need also. We also
5 have math interventionists this year. So we are
6 aware that that is an area where some of our students
7 are really, really struggling in. And then another
8 thing is just making sure that we have an aligned
9 curriculum, but there's so many different pieces that
10 we've put in place this year around aligning the
11 curriculum to the assessment. We moved to Common
12 Core a year early; we were really trying to get that
13 rigor in. And trying to teach the Common Core as
14 well as the Arkansas Framework is a challenge. It's
15 -- you know -- it's a balancing act. It seems as if
16 it would be easy, because one Common Core standard --
17 three Common Core -- three Arkansas standards may
18 make up one Common Core standard, but the
19 instructional shifts are so great that we're still
20 doing professional development with our teachers in
21 order for them to kind of gain a better understanding
22 of how to change their direct instruction and how to
23 measure how our students are doing.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thanks.

25 DR. WITONSKI: Hello. Good afternoon. So I

1 know we've talked about curriculum. We've talked
2 about Saxon. And one of the solutions for the math
3 curriculum is moving your 4th graders into maybe the
4 5th grade Saxon?

5 DR. ANDERSON: Well, that's what we did for
6 Jacksonville. Saxon is not the only math. We can
7 use enVision Math. Some of our schools use Singapore
8 Math. So we use a variety of different math programs
9 across our schools. Saxon is just what we use in
10 Jacksonville. And as we move into these more
11 rigorous standards we're doing more research around
12 different math programs and we just don't know yet
13 what math programs will really develop the skills
14 needed to master the Common Core standards.

15 DR. WITONSKI: And I think that's where our
16 concerns come about.

17 DR. ANDERSON: Right.

18 DR. WITONSKI: And so as we're trying to move
19 forward, as you've stated, if they don't have the
20 skill in one grade level it's difficult for them to
21 take it on to the next grade level.

22 DR. ANDERSON: Right.

23 DR. WITONSKI: And if they've been experiencing
24 a low-level program of just the fundamentals, such as
25 what Saxon offers, it's definitely a concern which

1 could then relate itself to what we're seeing over in
2 Jacksonville high school.

3 DR. ANDERSON: At the high school. Absolutely.

4 DR. WITONSKI: Yes, absolutely. So you talked
5 about that you implemented Common Core standards a
6 year early. So what year did you implement the
7 Common Core?

8 DR. ANDERSON: Last year. We moved to Common
9 Core last year.

10 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

12 MR. BOARDMAN: Thank you. Yeah, a couple of
13 things. One simple one is: what AP courses are you
14 offering now at the high school level?

15 DR. ANDERSON: We don't offer any. We don't
16 have any AP classes right now; 10th grade is the
17 highest we have right now and they'll move into the
18 AP classes next year. We offer pre-AP classes.

19 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. Another thing: I looked at
20 the waivers; I think you asked for about six waivers.

21 DR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh. I'm happy to discuss
22 those.

23 MR. BOARDMAN: Most of those -- I didn't really
24 see those that had much to do with curriculum or --

25 DR. ANDERSON: No.

1 MR. BOARDMAN: Again, I hear the word -- maybe
2 it was North Little Rock about being innovative.
3 What do you see as innovative as far as the students
4 are concerned in what you're trying to do? Are you
5 just doing what -- just gifted and -- what's
6 different about this than what would be in a school
7 in North Little Rock?

8 DR. ANDERSON: Well, I think that -- well, I
9 think that what we do differently is really around --
10 there are a lot of components that we do differently,
11 around parental involvement. We have parents on our
12 board; we have parents that are involved in our
13 school-based management team. We do home visits at
14 the beginning of the year, every one of our scholars.
15 The teachers visit their homes to make a home/school
16 connection. We bring teachers back two weeks early
17 for professional development to prepare them for
18 that. I think the commitment from the families that
19 have their students there; longer day; longer year.
20 When most people are out May 31st headed to vacation
21 our families are committed to stay there until June
22 14th, 15th, 16th for that longer school year. I
23 think the arts infusion is huge around what we do
24 differently. I think that basically we make a
25 concerted effort -- I think that we provide a safe

1 environment. You know, North Little Rock talked
2 about not having an educational need. We've never
3 had to expel a student yet. We don't have an
4 alternative learning environment because we reach
5 students where they are; we keep them in the
6 classroom. Our social curriculum really does do a
7 lot around developing social skills and gives -- and
8 it helps teachers around teacher language and how to
9 deal and redirect misbehaviors as well and to build
10 -- and not for just putting a child out of the class
11 to be the option. So I think that those are some of
12 the things that we do. I think that basically
13 parents are satisfied with their children being in a
14 safe environment where there are high expectations,
15 no matter where they come to us, and that we're going
16 to try to do our best to meet those expectations. I
17 think that what we do differently and what they --
18 what a North Little Rock student will enjoy, that he
19 may or may not get, really is around the arts
20 infusion and their students being engaged in a
21 different way and their students being assessed in a
22 different way and their students' teaching maybe in a
23 different way than what they have been accustomed to.
24 We do have a lot of students that come to us that
25 have not been successful in other schools and they

1 are successful with us. So --

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

3 MS. COFFMAN: Dr. Anderson, I'm looking in the
4 application at the list of curriculum items and I'm
5 concerned that I see huge gaps. So, for example, you
6 have Saxon math as K-4 but then as I look down to any
7 other math there's no grade levels. So I'm not
8 seeing math for 5-8. So let me clarify my question
9 by asking you: if we were to approve this application
10 for Capitol City Lighthouse, what is your plan for
11 opening? Are you planning to open a K-12
12 immediately?

13 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Kimbrell
14 stepped out of the room at 1:45 p.m.)

15 DR. ANDERSON: No, we're not. We opened -- and
16 just depending on the facility that we're able to
17 renovate -- we opened in Jacksonville K-6 and then we
18 add a grade every year. We opened in Pine Bluff K-4
19 and now we're to 6th grade. So it's a K-12 model but
20 we won't open K-12.

21 MS. COFFMAN: Okay. And so I don't see a
22 complete curriculum listed for a K-6 model.

23 DR. ANDERSON: Did you get the responses?

24 MS. COFFMAN: Yes.

25 DR. ANDERSON: I think that in the responses we

1 outlined assessments that's used and whether or not
2 they're formative or normative and what grades. And
3 then beneath that we also list the curriculum.

4 MS. COFFMAN: I see that. That's what I'm
5 looking at.

6 DR. ANDERSON: You see it? My Math -- do you
7 see it right here?

8 MS. COFFMAN: I see My Math, Parts 1 and 2.

9 DR. ANDERSON: And above that My Math 5th grade
10 and then Springboard, College Board.

11 MS. COFFMAN: It has them listed; it has no
12 grade level on this sheet.

13 DR. ANDERSON: This is the responses that we had
14 to submit after the application.

15 MS. COFFMAN: Okay.

16 DR. ANDERSON: So I'm not sure if you actually
17 have this, but this is what was submitted when we got
18 the clarifying questions.

19 MS. COFFMAN: Okay. My second question is: what
20 type of professional development is provided for your
21 teachers around this curriculum?

22 DR. ANDERSON: We do professional development
23 around all content.

24 MS. COFFMAN: Be more specific, please, "round
25 this curriculum."

1 DR. ANDERSON: Which one? My Math?

2 MS. COFFMAN: Any of your math courses, what is

3 --

4 DR. ANDERSON: Oh, okay. So for Springboard
5 they actually did a four-day training, presented by
6 College Board. We actually do content training in
7 every one of the content areas. So they get the
8 content training in Saxon; they get the content
9 training in My Math; they get the content training in
10 Springboard, as well as for literacy, as well.

11 MS. COFFMAN: And who provides that training?

12 DR. ANDERSON: Well, we actually -- our leaders
13 provide some of the training. Some of the training
14 we have brought in specialists from Imagine It, to
15 come in and actually do some of the training. Also,
16 we have lead teachers that will provide some of the
17 training. And then the professional development is
18 ongoing throughout the school year. Through their
19 grade level meetings that they have weekly, they're
20 constantly having an opportunity to revisit the
21 curriculum and revisit the curriculum MAPS as well
22 and make the adjustments in the meeting.

23 MS. COFFMAN: Okay. And let me close by asking
24 a clarifying question. You mentioned that you had
25 hired a math coach at one of your schools?

1 DR. ANDERSON: Uh-huh.

2 MS. COFFMAN: Could you kind of describe the
3 role that math coach plays?

4 DR. ANDERSON: We actually have
5 interventionists. I don't know if I said coach. We
6 actually have math and reading interventionists.

7 MS. COFFMAN: Okay.

8 DR. ANDERSON: And so the interventionist
9 supports the scholar. So the interventionist
10 provides direct services to the scholar. So our
11 Director of Teacher Leadership actually provides
12 services to the teacher around teacher development.

13 MS. COFFMAN: Thank you.

14 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Boardman, you're recognized.

15 MR. BOARDMAN: I'll pass for now. I'll pass.
16 I'll have maybe one more chance.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Hernandez?

18 MR. HERNANDEZ: This may be a question for
19 Legal. I saw some legal references about as far as
20 the conflicts of interest; there was some questions
21 about the possible conflict of interest with the
22 charter facility's management acquiring property to
23 be leased by the charter schools.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Ms. Clay, would you come up
25 please?

1 MS. CLAY: When the original application came in
2 we just needed some additional information about that
3 relationship. You have that information before you.
4 I can tell you that it's not uncommon for a charter
5 management organization to in fact have this kind of
6 arrangement. But when we had -- when we made the
7 legal comments we just needed some additional
8 information for you all to review.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.

10 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Kimbrell
11 returned to the room at 1:50 p.m.)

12 DR. WITONSKI: Dr. Walters?

13 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Anderson, I would like to go
14 back to talk about math for Jacksonville. And you
15 have made gains in literacy and I want to give you
16 credit for that. I don't have issue with that. But
17 you said, you know, Saxon has been the basis for your
18 K-4, and I appreciate that y'all think that that's
19 working well. But I guess my concern is when we look
20 at the data -- if you look at the K-4, only one out
21 of eight of the different groups -- looking at all
22 students, when looking at AMO's, only one out of
23 eight met their AMO this year. When you look at the
24 growth for the 4-8 none -- none of those groups met
25 their AMO in math. And if we move to the middle

1 school, which is 5-8, only one out of 10 of those
2 groups met for performance; only two out of 10 met
3 for growth. So this K-4 curriculum that you've been
4 using -- these 5-8 students, that's their feeder
5 school. So if that is being so successful we have a
6 lot of groups of kids that aren't meeting growth or
7 status, either one. When we move on to the high
8 school level not one group -- not one group met
9 status and some of them were 20 and 30 points below
10 what their annual measurable objective was set. So
11 I'm concerned that you feel -- and I understand with
12 educators we can argue and everybody has, you know,
13 what they think is best in what you need to do. But
14 Jacksonville Charter has been in operation now for
15 four years. So if you've been there four years and
16 this curriculum is working, we've got lots of kids
17 that looks like to me are getting farther and farther
18 behind when it comes to math. So I'd like for you to
19 explain that to me.

20 DR. ANDERSON: Actually, I think that what we
21 saw was a dip. So you think about -- I can talk
22 about one example. We had 90% of our 3rd graders
23 proficient -- of our 4th graders proficient in math
24 last year, which is huge for the population that
25 we're serving. We're 68% Free and Reduced at

1 Jacksonville, 91% Free and Reduced in Pine Bluff.
2 But we did see a dip in their math performance and I
3 think that the majority of that may be curriculum.
4 Like that's why we made the adjustment to the
5 curriculum. That's why we went back to that to see
6 that, but -- and another part of it was that I think
7 that we were focusing on literacy so much also. We
8 put a lot of literacy initiatives in there because we
9 thought that we were there with math, that math
10 slipped and literacy went up. And so, honestly, in
11 transparency, that may be a little bit part of it but
12 we also do recognize that Saxon does not move
13 children forward at the level that we wanted for them
14 to move to in the upper grades. We're saying that in
15 the K-4 we found that Saxon has been good in trying
16 to prepare scholars. So I think that there are a lot
17 of other variables also that can -- we can talk about
18 with higher scores. Like I said, I think what we --
19 when we analyzed it, they just did not perform well
20 on the open responses. So we know we have to do a
21 better job of preparing them in open responses as
22 well. So I appreciate your comment about the
23 curriculum and I think that we are also always
24 looking at the curriculum that would best fit in our
25 accelerated student achievement at the level that we

1 want for it to.

2 DR. WALTERS: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

4 MR. HOY: Actually, this question is for Dr.
5 Rodgers, if you don't mind. I know in your
6 presentation you said you did not have much of an
7 opportunity to hear much about this particular
8 application. After the testimony you've heard today,
9 given your thinking now in terms of educational need
10 versus choice and whether or not you feel like this
11 charter is providing something that may not be
12 offered in your district -- I think I saw you
13 motioning a couple of times back near the back and I
14 just wanted to get your thoughts on that.

15 SUPT. RODGERS: Well, thank you. Again, I still
16 agree this charter does not provide anything
17 innovative, anything more than we're providing in
18 North Little Rock. Actually, I've got Rosie here and
19 Beth here; they can provide you more detail. But
20 just as she mentioned with Saxon math, I was over
21 curriculum back in the mid-90's when we were really
22 working with Saxon math. It never was intended to be
23 a curriculum. And as we've gone through this -- and
24 we've had a short amount of time -- there are more
25 and more and more of those things in there that we

1 haven't been able to delve into that we think do not
2 make this innovative. Saxon math is just meant for,
3 to use the slang, drill-and-kill, to help those kids,
4 but it was not meant as a curriculum. We do not see
5 strong curriculum in here. We do not see strong
6 evidence that they are doing anything more than we're
7 doing in the North Little Rock School District. And,
8 again, if you want more detail Dr. Stewart is here
9 and Rosie Coleman is here; they can speak more to
10 that.

11 MR. HOY: Then in terms of the end-results, I
12 think you heard testimony about in the goal schools
13 there's like 100% college going rate or something
14 akin to that. And since that is the overall mission
15 of the enterprise I was wondering about your thoughts
16 on that.

17 SUPT. RODGERS: Well, actually, our goal in
18 North Little Rock School District -- because we know
19 not every kid is college-bound -- we are focusing on
20 college and career readiness. And we're focusing
21 also on more of our kids going to college and more of
22 our kids going to be career ready. That's the reason
23 we are moving forward with an aggressive STEM program
24 so we are preparing kids for careers or college,
25 because we know that not all kids are college-bound

1 but they can be ready for the workforce with advanced
2 career development and come out with the skills ready
3 to go into the workplace. Does that answer your
4 question?

5 MR. HOY: It kind of does, except for this
6 philosophy that I'm hearing that if you're going to
7 be ready for the world of careers that is basically
8 the same skill set, at least --

9 SUPT. RODGERS: Well, just to give an example,
10 in our medical technologies, a student might get
11 ready and go into the field of medicine, which is a
12 college course. They also might get a certification
13 to where they are going to work on an ambulance as a
14 driver. So when they leave our vision is they have
15 that diploma; just like our vision is world class --
16 that diploma, that child will go out in the workforce
17 and can take that any place in the world, whether
18 it's an electrician or working on an ambulance as an
19 EMT or whatever that may be.

20 DR. ANDERSON: And I just want to go back. I
21 don't want to belabor Saxon. I'm not married to
22 Saxon. We, you know, are happy to do whatever. But
23 when we talk about Pine Bluff, we saw a 16% increase
24 in the area of math for their performance from the
25 previous year. So I think that any curriculum where

1 people are prepared and they use it will do what we
2 need for it to do -- and what it doesn't need to do,
3 we have to lift up the curriculum. We know that. We
4 have to lift up the curriculum, no matter what
5 curriculum we choose to use. But I also know that
6 there was a dip across the state in the performance
7 of math as well. And I appreciate you all letting us
8 know how many -- reminding us how many AMO's we
9 didn't achieve, but I'd like to know how many North
10 Little Rock didn't achieve.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Anderson, thank you.
12 We've got members who I think are going --

13 DR. ANDERSON: Okay.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Based on that comment about the
16 dip information, I think it would be helpful to us --
17 Ms. Perry, is it possible to get this same data on
18 North Little Rock schools, as far as their middle
19 school and high school scores for this last year?

20 MS. PERRY: I don't have that with me but we can
21 get that for you.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: But, yes, if somebody could
23 ask Mr. Paron to provide that to the Panel I think
24 that would be most helpful. Okay. Dr. Witonski, do
25 you have other questions?

1 DR. WITONSKI: Dr. Anderson, so -- and I know we
2 keep going back to this curriculum idea. I think the
3 concern is between what is curriculum and what are
4 programs and what are instructional materials --

5 DR. ANDERSON: Right.

6 DR. WITONSKI: -- and knowing the difference
7 between those two. One of the waivers that you
8 actually have requested -- and this can be found on
9 page 23 of their contained documents, which I believe
10 is on page 152 in our packet. This is 6-16-102 for
11 School Day Hours. And we know that that is not
12 provided if you want to extend those hours, which
13 would lead me to believe that you want to shorten
14 those hours?

15 DR. ANDERSON: No. We wanted to extend it. In
16 our response, we made the clarification.

17 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

18 DR. ANDERSON: Because we have an eight-hour
19 day.

20 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

21 DR. ANDERSON: That was what it was.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

23 DR. ANDERSON: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I see Mr. Boardman has a
25 question.

1 MR. BOARDMAN: No. I'm just -- again, I was
2 going back looking at the math. So maybe when we get
3 the numbers on North Little Rock -- but, again, when
4 I look at growth -- I mean, when you look at this
5 it's just -- it seems to be very poor performance in
6 mathematics any way you look at it. It's below the
7 level of expectation and that is on growth or
8 proficiency, so -- but we'll -- maybe we can compare
9 that a little bit later. But unless I'm reading it
10 wrong, when you look at the red that we've got here
11 in math that -- as Dr. Walters pointed out, there's
12 only two green in all the scores, so -- I mean on
13 Jacksonville.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

15 DR. ANDERSON: I do say -- I do want to point
16 out, as I pointed out earlier, is that our
17 subpopulations are making growth. So our students
18 with disabilities and our ELL students did make
19 growth in the area of math.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman, do you have a
21 question?

22 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. Dr. Anderson, during the
23 conversation you mentioned that you were applying in
24 the North Little Rock School District, not the Little
25 Rock School District. And I'd like to ask why, why

1 you're not applying in Little Rock School District
2 and why you selected North Little Rock?

3 DR. ANDERSON: One of the things is that we
4 think that Little Rock School District has an
5 abundance of charter schools, along with the Little
6 Rock School District; that they are -- parents have
7 many choices. So, in North Little Rock, there's only
8 one charter school in North Little Rock, the LISA
9 Academy and so we felt like there was a greater need
10 in the North Little Rock School District. And I
11 would say that originally we were actually approached
12 by the Argenta development community about doing a
13 charter school in North Little Rock a few years ago,
14 as they started to revitalize their arts district.
15 And so that is where the initial interest came from.
16 And so we've been in -- our regional offices are in
17 North Little Rock, above the THEA Foundation, so
18 we've been in North Little Rock for the last few
19 years, just building relationships, riding around,
20 looking at these areas of need. This particular area
21 was not something that we just had to have. We
22 actually approached North Little Rock School District
23 about trying to lease one of their many buildings
24 that they are closing, and we were -- they were not
25 interested in doing that for us. So if they continue

1 to have an issue with where we're located, we're
2 happy to, you know, talk to them about leasing one of
3 their facilities. But we also looked in the Lynch
4 Drive area and the Rose City area; we looked in the
5 McAlmont area; we looked in the Levy area. We saw a
6 facility in the Levy area that we really liked but it
7 was too big for us to finance the outfitting of. And
8 then the area that we looked at over on Maple Street
9 was also another area of need that we looked at. I'm
10 actually from England, Arkansas, so I actually spent
11 a lot of time in North Little Rock growing up. I'm
12 very familiar with the area. And I also had
13 mentioned that I'm also a former North Little Rock
14 parent. So when we started looking we actually just
15 simply rode around and looked at the areas that we
16 thought were -- there was a need for choice and it's
17 very difficult to find facilities.

18 MS. COFFMAN: Is the Maple Street address
19 considered part of Argenta?

20 DR. ANDERSON: It's down -- it's not -- it's in
21 the area. It may be; I'm not certain. It's in the
22 area. We actually were really interested in the
23 Argenta Academy at one point, when they talked about
24 closing that as well, but it is probably about four
25 blocks -- we're on 4th Street, it's on 18th. So

1 that's how far down it is.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I think -- Dr. Walters, do
3 you have questions?

4 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Anderson, I have a question
5 about one of the waivers you've requested, and that
6 is for class size for lower grades. And, Ms. Perry,
7 please correct me if I'm wrong. I know that we give
8 waivers frequently for class size for upper grades,
9 but I see you're requesting for kindergarten and
10 first grade. Can you give me your rationale for
11 that?

12 DR. ANDERSON: This is a waiver that we have.
13 That's our class size, 22. I think it's two over
14 than what the -- I think it's 20, and so we're just
15 requesting 22. It's a waiver that we have for
16 Jacksonville; it's also a waiver that we have in
17 place for Pine Bluff.

18 DR. WALTERS: Now actually what's written here
19 -- well, maybe it's incorrect -- but 22 you can have
20 if you have a halftime aid under Standards. You're
21 asking to go 10% above that.

22 DR. ANDERSON: That's just under special
23 circumstances. So that's like if we were putting 24
24 in one class, 20 in another, as long as we don't go
25 over the regular cap, where we do have -- we do

1 provide the paraprofessionals also for those classes.

2 DR. WALTERS: Well, Dr. Anderson, since -- you
3 know -- since you've said that many of the students
4 that you serve are below level -- of course, the
5 kindergarten, we wouldn't call below grade level.
6 But I know that the research doesn't really support
7 reducing class size as you get to the middle level,
8 but there's a huge body of research out there that
9 supports reducing class size at these grade levels.
10 So I guess I'm having a hard time understanding your
11 rationale of your 24 kindergartners in a classroom
12 with students who are, you know, probably coming and
13 not being from homes that have had books read to them
14 and things like that.

15 DR. ANDERSON: So I don't think any of our
16 classes have 24. That's -- we asked for that
17 flexibility in case those circumstances arise. Our
18 classes are 22 and we do provide the part-time
19 paraprofessional to assist the teacher. And I think
20 it's around trying to meet the need that we have. I
21 think that that's where we have the biggest part of
22 our wait list is at the kindergarten level. So I
23 think that that's part of also trying to meet the
24 needs of the interest that we have.

25 DR. WALTERS: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I'll just ask if any of the
2 rest of the panel members have questions? Okay. So
3 you've got all of your questions answered. You've
4 got an application here for a K-12 with a 750 cap
5 art-infused school. So we can discuss what the
6 pleasure of the Panel is in this application.

7 MR. HOY: An observation, Dr. Kimbrell. I think
8 one of the requests was to get the information on
9 North Little Rock. I don't know if we've gotten that
10 yet, so --

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: They must be working on that
12 as we speak now. So do you want to take a break and
13 look at that? It has been a little involved but I
14 also know that there are people waiting to see what's
15 going to happen and have their opportunity also
16 before this Panel.

17 MR. HOY: Well, then I guess the question goes
18 to the person that asked specifically for that data.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez? I don't want
20 you to make a decision you're not comfortable making
21 or without the information that you need to have in
22 your hands.

23 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'm okay with voting.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Does anybody else need that
25 information?

1 MR. BOARDMAN: I'm okay.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

3 MR. HOY: Short of getting that particular
4 information, I would like to direct one more question
5 to Superintendent Rodgers.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

7 DR. STEWART: It's me. It'll have to be me
8 instead.

9 MR. HOY: Okay.

10 DR. STEWART: I'm the pinch-hitter today.

11 MR. HOY: Then I was wondering if you've had an
12 opportunity to look at the ESEA status reports for
13 North Little Rock and if you would see that there was
14 a substantial difference between what you've seen in
15 Capitol City Charter's results and your results?

16 DR. STEWART: Actually, my -- Ray, if you would
17 come up here. This is Ray Girdler. He was sworn in
18 originally. But he really is my data guy, so he can
19 answer just about any question that you have.

20 MR. GIRDLER: Most of the questions -- the data
21 you don't have, I have that; I just don't have a
22 hard-copy of it and that's one of the reasons why, we
23 had that delay. If we didn't have that delay I would
24 have had so much data in your hands you wouldn't have
25 to ask half the questions that you asked today. The

1 first question was the ESEA reports. The biggest
2 thing you need to know about the ESEA reports is that
3 we went from two Priority; 11 -- 9 Focus. We have no
4 Priority; three Achieving; six Focus; seven Needs
5 Improvement. You're looking at -- we tripled the
6 Achieving schools we had in our area. The biggest
7 concern is about where the school is located and the
8 ESEA reports, because you're going to see all the
9 districts whereas Jacksonville you'll see one
10 elementary school with K-4, whereas North Little Rock
11 you can look at the district report and you're going
12 to get the whole K-12. You can break it down by each
13 school. The school where the Lighthouse Charter is
14 located, it's located in an area of our most
15 achieving schools. So they're going to be pulling
16 students from our Achieving elementary schools; like
17 Boone Park is Achieving. If you get to it -- and you
18 can pull it up on the ADE website, the hard-copy
19 reports -- Lynch Drive, we recently sent in an
20 appeal, so on there it will say Focus but it's
21 actually being revised. So, Lynch Drive was
22 Achieving. Center Street still shows it's Focus, but
23 they met all their goals last year and so they were
24 Achieving in math last year; they were Achieving in
25 literacy last year. So they have to do that one more

1 year, and they were probably one of our most
2 successful schools last year. And then the other one
3 is Glenview. And in all those schools -- in all four
4 of those schools you're talking about a poverty rate
5 that's at 97%. We're not talking 70%, as you see in
6 Jacksonville; we're talking about 97% in these high
7 need areas. And the school where they're supposed to
8 be the most needy is where we're having the most
9 success right now as a district. But in all honesty,
10 if you were to go to (inaudible) and you were to pull
11 like the scale literacy and math chart for every
12 grade, every school district, you're going to see
13 North Little Rock, the big blue bubble, and inside it
14 every -- it's uncanny how similar the scores are.
15 You'll see North Little Rock, big blue dot; you'll
16 see Jacksonville Lighthouse right smack in the middle
17 of North Little Rock on every single chart. I mean,
18 it is identical. We struggle in math too and that is
19 one of our high need areas. But at the same time, if
20 you look at Pine Bluff, Pine Bluff scored slightly
21 below if you're looking at the scale scores. If
22 you're looking at the growth scores, you see kind of
23 a mixed view, and you guys kind of saw that today. I
24 have some charts -- the hardest thing to interpret
25 with Lighthouse, they're supposed to be a college

1 prep -- right? -- but they only go through 10th grade
2 and all the college prep data is not available. You
3 can't pull ACT. The closest thing that you have is
4 -- I have it, it's not on those charts -- is the
5 Explore. The Explore assessment that they mentioned
6 needs to have a composite score of 14.7; they have a
7 composite score of 14.6. It's just real repetitious
8 when you look at the scores. The earliest one, which
9 isn't fair to go to -- you pull the early warning
10 report where you can kind of see what is their credit
11 accumulation and where we are. North Little Rock, in
12 grades 9 and 10, if you pull it out and consolidate
13 it, it's sitting at about 90%. Jacksonville is
14 sitting at about 78. Now that may or may not be
15 fair, considering now we just found that since it's
16 located at the airport the highly mobile students are
17 going to count against the graduation rate. And so
18 that's not a -- that's not data that we can pull
19 from. Do you have any -- does that answer your
20 question?

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Additional questions about
22 North Little Rock? Okay. Any other further
23 questions? We've got an applicant seeking a charter.
24 I'm sorry, Ms. Perry, how many years was this? The
25 initial is --

1 MS. PERRY: Five years.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Five years. An initial
3 charter for five years. Panel, any further
4 discussion? Anyone have a motion? There has to be a
5 decision, yes. Yeah, we can't just sit here.

6 DR. WALTERS: I move to deny the application for
7 the Capitol City Lighthouse Charter School in North
8 Little Rock.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have a motion to deny the
11 charter application for Capitol City Lighthouse.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And a second. Now do we
14 have any discussion, concerns by the rest of the
15 Panel? If not, then we'll do a roll call. And the
16 motion is to deny, so with each of your votes you
17 will need to give a reason for your vote of denial.
18 Mr. Hoy?

19 MR. HOY: Clarification.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

21 MR. HOY: You give a reason for denial if you
22 vote yes to the motion?

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes. Because it's a denial
24 of the application.

25 MR. HOY: I vote no.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Ms. Walters -- or Dr.
2 Walters?

3 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes. And my reasons are I
4 think that there are a lot of holes in the
5 curriculum. I think that the Lighthouse Charter
6 system has some good points, in Pine Bluff and
7 Jacksonville, but I also think there are some areas
8 for growth. I would be interested in looking at this
9 application again in the future, if they so choose,
10 with maybe some more things fleshed out in regards to
11 curriculum and hopefully see some different gains at
12 their charters that are already existing.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

14 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes. Just on the basis
15 that, you know, I think there needs to -- I think
16 there needs to be some demonstrated gains and also
17 some clear curriculum and direction moving forward in
18 trying to improve the -- especially the areas of
19 math, if we're to open up a charter school in the
20 North Little Rock area.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

22 DR. WITONSKI: My vote is yes. I think that
23 although there are some good things that have been
24 demonstrated prior, I'd like to see some improvement,
25 and specifically in the area of curriculum

1 instruction -- what that curriculum design is going
2 to look like in terms of moving students forward,
3 specifically in the area of math.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

5 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes. I think, again, I
6 have concerns with both curriculum and achievement in
7 the other schools. I'm not as concerned about
8 comparing with North Little Rock because I think we
9 need to look at this one and each one that comes in
10 individually anyway. But I just do not see anything
11 in here that gives me confidence that they would do
12 well in this area, and especially in the mathematics
13 area.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

15 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes. I think these
16 students deserve the very, very best education that
17 we can provide for them and I don't feel that this
18 curriculum is one that is planned out to provide the
19 best education for them.

20 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. With five yeses on
21 the motion, one no, the application is denied.

22 Okay, Panel. Would you like a break? Do you
23 need a break? All right. It is 15-after and we'll
24 be back in 10 minutes. Look at the clock.

25 (BREAK: 2:15 - 2:30 P.M.)

1 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Kimbrell
2 exited the hearing room.)

3 A-9: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
4 APPLICATION: EXALT ACADEMY OF SOUTHWEST LITTLE ROCK, LITTLE
5 ROCK, ARKANSAS

6 DR. WITONSKI: And so for us to get kind of back
7 on track, our next one that we will be reviewing is
8 Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock Charter
9 School. And so if anyone is here to speak for or
10 against Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock
11 Charter School, if you would please stand -- and I
12 don't have his cheat-sheet but I'm going to get it.
13 So if you would, raise your hand, your right hand --
14 it does matter. Do you swear to tell the whole truth
15 -- tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
16 the truth?

17 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

18 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you. You may be seated.
19 We're going to start, if we can, with Ms. Perry. Ms.
20 Perry, if you would give us an overview of the
21 application. I want to remind us before we get
22 started that we have 20 minutes to present the case
23 for the charter school and then we will offer a
24 combined 20 minutes to anyone who is against this
25 proposed open-enrollment charter school. And then we

1 will conclude with a 5-minute comment period from the
2 applicant. So, Ms. Perry, if you will start us off.

3 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. You're going to hear from
4 representatives of the charter that will be called
5 Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock Charter
6 School. They propose to offer grades K-8; K-2 in
7 year one and adding a grade each year, with a maximum
8 enrollment when they're at full capacity of 540, with
9 180 in year one. And they have applied for their
10 501(c)(3) nonprofit status for Exalt Education,
11 Incorporated. It would be located at 6111 West 83rd
12 Street, here in Little Rock. And Mr. Ben Lindquist
13 is here to begin the presentation from the applicant.

14 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you. Mr. Lewis [sic], you
15 are recognized to begin your 20 minutes. And I don't
16 know if you have anyone else that's here to present
17 with you or are you going to be the only one?

18 MR. LINDQUIST: We're going to have four
19 presenters here today in the 20 minutes that we have.

20 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Great. Great. Thank you.

21 MR. LINDQUIST: All right. Well, I'm Ben
22 Lindquist, founder and CEO of Exalt Education, and
23 our team is very excited to be here today to present
24 our application to you to open a new school in
25 Southwest Little Rock. I want to start by just

1 telling you a little bit about the organization, and
2 then I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Tina
3 Long to talk about the need that we will be
4 addressing there.

5 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Kimbrell
6 returned to the hearing room.)

7 MR. LINDQUEST: Exalt Education is a three-year
8 old Arkansas nonprofit organization. We serve 830
9 students in grades K-8 at three different locations.
10 Our purpose is to equip mission-driven educators with
11 the tools and supports that they need to serve
12 students who are growing up in under-resourced
13 communities. Over the past 30 years we've opened
14 three campuses. Our first school was a start-up from
15 scratch in Portland, Oregon, actually in the Rockwood
16 community. Our second school under management was a
17 restart of a struggling charter school here in Little
18 Rock, called Little Rock Preparatory Academy. We've
19 been managing Little Rock Prep for two-and-a-half
20 years and we've grown it out to two campuses to be
21 able to meet the enrollment projections that were set
22 forth in its original charter application. We're a
23 young organization but we believe that you'll see
24 convincing evidence today that we're having a
25 transformative impact on the lives of our students.

1 Our mission is to prepare students from low-income
2 homes for competitive colleges and advanced careers.
3 We do that by providing them with a liberal arts
4 education, by enabling them to close the achievement
5 gap with their more affluent peers, by insuring that
6 they master core subjects, and by helping them
7 develop the key behaviors and attributes required for
8 success and leadership in their communities.

9 One of the things that distinguishes us from
10 other organizations is that every major aspect of the
11 programs that we implement are research validated.
12 We don't choose them because I like them or other
13 members of our team have experience with them; we
14 choose them because we believe that they are the
15 research validated programs that are -- have proven
16 to be the most effective in serving low income
17 children.

18 I've been working in education for 16 years. I
19 decided to pursue a path in education when I was a
20 sophomore in college, actually. And I've worked in a
21 number of different urban markets all over the
22 country over the past 16 years. I spent four-and-a-
23 half years working for a charter school organization
24 in Chicago, as a part of that experience. Throughout
25 that time I really had a focus on figuring out ways

1 of creating high quality options for low income
2 students nationally. Over the last two years we've
3 assembled a board of directors; it's a five-member
4 board that has distinguished expertise in law, human
5 resources, nonprofit management, district
6 administration, banking, and philanthropy. That
7 board would approve the slate of candidates to become
8 the school board of the Exalt Academy of Southwest
9 Little Rock. Our management team currently consists
10 of 12 different members. You can see them listed in
11 the chart here. We feel quite confident that our
12 team has the expertise and qualifications to provide
13 the central support that our schools need to be
14 successful. The most recent additions to our team
15 include a Director of Advancement and a Chief
16 Administrative Officer, each of whom possesses over
17 25 years of experience in nonprofit management.

18 Exalt Academy uses autonomy and innovation to do
19 more with less. You can see in this chart the
20 results that we've been able to get in the short
21 operating history that we've had. Last year, at
22 Little Rock Preparatory Academy, the restart school
23 that we assumed management of, on average 25% of our
24 returning students gained a proficiency level in one
25 year's time. At the KNOVA Learning Reynolds Public

1 School, the school that we started from scratch in
2 the Rockwood community, on average 27% of students
3 gain a proficiency level in one year's time.

4 Many of my interactions with Dr. Kimbrell and
5 the members of this Panel have been in the capacity
6 I've served in for the past three years, as Executive
7 Director of Little Rock Preparatory Academy. And so
8 I think it's appropriate that you would consider
9 Little Rock Prep's performance as a basis for
10 considering our track record as an organization. You
11 can see in this chart some statistics on who we serve
12 at Little Rock Preparatory Academy: 83% of our
13 students, or 415 students, qualify for the federal
14 Free and Reduced Lunch program; 96% are African
15 American; 70% are from central Little Rock, which is
16 the service area that we focus on at Little Rock
17 Prep. You can see in the comparison that the
18 demographics of the school are significantly higher
19 poverty and higher minority than the surrounding
20 demographics of the district and the county as a
21 whole.

22 Over the past three years, we've grown Little
23 Rock Prep out. When I started as Executive Director
24 the school was dramatically under-enrolled. In its
25 second year it had projected that it would serve 216

1 students in grades 5 and 6. When I started at the
2 school it was serving 62 students in grades 5 and 6.
3 Enrollment translates into financial strength and
4 because the school was struggling with enrollment
5 when I came on board it was also struggling with
6 finances, with compliance, with a variety of other
7 issues. But by putting together a strategic plan and
8 working in close concert with the Board of Trustees
9 we've been able to turn that around and you can see
10 in this chart the enrollment gains that we've made
11 over the last two-and-a-half years. Today, 85% of
12 the students at Little Rock Preparatory Academy have
13 been with us for less than 24 months. That's
14 important because that means that we haven't had a
15 lot of time yet to enable students that are coming
16 into us at low performance levels to move to the high
17 performance levels that we believe are possible.

18 We have a school management model that we use to
19 develop exemplary schools in under-served
20 communities. There are five different levels to that
21 school management model. The first level is -- and
22 this is a foundational element -- you have to have
23 operational stability to be able to focus on the
24 other things that go into a quality school. At
25 Little Rock Preparatory Academy we've dramatically

1 improved the facilities in which the school is
2 located; we've expanded the enrollment; we've
3 addressed the compliance findings that were plaguing
4 the school when I started; and we've strengthened the
5 school's financial position. Level 4 is to bring in
6 the right team. We've retained two principals to
7 lead each of our campuses, our primary school and
8 middle school campuses. At each site we have a Dean
9 of Students, a Director of Curriculum and
10 Instruction, and a Special Education Coordinator.
11 Those people are working closely together on-site
12 every day, full-time, to make sure that our students
13 are getting the education that they deserve. Level 3
14 is stakeholder support. We were very excited last
15 year when we administered a spring survey to learn
16 that 86% of our parents reported that they would
17 refer our school to a friend. We've seen a real
18 increase in stakeholder support as we've stabilized
19 the school and built the kind of quality that we need
20 to have there. Level 2 in our management model is
21 student engagement. Last year, this was a real focal
22 point for our management team. We saw increases in
23 average daily attendance, reductions in tardiness; we
24 saw behavior improvements over the course of the
25 year; and our student retention climbed over 80% for

1 the year for the first time in the school's history.
2 All of those things, if they're not in place it's
3 really hard to focus on optimal student learning.
4 But we've now covered that ground and we feel that
5 we're poised to see the kind of achievement with our
6 students that they deserve. Our academic design has
7 been installed and refined. We've had two years of
8 impressive learning gains, over a year, which I'd be
9 happy to speak to in more detail. And 88% of last
10 year's first graduating class of 8th graders moved on
11 to college preparatory high school programs. Those
12 are specific high schools that we believe put them on
13 a track to college.

14 On this next slide you can see the learning
15 gains that our students made this past year. In
16 math, 19% of our returning students gained a
17 proficiency level in one year's time. In literacy,
18 30% of our students gained a proficiency level in one
19 year's time. Those are the kinds of gains that take
20 students from low performance levels to a college
21 preparatory path.

22 In these next two slides you can see how we did
23 on the AMO's that the State set forth for the school
24 for last year. The green arrows highlight where we
25 saw gains; the yellow arrows highlight where we saw

1 decreases. You can see in the primary school campus,
2 which is actually just the second year -- well,
3 actually, this captures the campus when it was a
4 first-year campus, as a primary school. You can see
5 that we made gains in seven of the right different
6 AMO categories. In the next slide you can see our
7 middle school campus. The reason we added the
8 primary school was because we were concerned that our
9 students were coming into 5th grade at such low
10 achievement levels that we truly couldn't provide
11 them with a college preparatory education that they
12 deserve. And you can see with our middle school
13 students it's been a harder run for them. We saw
14 increases in four of eight AMO categories but
15 notably, even in those categories where we saw
16 declines in literacy we actually met the AMO targets
17 last year.

18 With that I want to turn it over to my colleague
19 Tina Long, who is the founding principal of the Exalt
20 Academy of Southwest Little Rock, to take you through
21 how we would meet the need there. Tina?

22 MS. LONG: Hi. Good afternoon. I'm Tina Long.
23 I serve students through education as a teacher, a
24 principal. I've had the opportunity to be involved
25 in several charter school start-ups over the years,

1 some of which are among the highest performing
2 charter schools in their area measured by state
3 standards and then the waiting lists. I would be
4 thrilled at the opportunity to be able to be the
5 principal of the proposed charter school.

6 So what do these children have in common? All
7 of them are growing up in poverty. Listed here are
8 some of the changes that we can face that we can help
9 low income children. Often, they face limited adult
10 care; often, single family homes, maybe minimal
11 resources. There's up to a 30 million word deficit
12 for children by the age of three. There's often
13 fewer books, less guided reading, typically no access
14 to technology, even less direction in basic skills
15 that we're seeing coming into our kindergarten.
16 There's a higher risk of physical, emotional and
17 substance abuse in many of the homes and then
18 frequent transitions from houses, jobs or even
19 guardians. Without solutions our children are going
20 to become further and further behind. The research
21 cited at the bottom of this slide shows that the
22 achievement gap has been steadily growing since 1970.
23 Low income children lag behind their more affluent
24 peers between three to six years. Only 32% of
25 children growing up in low income homes are

1 graduating -- or 32% are not graduating from high
2 school and only 9% are graduating from college. I
3 know that these are statistics that we can change.

4 We would like to serve students in Southwest
5 Little Rock because there is no higher concentration
6 in central Arkansas of poverty than in Southwest
7 Little Rock. Currently, there are 4,094 students in
8 grades K-8. Of those students 81% are Free and
9 Reduced Lunch; 70% are African American; 20% and
10 growing are Hispanic. Many of those students in that
11 area are not performing academically. So how are we
12 going to meet the needs of our children? We're going
13 to do whatever it takes to teach the whole child, not
14 just literacy and math.

15 Listed here are key success factors that Exalt
16 Education employs to make sure that our children
17 achieve. The first is that we start early. As Mr.
18 Lindquist suggested, we open K-8 schools, not just in
19 middle school. So we'll start with K-2, 180
20 students, and then adding 60 students per grade from
21 the bottom in kindergarten each year, filling the
22 bottom. Our full capacity will be 540 students.
23 This slow systematic growth insures that our students
24 can be successful with us in the school. We give
25 students the benefit of more learning time, so Exalt

1 Academy Southwest students will gain over two
2 instructional years by the end of 8th grade by our
3 schedule alone. So we offer a 7:30 to 4:30 school
4 day, two extra hours a day; a 200-day calendar, which
5 is 22 days more than the traditional calendar. That
6 is key when we're working with children in poverty.
7 The greatest teachers every single year get their
8 children from behind grade level up to grade level,
9 or making significant gains, by the end of the year
10 and then the academic regression that happens over
11 the summer is significant, which is what's really
12 widening the achievement gap. We offer longer
13 learning blocks, so our children don't just have
14 exposure to the standards but actually master the
15 standards before moving on. And we provide a double-
16 dose time for all children who are behind grade
17 level. So we serve the whole child and we do that by
18 addressing the learner's social, emotional and basic
19 needs as well. So we have an extensive four-week
20 training for all of our teachers in the summer. That
21 doesn't just cover literacy, math, writing, and all
22 of the standards; it covers de-escalation, it covers
23 drug and alcohol education, self-expression, civic
24 and character development, developing civic leaders,
25 physical education, nutritional needs, all of the

1 different things that help our children become the
2 civic leaders of tomorrow. Some -- we also give more
3 personalized attention and we do that from a very
4 unique management approach. So we have a co-teacher
5 model, so there's two teachers in the day. So during
6 a seven-hour period, in the heart of the day, from
7 8:30 to 3:30, the ratio is 1-to-15 with two teachers
8 working together, brainstorming, making sure that we
9 collaborate and do what's best for our students. We
10 have a management team led model, so we have a five-
11 person management team. Each person is a specialist
12 in their own domain, providing instruction for the
13 entire school, working in the right direction for our
14 students. We have grade level leads; that's very
15 important to us. The teachers are leading the
16 school. So our grade level leads run PLC's, design
17 their next month's instruction based upon the data
18 that they receive from the previous month. Our
19 teachers also have a staggered school day so that
20 it's a more manageable schedule and a sustainable
21 schedule for our teachers. We meet each child at his
22 or her own level and we do that immediately upon
23 enrollment. So as children are enrolled in the
24 school the first thing we do is placement testing and
25 we place them in performance groups. Before school

1 even starts goals are set for each individual child
2 as if each individual child has their own IEP. From
3 there, teachers design education based upon the needs
4 and how they're going to get the children at grade
5 level. From there, lessons are planned and delivered
6 and then children are reassessed every five to ten
7 lessons, depending upon the subject. We also immerse
8 our students in language, so some of the language
9 programs that we use -- reading, mastery language
10 programming, Writer's Workshop, Six-Plus-One traits
11 of writing, all proven to be effective in schools.
12 Our teachers are all trained in those programs and
13 have access to all of the curriculum needed so that
14 they have the tools to be successful.

15 We have a positive behavior plan that sets us
16 aside from many other schools. Our behavior plan is
17 very systematic and focus is on the idea that
18 appropriate behavior is a major heart of academic
19 success. So this plan has three different levels: a
20 universal level, a classroom level, and an individual
21 level. Children who are struggling with behavior are
22 placed on individual point cards where they're
23 getting more frequent feedback on how to behave
24 appropriately. We're actually teaching the behaviors
25 needed for success. Our plan is a combination

1 between a responsive classroom, safe and civil
2 schools, CHAMPS, and Doug Lemov's Teach Like A
3 Champion, all proven effective working with a
4 population similar to ours. The idea is that we
5 don't punish or give punitive consequences, but we
6 reward and affirm behaviors. This concept is very
7 different than a traditional public school and often
8 is a paradigm shift for many of our teachers. So we
9 provide many hours of instruction and professional
10 development specifically on our plan. We use all
11 research validated programs and I'm happy to speak to
12 any of those programs during our question-and-answer,
13 but it ranges from FOSS Science all the way to direct
14 instruction programs.

15 Lastly, we manage performance literally daily
16 through exit tickets, through weekly assessments. We
17 have monthly assessments, benchmark testing, where
18 we're measuring our students through a formative
19 testing manner every month against the Common Core
20 standards and then shaping instruction through PLC's.
21 We have semi-annual testing with the NWEA MAPS where
22 we're measuring our students against their peers
23 nationally. And then we have the annual testing of
24 course that all of us in the state use. Frequent
25 assessments allow our teachers to make adjustments to

1 optimize student learning throughout our entire
2 school year.

3 So with that, I'm going to move it over to Mr.
4 Scott to talk a little bit about our community.

5 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Tina. I want to be
6 sensitive to the time that we have here.

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You have about a minute-and-
8 a-half.

9 MR. SCOTT: A minute-and-a-half. My job is to
10 show our community support and there's some slides
11 that you have there that speak to that, how we're
12 able to garner support and basically from churches,
13 from healthcare, also from learning partnerships and
14 community and civic groups. Also, we have with us an
15 individual by the name of Carlos Cervantes. I'd like
16 for him to come and share with us from his
17 perspective about his support for our application.

18 MR. CERVANTES: Good afternoon, Ladies and
19 Gentlemen. My name is Carlos Cervantes. Okay.
20 First of all, I kind of wanted to bring up -- you
21 probably heard the first portion of Exalt. Okay?
22 But let me -- what I want to do is basically let you
23 know why really we feel confident that Exalt should
24 go right ahead and put a charter school in that area.
25 We feel very confident that they can provide the best

1 education that we want for that particular region.
2 Now, that being said, we have in that area -- we'll
3 call it -- and you probably don't know about this --
4 is downtown Southwest Little Rock. And basically it
5 is -- this is downtown. This is where they want to
6 put the -- downtown Southwest Little Rock is Geyer
7 Springs to Baseline, all the way up to the
8 interstate, come down and then all the way out to
9 where Wal-Mart is and Chicot. Now the reason why we
10 say that is because that area is thriving in our
11 culture and our businesses. And if you go down there
12 and shop, which probably most of you don't but I do
13 -- I go down there about two or three times a week
14 during the week; I do some shopping myself. It's
15 thriving very strong in that area, their business
16 concern; they're thriving in their culture in that
17 particular area; they're thriving in their religion
18 especially down there; they're thriving in raising
19 their families in downtown Southwest Little Rock. We
20 call it "downtown Southwest Little Rock" because they
21 do have everything that they need to thrive. They
22 have their own banks, they have their own grocery
23 stores, their own bakeries, shoe shops, boot shops,
24 you name it. The only time you're going to see a
25 Latino or our culture in this area is probably two

1 things: they're probably going to work over here or
2 they're going to attend courses. Now we have all
3 that down there but what we also need in Southwest
4 Little Rock or downtown Southwest Little Rock is a
5 health clinic. It's been seven years on the back
6 burner, a health clinic for downtown Southwest Little
7 Rock. This health clinic is located right there on
8 Baseline. And I don't know if you're familiar with
9 Baseline and the Post Office, right behind there, as
10 we speak right now they're building this clinic for
11 this particular neighborhood right now. So after I
12 leave here I will go down there and take some new
13 photos, look at the project and see how it's going.
14 They should be done with the roof this week, right
15 now, so now they're starting the interior. That's
16 something that was a need for that area in downtown
17 Southwest Little Rock was a health clinic. So with a
18 health clinic and an educational area, especially in
19 that section, it will thrive. I guarantee you, it
20 will thrive. Now with the Baseline clinic being
21 there -- we're looking at a clinic of 5,500 square
22 feet, which you've heard this line before, "you build
23 it, they will come." It's being built and they will
24 come. If you put a charter school there, they will
25 come. They want to thrive also in education. That

1 area there will thrive on education.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Carlos, we're going to
3 have to cut it short. We have time limits and there
4 will be lots of questions and there may be
5 opportunities to ask questions of the work that's
6 being done down there. So if you could take one more
7 minute, wrap up, and then we'll move forward.

8 MR. CERVANTES: Okay. I'll tell you a little
9 bit about myself. I was the state director for
10 LULAC, League of United Latin American Citizens, four
11 years. And that basically is what got us out there
12 in that area in 2001. So I have been in the trenches
13 in that area since 2001, in that area. So with that,
14 it's something that we have a need for. We
15 understand that. So also I'm current president right
16 now of the FBI's Academy, Advisory Consult Academy.
17 So with that, we kind of more or less take a look at
18 human trafficking, you know, or drugs in a particular
19 area. So we want to stay focused on that and we want
20 to stay focused so we have a better education and, of
21 course, the health clinic. Okay.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, sir.

23 MR. CERVANTES: You bet.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Do we have anyone who
25 is here to speak in opposition? Let's recognize Dr.

1 Glasgow and we'll give your side 20 minutes. Is
2 there anyone else who will be speaking in opposition?

3 DR. GLASGOW: I won't need 20 minutes, so I
4 think you all will be thankful for that. I would
5 like to say that our board was aware of this
6 application from the Exalt Academy. They did take a
7 vote on it. They're opposing the application and I
8 can relate to you the reasons that the board decided
9 to oppose the charter application. Before I get to
10 that, I might just mention when we were -- somebody
11 asked Capitol City Lighthouse earlier why they
12 decided to try to put their charter in North Little
13 Rock and they said Little Rock already has plenty of
14 choices, charter schools all over the place. And we
15 do. We have a lot of charter schools in Little Rock
16 and we're not afraid of the competition, that's for
17 sure. We also have excellent K-2 education which is
18 how Exalt would start off. We have a Chicot primary
19 school and we have a dedicated pre-K school that's
20 associated with Chicot. We have a lot of Hispanic/
21 Latino students. In fact, we have several schools in
22 the area that are very high in that population.
23 Exalt says that part of their mission is to education
24 those particular children for whom English is a
25 second language. If you look at their budget, you

1 don't see any positions to work with that. We have
2 an ESL department; we have people who are trained to
3 teach SIOP, which is one of the programs that they
4 intend to use, but they don't have any staff for that
5 and we have three people in our ESL department who
6 work extensively with the schools in Little Rock and
7 especially in that part of town where there's a high
8 concentration of students for whom English is a
9 second language. Our board was concerned, just like
10 for the Capitol City Lighthouse, that the budget is
11 very -- it's a very narrow margin for funds to go
12 down. The first year there's very little in terms of
13 revenue over expenses. So if for some reason they
14 did not get all the students that they intend to
15 enroll or if they were below 70% on the Free and
16 Reduced Lunch then they could fall below that mark
17 that they need for the first year. And we're always
18 concerned if a school fails financially because that
19 has repercussions for our district.

20 In addition, they're asking for waivers for
21 principal and teacher certification or licensure,
22 gifted and talented programs, media center, health
23 services, counselor. They say they will contract for
24 special ed. services. Quite honestly, we have 12%
25 special ed. students in the Little Rock School

1 District. The charter schools have a great impact on
2 our special ed. population because most charters
3 enroll very few students who are special education
4 because we have such good services in that area. So
5 our special ed. population goes up each time a
6 charter school is established. No transportation is
7 provided, which is another concern that our board
8 had. We feel that the school does not meet the
9 criteria for a charter school in being very
10 innovative. If a school is going to request waivers
11 for teacher certification, principal certification,
12 GT, media center -- if you're going to request
13 waivers on all that then your obligation to be very
14 innovative is very great. To get all this you need
15 to really have a program that's innovative. We think
16 it's mostly a longer school year and a longer school
17 day and that's mostly their innovation, so we don't
18 think that there is a lot in that area. We have
19 local schools that are really good in the same area
20 of town. The application touted technology as one of
21 the main features. However, the original application
22 only mentioned teacher technology; it didn't say
23 anything about students having access to technology.
24 And when you on the Panel looked at that you asked
25 some of the questions about student technology and

1 they came back and said they would have a student
2 computer lab. And for that they said, "Teachers" --
3 and I'm quoting -- "are encouraged to use the
4 computer lab with their students on a regular basis."
5 So it seemed like that's sort of an after-thought,
6 adding the computer lab to their program. In the
7 Little Rock School District, over the next couple of
8 years all students in grades 4 and 5 will have one-
9 to-one technology, will have laptops. And we think
10 that a computer lab is sort of something that was big
11 in the past but that's not where technology is going
12 now, so we don't feel like that that's an innovative
13 feature for this school. As you noted, some of you
14 on the Panel who reviewed this, their achievement
15 goals aren't clear. Being a K-2, it's going to be
16 quite a number of years before we really know whether
17 they are producing a lot achievement-wise or not. We
18 feel like it's probably not a good idea to put
19 another charter school in this part of town and in
20 our district at this time. And that's what our board
21 had to say, so I'm relaying that to you.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, sir. Anyone else
23 wanting to speak in opposition to this charter
24 application? If not, Mr. Lindquist, we'll give you
25 an additional -- your five minutes to bring whomever

1 you would like to continue to bring forward your
2 application.

3 MR. LINDQUIST: Well, because we only have five
4 minutes of time I'm going to have members of my team
5 elaborate further in the question and answer with
6 you. I want to take this precious time to just
7 address point by point the comments that were just
8 made. First, I want to just turn to a slide that we
9 have in our back-up deck. You have the back-up deck
10 in your -- as a hard-copy in front of you as well.
11 It's on the performance of schools in Southwest
12 Little Rock and it's a chart that shows -- it's back
13 four slides. There, that's it. You can see in this
14 chart how --

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: What page is that?

16 MS. LONG: Page four. No, sorry. Page 26.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

18 MR. LINDQUIST: Slide 26. You can see
19 represented here six elementary schools, one
20 intermediate school, and two middle schools. You can
21 see the grade levels that they serve, the total
22 enrollment, the Free and Reduced Lunch count. You
23 can see their 2011 AYP status which was the last year
24 before the waiver came into being. And then you can
25 see their 2013 ESEA status. In 2011, every single

1 one of those schools was a Tier 3 school under AYP.
2 In 2013, you can see that there are several -- there
3 are three Priority schools and one Focus school among
4 those schools. These are schools that have been
5 chronically low performing, and there's a reason for
6 that: it's because they're serving a high
7 concentration of low income students and it takes a
8 specialized model and approach to serve those
9 students. The Little Rock School District is a
10 general education provider; they are not equipped to
11 do that and I'll explain a little bit more about why.
12 They talked about educating the English Language
13 Learners. They have three people that they said were
14 working in their central office to support a district
15 with 24,000 students in serving English Language
16 Learners. Our programs have specifically proven to
17 work with English Language Learners, our mainstream
18 programs that we use every day. We don't need three
19 people spread across 24,000 students because we have
20 two teachers in every classroom effectively serving
21 our students with programs that work with English
22 Language Learners every day.

23 The next point that was made was about the
24 budget, narrow margins in the budget. I just
25 explained to you that when I started at Little Rock

1 Preparatory Academy three years ago I inherited a
2 school with 62 students. I can tell you, there were
3 no narrower margins than the ones I was working on.
4 We cleaned it up; we fixed it; the school has a much
5 stronger financial position. I have an MBA. Members
6 of our team are working very closely to manage its
7 budget position and its cash-flow position tightly.
8 We take that very seriously and we do it very well.

9 It was mentioned that the Little Rock School
10 District serves a population that's 12% special
11 education. This year, our population at Little Rock
12 Preparatory Academy is 13% special education. So
13 it's hard to make the argument that we're somehow not
14 taking students with disabilities into our school.

15 Transportation. One of the reasons why we chose
16 this community, and Carlos spoke to this, is because
17 it is its own community. It's very defined. Within
18 that community we have census data that reports that
19 96% of residents have access to transportation. Over
20 70% of them drive their own cars to work every day,
21 and another 25% to 30% of them participate in
22 carpooling every day. That's census data that's
23 widely available. So we know that even though these
24 people are low income they must have transportation
25 to be able to do what they do every day. We have a

1 high poverty population coming to our school at
2 Little Rock Prep every day without buses.

3 Innovation. Innovation is one we can speak to
4 for quite sometime. I actually welcome you all to
5 ask about innovation in our programs and we're happy
6 to speak to that further. But one thing we explained
7 is that we have a staggered teacher schedule. That
8 staggered schedule is fundamental. It allows us to
9 provide our students with a school day that's over
10 nine hours in length, while not having to have our
11 teachers work a nine-and-a-half hour day.

12 Technology, broadly defined, is actually
13 anything that creates a break-through change in
14 productivity. That's what technology is. It's not
15 iPads; it's not a new application on your cell phone.
16 Our staggered model and the way that we're serving
17 our students is break-through technology.

18 The achievement goals, happy to elaborate on the
19 achievement goals. We will begin administering the
20 NWEA MAPS in year-one. That allows us to assess
21 students in grades one through eight immediately, so
22 we will have data on how our students are doing from
23 the get-go. We're not waiting until third grade to
24 assess them.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Lindquist.

1 Your time is up.

2 MR. LINDQUIST: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Now we'll move to questions
4 from the Panel. We'll begin with Ms. Coffman and
5 we'll go around the horseshoe, asking any questions
6 and getting clarifying information from either the
7 school district or the applicant or from staff.

8 MS. COFFMAN: Mr. Lindquist, it's page 485 for
9 me. But it talks about your curriculum as being
10 Writer's Workshop, direct instruction, Saxon math,
11 and math skills.

12 MR. LINDQUIST: Is that page 485 of the charter
13 application?

14 MS. COFFMAN: No. It's on the -- in NOVIS, on
15 our State Board, where they're all listed on the
16 electronic piece.

17 MR. LINDQUIST: Okay.

18 MS. COFFMAN: I don't know, there's not a --

19 MR. LINDQUIST: Okay. I'm sorry to interrupt.
20 You go ahead and continue.

21 MS. COFFMAN: That's okay. Let me see if I can
22 find the page number. Page --

23 MR. LINDQUIST: I think we've got 3,000 pages or
24 more out there with you all right now, so --

25 MS. COFFMAN: Well, it has two pages. It says

1 page 30 of 63, and then also it says page 65, but
2 it's page 485 for me. So it's one of those three.

3 MR. LINDQUIST: Okay. Thank you so much.

4 MS. COFFMAN: Yeah. It was the one that --

5 MR. LINDQUIST: We'll see if we can track with
6 you. Keep going.

7 MS. COFFMAN: It says that ELA and math Common
8 Core standards are laid out in math and English
9 Language Arts units. It says, "Teachers will use
10 Writer's Workshop, direct instruction curriculum,
11 Saxon math, and math skills." And I'm sure, if you
12 were listening earlier, we are very interested in
13 what the curriculum will be. So could you expand on
14 what the curriculum will be for your K-2?

15 MR. LINDQUIST: Yeah. I would like to refer
16 that question to the founding principal at the school
17 if you're comfortable with that.

18 MS. COFFMAN: Uh-huh.

19 MS. LONG: Hello. I brought our curriculum map
20 for you.

21 MS. COFFMAN: Great.

22 MS. LONG: So we do use Connecting Math Concepts
23 for math particularly in the elementary school
24 grades. We also use a specific math fluency program
25 called Rocket Math that helps address that. So we've

1 created a liberal arts math that focuses on
2 standards, not only the Common Core standards but our
3 own standards integrating in core knowledge standards
4 and building a map that is well-rounded for all of
5 our kids K-8. And then progressive, building upon
6 previously learned knowledge. So it is a spiraling
7 curriculum, yet building, expanding and getting
8 deeper in all of the Common Core standards as well as
9 our own standards. We do not necessarily use a
10 variety of programs. We have a very chosen program
11 that we know is effective with working with low
12 income children. What we do instead is take our
13 program, train everybody in it very deeply so they're
14 very proficient in delivering it with fidelity, and
15 then from there we will enrich it by using our test
16 data. So, for example, if the test data is showing
17 let's say division is weak and in that program -- in
18 the prescribed program that we're doing, when it
19 comes to the spiraling of division we'll then take
20 that unit which maybe should have been a week, a day,
21 and then we'll expand upon it, add tips, do that to
22 it. So just build it up. So it's not necessarily a
23 variety of different programs where everyone is doing
24 different things; it's taking a very successful
25 program that works and defining it for the needs of

1 the child.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Clarification?

3 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. Could you just clarify the
4 juxtaposition between Writer's Workshop and direct
5 instruction?

6 MS. LONG: Absolutely. So the direct
7 instruction program that we're using, there's two
8 different language programs that would be comparable,
9 depending upon the grade level. One is Language for
10 Learning, or Language for Thinking, which is a very
11 oral presentation program. And then when they get
12 older it's a reasoning and writing program, so in
13 grades 2 and up it goes into reasoning and writing.
14 Those programs teach structure skills; it teaches
15 them the mechanics of it. The Six-Plus-One Traits of
16 Writing and the Writer's Workshop teaches the passion
17 and creativeness. It allows children to expand upon
18 areas that they're interested in. So it's the
19 creative side of writing with the structured side of
20 writing; it's where those two pair together.

21 MS. COFFMAN: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

23 MR. BOARDMAN: Yes. A couple of things I'm
24 curious on. On the schedule that I'm looking at it
25 talks about 1:50, right after lunch; it talks about

1 supervision, supervised recess and teaching core.

2 When you say "teaching core," what is in that?

3 MS. LONG: Yes. Absolutely. So there are two
4 different -- there's two teachers in the classroom;
5 one teacher will be a specialist in science or
6 natural world; the other one will be a specialist in
7 global studies or humanities. We'll do what we call
8 our core and we call them our core because our units
9 are carefully designed to hit even within just those
10 classes, hit all of the Common Core standards. So we
11 do it multiple times a day, not just in literacy we
12 hit literacy. There are literacy standards within
13 our Common Core times, which is those times of the
14 day. So that is one teacher would have their either
15 prep time or they're designing their lesson while the
16 other teacher would be delivering at that point their
17 core lesson. Each core lesson too, just to speak a
18 little bit to technology, has -- each unit has a
19 technology component. So for us technology is more
20 than just taking our children to the computer lab,
21 which we do have a computer lab but there is also a
22 mobile lab and then computers in the classroom, as
23 well as other types of technology, InFocus machines
24 as well as Elmo's. We have a rotating schedule
25 that's built directly into those lessons that we were

1 talking about, into each unit, where children use
2 technology, not just computers. So they get to use
3 the InFocus machines themselves, the Elmo's, through
4 a lot of the student-led activities that we're doing.

5 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. I think I understand. So
6 this is mostly where your science is too and that
7 kind of thing?

8 MS. LONG: Yes, sir.

9 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So on your schedule --

11 MS. LONG: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: -- as I look at that, you
13 talk about a day that begins at 7:00 and students
14 dismiss at 4:30. There's lots of break-up time
15 during that time for kids to do other things and
16 teachers coming in and working. Talk to me a little
17 bit about that time between -- it looks like between
18 8:30 and 10:30, where you've got it looks like direct
19 instruction, reading, spelling, and then it says at
20 9:25 staggered morning recess, breaks, and
21 transition, supervised recess, prep periods. So
22 you've got 130 minutes there --

23 MS. LONG: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Well, actually, 135 minutes
25 as you transition.

1 MS. LONG: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: What does that -- I mean,
3 you're looking at first year 180 kindergarten, 1st
4 and 2nd grades. Right?

5 MS. LONG: 180?

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah. Tell me how that
7 looks.

8 MS. LONG: Oh, that's my favorite part of the
9 day because that's the time when we really meet the
10 kids' needs individually. So when I spoke to upon
11 enrollment children are performance grouped, those
12 are our performance group times. So we call it "a
13 walking math" and "a moving reading time," where
14 children move according to their ability level, not
15 necessarily their grade level. And at that time
16 instruction is delivered directly on the skills that
17 they need. So during that time, when you mentioned
18 the recess time there, that's just simply because
19 kindergarten children cannot sit for 135 minutes
20 straight and we do have staggered times on our
21 playground and then supervision, not having 180
22 children outside at one time. So we stagger --
23 within that performance group time that group will
24 have their recess, so that's what that really means.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Dr. Witonski?

1 DR. WITONSKI: So I know in one of the initial
2 -- in the initial application -- and then you
3 provided responses back for some particular waivers
4 -- was the extended day, that particular section
5 asking for relief from that?

6 MS. LONG: So what we're looking at is having a
7 7:30 to 4:30 school day. That's what our school day
8 would be.

9 DR. WITONSKI: So the waiver would -- you are
10 still seeking a waiver to shorten the day?

11 MS. LONG: No, I don't believe so.

12 MR. LINDQUIST: We're seeking a waiver from
13 specifics of the requirements so that we can actually
14 provide the whole schedule that you have in front of
15 you in response.

16 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

18 MR. HERNANDEZ: Looking at the middle school
19 campus for Little Rock Preparatory, just some
20 clarifying. How long have y'all been -- how many
21 school years have y'all been taking over management
22 of that?

23 MR. LINDQUIST: When I started at the school it
24 was in January of 2011. It was midyear. The
25 executive director -- founder and executive director

1 left in December. I actually hadn't planned on
2 starting at the school that early, but felt that it
3 was really critical with the executive director
4 transitioning out to provide that continuity.
5 Essentially, the job that first five months was to
6 walk the school out of the year safely. It was in a
7 position of quite a bit of vulnerability and there
8 were a lot of things that needed to happen to do
9 that. We also used that time to develop a strategic
10 plan and then to go before the State Board of
11 Education to request that they approve the addition
12 of grades K-4 and we obtained that approval in May of
13 2011. So that was kind of what the first five months
14 looked like. That summer we dramatically expanded
15 the school. We renovated the second floor of the
16 building we were in. We grew to 250 students in
17 grades K-7 when we entered the next year. So the
18 middle school students' scores that you're seeing
19 represented here are students that have not had the
20 benefit of our feeder program. Exalt believes in
21 starting the students in kindergarten and the early
22 grades and serving them through middle school, and
23 then returning them to public high schools for their
24 high school experience once they're on a college
25 path. So that's kind of our belief. And we think

1 that now that we have the feeder system in place at
2 Little Rock Prep we're really enabling students to
3 close the literacy gap at those early grades so that
4 they can really benefit from a college preparatory
5 program in the middle school grades. But these
6 students unfortunately haven't had the benefit of
7 that.

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

9 DR. WALTERS: I have a question about your
10 health services. One of the questions that the
11 internal review committee asked was to explain your
12 health and safety services. And my understanding is
13 your response was that you were going to request a
14 waiver for that part of Standards for Accreditation.
15 So I understand you're going to ask for a waiver but
16 how are you going to meet the health needs of those
17 students?

18 MR. LINDQUIST: We have a nurse at Little Rock
19 Preparatory Academy and she's currently working for
20 us half-time. We're planning to expand her position
21 to full-time and then she would be supporting not
22 just the existing two campuses but the expansion into
23 Southwest Little Rock as well. That plan will
24 probably work for the first two years with the low
25 enrollment numbers that we have, and then after that

1 we'll need to have a person on-site that's meeting
2 the health needs of the students. So that's the
3 initial plan. The nurse coordinates all of the
4 different health activities that we have at the
5 campus each year and that includes various
6 screenings, hearing screenings, vision screenings,
7 dental screenings. So we provide all of those things
8 to our students over the course of each year and
9 typically we do it at no cost to the students.

10 DR. WALTERS: Okay. So you're saying that the
11 nurse that you have that's on your other campuses is
12 also going to serve this campus also?

13 MR. LINDQUIST: She'll be able to do that
14 temporarily during the first two years, until the
15 campus's enrollment has expanded sufficiently to be
16 able to have an on-site nurse there.

17 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And what about mental
18 health services? Was that addressed?

19 MR. LINDQUIST: Yes. We actually have
20 partnerships with a number of different community
21 organizations that come on-site and provide mental
22 health -- a variety of different mental health
23 services to our students. And we're currently in the
24 process of working with a practicum team at the
25 Clinton School of Public Service to formally

1 establish a number of other partnerships with
2 different institutions to really ramp up the
3 provision of those services for our students. So
4 that's something we're very aware of as a need. I
5 don't yet think that we're doing the job we need to
6 be doing because it's a significant need, but I
7 expect that we will be there very soon.

8 DR. WALTERS: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

10 MR. HOY: I'm probably going to over-simplify
11 this. But when I look at charters in their initial
12 start-up I either see them as a replication of a
13 model that's already successful or a developmental
14 model. I have been looking for information on Exalt
15 outside the state of Arkansas. I'm assuming that
16 this is a start-up model or developmental model --
17 but if not, are you basing it on some other program
18 that has already been established? I know you seem
19 to refer a lot to Little Rock Prep. In a lot of
20 cases, you talk about Exalt in the past-tense, as if
21 it had existed before, and I'm just a little unclear.
22 So if you don't mind clarifying it for me.

23 MR. LINDQUIST: I started developing the concept
24 for Exalt Education when I was working in Chicago for
25 an organization called the Chicago Charter School

1 Foundation. We were expanding a multi-campus charter
2 school in Chicago. At that time we were scaling
3 rapidly but we weren't -- I didn't feel that we were
4 doing justice to the highly low income, minority
5 population that we were serving. So I started to
6 think about how can we better serve these kids and
7 that led me to a position as a program officer at a
8 major national foundation that was awarding grants to
9 charter schools all over the country, and then led me
10 to a position where I was helping start the Charter
11 School Growth Fund and I worked there from 2005 to
12 2010. We established a portfolio of different high-
13 performing charter management organizations that were
14 serving almost exclusively low income students in
15 urban centers nationally. All of that time I was
16 studying and looking at best practices and research
17 validated programs for serving these children and
18 essentially the concept for Exalt came out of that
19 experience. It's really an attempt to integrate all
20 of that into one coherent academic design and
21 business plan that can allow us to serve low income
22 children nationally more effectively than we have
23 been. And I developed that business plan and an MBA
24 program in 2009 and 2010, and then left my position
25 at the Charter School Growth Fund to execute the

1 business plan, and that's how I ended up here.

2 MR. HOY: So as a follow-up then I'm going to go
3 ahead and classify this as kind of a developmental
4 type program since there's no data outside the state
5 of Arkansas in terms of Exalt specifically. With
6 that being said, there's also a charter school I
7 believe within blocks of where you intend to put this
8 one -- Cloverdale, I believe. So if that's the case,
9 explain to me the difference for why this one is
10 necessary when you've got one right down the road?

11 MR. LINDQUIST: Okay. So we're going to go to a
12 slide that I want to talk about a comparison between
13 the surrounding schools and ours.

14 MR. HOY: Before you start, you're saying a
15 comparison between the surrounding school and yours.
16 But, again, you're talking past-tense when you talk
17 about yours and Exalt. So that makes me a little --

18 MR. LINDQUEST: Yeah. Let me clarify the
19 question. I don't think I answered your first
20 question appropriately, actually. I'm sorry. So let
21 me answer that question directly and then I'll speak
22 to this other point that you've raised. So Exalt is
23 being grown out of the first school; it's an emergent
24 network and so one of the down-sides of that is that
25 we're on a steep learning curve. We don't have the

1 same kind of experience base that other much larger
2 CMO's might have. Members of our team have been
3 working in this state for a long time, so we bring
4 that to the table, but we're still developing the
5 organization infrastructure and capacity. The up-
6 side of that is that we get to build it with our
7 first school as kind of our demonstration site.
8 Right? So we're learning and constantly improving
9 and we have the ability, the flexibility to change
10 and grow the model and improve it constantly because
11 we don't yet have a huge footprint that a CMO of 65
12 schools would have. When you have 65 schools it's a
13 lot harder to improve a single coherent design and be
14 able to roll that out across your 65 schools. So
15 there's advantages to what we're able to do right now
16 and that means that we can look at the population
17 that we're serving at Little Rock Prep and the
18 experience we're having there and we can constantly
19 improve and modify the design as we go to make it
20 better and better. And then we can take that and use
21 that to inform the best practices and the programs
22 that we're implementing at our Portland school and in
23 other locations. So that's kind of the direct answer
24 to that question.

25 Going to the comparison, we actually reviewed

1 the school improvement plans for the primary and
2 middle schools in the area around, that have
3 attendance zones in Southwest Little Rock. We also
4 reviewed the board meeting minutes from the Little
5 Rock School District's board meetings, looking for
6 information on how Southwest Little Rock schools are
7 being addressed and attended to. And what we found
8 was very interesting, actually. We do think that
9 there are some good efforts being made on the part of
10 the local elementary and middle schools in Southwest
11 to take advantage of the school improvement dollars
12 that are being made available to try to do some of
13 the things that we're doing. But there's also some
14 very significant things that they're just not doing,
15 and these are some examples of what they're not doing
16 yet. So one thing is, if you look at traditional
17 public schools, they don't have contractual
18 accountability with an authorizer as we do. If you
19 all put in the place a five-year contract with us, we
20 know that if we don't perform we're not going to get
21 renewed; we're going to be out of business. Most of
22 these schools, they've been doing this for a long
23 time and nobody is putting them out of business. So
24 we have the urgency of that contractual
25 accountability with you. We specialize in serving

1 children who are growing up in low income homes.
2 We're not a general education provider. I don't have
3 to satisfy the most affluent kids in West Little Rock
4 and in the Heights while I'm also trying to serve
5 kids in Southwest Little Rock. That makes a big
6 difference. That means that we can do things within
7 our model that really meet the needs of these kids.
8 We have an appointed, not a locally elected, school
9 board. If you follow Little Rock School District
10 politics, you know that that matters. Our board
11 implements the Carver Policy Governance model. It's
12 a model that drives discipline. The board sets end
13 statements and executive limitations. Management's
14 job is to execute within that framework. If we don't
15 execute it, there are changes in management. We have
16 a management team staffing structure; we talked about
17 it. Our school is a lot more -- they're not as
18 hierarchical; they don't concentrate as much power
19 literally with the principal, as most traditional
20 public schools do. We have waivers from state laws
21 that allows a lot of flexibility. Those are some of
22 the larger organizational differences.

23 What does that mean in terms of programmatic
24 differences? Our positive behavior plan, we actually
25 talked about this at some length. We think that

1 that's one of the key things that distinguishes our
2 schools most from Little Rock School District schools
3 right now. When our teachers come to us out of the
4 Little Rock public schools they're used to schools
5 with zero intolerance, "we exit students if it's not
6 working." And there's conversation in the minutes of
7 the Little Rock School District meetings about
8 students that are being expelled going into Covenant
9 Keepers and going into charter schools. We provide
10 our students with 35% more learning time every year,
11 nine hours a day versus six hours and 45 minutes in
12 the surrounding schools; 200 days a year versus 178
13 days. Our co-teacher model allows us a 15-to-1
14 student-to-teacher ratio. I know a lot of public
15 school teachers that would kill for that ratio. That
16 makes a huge difference. It's not just a marginal
17 increase down to 22 or 21 kids. At 15-to-1 you truly
18 can individualize learning in a different way. We
19 offer extensive training and professional development
20 time, over the summer and throughout the year. I
21 already talked about the management team staffing
22 structure. The other thing I would just highlight is
23 our performance management system. Just this year we
24 put in place the Illuminate system, which allows us
25 to provide monthly benchmark assessments. That's

1 making a huge difference because we're assessing our
2 students' progress towards state and national
3 standards every month throughout the year.

4 MR. HOY: Hang on. And just in the interest of
5 time I think you have diverted from my original
6 question to something a little bit more that's maybe
7 tangent to it but doesn't get where I'm trying to
8 get. I was trying to get -- number one, we've got a
9 charter school there that seems to be intent on the
10 purpose of addressing these same students'
11 educational need, high poverty, language barriers.
12 And the other thing in terms of this board having the
13 accountability that you come back before us in five
14 years, I think that was alluded to earlier by one of
15 the board members when we said in looking at your
16 goals we may not know where you are five years later,
17 based on the lack of exactness in your goals. Now
18 even to the point where I know you're saying "we
19 don't know what it's going to be at the state level,"
20 but most of the applications I've looked at at least
21 said that they're going to be at the state levels or
22 exceeding, whereas in this particular goal we don't
23 even make those statements, at least not from my
24 observations. And so, again, I'm going back to we've
25 got a charter school there. Tell me why this one is

1 needed when you've got one already there?

2 MR. LINDQUIST: So we actually had four charter
3 schools that were serving students from Southwest
4 Little Rock just two years ago.

5 MR. HOY: I understand.

6 MR. LINDQUIST: Two of those schools have been
7 closed.

8 MR. HOY: Understood.

9 MR. LINDQUIST: Dreamland Academy, which we
10 picked up a few of their students but mainly their
11 students returned to low performing public schools.
12 So the Dreamland Academy was serving over 250
13 students at its peak and has since closed. UCPC
14 actually drew in many students from Southwest Little
15 Rock, interestingly enough because they were coming
16 up University. That school we think at its peak had
17 as many as 350 students and closed in its first year.
18 So we know that there are other schools that have
19 served students in that area that have served over
20 500 students or more. We also know that there
21 remains Covenant Keepers, which was limited to just
22 serving middle school students, so it was cut back
23 from a high school to a middle school. And we know
24 about Cloverdale. Now I'm hard-pressed to understand
25 why Cloverdale would be the basis for a case because

1 I don't think anybody would argue that Cloverdale is
2 a high performing model school that's demonstrating
3 what's possible in Southwest Little Rock.

4 MR. HOY: I understand. But in terms of
5 developmental models neither has Little Rock Prep;
6 you're not in that area. So it was still just a
7 question I was curious about.

8 MR. LINDQUIST: Yeah. So --

9 MR. HOY: Are you saying that you anticipate
10 that you will outperform whoever, whatever?

11 MR. LINDQUEST: Yes.

12 MR. HOY: And I guess that's the question.

13 MR. LINDQUEST: Let's go to the goal slides.
14 You have those in front of you too. Let me get the
15 slides. So these are slides 43, 44 and 45 in your
16 deck. Oh, I'm sorry, it's actually page 22 in your
17 deck. I apologize. It's two slides per page, so
18 let's find that. There are three pages on the
19 performance goals for the school. We have 8th grade
20 performance goals. We talked about backwards
21 mapping. This is in essence our version of backwards
22 mapping. We want to know where we're trying to take
23 our students. We want to have integrity in the
24 standards of the school to make sure that right from
25 the beginning, starting K-2, we know where they need

1 to be in 8th grade. So these are some of our --
2 essentially our culminating standards for our 8th
3 grade students. And you can see it's completed in a
4 yearlong Capstone course which is a very rigorous
5 course that truly prepares them for college
6 preparatory high schools. It's reaching college
7 entrance levels on the ACT Explore exam and it's
8 getting them admitted to a college preparatory high
9 school. Now Little Rock Prep, last year, we had our
10 first 8th grade graduating class. Our students did
11 not do as well as we wanted them to do on the Explore
12 and I'm here to tell you we've got some work to do to
13 get them where we need them to be. But I also know
14 that 88% of our students last year were admitted into
15 college preparatory high school programs. And we had
16 a Director of College and Career Advancement who
17 spent the whole year working to get those students
18 placed into those programs, so we're very proud of
19 that fact.

20 The next slide speaks to some of the other
21 performance goals that we have on the NWEA measures
22 of academic progress. This is a specific national
23 assessment that we've decided to use and this allows
24 us to test students in the fall and spring of each
25 year, every year, from grades 1 through 8. And you

1 can see we've set national percentile ranking goals,
2 we've set individual growth target goals, we've set
3 national average goals, and comparative performance
4 goals. These are very specific goals that we have to
5 meet to comply with the goals that we set forth in
6 the charter and to meet this authorizer's
7 requirements.

8 The last page addresses the state tests. In the
9 state tests you can see that actually one of the
10 goals is that by the spring of their 5th grade year a
11 higher percentage of students will achieve a
12 proficient or advanced level than students in the
13 Little Rock School District. That's not an 8th grade
14 goal; that's a very specific 5th grade goal. And if
15 we're not meeting that goal by the time our five
16 years is up you would have grounds not to renew our
17 charter.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We have a follow-up
19 on the NWEA. Dr. Witonski, and then we'll come to
20 you, Mike.

21 DR. WITONSKI: So you've had NWEA in place for
22 -- in Little Rock Preparatory Academy for how long?

23 MR. LINDQUIST: Two years.

24 DR. WITONSKI: Two years. Okay. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: I was just looking through this
2 packet and I just had a question about the staffing.
3 I notice that it said there was -- I think one of the
4 waivers that was being requested had to do with --
5 was dealing with -- or one of your -- I'm trying to
6 get there -- merit, basically, for performance-based
7 pay for your teachers. Do you currently do that with
8 Little Rock Prep employees? And if you do, how is
9 that working?

10 MR. LINDQUIST: Yeah. We have a discretionary
11 performance bonus program so all of our teachers have
12 the opportunity to earn up to \$3,000 each year that's
13 a part of this bonus program. The bonus is paid out
14 twice annually. We do a summative fall evaluation
15 and we do a summative spring evaluation of our
16 teachers and that results in the bonus payout. And
17 we believe that that's a very important part of
18 making sure that student learning is really a
19 priority for our teachers and that that's central to
20 the way in which they're instructing students and the
21 way that they're working in the school throughout the
22 year. We have been making adjustments in that
23 program and improvements, however, because, honestly,
24 our teachers work extremely hard. They contribute
25 their hearts and souls, and we want to make sure

1 we're also valuing them for that. So there's a way
2 in which we're trying to make sure that that program
3 is designed to be effective and targeted but
4 compassionate.

5 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'm sorry, did I miss -- is it
6 based on an evaluation?

7 MR. LINDQUIST: It is based on evaluation.

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: And that's all?

9 MR. LINDQUIST: And this year we're moving to
10 test, so -- well, the evaluation includes a number of
11 different components. It includes two different
12 types of classroom observations. It includes a
13 larger evaluation actually that's done by the
14 principal. So it's a process that actually takes us
15 about a month-and-a-half to complete. And we prep
16 our teachers leading up to it by doing observations
17 in the fall to make sure that, you know, they have
18 the opportunity to understand what the standards are
19 and it's very transparent.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: I see. Do y'all use any kind of
21 testing matrix or growth on NWEA or anything like
22 that?

23 MR. LINDQUIST: We do use the NWEA as a measure
24 of growth in the spring evaluation.

25 MR. HERNANDEZ: For their evaluation, for

1 teacher evaluation?

2 MR. LINDQUIST: Yes.

3 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Is there a percentage?

5 MR. LINDQUIST: It's 20% of the total.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: And so 20% of the total is
7 from student achievement?

8 MR. LINDQUEST: It's based on the NWEA MAPS
9 standardized assessment.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

11 DR. WITONSKI: I'm sorry, I'm going out of turn
12 again. So in the documents that you provided in your
13 application, which we appreciate, especially the
14 information you submitted -- in our packet it's page
15 1,194, is what I'm looking at, just so you can see
16 what I'm looking at. But there is "sample that is
17 online LPC sample." Is that the direct instruction,
18 the --

19 MR. LONG: Yes, ma'am.

20 DR. WITONSKI: -- progress charts?

21 MS. LONG: Yes, ma'am.

22 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. And so what are the plans
23 for the use of those?

24 MS. LONG: So it's part of our evaluation system
25 as well and it's part of our goal-setting, so there's

1 two parts to it. As I mentioned, when children
2 arrive at our school we take the programs based on
3 the placement test and NWO test, a variety of
4 placement tests, and decide their placement in
5 groups. Also, they're placed in the instructional
6 program. So from there we can determine how far
7 behind the children are behind grade level and then
8 goals are set based upon that. So then we use the
9 charts or we track literally every week data
10 submitted every Wednesday. We have a data
11 coordinator who puts all of the data into the charts
12 you're looking at and then shows teachers -- if the
13 goal is 300 lessons by the end of the year you have
14 to complete 1.6 -- 1.5 lessons a day in order to meet
15 your goal to get your child at grade level. So every
16 week then as the data is put in those charts the
17 teacher can say, "I am above my goal or behind my
18 goal. Here's how I'm tracking against my goal." It
19 doesn't necessarily mean that they're going to move
20 through lessons quicker; it may mean that that group
21 or that particular child needs to go to the double-
22 dose time and may mean that we need to take a little
23 bit of time away from one area and add it to another
24 area 'cause one group is way ahead of goal, one group
25 is behind goal. So it's those type of adjustments

1 that we make based upon those charts. Right now,
2 we're just housing them on Google drive and that's
3 where we're accessing them on a regular weekly basis
4 while we're sharing that information.

5 DR. WITONSKI: So one of the concerns I know
6 that you heard probably earlier today is this idea of
7 just staying with one source. So your -- if you see
8 that the need is not being met by the direct
9 instruction or whatever the lesson plans are, you
10 have those other items that you listed that you would
11 then go to as a secondary?

12 MS. LONG: Yes. So we don't necessarily switch
13 around programs or -- what we do is we take the
14 program and we add the depth and add on -- and then
15 add the enrichment to it so we're making sure that
16 we're still covering all of the components. A
17 problem with using a variety of programs is one
18 program may cover one thing one time and then it may
19 be covered in another program and another. And if a
20 teacher is skipping around what can happen is there's
21 gaps and we don't want those gaps to happen. So
22 we're using a systematic direct instruction program
23 but we're enriching it, deepening [sic] it, and
24 adding additional practice with the other programs in
25 that area. That's how we do it.

1 MR. LINDQUIST: Just one addition on that point.
2 We believe in having a single coherent academic
3 design. We don't believe in having a number of
4 different programs in place across different schools
5 and the reason is that we also believe in having the
6 expertise to provide the kind of training and
7 professional development that teachers really need to
8 implement those programs properly. And you can
9 dilute it. What happens if you're implementing lots
10 of different programs is you never have sufficient
11 expertise to really drive value behind the programs
12 that you've chosen.

13 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No questions?

15 MR. BOARDMAN: No.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

17 MS. COFFMAN: I appreciate the plan to start
18 with K-2 and build upward and I do know the area very
19 well. I have been there many times. I anticipate
20 that your students will be low-income, possibly a
21 large group of Hispanic children. And so my question
22 is: what is your plan in those K-2 primary years to
23 focus on language development, especially looking at
24 cognates. Talk to me a little bit about that.

25 MS. LONG: So the programs that we're using are

1 very rich in language and actually have -- when it
2 looks -- look at the language standard, the ELL
3 standards in addition to the Common Core standards,
4 are meeting those ELL standards as well, so many of
5 the characteristics of SIOP. In addition to that,
6 because we're placing children where they can be
7 successful, very rich on vocabulary, lots of
8 vocabulary practice in addition to the writing and
9 the reading parts of it. We are immersing language
10 throughout the entire day. So all of the science
11 lessons, very heavy on vocabulary. All of the global
12 studies lesson, very heavy on vocabulary. We're
13 keeping data on the vocabulary and making sure that
14 we're looking at even the children's Z-scores and
15 making sure that they're not dropping or not --
16 sometimes groups are not rising as much as their
17 peers who are not ELL, and so we're making sure that
18 they're moving at the pace of non-ELL children.
19 Actually, our principal of the Little Rock
20 Preparatory Academy is SIOP trained and certified.
21 We will look to hire additional staff that is, as
22 well as training all of our teachers in that as well.
23 So it is an immersion program versus a pull-out
24 program. We do have interventionists where if a need
25 for pull-out must happen we will do that. We don't

1 like to do that as much because we want an
2 instructive environment with full immersion and a
3 really rich language environment.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: A question for Mr. -- or Dr.
5 Glasgow. Sorry I have to get you up there again, but
6 a lot of conversation about this neighborhood in
7 Southwest Little Rock. What school serves that
8 population currently in Little Rock School District
9 and do you have their status, this year's school
10 status?

11 DR. GLASGOW: I know they're designations.
12 Right.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

14 DR. GLASGOW: Baseline Elementary probably has
15 30% or 40% Hispanic/Latino. They are a Priority
16 school. Wakefield is in the general neighborhood.
17 It's doing well. It's a Focus school. But if you'll
18 remember, Focus schools, especially in Little Rock
19 School District, most of our elementary Focus groups
20 did not have a non-TAG group. Consequently, the TAG
21 group -- the whole school was tagged. Consequently,
22 it was compared to the state average of non-TAG, so
23 that's how Wakefield became a Focus school. It's
24 actually doing very well. Geyer Springs is in the
25 area. It's a Priority school. Dr. Suggs plans to

1 make it a high ability academy. It's a school that
2 we plan to close and reopen next year as a -- with a
3 different structure and emphasis to it. Middle
4 school-wise, Mabelvale Elementary is in the general
5 area. Mabelvale was just recognized by -- I believe
6 it was the Office of Education Policy. It's a group
7 out of the University of Arkansas that ranks schools,
8 among schools with a high percentage of Free and
9 Reduced Lunch kids. It was in the top 10 of schools
10 in the state in terms of progress. Cloverdale, which
11 is a conversion charter, is right next to where this
12 school will be. And even though it's still a
13 Priority school it did make some gains last year, so
14 we think it's headed in the right direction with the
15 new principal.

16 MR. HOY: Can I ask a question?

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure, Mr. Hoy, go ahead.

18 MR. HOY: Dr. Glasgow, I just wanted to ask a
19 question and I will relate it back to your initial
20 concerns when you did your opening statement. One of
21 those initial concerns was that there's already
22 charter schools in the area; however, it's been
23 pointed out in this conversation that the charter
24 school that's there is a middle school and not
25 elementary. This one starts at elementary. So I'm

1 thinking there would probably not be as much
2 duplication of services, especially up-front with the
3 charter school. And I was wondering, number one, if
4 you were satisfied with that? The other concern you
5 had was that at this particular -- on this particular
6 proposal there were no ESL staff members on-site and
7 the response was the fact that they are going to
8 provide that with staff in every classroom. I
9 believe it was two staff for every classroom,
10 something like that Mr. Lindquist said. So, you
11 know, and he also pointed out in Little Rock School
12 District there was three and compared that to the
13 ratio of actual students in Little Rock School
14 District. That's a sizeable ratio, I suspect. The
15 other thing that you pointed out was an issue was the
16 narrow margins in terms of the budget and Mr.
17 Lindquist addressed that in terms of the fact that he
18 has worked with narrow margins before, in Little Rock
19 Prep, and I think that's accurate. So with those
20 responses to your initial concerns are your concerns
21 still the same?

22 DR. GLASGOW: If he can work with a narrow
23 margin, then we're happy with that. We just don't
24 want the school to get at a certain point and lose
25 their charter because they're not performing

1 financially. That puts a burden on us, so we don't
2 want that to happen. In terms of the staffing,
3 they're putting teachers in schools that they plan to
4 hire. They want to hire as many bilingual teachers
5 as possible, but where are they going to get
6 bilingual teachers? There are very few of them
7 available in the Little Rock neighborhood. So to
8 hire bilinguals -- and I'm using "teachers," not a
9 certified teacher -- but staff that they can use as
10 teachers are probably going to be moms in that
11 general area, I would think. So I am concerned about
12 that. Now our three people in the ESL department are
13 not people that provide direct services to all the --
14 they're trainers and they train SIOP, they train
15 teachers all over the district. They do work in the
16 schools but they're not assigned to individual
17 classrooms.

18 MR. HOY: Just a follow-up, I'm just curious:
19 would teachers from other schools be allowed to
20 attend those trainings?

21 DR. GLASGOW: You know, if we had room I'd say
22 so. Yes.

23 MR. HOY: Okay.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions? Yes, Dr.
25 Walters.

1 DR. WALTERS: Mr. Lindquist, I have a question
2 for you. I know that the internal committee had some
3 concerns about your plan for human needs and special
4 education students and for gifted and talented
5 students. And you responded, "I still don't know if
6 the specificity is there." So can you tell us about
7 the gifted and talented program and about how you're
8 going to meet the needs of your special education
9 students?

10 MR. LINDQUIST: One thing I'd like to add that's
11 just a very quick digression, and then if you're
12 comfortable with that I'd like to have Tina speak to
13 your question. But the digression is just simply
14 that we had a first meeting with Dr. Suggs three
15 weeks ago; we had him come onto our campuses and he
16 was generous enough to give us two hours of time to
17 do that. And he is impressive and I would love to
18 see him transform the Little Rock School District,
19 and if we can help we will do it. And so I welcome
20 the opportunity to have continued meetings and I even
21 think that we would be so willing to do -- we do a
22 lot of door-to-door outreach when we're campaigning
23 to enroll the school. And if we could target our
24 outreach in the attendance zones of schools that are
25 really struggling --

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Lindquest, can we pretty
2 much stay on track? I mean --

3 MR. LINDQUEST: Excuse me. We would love to
4 help. That's all I'm saying.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I just wanted to make sure
6 you've answered the questions that we're asking.

7 MS. LONG: So for time and for special
8 education, the programs that we're using are proven
9 to be very effective with special education
10 populations as well. All of our children are placed
11 in the programs where they can be successful and then
12 we build upon those successes in small groups. Our
13 population at Little Rock does have a special
14 education -- a large special education of students.
15 Our school in Portland also has a large special
16 education group of students. Any needs that cannot
17 be met through specialized designed instruction in
18 those small performance groups we'll then provide
19 additional services through immersion. So it's very
20 important to us to provide the least restrictive
21 environment for our students. So what we do is our
22 special education providers work hand-in-hand with
23 the actual curriculum and the teachers, designing and
24 shaping and modifying the curriculum to meet each
25 individual student's goals and their IEP's. So then

1 they take that work and push it into the classroom.
2 So what you see often is our special education
3 teachers working directly in the classrooms with the
4 two teachers, making sure that those needs are met
5 for the least restrictive environment for our
6 students and following all IEEA requirements. For
7 our TAG students, very similar in the fact that
8 children are placed where they can be successful and
9 then we build upon it. I mentioned earlier that we
10 had a double-dose time for children who are behind
11 grade level. So children who are not behind grade
12 level, who are above grade level, the two blocks we
13 have is called our Reading Enrichment and a Math
14 Enrichment block. Those are very student-centered,
15 high-level courses that are offered to children who
16 place into those courses or identified as TAG
17 students. And those are very student-led and so what
18 we do at those times is it's a lot of projects, PBL's
19 (project-based learning), and then we invite people
20 into the community and work through those projects
21 together. So it's kind of a flipside to make sure
22 that we're meeting those needs as well.

23 DR. WALTERS: Okay. Will you have a full-time
24 special education teacher at this campus?

25 MS. LONG: We currently have a full-time special

1 education teacher at each of our existing campuses.
2 Upon enrollment, if there is a need on who's coming,
3 yes, we will. Whether it will be part-time or full-
4 time will depend upon the caseload. We will follow
5 all of the IDEA laws.

6 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And can you also speak
7 specifically about the gifted and talented program?

8 MS. LONG: Absolutely. So specifically about
9 the -- it's the same type of concept where it's a
10 push-in or full immersion program, except for it's
11 expanded upon. So much of our work with our
12 interdisciplinary blocks are all student-centered and
13 in those blocks is when the students really get to
14 elaborate and work with children who are above grade
15 level. There's two specific blocks during the day --
16 during the week; they're 40-minute periods twice a
17 week, where they are pulled out and work with just
18 peers who are at their level in enrichment
19 activities. At other times what we do is take the
20 curriculum and then differentiate it and scaffold it
21 for them.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Other questions? Very good.

23 DR. WITONSKI: I'd like to make a motion.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Are you ready for a motion?

25 Dr. Witonski has a motion.

1 DR. WITONSKI: I'd like to make a motion to
2 approve.

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have a motion to approve
4 the application.

5 MR. HOY: I'll second.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Second from Mr. Hoy. Any
7 further discussion or questions? Yes, ma'am.

8 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Kimbrell, in keeping with Mr.
9 Hernandez's point earlier about consistency, I know
10 they said they may have a part-time nurse but that
11 was a "may." So if there's not going to be a nurse
12 on campus, if there's not going to be a counselor, I
13 think part of the motion needs to be that they're
14 required to provide us with a report of the services
15 that they -- you know -- outside services or
16 whatever.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Do you want to be specific
18 then in the motion -- I think that motion that that
19 report would come annually?

20 DR. WALTERS: I believe we said earlier
21 September. For the fiscal year ending '14, it would
22 be due in September.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Just a report of
24 those services to be provided.

25 DR. WALTERS: And that would be if they did not

1 have a nurse on campus.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Very good. Okay. I have a
3 motion and a second. Any further discussion,
4 clarification? If not, all in favor of the motion
5 say aye.

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: All opposed? Motion passes,
8 the application is approved. Good luck.

9 MR. LINDQUIST: Thank you very much.

10 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: At least you don't have to
11 start in the hole this time.

12 MR. LINDQUIST: Thanks for putting up with my
13 digressions too.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yeah, you're bad about that.
15 Yeah, I've got some of them the same way up here.

16 MR. LINDQUIST: You look good in that sweater,
17 Dr. Kimbrell. I might have to do that myself.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay.

19 (OFF THE RECORD - 4:00 P.M.)

20 (BACK ON THE RECORD - 4:03 P.M.)

21 A-10: HEARING OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
22 APPLICATION: OZARK COLLEGE AND CAREER ACADEMY, SPRINGDALE,
23 ARKANSAS

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I appreciate all of you
25 hanging in here and being a part of this and us

1 learning together through this process. And we -- I
2 think you can see that we take it seriously and it's
3 important to us. We want to make sure that when we
4 authorize charters that they're going to work to be
5 very successful. So we're very interested in Action
6 Item, I believe, 10, the Ozark College --

7 MS. PERRY: Yes, sir. This is the last hearing
8 today for an open-enrollment charter and it's Ozark
9 College and Career Academy, with the sponsoring
10 entity of Ozark Education, Incorporated that has
11 applied for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. This would
12 be a school serving grades K-12 with an enrollment
13 cap of 250 students, located at 922 East Emma Avenue,
14 in Springdale. And you have Dr. Christi Silano here
15 to speak about the application first. You also know
16 that you've got Mr. Clay Hendrix with the Springdale
17 district who wants to respond as well.

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: If I could, all those that
19 will be speaking either in support or in opposition
20 please stand and raise your right hand. Do you swear
21 to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
22 the truth?

23 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Is it Dr.
25 Silano?

1 DR. SILANO: Silano.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Silano. Thank you. Please
3 proceed.

4 DR. SILANO: All rightee. Well, good afternoon.
5 My team and I are very pleased to be here to present
6 you a proposal for a new charter school to be opened
7 in Springdale, Arkansas. I'd like to begin by giving
8 you a few quick notes about my background, as founder
9 for this school, that would qualify me as a charter
10 founder. I have Ph.D. in Curriculum Instruction from
11 the University of Arkansas, specializing in dropout
12 prevention. I have 17 years in public, private and
13 charter education, primarily as a teacher. I am a
14 licensed building administrator in the state of
15 Arkansas. I have four years experience as a director
16 and one year experience as an instructional
17 facilitator of ALE's in Northwest Arkansas, and I'm a
18 parent of two children who have gone through the
19 Springdale system.

20 The mission I envision of our program -- the
21 mission of Ozark College and Career Academy is to
22 empower our students to excel academically, discover
23 their talents, and advance toward their dreams. Our
24 vision is to become a model innovative education
25 program noted for unsurpassed ability to engage

1 students in the education process for project-based
2 community-centered learning activities.

3 A little bit about our organization, our
4 sponsoring organization, it is -- in fact, we were
5 awarded nonprofit 501(c)(3) status a couple of weeks
6 ago, and I have that letter available for review. We
7 are dedicated to hands-on project-based education in
8 our community. We are dedicated to 21st Century
9 skill development in our community. We're dedicated
10 to serving diverse populations. We're dedicated to
11 college and career preparation, and we're dedicated
12 to engagement in intrinsic motivation through
13 innovative programming.

14 A little bit about our current activities, and I
15 want to draw your attention to these for three
16 important reasons. We have already started operating
17 as a nonprofit trying to serve our community. We
18 started in June with summer programming, reaching out
19 to students with 21st Century learning skill
20 opportunities at two nonprofit locations in Northwest
21 Arkansas, in both Fayetteville and in Springdale.
22 We're currently offering afterschool classes and also
23 home-school programs. And there are three reasons I
24 wanted to draw your attention to that. Number one,
25 we believe that having these programs is building our

1 capacity as an educational leader handling
2 accounting, insurance, background checks,
3 professional development, and a variety of tasks that
4 my work -- my years in public education have not
5 necessarily equipped me for. Number two, it's been
6 an outreach to our community and families. We've
7 been able to build relationships with teachers,
8 community leaders, and establish a presence in the
9 community as being there to serve. It's also given
10 us opportunities to recruit supporters and just get
11 to know the needs of our families. And, number
12 three, the third, maybe most important reason why
13 we've started these activities in the community is,
14 again, for the charter school to build structure for
15 our unique programming. We've been able to break in
16 our video production studio through video production
17 classes we've been offering to middle schoolers since
18 summertime. We've been able to break in our computer
19 programming -- program, which is a game design
20 program, for middle schoolers, working with a
21 University of Arkansas senior from the computer
22 department at the University of Arkansas. And we've
23 also been offering music, physical education, and
24 even cooking classes, all for middle grades. This is
25 partly based on my own research as a dropout

1 prevention specialist. I have learned that the
2 reason for high dropout rates, one of the big reasons
3 is lack of engagement that starts at the middle
4 school level. So I'm dedicated -- we are dedicated
5 to providing an education service that is going to
6 really engage that age group of students with 21st
7 Century learning skills -- or skills that they can
8 use with computer skills, media production skills,
9 and outdoor education and childhood education, early
10 childhood, which I'll talk about shortly.

11 The other activity that our education is
12 currently involved in is our Montessori preschool
13 which is opening in January. Part of our mission is
14 to offer that hands-on, very engaging, high level,
15 higher order critical thinking skills, and Montessori
16 is an international curriculum which is recognized
17 for its ability to do that. One of the experiences I
18 had as an ALE director and instructional facilitator
19 in ALE in the past five years is just noting the
20 difficulty that our students have, students at risk
21 have in the critical thinking skills. And so I
22 believe that by starting young with a curriculum that
23 is truly going to engage them in higher order
24 thinking, self-motivated learning that we can
25 possibly be successful with the Common Core. I

1 believe that the way things are being handled, the
2 current curriculums, we are not quite getting there
3 and I fear that we won't get there, and that's why we
4 would like to start something new and innovative to
5 see if we can do it.

6 By establishing a Montessori preschool in
7 January this has allowed us to accomplish a couple of
8 goals. Number one, to establish relationships in the
9 Montessori community, including a teacher internship,
10 which one of our teachers, Mrs. Chiodo, is here
11 today. She is currently in an accredited Montessori
12 curriculum course of study and is interning at the
13 Fayetteville Montessori school. It has allowed us to
14 receive advisement for curriculum materials purchases
15 and other types of advisement in building a
16 Montessori school. So we're working with Bentonville
17 and Fayetteville private schools along those lines
18 and also it's helping us in being able to hire
19 Montessori certified teachers. So it's not my intent
20 that we will open our school in August with all of
21 these wonderful innovations and have to have the lag
22 time while the children are waiting for the adults to
23 figure out what we're doing. We're going to have a
24 Montessori program of preschool that we'll be
25 partnering with -- and I should state that this is

1 distinct, you know, financially and in every way from
2 our charter school. But because we're sponsored by
3 the same organization we're able to get -- fill our
4 capacity and to learn as we go. And we are also able
5 to establish relationships with potential students,
6 including low income and minority students receiving
7 state aid for childcare. And so we'll be able to
8 recruit from the preschool age on up to come into our
9 kindergarten and by getting those kids that are
10 getting the childcare vouches.

11 A little bit about our facility. We are
12 thrilled -- we were thrilled to be offered a proposed
13 contract from the Jones Center for Families. The
14 Jones Center, if you've never been up to Springdale,
15 is just the pride of our community. It was
16 established in 1995, by Jones -- Harvey and Bernice
17 Jones, who are the owners of Jones Trucking, and it's
18 just an amazing facility. They've offered us 8,570
19 square feet for our classrooms, including six
20 classrooms and administration space, with a seventh
21 classroom for the second year. Benefits of that
22 facility include projector-equipped, fully equipped
23 classrooms and auditorium. Maintenance and security
24 are provided. There are two full-time police
25 officers on staff at all times. Recreation options

1 including swimming, gymnasium, ice skating rink, and
2 also probably the most important thing I think, or
3 valuable thing, is we also have -- the Northwest
4 Arkansas Community College just opened a campus there
5 last year. So our students as they get older would
6 have the opportunity to take some community college
7 classes right there on our campus. And this may be
8 also equally important, located in downtown
9 Springdale, it's a welcome and familiar facility for
10 needy families with 40 social service agencies right
11 on our campus. So a wonderful thing for our
12 families, especially the at-risk families and
13 children that we hope to serve.

14 A little bit about our staff. This is a list of
15 our partners, staff and advisors we network with in
16 our -- in building our current program and planning
17 for the charter. And so we have a staff including --
18 and I won't read all of them, but we have an Hispanic
19 Outreach Coordinator, who regrettably couldn't be
20 here today, but he has helped us with our outreach
21 through media, through newspaper, television and
22 radio to reach out to our Hispanic community. But as
23 you may know about Springdale, we also have a pretty
24 high Pacific Islander community as well, and so he's
25 been helping with that. He has a long background in

1 pastoral ministries, so he knows a lot of people and
2 is able to really, you know, talk to people where
3 they're at. He also has experience as a food service
4 director for several private -- or nonprofit
5 preschools in our area, so he's a very valuable
6 member of our team. We have several teachers on-
7 board including private school instructors and also
8 interns from the University, and so we've been able
9 to develop relationships with some high quality
10 teachers.

11 Our board of directors we have with us today:
12 Dr. Larry Ash, our president of our board. He has a
13 background working, you know, with nonprofits. His
14 doctorate is in economics. He has a background in
15 public relations and has been very devoted to the
16 community, worked in the Springdale law enforcement
17 reserve for many years, so he knows our community
18 well. Attorney Paige Young, who has worked with
19 Youth Bridge which serves local youth at risk. And
20 Dr. Julie Trivitt, our treasurer who is a professor
21 at the Lawton School of Business. Our partners: the
22 Jones Center for Families and the Walton Family
23 Foundation. And our advisory team who's just a
24 variety of people that I've known over the years and
25 some of them are new friends who have been helping me

1 learn every aspect of the business of operating a
2 school.

3 Just a little bit about our Northwest Arkansas
4 region. The graduation rate average for Northwest
5 Arkansas is currently running at 84%. Literacy,
6 algebra and geometry are in the 80's and with biology
7 at 58% proficient and advanced. What does this mean
8 in financial terms? And I should have written on
9 that slide "human terms" as well. We have a total in
10 Northwest Arkansas for the big four districts and I
11 think just the big four because there are other
12 smaller districts that may send -- that students may
13 come from to us. But in the big four, as of 2012,
14 there were 56,661 students, with 84 -- if we continue
15 at the current 84% graduation rate, that's 9,000 --
16 over 9,000 students not on track to graduate. With
17 dropout rates being as low as they are, and as a
18 dropout prevention specialist, I suppose question
19 those rates. But if those are accurate and most of
20 these students continue on to get a diploma, we're
21 still talking about one class of super seniors in
22 Northwest Arkansas costing over \$4.5 million per
23 year. And in human terms I personally have been
24 working with these students over the years and I've
25 seen the heartache that comes when students don't

1 graduate on time, the tough decisions that have to be
2 made by students, teachers and their families. So
3 it's more -- it's much, much more than just a
4 financial cost; it's a human cost.

5 Specifically, the Springdale district-- I'm just
6 going to give you a few -- I'm not going to overwhelm
7 you with a lot of data. But, again, this is based on
8 the 2012, which is what I had access to when I was
9 required to send in this PowerPoint. But we do have
10 access to the 2013 data as well and it has changed
11 slightly in some areas but it's still very close to
12 what it shows here. Nine Focus and Priority schools
13 -- only one Priority school -- I say "only" -- but I
14 did have the opportunity to work in that charter
15 school last year as instructional facilitator, so I
16 knew up close and personal what the challenges are in
17 that situation. Graduation rate of 82%. And again
18 the overall general steps were probably close to in
19 keeping, maybe a little lower, because of the
20 demographics and what we have regionally. But I just
21 wanted to point out the TAG statistics are much lower
22 -- again, 50's and 60's -- and very low in science.
23 And this is the group that we most intend to reach
24 out to is the TAG population.

25 So what is unique about OCCA compared to our

1 traditional public schools in our area? Well, with
2 OCCA we're talking about a Montessori based
3 curriculum. Now we understand that we will be
4 accountable for all aspects of the Common Core
5 assessments and state assessments that come down the
6 path, so we're not sure at this area -- level of
7 development where we're at right now if we will, if
8 ever, be able to be accredited as a Montessori
9 program with Montessori accreditation. We're
10 certainly going to seek it but right now, we're
11 saying Montessori tradition because we do understand
12 that we may have to tweak our -- at least our primary
13 grade curriculum. The public -- traditional public
14 schools have developing methodologies that develop
15 over time; you know, every few years something new
16 and exciting comes up. Montessori has been around
17 for 100 years and has been proven to be effective
18 throughout the world and is very much treasured by
19 many, many families. We're talking about smaller
20 class sizes than what the district can offer. We're
21 talking about smaller school size than what the
22 district can offer. I personally am dedicated to not
23 going over the 245 cap for our K-12. I want us to
24 have that small family environment. If we were to
25 grow, it may be it would be another site down the

1 road. But we truly believe that that small family
2 relational environment is what we think will be the
3 most effective in working with our at-risk students.
4 School uniforms; a one-to-one computer ratio -- we
5 are a 21st Century school after all. Early foreign
6 languages, and this is unique to our school. I
7 haven't heard much about this in other schools in
8 Arkansas. You will see in my application that there
9 is plenty of research to back up the importance of
10 early foreign languages. Children at their youngest,
11 this is when they are most receptive to learning a
12 second language and there have been many additional
13 benefits that have been shown, including improvement
14 in English, if a child speaks two languages. You
15 also see -- and, again, this is from me working in
16 Springdale's schools and in Bentonville, in Northwest
17 Arkansas, with our Hispanic population. Many, many
18 of our Hispanic students aren't as engaged in school.
19 Many of them, as much -- and I know Springdale works
20 very, very hard and does a wonderful job, you know,
21 working with those populations but I also -- I'm
22 seeing the downside of those who don't make it and
23 many of them I think would benefit from the self-
24 esteem that would come from seeing that their
25 language is valuable too and that they can teach

1 others something that's going to be valuable for
2 their careers. I also see many, many graduates in
3 our community who are bilingual conversationally but
4 they're not bi-literate. They cannot read and write
5 in their mother tongue. And so we will -- this would
6 be one instance we're going to have to separate the
7 monolingual from the bilingual students so those
8 bilingual students can work on their reading and
9 writing literacy and the monolingual students can
10 start with their conversational skills.

11 We are looking at a longer school day, and this
12 would be important with the things that we're going
13 to add, with the digital curriculum that we're
14 wanting to add and the foreign languages that we're
15 requiring. We do need additional time in our day.
16 And the extra week at the beginning of the week and
17 the extra week at the end of the year will allow us
18 to, we believe, work even more to provide the
19 tutoring, the one-on-one, the small groups that are
20 necessary to help the students achieve at a higher
21 rate than they would in the traditional schools.
22 We're also talking about a K-12 community -- and
23 again, this relates back to my own research. We find
24 that every time a student changes schools, and
25 especially if they're at risk, we can see a blip in

1 the radar. And so students who also are moving a
2 lot, are highly mobile, then you put them -- the
3 district is forcing them to change schools, their
4 parents are having them change schools; we see
5 students coming from 15 or 20 schools by the time
6 they get to high school. So we want to provide one
7 solid place. Even if mom -- single mom has to move
8 five times during their school career they can stay
9 at the same school for the whole 12 years, if they
10 stay in Northwest Arkansas.

11 Benefits of Montessori, really quickly, there's
12 only one other public Montessori school in Arkansas.
13 Montessori schools are a trend throughout the
14 country, growing in California, Colorado, Arizona,
15 throughout the world. The only other one right now
16 is an elementary school in Benton, Arkansas. In our
17 region we have three Montessori schools, all private,
18 very expensive and out of reach for the average, and
19 especially the low income, students.

20 Our 5-8 certification programs is another
21 innovation and I did allude to that earlier. This
22 will be where we would take four areas and we tried
23 to pick diverse areas for forming arts, computer,
24 game design, early childhood, which is our older kids
25 working with the younger ones and perhaps working in

1 the preschool to develop those family consumer
2 science skills, and then other education which would
3 integrate science and outdoor physical education;
4 technology rich, real world projects; production
5 skills; career exploration. And then grades 9 and 10
6 will be college and career. I can't wait to be able
7 to say to my 9th graders, "Hey, you don't have to
8 think about high school in terms of four long years."
9 We lose so many kids who become disengaged at the 9th
10 grade level. "High school can be two years. You can
11 start college in two years if you work hard and we're
12 going to help you do it." And we have wonderful
13 concurrent credit programs and technical programs in
14 our area and even right on our campus at the Jones
15 Center should we be approved. And then, finally, the
16 11th through 12th concurrent credit -- we want to, as
17 we said, offer transportation. One of the barriers
18 to many of the students in Springdale and throughout
19 Northwest Arkansas to get into these concurrent
20 credit programs is transportation. We want that to
21 be a part of our mid-day, to take them, if they need
22 to go to the technical school or wherever they need
23 to go. And then digital curriculum -- we do not
24 intend to buy textbooks. Everything will be online.
25 We'll be using the most up-to-date engaging digital

1 curriculum that we can find, and so our teachers will
2 be trained in blended and flipped instruction to
3 accommodate that type of learning. That's all I
4 have.

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Is there anyone
6 else who will be speaking? There's still about a
7 minute.

8 DR. SILANO: No, sir.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That was timed really well.

10 DR. SILANO: Oh, thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. I do know that Mr.
12 Hendrix is here to speak in opposition. Mr. Hendrix,
13 we'll give you your 20 minutes.

14 MR. HENDRIX: I will not take all of that 20
15 minutes. My name is Clay Hendrix. I'm assistant
16 superintendent for educational innovation technology,
17 STEM, and district accountability at Springdale
18 School District. And I thank you for your time,
19 Commissioner and Panelists. I am going to begin by
20 asking that you deny the open-enrollment charter
21 request for Ozark College and Career Academy for the
22 following reasons, and these are reasons that we have
23 based off of the application that you have with you.
24 These are just some things that I want to bring to
25 your attention in the context of Springdale School

1 District. I will begin with a few key programmatic
2 features. We find that there's no uniqueness of
3 program offerings in this application. Flow theory
4 and teacher as facilitators are concepts that are
5 found throughout Springdale School District. The
6 theories behind those concepts are those that
7 facilitate the beginnings of project-based learnings
8 and Dr. Silano alluded to that, and those are
9 certainly things that can be found in the Springdale
10 School District as well. We have an engaging
11 instruction that's present throughout all of our
12 schools. I will name a few things that we do, not
13 all of them but things that our teachers are trained
14 in: Understanding by Design, Cognitively Guided
15 Instruction, Thinking Mathematically, the literacy
16 design collaborative and mathematics design
17 collaborative, (unintelligible) and East, just to
18 name a few. We do have highly engaging instruction
19 and we see that engagement increasing as we go
20 throughout each year. We have, we believe, the
21 highest caliber curricular design. You'll have to go
22 a long way to find a school district that has better
23 curriculum design than Springdale. And I'm just
24 going to highlight two things right now. We're
25 working with Dr. Marcia Imbeau from U of A. She is a

1 protégé of Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson, and so that has
2 been very useful to the district, certainly as we
3 move into tests and those things. And then also
4 authors and advisors to PARCC, David Pook and Diane
5 August, are working with us to do some continual
6 curriculum alignment and develop interim assessments.
7 So moving from key program added features to baseline
8 assessment plans, these are just some issues that we
9 saw in the proposal. One is that the school states
10 that during the first two weeks of school students
11 will take a PARCC exam. The PARCC exam won't be
12 available at that time for students to take. I know
13 that you realize that. We are fortunate in
14 Springdale, 22 or 24 of our schools -- a lot -- let
15 me just say most of our schools -- we're
16 participating in the PARCC field test this spring.
17 We're excited about that. And so we will have a deep
18 understanding -- or, I'm sorry -- a deeper
19 understanding of how those assessments and the
20 logistics of those assessments will work. And so we
21 believe we'll be well prepared for those assessments
22 in 2015. And also during the interim, and as we have
23 for a number of years, we've been using NWEA and the
24 data from that to impact instruction. Advanced
25 placement is something we feel very strongly about in

1 Springdale. In two of our high schools we have 20 to
2 23 AP courses offered, depending on the year, plus IB
3 courses that are offered at both high schools. We
4 have two elementary schools that are IB elementary
5 schools. And I think that the size of this school,
6 with 250 students K-12, they will have a hard time
7 offering a wide range of AP courses or IB courses for
8 their secondary students. Extended day, we have
9 similar extended day opportunities mostly centered
10 around 21st Century learning communities that you're
11 familiar with. We have those at a number of middle
12 and elementary schools in Springdale, plus other
13 types of programs to help with extended day services
14 for students.

15 In student services, one area of concern for us,
16 the application does not appear to have a more rich
17 or a more supportive environment for students
18 specifically with requested waivers from guidance,
19 program media center and alternative learning
20 environments. And so those were three things that
21 raise concern with us.

22 Next is ELL instruction. I don't think I have
23 to tell you that Springdale School District is a
24 leader in the state and nation as far as ESL
25 education goes and Dr. Silano alluded to, incorrectly

1 so. We have a large number of Hispanic students in
2 our school district; we have a large number of
3 Marshellese students in our school district; we --
4 our ESL folks, department, team, they don't just get
5 to focus on students that speak one language as their
6 first language. So we do a variety of things. We
7 also provide ESL Academy to people from all over,
8 just for information. I've been here all day. I
9 have all of these notes on you people now. So
10 anyway, and then I did want to address just a few
11 other things. Those are the things that I got from
12 the proposal that you have, and then I just want to
13 touch on a couple of other things. We have a lot of
14 in-district transfers that are requested by parents.
15 As you know, we have 17 elementary schools, four
16 middles, four junior highs, and three high schools.
17 And so for families that do move around in the
18 district they can request to stay at their own
19 school; we honor those. Especially if there's a
20 family hardship, we honor those insofar as we can
21 except for when it would make us, you know, exceed
22 capacity in a certain school. And we do have
23 transitions to middle and to junior high and to high
24 school; however, we have our elementaries that are P-
25 5 elementaries. So if the student starts in pre-

1 kindergarten they could stay in the same elementary
2 school for seven years. And I know -- I agree about
3 the research that comes from transitions to different
4 buildings. But we do have a system where they can
5 stay at the same building for the first seven years
6 and we definitely try to help when families have to
7 move for hardship.

8 Student achievement. She put a slide up there;
9 it was mostly correct. It was mostly correct, Dr.
10 Silano. I want to point out a couple of things. Our
11 Priority school is Archer Learning Center, which is
12 our ALE, among other things. It -- and Mr. Hoy
13 certainly has an email or letter from me. It met its
14 AMO's in literacy and mathematics. It did not meet
15 its graduation rate AMO. Its graduation rate
16 increased quite a bit. It overall saw about a 42%
17 increase in student achievement. I don't care if
18 it's a priority school or not; it's awesome. And so
19 we were really pleased to see that increase in our
20 Priority school. And then for our district
21 Proficient and Advanced and TAG, those are going up
22 in mathematics and literacy. They are both about 70%
23 and 71% this year; they're up 4% or 5% from last
24 year. We did not meet either AMO at the district
25 level for TAG either in mathematics or literacy, but

1 we were within 2%. So obviously we're not pleased
2 with that but we have made growth. As a district we
3 met our graduation rate and exceeded it by 7
4 percentage points. Our graduation rate was 82% for
5 Springdale and our three-year average is 75% for
6 graduation rate. So what that tells you is the
7 growth that we have had just in the last three years
8 in graduation rates.

9 So, in summary, the opportunity to provide
10 parents a choice that is distinctly value-added and
11 worth the investment of the State's resources should
12 be a part of the expansion of the charter school
13 application process. There's no evidence provided
14 that this proposal meets this important criteria.
15 Furthermore, the proposed academic programs, ESL
16 program, curriculum instruction design, and the lack
17 of professional development plan for technology
18 integration, a counseling program and a media program
19 did not come close to matching what is currently
20 available in the Springdale School District. The
21 nature of the charter movement is to allow new ideas
22 to come forward, to provide clear and distinct
23 options for students. Based on the charter
24 application, the proposal is very duplicative
25 regarding the instructional programs that are already

1 offered in other schools in Springdale. On the other
2 hand, it is lacking in many of the programs that
3 through research are found to be particularly of
4 benefit to children in poverty. And furthermore, any
5 effort to diminish the resource base of the
6 Springdale School District diminishes our capacity to
7 serve the children in Springdale. Obviously, we are
8 concerned about Title 1 and other things that might
9 change if this school was opened in our district.
10 Their proposal appears to be limited in scope without
11 making a valid case for the necessity of this type of
12 choice options for parents in Springdale. Therefore,
13 Springdale stands in opposition to this charter
14 application and respectfully requests that you deny
15 this application.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you, Mr. Hendrix.
17 Anyone else to speak in opposition? There's still
18 time left. If not, Dr. Silano, we'll let you have an
19 additional five minutes.

20 DR. SILANO: I'll start by apologizing for any
21 mistakes I made about the data. All right. I just
22 want to hit on the issues that were brought up by Mr.
23 Hendrix. One thing that was noted in the letter that
24 he read from, from Dr. Rollins, is that the flow
25 theory that we referred to as being part of the basis

1 for what we're trying to achieve with Montessori and
2 project-based learning -- Dr. Rollins noted that his
3 theories have been part of the shift into the project
4 based learning model. And what we're talking about
5 is not just a theory-based situation; we're not just
6 looking at influences on our curriculum. We're
7 looking at the actual internationally recognized
8 curriculum and instructional procedures that have
9 been built over a period of many, many decades by
10 American Montessori Society and International
11 Montessori. So this is definitely very distinct in
12 the instructional model as far as how teachers relate
13 to students, what materials are used. Definitely
14 innovative.

15 He said that there is no evidence that the
16 curriculum or instructional program will equal or
17 exceed that of the Springdale School District. Well,
18 that is true. We're a brand-new start-up, so we
19 wouldn't be able to offer any evidence. But we are
20 using research-based programs and we have -- there's
21 plenty of research to support what we're trying to do
22 as far as project-based learning, Montessori, flow
23 theory, and concurrent credit to keep students
24 engaged and excited about school so we don't have the
25 brain-drain that happens for so many traditional

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public school students.

There was a problem that was raised, or a question that was raised about my application, our application, concerning the PARCC assessments that we plan to use as an initial assessment model. No, we do not have access and I don't know if I didn't explain that well in the application. What was intended by the meaning -- and I may be -- hopefully I communicated that -- was that our teachers would be able to build PARCC-based assessments built on -- based on the PARCC assessment sample items that are available to everyone right now. Also, there have been many references today to the NWEA MAPS assessment and I know that is widely available through grants and a lot of people are thrilled to have it because it gives them a snapshot of what's happening in their schools. But me, as an instructor, who has had first-hand experience giving that and working with the data available from that, I believe that the STAR assessment, based on my research, would be superior for the reasons that we're devoted to assessment with the least possible classroom disruption and the most specific possible data. STAR offers both teacher and student friendly program assessments and offers MAP test items to

1 where a teacher can give formative assessments every
2 week if they want to. With MAP you only get to give
3 it three times during the year; it's cumbersome to
4 administer; and it gives very general data as far as
5 grade equivalency as opposed to STAR and other
6 assessments like it that will give you a breakdown of
7 what the students actually need to work on. For me
8 as an instructional facilitation working with the
9 Springdale ALE, I was instrumental in helping to
10 raise those scores, the literacy improvement that
11 they saw in their literacy scores, and I used the MAP
12 data in doing that with our team, with our PLC's.
13 But we really became much more dependent on teacher-
14 built assessments. They were much more helpful than
15 the actual MAP data itself as far as helping
16 individual students with their individual learning
17 plans.

18 The one-to-one technology, the digital
19 curriculum, there was a question about professional
20 development for that. The digital curriculum plans
21 we're looking at all offer extensive professional
22 development that comes with the curriculum. We've
23 also looked at one bid so far and others are
24 forthcoming to provide contracted IT services who
25 will also provide professional development to our

1 teachers in using our technology. And we've also
2 been getting bids -- yeah, I'm sorry -- IT for set-up
3 and support, we've been looking at. It's for that,
4 and that's included in our budget.

5 As far as Advanced Placement, no, we can never
6 offer all of the offerings that are offered at a huge
7 district like Springdale. We will have access
8 through our digital curriculum, depending on which
9 one we end up going with. Some of them have a
10 minimum of five AP courses, up to ten AP courses that
11 would be available online. We also intend to hire --
12 our teachers will be highly qualified and not
13 necessarily certified at the secondary level, so that
14 we can hire teachers with master's degrees in their
15 subject areas, who will be qualified then to teach
16 these AP courses or some kind of concurrent credit
17 course.

18 Talking about extended day, extended calendar,
19 yes, there are opportunities in Springdale for that.
20 But this would be a requirement for all of our
21 students, not optional, to be in the extended day
22 program. We'll also offer before and after school
23 programs in partnership with Ozark Kids, one of our
24 affiliates, so that students will get additional
25 opportunities for mentoring and tutoring.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Silano, your five
2 minutes is up.

3 DR. SILANO: Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any last statement? I'm
5 sure there's going to be plenty of questions.

6 DR. SILANO: Okay. I would just -- I have one
7 thing. One of the last things he said was there is
8 nothing in my application that speaks to helping
9 students in poverty. Speaking about Montessori
10 specifically, it was started for students in poverty
11 and disabled students. And because of the
12 achievement that Marie Montessori was able to achieve
13 with those at-risk groups that is why it's become so
14 popular and has been moved over to the -- to use with
15 the average student, mainstream. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you. Okay. Panel, I
17 believe we're to a point now where we ask questions
18 of both the applicant and any district that is in
19 opposition or any person that may be in opposition.
20 I think we only have the one district in this case.
21 So we'll begin this time with Ms. Coffman.

22 MS. COFFMAN: Thank you. My question is going
23 to be a general question to start off. We're very
24 well aware of the advances that Springdale has made
25 in educating the students. What was -- what really

1 prompted you to want to bring forth this proposal?
2 And I believe you said that your children went to
3 Springdale. Is that correct?

4 DR. SILANO: Uh-huh. Yes. Well, you're getting
5 to really the heart of the matter for me because it
6 becomes a little bit personal. But having worked in
7 ALE's -- and only one year in Springdale, actually
8 four years in the Bentonville ALE working with at-
9 risk and low achieving students -- as the director of
10 those programs and a leader in Springdale in the
11 program, I encountered a lot of frustration over the
12 years. For the Bentonville program, for example, I
13 designed -- every year they would come to me and say,
14 "What do you want to do next year, Christi?" And I
15 would put together these wonderful plans and designs
16 to improve, to bring in project-based learning, to
17 bring in vocational opportunities, to bring in things
18 that I have learned, you know, and that my teachers
19 believed would be helpful. But we tended to be at
20 the bottom of the totem pole. In a big district
21 there are many, many other priorities, more
22 important. And I'll say, you know, in Bentonville we
23 were in portable classrooms in the back parking lot;
24 in Springdale, the facility was less than -- was
25 substandard compared to all the beautiful new

1 buildings that they've been building. So I just felt
2 like I wanted to be able to serve these kids with a
3 facility that we would be proud of, that -- a school
4 that they would be proud of, where they wouldn't have
5 to feel like they were second-class. As far as my
6 own children in the Springdale district, I am
7 grateful for the education they got there. My older
8 son was in the music program, the band program. I
9 think that really saved him. I think it's those
10 engaging kinds of opportunities that really help. He
11 was bored. He was often very bored in his classes,
12 and so there was a lack of engagement there. He's
13 very digitally savvy, like most kids nowadays.
14 They're on their cell phone or on their laptops;
15 they're playing computer games. And I believe if he
16 had been in an environment that had been more -- and
17 heaven knows, Springdale is doing everything they can
18 -- everybody is -- to try to get technology into the
19 classroom. But I believe if you have that one-on-one
20 technology, your curriculum is digitally laced, and
21 students are doing projects that are digitally
22 enriched that there would have been more engagement
23 for him. He was not a superstar in school, I will
24 tell you that. He barely graduated, even though he
25 scored advanced on all of his tests throughout the

1 years. My younger son, I am actually home-schooling
2 him this year. I pulled him out of the Springdale
3 district for the same reason. He's a talented
4 musician, as our private music instructor sitting in
5 the back here is on my team can attest. However, he
6 was not interested in being in the marching band,
7 like his brother was. And so he was -- it was very
8 sad to watch him also scoring very advanced on all of
9 his benchmarks but slowing losing engagement with the
10 school. And I think, you know, it's not that those
11 things aren't being offered in the big districts;
12 they certainly are. But unless, you know, we give
13 students so much choice and they see their friends --
14 lots of other kids who are not participating in
15 things, I want to create an environment -- and that's
16 what this is all about, creating a model where
17 everybody has to participate in one of these
18 certification programs. So if you're a middle school
19 student, you are in either video production or
20 computer programming or this or that. You can switch
21 at the semester or you can switch again at the end of
22 the year. But everyone is doing something engaging,
23 not just going to classes and listening to blah-blah-
24 blah every day. So that is -- that's what I want to
25 do is do something that I believe will be helpful to

1 students with individual learning programs that will
2 be student led and community involved with the
3 digital aspect to it.

4 MS. COFFMAN: May I follow-up?

5 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am. Follow-up.

6 MS. COFFMAN: It's a follow-up question then.
7 I'm looking at the schedule. There's a kindergarten,
8 K-2 schedule, and a 6-8 master schedule. And so I
9 hear exactly what you're saying about those kids that
10 we're losing; they're just not interested --

11 DR. SILANO: Sure.

12 MS. COFFMAN: -- in the way it's being provided.
13 So that brings me to the question of why the digital
14 literacy is sectioned off into the schedule?

15 DR. SILANO: Yes. I'm glad you brought that up.
16 It's not actually -- it's actually integrated
17 throughout the curriculum. And actually in the
18 packets that you received on the Montessori section,
19 American Montessori does support technology. I know
20 there's some question about that because they are so
21 traditional, but they do support technology in their
22 K-12 programs. So certainly, we'll -- and certainly,
23 with our project-based learning that's a big part of
24 it. We want to include that stem. That's why, for
25 example, with our afterschool programs that we're

1 offering now -- I'm a drama teacher. I'm an English
2 teacher but I also was certified in drama and taught
3 drama and debate for many years. And, you know, it's
4 wonderful to have those performance skills. I mean,
5 it gives kids so much confidence. But how much more
6 if we could also show them how to operate a camera;
7 if we can show them how to film; if we can show them
8 how to edit. Now they have a skill that they can use
9 in a business sector or in any type of a job. The
10 same with, you know, our computer game design
11 project-based learning certification. These are kids
12 who go home and they spend hours and hours playing
13 computer games. Well, that's wonderful, being a
14 consumer of all these exciting games. But how about
15 being a producer of these games? Now you have a
16 computer programming skills that you can take out
17 into the private sector and that's going to give you
18 a better job opportunity. It's the same way with our
19 outdoor education. We would incorporate scientific
20 -- digital scientific data collection methods. We
21 did that this last summer with electronic microscopes
22 and data collection methods and with our early
23 childhood education as well. We're going to be
24 training little teachers, by golly, and we're going
25 to show them how to collect data on what they do with

1 those kids and use technology to help them be
2 effective in working with other children. So, but
3 where you see where it's blocked off for digital
4 literacy, that is actual time in front of the
5 computer with the -- you'll see the Learning.com
6 curriculum, which I also gave you a copy of in your
7 packets. That is -- and I'm sure there are others
8 like it; we haven't contracted with them yet. But
9 that is a program that actually teaches children
10 digital skills from kindergarten through 12. So
11 they're learning how to -- you know -- it's sad to me
12 as an English teacher how many kids come to high
13 school and can't tell a good website from a bad
14 website, don't understand about plagiarism, what --
15 you know -- "What's the point? I just copy and
16 paste. Right?" So they -- so this teaches them the
17 importance of copyright laws, the importance of
18 internet safety, the importance of, you know, how to
19 use the software. So they're getting direct
20 instruction in digital literacy and that's what
21 you're seeing.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

23 MR. BOARDMAN: I noticed in your application you
24 talked about using eBooks pretty extensively.

25 DR. SILANO: Yes.

1 MR. BOARDMAN: And I think you said that -- you
2 referred to your media, you have about 750, I think,
3 eBooks the first year?

4 DR. SILANO: Yes.

5 MR. BOARDMAN: What eBooks are you -- I mean, is
6 this one company or one -- what eBooks are you
7 talking about here?

8 DR. SILANO: No. We don't have a specific
9 company in mind. Just through my own research as a
10 literacy instructor, the cost of eBooks versus print
11 books is certainly a savings to us but it's also in
12 line with our 21st Century learning. The high
13 schools -- the big high schools that I've worked in
14 there is a move away from buying print books and a
15 move toward electronic books.

16 MR. BOARDMAN: I just wondered if you use --
17 yeah, I understand that.

18 DR. SILANO: Yeah.

19 MR. BOARDMAN: You were talking about \$3,000 to
20 buy 700 and I thought maybe you already had something
21 in mind?

22 DR. SILANO: No. I just picked an average. I
23 just looked at several, you know, books that -- at
24 different grade levels and came up with an average
25 cost.

1 MR. BOARDMAN: Okay. One other. Because of
2 your past work and what you've done, what do you --
3 if you're looking at your students in your classes or
4 in this school and you were looking to prevent
5 dropouts, because that seems to be a very important
6 thing --

7 DR. SILANO: Yes.

8 MR. BOARDMAN: -- and something that you work
9 at, what would you look at as far as an early warning
10 system to prevent -- to try to identify students that
11 you might be concerned about? What kind of factors
12 would you look at?

13 DR. SILANO: Well, there's been some great
14 studies done on that -- and, again, this is why, you
15 know, the middle school level is so important to me.
16 One of the studies came out of Chicago -- and forgive
17 me if I don't remember the names -- the name of the
18 study -- but it was a big study of several thousand
19 students across several -- you know -- many, many
20 districts that showed that at the 6th grade level you
21 can predict more than any other grade level who's
22 going to drop out based on attendance, based on
23 grades, based on behavior. And so those would be the
24 three warning factors. And so there are, you know,
25 40 social service agencies available at the Jones

1 Center; we'll be able to refer students. Being a
2 small school we'll know everybody's name; we can go
3 check-up on them at home, whatever it takes to get
4 them to school and then work with them to be
5 successful.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

7 DR. WITONSKI: So at what point -- so you've
8 left the Springdale School District?

9 DR. SILANO: I did.

10 DR. WITONSKI: And were you -- you made a
11 comment about -- Mr. Hendrix had made a comment about
12 the scores in ALE. Were you over that program to
13 produce those scores?

14 DR. SILANO: I was the literacy coach.

15 DR. WITONSKI: Okay.

16 DR. SILANO: So I was the instructional
17 facilitator for literacy.

18 DR. WITONSKI: Okay. Yeah. Thank you. I
19 noticed also in the waivers listed that it lists
20 specifically the flag for --

21 DR. SILANO: That was in reference to having the
22 American flag out front of the building. And so, you
23 know, since we'd be in a leased property that
24 wouldn't be an option for us to make those kinds of
25 decisions.

1 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you. My other question is
2 concerning assessments. So you at some point had
3 some experience with NWEA?

4 DR. SILANO: Yes.

5 DR. WITONSKI: And then made the decision that
6 maybe the better way to go is STAR math. So when the
7 school begins --

8 DR. SILANO: STAR math and reading.

9 DR. WITONSKI: Let's say it's the first day of
10 school.

11 DR. SILANO: Yes.

12 DR. WITONSKI: You'll be having -- you'll do
13 STAR math and STAR reading for both.

14 DR. SILANO: Yes.

15 DR. WITONSKI: And you want to open K-12?

16 DR. SILANO: No.

17 DR. WITONSKI: I'm so sorry. You want to have
18 math and literacy for the students where you're
19 starting, at that starting point. Correct?

20 DR. SILANO: On the first day -- first week of
21 school we will assess everyone. They'll all have
22 their own laptops; everyone will have STAR loaded on
23 their laptop. It takes 20 minutes to assess them.
24 They'll get their first assessment but they will also
25 get their first teacher-built PARCC type assessment

1 as well.

2 DR. WITONSKI: And I'm sure Mr. Hernandez will
3 have some financial questions. But in reviewing the
4 budget, going back to Mr. Boardman's question about
5 eBooks specifically, projecting out the cost of some
6 of those things I know as a former superintendent,
7 like many of us have lived in this room, sometimes
8 those can be more than you anticipate.

9 DR. SILANO: I'm sure.

10 DR. WITONSKI: Yeah. Absolutely. So I'm sure
11 you're keeping those --

12 DR. SILANO: I tried to be conservative with my
13 numbers. I mean, certainly, with the -- you know --
14 the Free and Reduced Lunch, you know, I put on there
15 that we're going to buy them lunch until we get --
16 our child, you know, nutrition is in place. I've
17 purposely put in higher salaries than I hope to pay
18 but that will, you know, just give myself, you know,
19 that conservative estimate. But certainly as a
20 nonprofit we'll be seeking additional grants and
21 donations to help shore up the needs that we have --

22 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

23 DR. SILANO: -- until we get established.

24 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

25 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. I have two questions.

1 One of them pertains to finances. If you weren't to
2 meet your marker, your number of students that you're
3 proposing and things like that, what other
4 alternative funding do you have in order to keep kids
5 from, you know, one, being pulled out of the
6 Springdale School District, and then if it were to go
7 bankrupt or not be able to meet its financial
8 obligations what plan would you have, just roughly,
9 to not get kicked out of school and put them right
10 back in?

11 DR. SILANO: So which question do you -- it
12 sounds like two separate; one is bankrupt and one is
13 not enough students.

14 MR. HERNANDEZ: Well, I think not having enough
15 students, according to your budget, might lead to
16 having some financial problems. So I guess what I'm
17 asking is what other financing is available to keep
18 it financially going if that -- if you weren't to
19 meet your number of students that you're proposing?

20 DR. SILANO: Well, my first course of action
21 would not be to look for other funding. My first
22 course of action would be to look at my programming
23 and how I can adjust it. Certainly, with the lower
24 grades Montessori is by its nature a mixed grade
25 classroom. So if I have one less teacher it's not

1 going to affect whether I can still have grades K-1
2 and 2 as proposed. I can still offer that with two
3 teachers instead of three. The same with my 6, 7, 8.
4 If -- you know -- one of the first things that we'll
5 do the first week of school with students, we'll
6 determine which of these certification programs that
7 they want to come into. And so it's very likely that
8 just because Dr. Silano thinks those are four great
9 programs, if the students aren't going to like one of
10 them, and so we will cut one of those programs. So
11 we'll have fewer teachers; that would be our biggest
12 expense right there. And then, you know, fewer
13 laptops, fewer everything will be dependent upon how
14 many students that we have. As far as additional
15 resources in the community, other than my own
16 personal line of credit, which is good -- certainly,
17 I don't want to have to bail-out my own school but we
18 also do have the support of the Walton Family
19 Foundation, who gave us a grant in the spring as a
20 start-up grant, and we will be seeking additional
21 donations from our community as well.

22 MR. HERNANDEZ: My second question revolves
23 around the curriculum. I'm looking through this
24 handout that was given to me and I know you
25 referenced the Learning.com and I also see a slip in

1 here for Odysseyware. And so I guess my question is,
2 just trying to put myself in the shoes of the
3 students that will be coming to this school,
4 especially the middle school -- so the majority of
5 the day that I see on this schedule will be -- where
6 the kids will be online working through the
7 curriculum for Odysseyware and Learning.com.

8 DR. SILANO: Well, actually, how that would
9 work, Learning.com is very specifically technology
10 skills, digital skills, so it would take up a very
11 short part of their week, although it is very
12 important. The Odysseyware, or another -- like we're
13 looking at a couple others such as Ingenuity,
14 something that is engaging and interactive, a good
15 price -- we are looking at flipped or blended -- and
16 blended learning models. So we want these -- we want
17 to check out these laptops to these children. As you
18 see in our budget, we have a budget for providing for
19 that. If they don't have internet access at home, we
20 will partner with Cox Communications to provide that
21 so that they do have Wi-Fi at home so that they can
22 take these laptops home with them and do some of
23 their learning -- their online learning at home, so
24 that when they come into the classroom they're
25 actually getting some direct instruction, small group

1 instruction, extra additional tutoring and help. So
2 they're not just sitting in front of a computer all
3 morning long. But, yes, our primary curriculum -- or
4 I should say our primary curriculum is project-based
5 but our back-up curriculum to insure all the aspects
6 of Common Core and that will come from their digital
7 resource.

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: So, for instance, for like a 7th
9 grade math student --

10 DR. SILANO: Yes.

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: -- when they're in the classroom
12 they'll be working primarily on Odysseyware for their
13 -- to get their lessons completed?

14 DR. SILANO: In the classroom that would be
15 their primary textbook, just like any certified
16 teacher doesn't rely on -- entirely on the textbook.
17 That would be their textbook go-to. So their teacher
18 may send them home with homework to go to. For
19 example, ConCademy video with, you know, "I want you
20 to watch this video tonight; tomorrow we're going to
21 work on it; we'll do some problems on the Odysseyware
22 curriculum; we're going to do this little group
23 activity using some cognitive guided instruction,"
24 and they will do a Common Core assessment at the end
25 of the week. So we will give our teachers liberty,

1 as we would with any professional, to develop their
2 curriculum as they see fit.

3 MR. HERNANDEZ: So would the teacher in the
4 classroom be like one teacher for multi kids and
5 multi subjects --

6 DR. SILANO: No.

7 MR. HERNANDEZ: -- at the same time or will
8 there be like one math teacher for 7th grade?

9 DR. SILANO: Right. As you can see in our
10 schedule, the math teacher has all math classes;
11 English teacher has all English classes. This is
12 very much like the model that we used at the
13 Bentonville ALE where I worked, where we had 60 to 75
14 students. So it's just, you know, four core teachers
15 and three groups of students, with one teacher, you
16 know, doing -- they take turns doing their prep time.
17 And so everyone is working in their highly qualified
18 area.

19 MR. HERNANDEZ: So would it be safe to
20 categorize this as -- or fair to categorize this as
21 kind of a ALE of sorts?

22 DR. SILANO: What I've tried to do here is take
23 the best of the ALE world. I think that model offers
24 a lot as far as smaller classrooms, more supportive
25 environment. So, yes, in that regard. But in other

1 regards, no. I think the ALE model falls short in
2 some areas, so we're trying to address both.

3 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

5 DR. WALTERS: Dr. Kimbrell, I have several
6 questions around budget, if it's okay while --

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am. Go ahead.

8 DR. WALTERS: Okay. My first question is about
9 NSLA funding. I notice that in your budget you use
10 the Level 2 funding, which is \$1,033 per student.
11 You have to be at 70% Free and Reduced in order to
12 get that funding level; however, the Springdale
13 School District, their level is 67.1. So I guess I'm
14 curious as to how you came up with the 70%?

15 DR. SILANO: Yes. Actually, that was a mistake.
16 Early on, in early drafts I had, you know, maybe been
17 a little too hopeful. As time went by I realized I
18 needed to be more conservative. So if you'll look in
19 -- if you have the application amendments, you'll see
20 that that's been addressed. And if I can find it
21 really quick, I can tell you where it's at. But I
22 did go down to the lower level in keeping with I
23 think that 52%, 53% conservative number that I'm
24 looking for, even though the neighborhood surrounding
25 the Jones Center we have about, you know, in the 90's

1 to 100% Free and Reduced. If I find it, it will tell
2 you.

3 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And that's fine.

4 DR. SILANO: Did you find it?

5 DR. WALTERS: You don't -- that's okay.

6 DR. SILANO: Okay. Yeah.

7 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And my next question is
8 about your FTE's for special education. I noticed
9 that you have an FTE of .5.

10 DR. SILANO: Correct.

11 DR. WALTERS: If your target with the students
12 that you're trying to reach are at-risk students, do
13 you feel like you're going to have probably a higher
14 percentage of special ed. students than probably what
15 you would see in a traditional school district?

16 DR. SILANO: It's definitely quite possible.
17 And I have been working with two special ed.
18 certified teachers to make sure that we're able to
19 address whatever needs could come our way. My hope
20 here -- and one way that I am thinking I could
21 address this -- and, you know, we're just purely
22 talking in terms of financial expediency. But, you
23 know, if I have a -- if I find a special ed. teacher
24 who wants to work half-time, that's fabulous. But if
25 she wants to work or he wants to work full-time, then

1 -- and they are -- and they should be certified in an
2 additional core area, then they could be a core
3 teacher and do half-day of core and half-day of
4 sp.ed. and then I would just hire a half-time core
5 teacher to cover that, so that we would actually have
6 a sp.ed. teacher on-site all day long but they will
7 also help with some of the core instruction.

8 DR. WALTERS: And along those same lines you
9 have -- for counselor and nurse you have a .25 FTE.
10 I realize your first year you're going to have 108
11 students but you have that same FTE for 15-16 when
12 you're going to be close to 150. So do you think
13 that that FTE --

14 DR. SILANO: Let me find that.

15 DR. WALTERS: -- is appropriate?

16 DR. SILANO: Oh, you're talking about the nurse?

17 DR. WALTERS: The nurse and the counselor.

18 DR. SILANO: Okay. The counselor I believe will
19 be waived for the first year and then it's a half-
20 time counselor the second year -- or is it .25? I
21 need to find it. I'm sorry. I'm not tracking well
22 here.

23 DR. WALTERS: Okay, .25. The counselor is .5
24 the second year, the nurse is .25 both years.

25 DR. SILANO: Okay. Yes. Okay, there it is.

1 Yes. Well, having come from an ALE -- two ALE's over
2 the last five years -- well, I take that back. In
3 Bentonville, we did have access to a nurse but it was
4 a hike. In Springdale, we had a part-time nurse who,
5 similar to this, would come in. So, you know, and I
6 realize -- and it was a struggle. I mean, there were
7 times when we definitely wished that we had more
8 nurse staffing available. But we do have a community
9 clinic available at the school, at the Jones Center,
10 a community medical clinic. We also have two full-
11 time police officers so we're prepared for any
12 emergencies that could come up. My whole staff will
13 be trained in CPR and First Aid and I myself and the
14 administrative team will be trained in medication
15 dispensing in the event that a child should ever need
16 medication during the hours that the nurse would not
17 be present.

18 DR. WALTERS: Okay. And I have one last
19 question along the lines of the budget. I noticed
20 for your fiscal services you had zero listed there.
21 You said that the administrator assistant would be
22 responsible for that. And when I look at the salary
23 for your administrative assistant it looks like the
24 salary is \$27,500. So I'm a little bit concerned
25 about as tight as this budget is going to be, an

1 administrative assistant that's going to need some
2 accounting background, that you're going to be able
3 to get one in Northwest Arkansas for \$27,000. So
4 have you considered that at all?

5 DR. SILANO: Well, currently, with Ozark
6 Education we are contracting with a CPA, two CPA's in
7 town with an accounting firm. So, you know, if we
8 feel that the cost is inadequate to pay then we would
9 use some of that money to pay for a contracted
10 service.

11 DR. WALTERS: All right. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

13 MR. HOY: Before I ask a question of you, I'd
14 like to ask a question of legal counsel. Ms. Clay,
15 in terms of looking at the waivers requested I just
16 wanted to make certain that there were no waivers
17 that were requested that were out of the norms of
18 what -- I heard the one about the flag. I see that
19 Legal made a couple of notes in terms of some
20 additional rules that need to be adopted if we go
21 with these particular waivers. So help me feel
22 better about the waivers.

23 MS. CLAY: Sure. At this time there are not any
24 waivers that the legal staff has concerns about.
25 Through the process we did make some comments back to

1 the applicant and they either agreed to the comments
2 or rescinded the waiver. The waiver about the flag,
3 that's not entirely uncommon in facilities where --
4 that are leased. Usually what happens is the
5 applicant agrees to display the flag in a prominent
6 location but it may not be on a flagpole in front of
7 the school building.

8 MR. HOY: Thank you.

9 MS. CLAY: You're welcome.

10 MR. HOY: Now for my questions for Dr. Silano.

11 DR. SILANO: Yes.

12 MR. HOY: Will you agree to display the flag in
13 a prominent location at this facility, if granted?

14 DR. SILANO: Absolutely.

15 MR. HOY: Okay. Good. With that being said, I
16 noticed that a lot of your philosophy seems to be
17 built on the Montessori philosophy.

18 DR. SILANO: For the younger children, yes.

19 MR. HOY: And I also am of the opinion that this
20 is built on a model that's already established and
21 will be somewhat of a developmental model that you're
22 developing. So there's no other entities that are
23 specifically designed on this model because you
24 designed it. Am I correct?

25 DR. SILANO: In the sense that we will be

1 integrating Common Core, and I did provide for you a
2 sample of a Common Core alignment with Montessori.

3 MR. HOY: Right.

4 DR. SILANO: So that will be new.

5 MR. HOY: Now one of the concerns that I've had
6 with adoptions of programs that I've seen over the
7 years in a number of the districts is that sometimes
8 the programs are adopted in part and not in totality.
9 And so there's a question of whether the program even
10 works because it is not adopted, some people say,
11 with integrity in terms of the entire program being
12 adopted. I believe I heard you say that the
13 guidelines of Montessori may not allow you to be a
14 Montessori school in terms of the full blessing of
15 the national Montessori deal. So I'm assuming that
16 you will not be able to implement Montessori in full.
17 Is that accurate?

18 DR. SILANO: Well, it's accurate in the sense
19 that according to the American Montessori Society's
20 accreditation process we may be short in a couple of
21 areas. And certainly, we'll continue to work on
22 those over the years. However, a large portion, if
23 not most Montessori schools in the United States are
24 not accredited by Montessori and yet children still
25 gain from the benefits of the basic curriculum model.

1 And so I share your concern because I do want to make
2 sure that our students get the full benefit of the
3 curriculum. I just want to -- I guess the reason
4 I've modified and said Montessori-based instead of
5 straight up Montessori is because I just want to make
6 sure that you all understand that I understand that I
7 am still accountable, we are still accountable to the
8 Common Core and to whatever it takes to get there,
9 even if that means at some point we have to cut some
10 element of Montessori to make that happen.

11 MR. HOY: Okay. And the last question for right
12 now and it still has to do to a degree with
13 programming. One of the elements of this particular
14 application is the class size ratios; you would like
15 for them to be small.

16 DR. SILANO: Yes.

17 MR. HOY: But when it came to I think Dr.
18 Witonski's question about not necessarily making
19 budget -- maybe it was Dr. Hernandez -- I mean, Mr.
20 Hernandez -- instead of seeking additional funding,
21 your thought was cut teachers which would seem to be
22 inversely related to small class size. Would you
23 please address that for us?

24 DR. SILANO: Well, yes. Cutting teachers in the
25 sense that if we have a much smaller student body

1 then we will have a smaller staff to match it. So
2 rather than trying to offer all of the same things --
3 for example, we have -- it is a high-demand area for
4 teachers looking for work in Northwest Arkansas. We
5 have an applicant pool that would probably make a lot
6 of the smaller districts in the state cry. And so
7 finding multiply endorsed applicants is not that
8 difficult; it's not unusual to find someone with
9 English and social studies or math and science. And
10 so if we have to double-up on endorsements we'll do
11 that. But, no, we do not intend to sacrifice class
12 size.

13 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Hoy, on your comment, before
14 you move to your next question, one of the concerns
15 in knowing that Springdale offers a starting teacher
16 salary of \$45,820, which is I'm sure what Mr. Hoy was
17 referring to, and knowing that you have listed here
18 \$37,500, in terms of a new teacher that would say to
19 me -- knowing all of the graduates that come out and
20 being familiar with the area in terms of access and
21 capabilities, the applicants that can be there,
22 knowing that your salary is more similar to my former
23 district's salary, and knowing how that competition
24 process works, knowing that that talent sometimes
25 goes to, unfortunately, what that number might

1 dictate, what are your thoughts in terms of how to be
2 competitive in that mindset, knowing that you've got
3 competition that can offer more?

4 DR. SILANO: Well, I have several thoughts about
5 that. Originally, I built my budget in hopes of
6 trying to match their salary schedule and found that
7 to be impossible with a small student body. So, but
8 I have a couple of thoughts that go along with that.
9 One is, again, we will be as a nonprofit seeking
10 community support. We have a very supportive
11 community that's ready to help students and very many
12 people who are supportive of this kind of thing. So
13 we can offer bonuses to our teachers that may help to
14 sweeten the deal a little bit. But also, you know,
15 just as I've been talking to teachers over past
16 months, there are people who are excited about this.
17 You know, they, like myself, have -- I personally
18 have taken a huge financial hit in not teaching this
19 year and devoting my entire year to working on this
20 proposal, because I feel so deeply and passionately
21 about it. And I know we have teachers in several
22 private schools in Northwest Arkansas and charter
23 schools who are working at less than, you know,
24 stellar salary schedules because they just -- they
25 love teaching and they love kids and they're

1 passionate about what they do. So as much as I
2 regret not being able to offer them the equally high
3 salaries I'll certainly be, you know, at the
4 forefront of trying to improve that and work with
5 that.

6 DR. WITONSKI: Mr. Hoy, thank you so much. I
7 apologize. You go ahead.

8 MR. HOY: Okay. Last one for now. I noticed
9 that you intend to offer Spanish and Chinese at the
10 start-up. Is the plan to do that through some type
11 of digital instruction or to do it with actual
12 humans?

13 DR. SILANO: We have on our staff three
14 bilingual Spanish speakers right now and so, yes --
15 yes and no. We plan to offer -- you know -- our core
16 curriculum in our world languages will be digital and
17 we do -- I hope to use Rosetta Stone. We plan to use
18 Rosetta Stone. I've budgeted for our older students
19 because it is far superior to any of the -- what's
20 being produced by the regular textbook, digital
21 textbook companies right now as far as inter-
22 activity. But we do intend to supplement that then
23 with opportunities for interaction with our community
24 members, parents, college students. And so, again,
25 with the resources we have in Northwest Arkansas I

1 don't see that finding native speakers is going to be
2 a big problem. Chinese will be a little trickier but
3 we do have quite a number of Chinese students who I
4 think -- at the University who will be happy to help
5 us with that.

6 DR. WALTERS: I have a follow-up to one of his
7 questions.

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters has a follow-up.

9 DR. WALTERS: I have a follow-up to one of
10 John's first questions.

11 DR. SILANO: Okay.

12 DR. WALTERS: It's about the Montessori model,
13 Dr. Silano, and I'm definitely not an expert, so
14 please correct me. But what I do understand about it
15 is it's more of a human growth and development and
16 learning -- it's not a curriculum; it's about how
17 children learn and it's not a curriculum. So, you
18 know, when I read through the application I guess I'm
19 still wondering -- I don't understand your
20 curriculum. I understand that it's, like I said, a
21 type of learning but I don't see it as "this is the
22 curriculum."

23 DR. SILANO: All right. I'm going to ask my
24 Montessori -- she's the expert on our staff right now
25 -- to talk a little bit about it as a curriculum. It

1 is in fact a curriculum that there is a certification
2 program that's available. Do you want to tell them a
3 little bit about it?

4 MS. CHIODO: I'll tell you what I know. I'm
5 sorry. I'm actually the intern right now for
6 Montessori, observing the classes and going through
7 my certification. And that was my concern and what
8 triggered this for me was my four-year old daughter
9 who will not do deskwork. She still doesn't know her
10 ABC's and she refuses to write. She was not going to
11 do it, so Montessori was definitely an interest. And
12 going into that, it's actually very precise and a
13 very definite method to how language arts and math
14 are introduced to the children. And it starts very
15 simple and each step is built upon that to where by
16 the time these children are four and five years old
17 they have a very in-depth and complete understanding
18 of the decimal system and what thousands are and
19 geometric shape and relationships and are actually
20 able to have a very intelligent conversation with you
21 on what quantities are, and early reading. The
22 process is done through goals and they have their
23 assessment every week and every month and every
24 quarter for the work that they will complete. And at
25 the beginning of the day though there is this freedom

1 of choice; they are still directed to their weekly
2 goals of "this is what we're trying to accomplish
3 this week," and they are led to those activities.
4 Whereas, okay, they might choose to do language first
5 that day, they still have their checklist of their
6 curriculum that they need to complete for their age
7 group.

8 DR. WALTERS: And I have a follow-up, so --

9 MS. CHIODO: Yes.

10 DR. WALTERS: And I understand the theory of
11 Montessori, but if a second grade student never
12 decides by their choice that they want to learn
13 certain Common Core state standards in math how do
14 you address that?

15 MS. CHIODO: You know, it's through principles
16 of redirect. You're still going to have to introduce
17 the subjects to them. They can't just sit and do
18 arts and crafts all day.

19 DR. WALTERS: All right. Thank you.

20 DR. SILANO: Would you care to look at this? It
21 has the actual concrete curriculum.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

23 MR. HERNANDEZ: Just, again, in reference to the
24 -- on your schedule for middle school foreign
25 language. I heard some discussion about offering

1 Chinese and is there -- is that going to be primarily
2 online from what I understood?

3 DR. SILANO: Yes. Like the rest of our
4 curriculum we will be using an online textbook for
5 that and the interactive -- finding a curriculum that
6 is as interactive as possible, just like an adult
7 would learn a foreign language.

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: Now as far as -- and this may be
9 a question for Ms. Perry. Is there the appropriate
10 waiver requested if they don't have a certified
11 Chinese instructor to go along with that, to be able
12 to do all that online?

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: It's not required once they
14 get into high school.

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: So will that be coming or is
16 that question -- if they're going to do this in the
17 high school level in the future, do they have the
18 appropriate waiver to be able to do that?

19 MS. PERRY: Well, we actually included language
20 in the responses that we sent to them. They can
21 assure us that they would follow the guidelines of
22 our digital learning and make sure that any vendor
23 that they use met the qualifications and met all the
24 restrictions, if that's what you're getting at, Mr.
25 Hernandez. If not, I'm not sure.

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: I guess I'm just thinking of
2 some of the ALE rules where it says that some of the
3 instruction -- that the online instruction has to be
4 supplemental. And so if there -- and basically the
5 kind of word that I've heard is that 51% has to be
6 instruction --

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: That's out now with the new
8 law.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: So it's good. Okay.

10 MS. PERRY: That is right. This is not -- this
11 is -- they're not requesting to have an alternative
12 learning environment for this program. Although
13 they're using some of the concepts from it, they're
14 not requesting it to be an ALE.

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

16 DR. WALTERS: I have a follow-up to what Ms.
17 Perry just said. I know she stated that you said
18 that, you know, your -- and the language whenever the
19 -- I guess the application was sent back and we had,
20 I assume, further clarifications and questions your
21 response was, "It is the intention of OCCA that every
22 digital course will be offered from a provider
23 approved by the Arkansas Department of Education." I
24 guess the language is a little concerning, that it is
25 your intention.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Did they ask for a waiver of
2 that rule?

3 MS. CLAY: That's what I was going to say. They
4 did not ask for a waiver so they would be bound by
5 those statutes and rules, even though I understand
6 your concern about the intention. They would be
7 required to follow those.

8 DR. WALTERS: As raising two teenagers they have
9 intention a lot to meet curfew and it doesn't always
10 happen, so I just wanted to make sure.

11 MS. CLAY: I understand.

12 DR. SILANO: I agree. And just to follow-up on
13 your question, Dr. Hernandez, it's my understanding
14 that if we do not have a certified teacher available
15 or a highly qualified in this case, if we get the
16 waiver for certification, that if we put them into a
17 digital learning environment that there would need to
18 be a certified teacher at the other end of the online
19 class. So we would follow the rules according to
20 that.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman has been waiting
22 impatiently.

23 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. Dr. Silano, it is your
24 intent to begin your school K-12?

25 DR. SILANO: No. Yeah, that was again an

1 oversight in the original application. If you look
2 at, yeah, the corrections that were made it shows
3 that we start with a K-1-2. We will have one small
4 learning community of early childhood Montessori
5 teachers, and then our 6-7-8, which would be another
6 small community of middle school learners.

7 MS. COFFMAN: And so looking at that and looking
8 at your long-term plan to grow, how will that fit in
9 your limited rooms at the Jones Center?

10 DR. SILANO: We have a two-year agreement for
11 the six classrooms, with a seven classroom option.
12 So at the end of the two years we would need to
13 either renegotiate with them for additional
14 classrooms or we would need to look for a new space.

15 MS. COFFMAN: And your audience that you're
16 targeting, the students that you're targeting, are
17 they -- is the Jones Center central -- is it a
18 central location to where those students live?

19 DR. SILANO: Yes. It most certainly is. It is
20 in the heart of downtown Springdale and surrounded by
21 schools with the highest Free and Reduced Lunch rates
22 in town. And it's been a popular go-to place for
23 low-income families for years. They offer
24 scholarships and very inexpensive memberships so the
25 community can have access to recreation.

1 MS. COFFMAN: And so the Jones Center is open
2 all day long?

3 DR. SILANO: Yes.

4 MS. COFFMAN: And it's a beautiful --

5 DR. SILANO: Beautiful.

6 MS. COFFMAN: -- resource to the community. How
7 will you insure the safety of your students? And I
8 know you mentioned earlier that there's police
9 officers that -- are the students going to be off in
10 a section that is inaccessible to the general public?

11 DR. SILANO: Yes. Actually, the public would
12 have to go through a couple of different doors to get
13 to the classrooms. So it would be easy enough to
14 keep them safe.

15 MS. COFFMAN: Okay.

16 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

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

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hendrix, I hate for you
19 to feel left out so I have a question for you,
20 please, sir.

21 MR. HENDRIX: Awesome.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: See? I told you he'd be
23 excited.

24 MR. HENDRIX: I'm very excited.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: You say that till I ask the

1 question.

2 MR. HENDRIX: Yeah. Okay. What's your --

3 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: What's the average size of
4 the elementary, middle school, junior highs and high
5 schools in the Springdale School District?

6 MR. HENDRIX: So averages are hard. So --

7 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Round numbers.

8 MR. HENDRIX: So elementary probably in the 600
9 range. We have 450's to 842's kind of thing. So
10 probably in there. And now middle schools, 700
11 junior highs, 700 between the two. The high schools
12 are 2200, 1800, and 360.

13 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So do parents in Springdale
14 School District have an option of a small school
15 setting?

16 MR. HENDRIX: Oh, no, not like this.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Thank you.

18 MR. HENDRIX: No, they don't. I didn't enjoy
19 that very much. You were right. I'll just sit back
20 down.

21 DR. WITONSKI: Dr. Silano --

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Oh --

23 DR. WITONSKI: I'm so sorry. So, and I know as
24 far as size -- I know in specifically Northwest
25 Arkansas one of the benefits of being in that area is

1 you have a ton of choices of private schools, charter
2 schools, public schools, whatever -- whatever is your
3 pleasure. And one thing that you mentioned in your
4 earlier statements is that you feel like that it is
5 very much like a model that was used at the
6 Bentonville ALE, what you used there.

7 DR. SILANO: As far as my schedule, yes.

8 DR. WITONSKI: And so what that leads me to is
9 in terms of what it can offer, in terms of being a
10 stand-alone, in terms of convincing this Panel that
11 this should be a new charter school, what is that
12 different component? What is new and innovative that
13 you would be offering the students?

14 DR. SILANO: Let me refer to my list. OCCA
15 offers an educational program that's hard to match
16 anywhere in Arkansas. We offer the following unique
17 features: Montessori early childhood program through
18 grade 4; early world language acquisition program
19 through grade 12; early technology instruction K-12;
20 middle school certification program 6-8; expectations
21 for every student to participate in a concurrent
22 credit program by grade 11. And as a former ALE
23 director, I will just say this, not on my list: one
24 of the hardest things for me was noting that -- and I
25 heard this from teachers over and over again; I hate

1 to even say the words because it seems bad, it seems
2 wrong. But what was often said is, "We've waited too
3 late. We've waited too late. It's too late to help,
4 to fix nine years of struggling." And so that's -- I
5 think the K-12 model is the best that we can come up
6 with to try to start to address some of the problems
7 early on.

8 DR. WITONSKI: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

10 MR. HOY: Yes, sir, for Mr. Hendrix, please.

11 MR. HENDRIX: Yes, sir.

12 MR. HOY: Now is it Mister or Doctor?

13 MR. HENDRIX: Just Mister.

14 MR. HOY: Okay.

15 MR. HENDRIX: Thank you. I'm sorry.

16 MR. HOY: Mr. Hendrix, when we started this
17 particular conversation you addressed the fact that
18 you felt like this particular charter did not offer
19 anything that was unique. And it has been pointed
20 out that perhaps some of the uniqueness would be
21 small class size; some of it might be the Montessori
22 approach; and some of the other things that were
23 mentioned. Do you still feel strongly in support of
24 the statement that you started with in terms of this
25 is not necessarily innovative or unique? And if so,

1 please elaborate.

2 MR. HENDRIX: I still agree with what I said
3 earlier. There have been some things pointed out to
4 me that may not have been apparent to me in the
5 application that make it in some ways unique. But I
6 still think they are very small ways. And to Dr.
7 Kimbrell's point, we don't have classes that small.
8 We don't have a school of 250 kids. We absolutely
9 cannot. That is unique. But as far as programming
10 and the choice, at all the elementaries that we have
11 I just can't say that this is going to provide
12 something that's new and unique.

13 MR. HOY: Okay. Then a question for Dr. Silano,
14 if you don't mind. One of the issues that seemed to
15 be raised at this particular point is although you
16 may have some features that are unique to your
17 school, especially in the area of small school size
18 and programming that may also put a strain on you
19 financially in terms of being able to stay afloat,
20 with the things that have been pointed out by this
21 particular committee in terms of being able to get
22 high quality teachers -- highly qualified and high
23 quality based on the competitive salary of the
24 Springdale School District, and the fact that
25 Springdale has so many programs they can offer in

1 terms of pre-AP and actually have a lot of teachers
2 as well as I'm suspecting digital learning
3 opportunities, give me your thoughts now in terms of
4 your budget, especially with some of the concerns
5 that have been brought to your attention by this
6 particular committee.

7 DR. SILANO: Honestly, I have no concerns about
8 filling up the school, really, very, very minimal
9 with the numbers, the capacity that we're wanting to
10 reach. I have had wonderful feedback from parents in
11 our community through our public hearings and through
12 people who have come to our classes. I know that
13 when ResponsivEd opened their charter school last
14 year with 450 seats they had over 1,000 applicants.
15 I know there is a waiting list that goes for years.
16 Parents are signing up their children years in
17 advance for the Haus Hall Academy. I'm not sure
18 about the specifics about Benton County School of the
19 Arts but I know they've grown and grown and grown
20 over the years because of the demand for choice. My
21 biggest concern in all actuality for these past
22 months, and what I thought you would ask me, if I may
23 be so bold -- what I thought you would ask me is how
24 am I going to keep the hundreds of middle school --
25 or middleclass families out of my school to make room

1 for -- to insure that we're reaching the at-risk
2 population that we're hoping to reach. And so that's
3 my biggest concern. And so the way we're addressing
4 that is through marketing. We will limit the
5 marketing that we do in the general population and we
6 are going to specifically market to the Hispanic/
7 Marshellese populations, low income part of town and,
8 as I said, with our preschool -- you know -- reaching
9 out to -- in our afterschool programming reaching out
10 to families in the neighborhood so that we can make
11 sure that when we do open up we have the population
12 that we're looking for. As far as other financial
13 concerns, I'm working very closely with my board to
14 insure that we have the internal controls necessary
15 to insure that we stick to our budget and that we,
16 you know, are able to find all the best resources to
17 make sure that we do not get ourselves in trouble.

18 MR. HOY: Okay.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Questions? No other
20 questions?

21 DR. WALTERS: I have a question.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Sure.

23 DR. WALTERS: In your plan to add a grade each
24 year, when you start adding the high school grades --
25 and my understanding, I did not see a waiver for the

1 38. Is that right?

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I don't remember seeing --
3 Ms. Clay?

4 MS. CLAY: They did not request a waiver.

5 DR. WALTERS: Okay. So as you think about that,
6 if you have not requested that waiver for that 38, it
7 is much more cost prohibitive to staff a high school
8 than it is an elementary school when you're looking
9 at having to have all those course offerings.

10 DR. SILANO: Sure.

11 DR. WALTERS: So thinking about facilities and
12 classrooms, you know, what is your plan to
13 accommodate that?

14 DR. SILANO: No. In the first couple of years
15 we -- with our digital instruction we will be seeking
16 a variety of options that will be available. If we
17 do go with the Odysseyware, I'm looking right now at
18 some 30 courses that are available. We can also
19 supplement that with other site licenses from other
20 -- for example, Ingenuity, which offers a wide
21 variety of CTE courses as well. And as I said, we
22 also are planning on our current credit. So it will
23 be pieced together but we have every intention of
24 being in full compliance with the requirements.

25 DR. WALTERS: Follow-up, please?

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, ma'am. Follow-up.

2 DR. WALTERS: It sounds as if it's going to be
3 basically all digital in the high school. Is that
4 fair?

5 DR. SILANO: Well, we will have -- you know --
6 just like with our middle school we will have core
7 teachers who will -- and this -- let me just say in
8 terms of, you know, where I come from in the ALE
9 situation this was one of the problems, one of the
10 reasons I left the ALE model is we had students -- we
11 only had, you know, core teachers for the most part.
12 Now in Springdale they have a much larger program, up
13 to 400 students, I hear, this year in their ALE. But
14 in Bentonville we had a very small program and so one
15 of my frustrations was even though I might have a
16 math teacher who also was very skilled in culinary
17 arts and maybe has a background, she was not able to
18 teach a cooking class because of lack of
19 certification. So with this, with our digital
20 instruction we can offer these kinds of courses
21 digitally but also supplement them with our project
22 based learning with the help of non-certified
23 teachers.

24 DR. WALTERS: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Additional questions?

1 MR. BOARDMAN: I have one.

2 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Yes, sir.

3 MR. BOARDMAN: I guess a couple of things. I
4 know what you're talking about on your marketing for
5 your students to come from, but basically you're
6 still going to have to get a lot of students.

7 DR. SILANO: Yes.

8 MR. BOARDMAN: And so is there a way to
9 guarantee what kind of students you're going to have
10 when you go that route.

11 DR. SILANO: Right.

12 MR. BOARDMAN: The other one is: I guess maybe I
13 don't understand on the blended learning and the
14 digital learning where you're going with the
15 secondary level. And I'm not sure even the
16 Odysseyware -- we haven't really gone through the
17 approval process for any of the providers, have we?

18 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Not at this point. No.

19 MR. BOARDMAN: So there's no way to know right
20 now what I think you're going to have available as
21 far as the digital learning, is there --

22 DR. SILANO: That's right.

23 MR. BOARDMAN: -- unless you have a teacher in
24 there and then using the digital learning, like
25 Rosetta Stone or whatever, as a textbook --

1 DR. SILANO: Exactly.

2 MR. BOARDMAN: -- as a resource as digital
3 learning. So I guess I'm pretty concerned about --
4 there's a lot of unknowns still in where you're
5 trying to go, I think. So, I don't --

6 DR. SILANO: Yeah. I do --

7 MR. BOARDMAN: -- know if it will work or not.

8 DR. SILANO: Okay. Yeah. I would agree there
9 are some unknowns and we are waiting with bated
10 breath for that list to come out. So I'm using, you
11 know, what's out there, what I'm familiar with having
12 used Odysseyware for several years and using it with
13 my son now in home-school. Also, we're piloting the
14 Ingenuity program and working -- I'm talking K-12 as
15 well. So just, you know, ready for whatever comes
16 down the pike to be familiar with what's out there so
17 we can pick the most engaging, interactive curriculum
18 that we can find.

19 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

20 MS. COFFMAN: No.

21 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hoy?

22 MR. HOY: No.

23 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Walters?

24 DR. WALTERS: No.

25 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. So we've got a five-

1 year charter application for a beginning K-2, 6-8,
2 adding a grade each year for a total capacity of 250
3 students. What is the pleasure of the Panel? Mr.
4 Hoy?

5 MR. HOY: I make a motion to approve.

6 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: We have a motion to approve.

7 (Brief moment of silence)

8 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: I have no second.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: I make a motion to deny the
10 application.

11 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: So the motion to approve
12 dies for the lack of a second. We have a motion to
13 deny the application.

14 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Do we have a second?

16 DR. WITONSKI: Second.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. We'll do a roll-call
18 vote. You'll need to state your reason for your
19 denial. And let's see, where did we start last time?
20 Did we start with you, Ms. Coffman, last time?

21 MS. COFFMAN: I think we did.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. Then, we'll go with
23 Mr. Hoy. Mr. Hoy, in regards to the Ozark Academy
24 the motion is denial. Your vote?

25 MR. HOY: I vote no.

1 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: No on the motion. Dr.
2 Walters?

3 DR. WALTERS: I vote yes on the motion and the
4 reasons why, I think you have a good concept. I
5 think -- I appreciate the target audience that you're
6 trying to reach. I think that there are some holes
7 and things that need to be fleshed out in your model
8 of adding the grades. Also, some of the unknowns at
9 your high school curriculum about how you're adding
10 the grades I have some concerns about. I'm also
11 concerned about how tight the budget is going to be
12 as well. I hope that we will see you back. I think
13 there needs to be a little bit more work involved.

14 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Hernandez?

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: I vote yes to the motion for the
16 same reasons, the fiscal concerns. You know, maybe
17 coming back with a better plan of contingencies and
18 just not to have a disruption in the education if
19 this were not to work out financially. Also, some
20 questions that I have as far as the curriculum and
21 the concerns there moving forward.

22 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Dr. Witonski?

23 DR. WITONSKI: My vote is yes also and I do hope
24 that you will come back before the Panel, hopefully
25 with some additional information as far as

1 sustainability. That is my concern. We know that
2 transitions can be difficult for kids, in particular
3 this population you'll be serving -- how that would
4 be sustainability long-term, so the fiscal impact of
5 that. And definitely for the assessments, the
6 curriculum, the instruction, and how that would be
7 delivered to students is definitely a concern. Thank
8 you.

9 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Mr. Boardman?

10 MR. BOARDMAN: I vote yes. I think there's just
11 too many unknowns. I think part of that is we just
12 don't have the knowledge; there's not been some
13 decisions made at the state level and other places to
14 answer some of those unknowns. But I just think
15 right now there's just not enough contingency as far
16 as some of the unknowns.

17 CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Ms. Coffman?

18 MS. COFFMAN: I vote yes. I would like to see
19 you come back. I would hope that you would think
20 about starting possibly with that K-2 and building it
21 that way. I do appreciate the multi-age approach; I
22 think that's very visionary. But I do wonder how the
23 Montessori is going to fit with the project based
24 learning. So I'd like to see more in the curriculum,
25 more spelled out.

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CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Okay. With five yeses and one no the motion carries and the application is denied. Thank you very much.

DR. SILANO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN KIMBRELL: Any last-minute -- Ms. Perry, any last-minute directions?

MS. PERRY: No, sir. Just a reminder that we'll begin at 8:30 tomorrow morning and there are four hearings that will take place tomorrow.

(The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss.
 COUNTY OF SALINE)

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas State Department of Education, Charter Authorizing Panel, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on November 13, 2013, that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

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

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

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: November 25, 2013.

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

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