

In The Matter Of:

*DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION*

*re: DOLLARWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
November 13, 2020*

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ARKANSAS DIVISION OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

REPORT RE: DOLLARWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOVEMBER 13, 2020
9:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

MS. CHARISSE DEAN, Chairman
MS. OUIDA NEWTON
DR. FITZGERALD HILL
MS. KATHY McFETRIDGE
DR. SARAH MOORE
MS. SUSAN CHAMBERS
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MR. JOHNNY KEY, Secretary of Education
MR. JOEL LOOKADOO, Arkansas Teacher of the Year

DESE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. LORI FRENO General Counsel
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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN DEAN: Then we'll get started with the reports, starting with the Dollarway presentation. Ms. Stacy Smith.

MS. SMITH: Good morning. Stacy Smith, Director of OCSS. And Dan is going to pull up the presentation for us, I believe.

First, I just want to thank you for dedicating this morning for discussion of Dollarway. I think it's important that we really just kind of carve time out to really go over everything and all of the information. There's been a lot of work that's been done in the Dollarway School District the past five years. If you have not met Ms. Barbara Warren, she is the Superintendent of Dollarway and Pine Bluff School District, and we're happy to have her with us today. And with her is Dee Davis, who is also with Dollarway; she does a lot of the curriculum work, works very closely with our team. And so welcome, we're glad you're here as well.

Thank you, Dan, for pulling that up.

So a lot of information, a lot of slides to go over today. I did provide -- and we're not to this yet, but you do kind of have a note-taking document that kind of follows the presentation today. There's

1 no information in it; it's just boxes. It's a place
2 for you to take notes. And I'll kind of cue you in
3 when that document starts. Okay.

4 So one of the first things -- I went to
5 Commissioner Key with the presentation and, you know,
6 asked him was there anything missing, and he said
7 vision and mission. And it's always great to come
8 back and center ourselves around that. And when I
9 was going through the slides, I don't -- I'm not sure
10 why but I really stopped and read the vision and
11 mission again, thinking about how that plays into
12 context with what we're doing with our schools. And
13 so I wore my Student Focused pin today. So Ms. Zook,
14 if she's watching, she can know that everything that
15 we're doing with the discussion today around
16 Dollarway is about students, okay, and making
17 decisions for them. And then when I looked at the
18 mission part, about the Department providing
19 leadership support and service, I hope that's what
20 our team, OCSS, is doing for the Dollarway School
21 District when we go in and we support and feel like
22 partners when we're doing this work. And I also feel
23 like -- we've brought in our comprehensive center;
24 we've got WestEd here today. Jason is with us, and
25 I'll introduce him in just a second. But that same

1 vision part is are we all working to the same thing.
2 And the outcome is we want students to graduate and
3 we want them to graduate prepared for college,
4 career, and community engagement. And so all those
5 pieces, today as we're going through this
6 presentation, they're weaved in throughout the entire
7 thing. And so I felt like the project itself really
8 stayed true to what our mission and vision is for the
9 Department.

10 So our comprehensive center -- I've talked to
11 you about this a couple of times, but I wanted to
12 bring in a third-party that was neutral to take a
13 look at everything that's been done in Dollarway, to
14 take a look at our work to help guide and give
15 guidance. And so there are many people that have
16 worked on this project.

17 And in person -- I think this is the first time
18 that you've gotten to fly since March, right?

19 MR. WILLIS: Yes.

20 MS. SMITH: We've got Jason Willis with us from
21 WestEd. On Zoom we have Lauren Outlaw with us and we
22 have Felicia Reed and Camilla Wilson. Everybody --
23 and Paul Kohler is not on the Zoom today, but he's
24 also been an integral part of this project. And so
25 Jason will be actually presenting to you in a minute.

1 This presentation is in two parts. My part is
2 this long, so we're going to go through it pretty
3 quick. Okay? And then Jason gets this. All right?
4 So Jason has got the meat of it today. And so really
5 a lot of my part is background and I am going to
6 touch on the slides and try to go through them pretty
7 quickly because I feel like Jason's part is -- really
8 kind of digs down into some of the details. All
9 right?

10 So just kind of the overview of how we're
11 hitting this today: I'm going to give you a little
12 bit of the background, a little bit of context
13 towards Dollarway; I'm going to kind of walk you
14 through your decision as a board, the decision that
15 you have to make and the options that you have; I'm
16 going to go over the exit criteria and talk about the
17 quantitative and qualitative outlook on that. Jason
18 is going to get into the research methods that they
19 used in laying out the different options, the
20 execution strategies for the different scenarios, the
21 findings, and our next steps as an agency and a board
22 -- where to go. I do want to say, when we get into
23 the different scenarios, we gave scenarios for every
24 option that's there. All right? Whether it's going
25 back to local control, whether it's annexation,

1 whether it's consolidation, we laid out lots of
2 different options. It's not set in stone; everything
3 is flexible. We just really wanted to try to pave
4 and make some connections for you so as you go
5 through the next couple of weeks and try to make some
6 decisions you have something to grab onto. Okay?

7 So everybody knows that Dollarway is in
8 Jefferson County, okay, and so that is just northwest
9 of Pine Bluff. This year's student enrollment is
10 around 920 students. When you're looking at the map
11 -- and we went over in detail the maps recently in
12 the discussion about the Altheimer campus and the
13 industry, the park and -- industrial park and all
14 those pieces. So, not a lot has changed there. This
15 map right here shows the populations and the
16 boundaries in the school districts. Earlier, I had
17 Jason -- I said, "Okay, really sit down and talk to
18 me about what is it I'm trying to see here." And if
19 you look at the areas in red those are the areas that
20 are losing in population. Okay? And when you look
21 at the areas in green those are the areas in those
22 counties that would be growing or have grown in those
23 years.

24 Jason, am I correct on that?

25 MR. WILLIS: (Nodding head up and down.)

1 MS. SMITH: So those are kind of your pieces to
2 look at. And you can see that the population,
3 especially like through White Hall and even in some
4 of the Pine Bluff areas, you are seeing some growth.
5 When you're looking at this you have some bar graphs
6 that are attached to it, and this may be one you want
7 to go back and dig into a little bit deeper. But
8 it's also -- they're also kind of attached to the
9 colors on the map itself. So, specifically, when --
10 that's hard for me to see -- when you're looking at
11 the area that's that red, the brightest red area
12 there, and you're looking at that bar chart -- Jason
13 and I were talking about this a second ago -- that
14 bar chart is grouped by age groups. Okay? So that
15 orange is the older student group that's in high
16 school. Okay? And as you go down all the way to the
17 bottom, the blue would be your incoming preschool.
18 Okay? So you can see in that area there's not a high
19 population in younger students -- okay -- our future
20 growth, whereas in the top -- and so it's kind of
21 connected to the red in that area about future growth
22 for students in that area or population. When you
23 look at the green areas it's kind of flipped a little
24 bit.

25 So, Jason, is there anything about that that you

1 want to comment on? Come on up here.

2 I did warn him I might throw him a softball when
3 I got to the maps.

4 So here it is, Jason.

5 MR. WILLIS: So the only thing that I would add
6 to this map here is that, you know, as Ms. Smith had
7 explained, that this looks at a subset of the
8 population within Jefferson County but it's looking
9 at school age children. That gives you a sense of
10 the trajectory of what future cohorts within the
11 schools is going to look like. And so, as Ms. Smith
12 said, those areas that are red or orange tend to have
13 -- you can project basically smaller cohorts of
14 enrollment in those places of Jefferson County as
15 opposed to other places, perhaps in White Hall or
16 Watson Chapel. You could project some of that
17 growth.

18 MS. SMITH: You said that so much better than I
19 did. In fact, if you want to take my part of the
20 presentation --

21 MR. WILLIS: No.

22 MS. SMITH: No? All right.

23 So Jason is going to go very deep into the
24 financial part a little while later, and these are
25 pieces that you've seen. But you can see the

1 assessment value over time. They remain -- in fact,
2 they've shown a slight increase in the past few
3 years, but they did have a significant drop back in
4 2015-16. When you're looking at -- their mills have
5 remained steady and their debt bond, non-bond -- so
6 they're keeping up with their payments and things
7 like that. When you get to per-pupil expenditures --

8 Dan, can you move the picture part on the
9 slides?

10 When you're looking at the per-pupil expenditure
11 part there, it's about \$16,000 per student. And one
12 thing I want to talk about is sometimes that per-
13 pupil expenditure part is a little deceiving because
14 you're talking about all funding, whether it's
15 federal funding, operating funding; you're also
16 talking about their 10-03(b) dollars. All of that is
17 going into that per-pupil piece. And so when it
18 looks like there's been an increase -- well, you've
19 got some balancing going on here. You've got this
20 loss of students, you've got these federal funds, and
21 so -- but their per-pupil expenditure is \$16,000.
22 You're looking at number of teachers, you're looking
23 at their average salary is \$48,000. So those are
24 some pieces there. When you're moving to this one,
25 their educator workforce, you're looking at 37%. And

1 this is one I kind of want to pause on for a second
2 because you're -- in the summer report that I
3 submitted to you there was a lot said about teacher
4 workforce. And 37% of their teachers in their
5 district are considered to be novice teachers; that
6 means they have three years or less teaching
7 experience. Okay? So 12% of their teachers are on
8 an emergency teaching permit. And so Ms. Warren and
9 I were visiting about this just a second ago and we
10 looked at this 181 courses taught by a teacher with
11 an emergency teaching permit. So, courses -- so a
12 single teacher at a high school will teach seven
13 courses --

14 Because you have an eight-period day, correct?

15 SUPT. WARREN: Yes.

16 MS. SMITH: And so you have to think of it in
17 terms of that. 62 courses are taught by a long-term
18 substitute. So that gets really into special
19 education; so they have a shortage area there. All
20 of their long-term subs or teachers on emergency
21 teaching permits are going through the pathways to
22 become licensed in those areas. But there is a
23 significant group of teachers in that area that are
24 teaching courses that are out of their licensed area.
25 Okay?

1 Enrollment -- this is enrollment over time. So
2 you can see the trend from 2016 to where they
3 currently are; this last year to this year, not a
4 significant loss of students.

5 Open and closed campuses within the Dollarway
6 School District -- so the red dots indicate school
7 campuses that have closed in the past decade.

8 Individual buildings in the Dollarway School
9 District -- and, again, I know I'm kind of flying
10 through this. There are three main buildings in
11 Dollarway School District. So you have James
12 Matthews Elementary. Enrollment at James Matthews is
13 340, and that's pre-k through 4th grade; there are 24
14 teachers in that school. You have Robert Morehead
15 Middle School, so 287 students at the middle school;
16 again, 24 teachers in that campus. And then at the
17 high school enrollment of 273 and you have 44
18 teachers on that campus.

19 So previous state actions -- so there was a
20 consolidation in 2006 of the Altheimer School
21 District. The Dollarway School District was in
22 previous state authority due to Standards for
23 Accreditation violations over several years, and so
24 the violations that led them to state authority were
25 in 2010 and in 2011. In two thousand -- so the State

1 Board at that time -- it was called a reconstitution.
2 But when you went back and looked at exactly what
3 happened it was the same thing that we've kind of
4 done with state authority -- superintendent was
5 removed, school board was removed, and they went
6 under state authority for about two years. In 2014,
7 they were returned back because there were no
8 Standards for Accreditation violations in 2012 and
9 2013. Right before Barbara ended up in Dollarway the
10 Altheimer campus itself closed.

11 Under state authority for this time -- in 2015,
12 the District was placed under state authority for
13 academic distress. In 2017 is when the
14 accountability rules switched over to the Level 5
15 support; so that brought on the Level 5 exit plan,
16 the district support plan, and the quarterly reports
17 to the State Board. They were also classified, in
18 April 2016, for fiscal distress as a classification.
19 And so that continued a fiscal distress plan and
20 monitoring on fiscal services.

21 So where are we today, and what decisions that
22 the State Board has to make -- so this kind of is a
23 decision tree on elements that we're going to talk
24 through today. So that first -- the blue bar is
25 really about the decision around Level 5 support.

1 So I'm going to present exit criteria to you
2 today and I'm going to present the plan, I'm going to
3 present how we monitor that, and we have to determine
4 did they meet exit criteria or did they not. Okay?
5 If it is determined that they did not meet exit
6 criteria, you can see that the law basically says
7 that the State Board must reconstitute, annex or
8 consolidate. Okay? If it is found that they did
9 meet exit criteria, then we've got you down to a
10 second level there where we want to look at the
11 fiscal criteria, the fiscal distress classification.
12 Both the academic and the fiscal are in their fifth
13 year. All right? So they really go hand-in-hand.
14 So, on both fronts in the presentation we're going to
15 be looking at both the fiscal and looking at the
16 academic Level 5 support.

17 Under fiscal, if they did not meet exit criteria
18 under fiscal, you can see the same thing -- the State
19 Board must reconstitute, annex or consolidate. Okay?
20 Only if they have met both Level 5 exit criteria and
21 fiscal criteria then they return to local control.
22 All right? And so as we go through today's
23 presentation we'll actually have some slides that
24 show different pieces of legislation and rules that
25 we're following that kind of give that guidance.

1 So kind of hitting on these four big buckets,
2 the one of returning back to local control -- so if
3 that was a decision that was made, then Dollarway
4 would be governed by a locally elected or appointed
5 school board. Reconstitution -- if reconstitution
6 was decided, then that means the Dollarway School
7 District would be governed differently than they
8 currently are, in a manner that is set up by the
9 State Board. Annexation basically means that
10 Dollarway School District would become a part of
11 another school district. And consolidation means
12 that there's more -- one or more other districts that
13 come together to make a new district.

14 And for purposes today, and as WestEd is
15 talking, and the scenarios that we've talked about, a
16 lot of conversation has centered around Dollarway and
17 Pine Bluff. So this is a question that keeps coming
18 up, and this is something we heard in stakeholder
19 feedback too, is can Dollarway continue under state
20 authority, under state control. When you go back to
21 the decision tree, the State Board does not have the
22 authority to keep a district under state control
23 under Level 5 support. Okay? When it gets to five
24 years a decision has to be made. If they did not
25 meet exit criteria, we're bound by law to make one of

1 those decisions. Okay? So if it's found that they
2 did make it, okay, then it goes to a fiscal piece --
3 and I'm not going to drive us down that train right
4 now because there's lots of "if" factors. Okay? But
5 the main thing to tell you is we're looking at the
6 Level 5 support and exit criteria there. Okay?

7 So you each have been given a discussion guide,
8 if you choose to use it. There's nothing in this
9 guide that's not in the presentation. Okay?
10 Everything that's on here, the charts and everything
11 are straight from the presentation. What it does do
12 is it gives you boxes to take notes on. So if
13 there's a question that you have, if something stands
14 out, something you want to make a note of, it kind of
15 connects it for you. It's also color-coded. Okay?
16 So earlier when we were looking at those four boxes
17 here -- throughout the different scenarios you'll see
18 it's color-coded in here as well. All right? So it
19 kind of pulls it all together for you.

20 So let's talk about the -- the main question
21 here is has Dollarway met Level 5 exit criteria for
22 the academics. And you did receive a summary report
23 on the agenda that discussed the OCSS team going in
24 and doing kind of the three-day monitoring of the
25 team and actually giving a rubric scale and scoring

1 whether or not -- how the District did on the
2 different areas. And so while there was a three-day
3 monitoring visit, scores were not solely based on
4 those three days; it was based on going back and
5 reviewing previous reports, interviews, previous
6 knowledge of our staff in classrooms working with
7 teachers. So minimal progress -- partially met is a
8 2, met with direct support is a 3, and met with
9 independence is a 4. You also notice that's the same
10 kind of rubric that we've been using, the last time I
11 came with an OCSS report, on monthly goals as we were
12 setting goals up. Okay?

13 So this first indicator at the top talks about
14 collaborative teams regularly interact to address
15 common issues regarding curriculum, assessment and
16 instruction -- and that's really that premise of
17 professional learning communities and the work that
18 they're doing there. Dollarway School District has
19 invested greatly in this process and has done a lot
20 of work around this area. And so when we looked
21 specific at the objections there we could see
22 evidence that that was happening. If you'll notice,
23 on 1.3 they got a perfect score of a 4. All of the
24 school teams do have schedules that allow for
25 collaborative teams and it's a priority within the

1 District. We -- when we went in we scored each
2 individual building. So we went through each
3 building, we went through every classroom, we
4 interviewed lots of people; we Zoomed into meetings
5 that were collaborative team time meetings to see if
6 that's really what the discussion was. And so the
7 schools kind of ranged between a 2 to a 3, and they
8 were doing it with some, you know, fidelity. And,
9 you know, others were consistent; it depended on the
10 grade level. Okay? So we saw some inconsistency
11 there.

12 Indicator 2, the school is aware and monitors
13 predominant instructional practices -- so when you
14 look specific at the objectives there kind of hit
15 mainly 2's at the building there. While there is a
16 lot of work around curriculum in the District, and
17 while the District is shifting and moving in that
18 direction, we're still not there as far as fidelity
19 with instructional practices or high quality
20 instruction in all classrooms. Ms. Warren and I had
21 a lengthy discussion; she's well aware of the
22 strengths and the weaknesses and the need for that
23 rise of more consistency and quality within
24 classrooms and all classrooms for students. We
25 definitely had some high spots and some great spots

1 where things were going really, really well, and then
2 we had areas that still needed a lot of additional
3 support.

4 Indicator 3 talks about the school provides
5 teachers with clear ongoing evaluations of their
6 strengths and weaknesses. And so we did see and we
7 have seen some of their leadership capacity being
8 built in using EdReflect tools, being able to get
9 feedback and guidance, being intentional about
10 monitoring classrooms. When we were talking to
11 teachers we would ask them, "Does your principal come
12 into your classroom? What type of feedback do you
13 get back?" And so, we wanted to know. And so we
14 were hearing -- again, we saw some consistency in
15 some places and other places some inconsistency.

16 Indicator 4, school curriculum adheres to
17 district and state standards -- so they're kind of --
18 you know, some subject matters, yes; some subject
19 matters, we're still trying to get there. When you
20 ask teachers in the classrooms, "Do you have what you
21 need to teach," the answer was yes. And I will say
22 that the District has done an aggressive job this
23 year to make sure that the school district had a
24 learning management system platform that actually had
25 content, and so that has been advantageous to the

1 District this year.

2 Indicator 5 talks about the financial support
3 for teaching and learning within the District.
4 Again, it was kind of hit-or-miss in that middle
5 area. Overall score is 2.5, so really right in the
6 middle of that direct support, partially meeting to
7 meeting.

8 Overall rating for exit criteria -- when you
9 look at the score from the 1 to a 4 it averages out
10 to a 2.64, so kind of just really hitting kind of
11 right in the middle. One thing I do want to note --
12 and this is something that we felt was important --
13 is when -- we really wanted to go back to -- a 2.64
14 doesn't sound like we've done a whole lot. Okay?
15 But when you go back and you start interviewing, what
16 change has occurred in the Dollarway School District
17 from the first year of take-over, when you interview
18 Barbara, when you interview the teachers and the
19 staff, one thing that we heard over and over again
20 was culture and climate, feeling like a family,
21 feeling like a community now. You know, none of that
22 is in this rubric to score because we're looking at
23 the academic achievement, the teaching and learning
24 part of the campus. But I would say -- and I think
25 you even heard this in some of the stakeholder

1 feedback -- they don't feel like they really got
2 involved in trying to improve academics until year-
3 three.

4 Is that fair?

5 SUPT. WARREN: (Nodding head up and down.)

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

7 MS. SMITH: Yeah, year-three kind of started to
8 hit that area. First two years was really about
9 addressing the climate, the culture of the buildings,
10 setting up for a system that could be foundational to
11 be able to move from there. And so I will say when
12 you go through the Dollarway School District you feel
13 like there is a family. They are proud of their
14 school. You see that. But the instructional pieces
15 in the classrooms -- in all the classrooms is not
16 consistent and not at a level of rigor that it needs
17 to be.

18 Am I losing --

19 MR. DAN DAVIS: (inaudible)

20 MS. SMITH: Thank you.

21 So I'm going to pause right there. So, that
22 kind of hit the Level 5 exit criteria for the
23 academic piece. Does anybody have a question about
24 those?

25 Dr. Moore.

1 DR. MOORE: Yes, thank y'all for presenting and
2 thank y'all for being here today. I echo, when I
3 visited Dollarway last year, really seeing PLCs and
4 that culture in action was great. I was ready to go
5 teach at the elementary school. Doing great work.

6 I -- and I know we've had this conversation
7 before, and I know that because of Covid we did not
8 have assessments in the fall. But is this -- we are
9 not considering any sort of student data or student
10 input into this exit criteria; is that correct?

11 MS. SMITH: On this exit criteria, we did not.

12 DR. MOORE: Okay.

13 MS. SMITH: On the workday, I would be happy to
14 bring to you any assessment that we had from the
15 previous four years.

16 DR. MOORE: Okay.

17 MS. SMITH: I'm happy to bring to you their NWEA
18 results -- not NWEA -- ACT Aspire interims and the
19 Renaissance and STAR. Yeah.

20 DR. MOORE: Okay. And that's what's -- has that
21 been able to go on this school year for --

22 MS. SMITH: They have. And they did provide the
23 Renaissance STAR. They didn't have 100% of the
24 students take it, but we do --

25 DR. MOORE: I understand.

1 MS. SMITH: -- have a percentage of it and we do
2 have an assessment report for that that I can give to
3 you.

4 DR. MOORE: Okay. And have teachers been able
5 to use that data effectively? I think that would be
6 great to have at our work session, because I -- you
7 know, I see these exit criteria as a list of inputs,
8 which are great and very important. But when we
9 don't have the output, you know, it's only as good as
10 what you --

11 MS. SMITH: Yeah. And --

12 DR. MOORE: And, you know, I appreciate your
13 team --

14 MS. SMITH: Right.

15 DR. MOORE: -- going in to really look at all
16 these, but we also want to hear about how students
17 are doing.

18 MS. SMITH: From the outputs -- so, you know, I
19 agree with you. And one thing as far as the outputs
20 go and in just the monitoring, we did go back and
21 look at their test results -- and you did hear that
22 over and over again, "if we had one more year." I
23 will say when you look at the number of students that
24 they were -- would've had to move, it's significant
25 to have met the exit criteria. And I will bring that

1 back to you, and it's in that -- the quarterly
2 reports as well. But the number of students that you
3 had to move from In Need of Support, out of that box
4 was a significant number of students. In monitoring
5 classroom expectation and rigor in all grade levels,
6 they would have had a difficult time meeting it. But
7 let me pull the reports for you to look at.

8 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you. And I'm saying
9 that, knowing that test scores are not the end-all
10 be-all at all; it is just one factor as we look at
11 how students are doing and where they are. I think
12 particularly if we can have any sort of data on
13 reading levels at elementary and middle school --

14 MS. SMITH: Yeah, absolutely, we'd love to
15 provide that for you. And, you know, when I say --
16 you know, it's hard to stand up here and say they
17 probably wouldn't have met it.

18 DR. MOORE: Right.

19 MS. SMITH: But the thing that keeps plaguing
20 the District is the turnover of teachers and the
21 novice teachers; and so you get someone trained, you
22 get them in the professional learning communities,
23 and then you have another group come in and you're
24 starting again. And so they've had this -- when you
25 think about 32% of their teachers being in that

1 novice group, it's kind of like they're constantly
2 working against this piece of getting the rigor where
3 it needs to be and starting over. So can I point to
4 many, many good things that are very supportive of
5 teachers in the Dollarway School District?

6 Absolutely can. Can I stand before you today, after
7 visiting all the schools and interviewing lots of
8 teachers and high school students, and say that the
9 academics in every classroom in the school district
10 is at a high level of where it needs to be? It's
11 not. So there's still a lot of work to be done, not
12 to say that the teachers are not committed because
13 they are; not to say that Ms. Warren and Ms. Davis
14 are not committed because they are. The strategies
15 that are being used are good strategies; we're just
16 not there.

17 Okay. Moving to the fiscal distress
18 classification -- on your sheet, on this one they
19 were placed into fiscal distress for two reasons: one
20 was for the declining balance, for fiscal integrity,
21 and the other was for the material audit findings.
22 Okay. And so, within the fiscal distress plan there
23 was also many objectives. All right. But the two
24 indicators are these two that have to be met to be
25 placed out of -- or considered meeting. Okay.

1 So when you just look at Indicator Number 1, the
2 declining balance, you can see a chart here that
3 shows that the Dollarway School District has
4 continued to have a declining balance from 2017 until
5 two thousand -- this current year. Without
6 significant cuts going into next year, they would --
7 they are already deficit spending. Okay. So going
8 into the next school year they would have to make
9 significant cuts to make their budget work. So as
10 far as the declining balance that jeopardizes the
11 fiscal integrity of the district, this is kind of the
12 model that we're currently at.

13 When you're looking at Indicator Number 2,
14 material audit findings, this is an area that we want
15 to brag on the District, we want to brag on the
16 business office, want to brag on our OCSS team and
17 the work that's been done there. When the District
18 was first put in fiscal distress -- this says '15,
19 but I think it was actually '19 because you had
20 supplemental that were not counted on this -- '19
21 findings. This last year, from '17 it was zero; '18
22 it was 2; '19, 1. I think this last year they just
23 finished the audit and I think we had 1 again. So
24 this is an area that has been resolved. They do have
25 practices in place. They have set their procedures

1 in place. So this is something that has been
2 addressed.

3 When you go through the fiscal distress exit
4 criteria, what I asked our OCSS office who works on
5 finance to do is to use that same scale of 1 to 4 on
6 these objectives for yearly to see did we meet that,
7 did we not meet that. And so you can kind of see on
8 the objectives here some of the ones that go with
9 this idea of creating a managed business office and
10 to control of those audit findings. Those are the
11 scores you're going to score higher on and areas
12 where, you know, the money part and the staffing are
13 where we need to be so that we're not ending in a
14 declining balance or deficit spending. Those are the
15 scores you're going to see a little bit lower. Okay.
16 So we have not reversed our deficit spending within
17 the Dollarway School District and our final balance
18 did continue to decline.

19 MR. SUTTON: Stacy --

20 MS. SMITH: Yes.

21 MR. SUTTON: -- can I ask a question, please?

22 MS. SMITH: Yes.

23 MR. SUTTON: Regarding the audit, are they using
24 state audit or private firm?

25 MS. SMITH: They're using the state.

1 MR. SUTTON: Okay. Thank you, ma'am.

2 MS. WOODS: Dan, would you go back one more
3 slide just for information? Thank you.

4 MS. SMITH: This one?

5 On your -- on the State Board agenda you had two
6 reports filed and one report is a summary report of
7 our visit. I believe it's seven pages with a
8 summary, and all of these scores are fleshed out on
9 that as well. So that might be an easier place for
10 you later to go back and pull and kind of read about
11 that visit.

12 MS. WOODS: Can we get a copy of this at the end
13 of the day?

14 MS. SMITH: You want a hard-copy of the
15 presentation?

16 MS. WOODS: No, just a soft-copy is fine.

17 MS. SMITH: Yes, I -- yeah, I'll get that. You
18 should have it on your agenda.

19 MS. WOODS: Oh, okay. Thank you.

20 MS. SMITH: So the Level 5 exit criteria overall
21 rating was a 2.64. Fiscal distress classification --
22 again, you had those two indicators. So, when you
23 kind of put this on a scale in looking at it overall,
24 I felt like we needed to kind of -- kind of look at
25 this visually, where do we want our -- the District

1 to be at this time. We would really prefer the
2 District as far as meeting exit criteria to kind of
3 hit that higher end of the scale, at 3.5 to 4. Right
4 now they're just kind of right there in the middle.
5 The fiscal is the purple, the academic or Level 5
6 support is the blue X. So they were both hitting
7 like a 2.64 and 2.69, kind of right in that middle of
8 direct support and meeting with direct support.

9 Do you want to make a comment?

10 SECRETARY KEY: Yes, I would. Thank you, Stacy.

11 And, Ms. Chambers, I think you're on. But just
12 in case -- and to give a little context to this, the
13 scale -- you know, Members -- and, Ms. Newton, you've
14 asked several times, and Ms. Chambers has asked a
15 number of times when we're dealing with state
16 takeover schools, you know, how do we know that we're
17 meeting the exit criteria. And it's -- with academic
18 -- in the old way we looked at it with the academic
19 distress, you know, it was very clear. You had one
20 indicator; you had one score that you either made it
21 or you didn't. But that didn't provide, you know, a
22 lot of the context in -- you know, let's say you
23 never made it -- so really somewhere with A to F; you
24 know, the only criteria there were are you an F
25 school still, then that's important. But it's also

1 not as complete when you're trying to describe what's
2 going on there. And, you know, this started kind of
3 a concept when Dr. Hernandez was here about how do we
4 look at it. But I really want to say thanks to Stacy
5 here because she's worked to refine this and worked
6 with Ms. Whitlow and Mr. Hoy and a number of the team
7 of OCSS to really develop something that we hope as
8 we deal with future districts -- I hope we never have
9 to deal with this level of takeover, but, you know,
10 let's be real, the law is there for a reason. If we
11 do, we want to have developed a system that gives you
12 all very clear metrics for how are we doing and
13 refining the way we set the exit plans and how do we
14 measure those exit plans. So while you see this is
15 here at the end of a process, of a five-year process,
16 what we hope is that in the future this is something
17 that we can give you on a regular basis so you can
18 see how they're growing with respect to minimal
19 progress, partially met, met, or met with
20 independence. And the "met with independence," as
21 Stacy said, that's where we want to get our schools
22 to in these situations.

23 So I just wanted to pause for a second and give
24 kudos to Stacy and the team for really putting
25 together something that gives us a better visual of

1 are we winning, are we making progress.

2 MS. SMITH: Thank you for those comments.

3 You know, again, it's always interesting to --
4 because I've sat in the audience and I've listened to
5 other districts being presented and, you know, it's a
6 fine line between being able to present what you
7 really see and the facts in comparison to what you
8 want it to be. There are good things happening in
9 the Dollarway School District and there are good
10 teachers in the Dollarway School District. And these
11 two ladies up here are phenomenal and they have great
12 leadership going on; they are making the right moves.
13 If we could've started year-one on the academics as
14 intensive, I think maybe we'd be further along in the
15 academics on progress for students. But they did
16 address climate and culture in their buildings and
17 facilities, and needs, and made some different
18 choices and decisions, and really elevated what it
19 means to be a staff member in the Dollarway School
20 District. And so there has been progress made and
21 there is right discussion and conversations on
22 academics; there's just still a lot of growth to
23 happen.

24 Okay. So with that, that ends my part. So now
25 you get Jason's part.

1 So Jason is from California, and I got to meet
2 Jason last night -- now I get to make fun of you, so
3 that's the part about me you don't know. So I met
4 Jason for dinner last night, and he thought, I guess,
5 he was going to Antarctica -- shows up in a coat,
6 zipped up to here. So welcome to Arkansas. I don't
7 think it was that cold last night. I'm not even sure
8 I had a coat on, but I think he wore it for the
9 entire dinner. He did, he had it on the entire
10 dinner.

11 But from the get-go for this process, you know,
12 there are times that you're just blessed because the
13 right people come in at the right time when you need
14 help, and that is truly what I can say WestEd has
15 been, with the Comprehensive Center -- the right
16 people at the right time. Talk to your
17 professionals, ask the right questions, but at the
18 same time completely student focused. And I can't
19 tell you how many times I've gone to Dr. Pfeffer or
20 to Commissioner Key to brag about them and the work
21 that they've done.

22 So Jason is going to come up today and he's
23 going to present and walk you through all your
24 different scenarial options. Again, nothing is set
25 in stone. This is a third-party looking out to say,

1 So today, you know, as Stacy had mentioned, I'm
2 going to be going through the various scenarios that
3 Dollarway may end up exercising through authorization
4 of the State Board over the course of the next -- the
5 coming months and years.

6 Today, in addition to myself, I'm joined by
7 Lauren Outlaw and Felicia Reed. I'll give them a
8 chance to introduce themselves. And I'm going to in
9 some ways be maestro-ing our conversation today in
10 order to kind of bring them into the conversation,
11 but also move the State Board through each of these
12 four options that Stacy had set up.

13 So to get started, I want to remind the State
14 Board of the decision tree that we discussed. So the
15 first two levels of the academic criteria for Level 5
16 support and the consideration of fiscal distress
17 criteria are the information that Stacy -- or Mrs.
18 Smith went over. And I'll be covering that bottom
19 set of decisions around the four options: the return
20 to local control, the reconstitution, the annexation,
21 or the consolidation.

22 So to set up our conversation, we think it's
23 actually really important to go over some of our
24 research methods. And if we take a step back in
25 thinking about how we organized our independent and

1 objective analysis going into this work with the
2 Arkansas Department of Ed. and with Dollarway, we
3 really looked at this from the perspective of four
4 sources of information, if you will. The first
5 includes consultation with the DESE staff; so that
6 includes Mrs. Smith, as well as other staff from the
7 Department. We also did a comprehensive financial
8 and operational analysis, and we'll talk about that
9 in more depth in a moment. We also looked at the
10 scenario now itself; so analyzing both the legal and
11 regulatory code in consultation with your counsel to
12 the Board, as well as the counsel to the Department.
13 And, finally, offering up an opportunity to engage
14 directly the Dollarway community, in gathering
15 feedback from them about this decision that is coming
16 before the Board in a matter of a month or so and
17 asking them about these various scenarios, how they
18 have felt about this work that the State has
19 partnered with the District in doing. And all of
20 that kind of leads to the centrality of after each of
21 the scenarios that we'll go through an execution
22 strategy for your consideration as the State Board of
23 Education. So once you make the decision about any
24 one of those four options, the execution strategies
25 are considerations, some of which are mandated by

1 law, others of which are things that we would offer
2 for the State Board to consider as a part of making
3 that decision itself that would help to support the
4 transition of Dollarway School District through that
5 scenario -- or through that option. I'm sorry.

6 So a couple of important things to note in terms
7 of what was not included in the analysis, the first
8 of which is that this impact analysis of both
9 annexation and consolidation of Dollarway with other
10 Jefferson County school districts did not go beyond
11 Pine Bluff. So, for example, we did not look at
12 consideration of White Hall or of Watson Chapel. We
13 were really looking on the options of annexation and
14 consolidation just at the opportunity to consolidate
15 or annex to Pine Bluff School District. The second
16 is that the implications analysis in use of CARES Act
17 funding and those flexibilities of other one-time
18 federal funds were excluded from the analysis, in
19 part largely due to the fact that these were unique
20 circumstances, hopefully not something that
21 continually Dollarway or any other school district
22 would be having -- would have access to in the
23 future, as they're trying to obviously address the
24 Coronavirus pandemic at this point. And, finally,
25 that the fiscal and operational impact of suggestions

1 raised during the stakeholder input sessions were
2 acknowledged, but they were not incorporated into the
3 financial and operational analysis. We felt it was
4 really important that we at WestEd, given our
5 expertise and our background, have the ability to
6 look at these issues from an independent and
7 objective standpoint. And we'll talk about some of
8 those assumptions as we progress forward.

9 So I want to start with the scenario analysis,
10 and I want to invite my colleague, Lauren Outlaw -- I
11 think Lauren is with us -- to introduce herself and
12 then jump in on the scenario analysis.

13 Lauren, are you there?

14 MS. OUTLAW: Yes. Yes, I am. Are you able to
15 hear me?

16 MR. WILLIS: Yeah.

17 MS. OUTLAW: Okay, great. Thank you for the
18 introduction and thank you to everyone present today
19 for this presentation. We are pleased to be
20 presenting our analyses and findings to the State
21 Board of Education today. And so, again, Lauren
22 Outlaw; I've been with WestEd for a little over a
23 year-and-a-half. I work with the Resource Claiming
24 and School Choice teams and primarily focus on
25 providing technical assistance to states, districts,

1 and federal grantees in an effort to support the
2 efficient and effective use of funding, but also to
3 insure high quality education practices. So, again,
4 thank you for the opportunity to present today.

5 Moving on -- Jason, if you could take us to the
6 next slide -- so here are the possible scenarios for
7 how the Dollarway School District might proceed based
8 on the State Board of Ed's decision. As Ms. Smith
9 explained previously, again, you have the four
10 scenarios that include return to local control,
11 reconstitution, annexation, and consolidation. In
12 our subsequent slides we will sort of address the
13 different state laws and DESE rules that govern each
14 scenario. But, you know, all of that is necessary as
15 you consider your next steps for the future of
16 Dollarway, and we'll get into those nuances as well
17 and also speak to that more during the working
18 session in December.

19 Next slide, Jason, please. Great. Thanks.

20 So, next, we wanted to just provide you with an
21 overview of what our scenario analysis included. So
22 we reviewed the Arkansas state law, the various DESE
23 rules, and we also looked into previous State Board
24 of Ed. agendas, minutes, strength -- excuse me --
25 transcripts, and orders. We also with -- in our

1 communications with DESE had access to and, you know,
2 took a deep look into the Level 5 exit criteria, the
3 district support plan, and also the fiscal distress
4 plan. We also, again, had access to the quarterly
5 and other monitoring reports that the Dollarway
6 School District was required to provide. And so, in
7 doing this analysis and to make sure that we had the
8 best information for the State Board of Education to
9 guide their decision process, we created a scenario
10 matrix and a decision tree and discussion guidebook,
11 which you have today, to sort of highlight the key
12 questions relevant to your ultimate decision and to
13 facilitate the decision-making process.

14 Next slide, please, Jason. Thanks.

15 So in doing all of this, we also established
16 sort of the legal timeline for the State Board of Ed.
17 action. And so, as you can see here, that began with
18 the December 10, 2015 action where Dollarway was
19 identified as being in academic distress and then
20 placed under state authority. Shortly thereafter,
21 Superintendent Warren was appointed. Next, in April
22 2016, Dollarway was then identified as being in
23 fiscal distress. The next point on the timeline just
24 is to emphasize that from 2016 to 2020 the Dollarway
25 School District was receiving, you know, ongoing and

1 continued support from the state and that they were
2 in consistent communication and also providing, you
3 know, technical assistance and strategic support. So
4 the next point on the timeline brings us to today
5 where we are meeting with the State Board of Ed.
6 members to share an overview of our analyses and
7 findings. After this meeting we -- as Ms. Smith
8 mentioned previously, we will participate with you in
9 a working group session to sort of flesh-out our
10 considerations for the execution strategies for each
11 scenario. After that meeting, the December 10th
12 meeting will be when the members of the Board are
13 tasked with reaching an ultimate conclusion, and that
14 conclusion will become effective on July 1st of 2021.

15 And with that, I will then pass it off to my
16 colleague Felicia -- excuse me -- Felicia Brown Reed
17 to share an overview of the stakeholder input
18 analysis.

19 MS. REED: Thank you so much, Lauren.

20 Good morning, everyone, and thank you for the
21 opportunity to be here. As Lauren said, my name is
22 Felicia Reed. I have had the pleasure of leading the
23 stakeholder input analysis for this project. I have
24 a background over the last decade or so of doing
25 stakeholder input analysis to inform major decisions

1 about communities all across the country. And so
2 while I love a good legal and budget analysis, I hope
3 that the stakeholder analysis can add a little bit of
4 actual life to this discussion, and I have the
5 pleasure to bring that to you today.

6 We're going to start with just an overview of
7 the timeline. So this stakeholder input analysis
8 will take place over two phases, and I'll go over
9 this first phase that happened in early October first
10 and then we'll go to the second phase after that.

11 Next slide, please.

12 So the Phase 1 meetings occurred between October
13 5th and October 13th. These were small group
14 meetings of folks that were in similar roles
15 together. It was facilitated by WestEd and took
16 place over Zoom; so they were all virtual in nature.
17 We offered 20 meeting times to 11 different role
18 types, including teachers, administrators, parents,
19 students, and community leaders. We advertised this
20 opportunity through the Dollarway School District
21 website and through 126 personal invitations to
22 various stakeholders throughout the Dollarway
23 community. And while 74 participants actually
24 confirmed that they would like to attend and signed
25 up for a meeting, we had 37 who participated in the

1 end in 13 meetings. All 11 roles were represented,
2 but for the purposes of analysis we were -- and to
3 maintain anonymity for those groups we narrowed the
4 list down -- and you'll see in the following
5 presentation five different categories of folks,
6 including students, teachers -- I'm sorry -- these
7 are Dollarway students, Dollarway teachers, Dollarway
8 school and district administrators put together,
9 parents of Dollarway students, and community leaders
10 which spanned a little bit wider than the Dollarway
11 community specifically and went to the surrounding
12 communities as well.

13 Next slide, Jason. Thank you.

14 So these sessions were designed to provide an
15 opportunity for stakeholders to weigh-in on what was
16 most important to them and what was concerning about
17 them. As you can see throughout our presentation
18 today and these discussion questions, and in
19 accordance with the best practices of stakeholder
20 input from across the country, we did not ask anyone
21 to vote on anything in this first round; we didn't
22 ask specific opinions or get any specific feedback on
23 these scenarios. We wanted to solicit opinions
24 without prompt to insure that input could inform the
25 specifics of how these scenarios were shaping up to

1 be. So the questions were very broad. As -- the
2 sessions were all designed to be about 60 minutes,
3 they were all exactly the same in structure. We
4 shared a brief video that Mrs. Smith put together
5 about the current actions and the scenario that we
6 were facing and providing some context about where we
7 were, but careful not to add anything that wasn't in
8 the legislation. So we just were -- we were very
9 specific to keep things as big as they did appear in
10 the legal terms. And so we asked -- we went through
11 this context setting, and then we started the
12 recording and we asked all the stakeholders five
13 discussion questions in all. We asked them what they
14 valued about Dollarway, what they have seen -- how
15 they have seen Dollarway improve, and why they
16 thought that that improvement had occurred; we asked
17 them what they hope would change over the next five
18 years; we asked them for ideas about how to move
19 Dollarway successfully forward, given that this
20 transition was coming up; and we asked them
21 specifically for advice for the Board of Education,
22 for you all -- what they thought that you should all
23 consider as you were making this choice. Transcripts
24 of these sessions will be made available to you upon
25 your request. But we have tried to distill this

1 information and I will say there are pages and pages
2 and pages of transcripts, and they are wonderful, if
3 anyone wants a little light reading. But it is -- we
4 have tried our best to distill that information to
5 inform our discussion today, so you will see that
6 going forward.

7 Next slide, Jason. Thanks.

8 So, just one piece that we wanted to point out
9 was that before we asked these folks for their input
10 we did prompt them to think about these four
11 dimensions of effective school management: governing
12 and community engagement, school culture and student
13 supports, student enrollment, staffing and fiscal
14 operations, and academic rigor and excellence. What
15 we know is that each stakeholder came to the
16 discussions with a very specific lens and have a
17 natural tendency to talk about that lens. What we
18 wanted to do with this prompt is to say, "We want you
19 to consider all these pieces, because all of them
20 will be considered as the decision goes forward." So
21 we were able to expand the commentary that the
22 stakeholders were able to give.

23 Next slide, please.

24 So at the end of each session we asked
25 participants to fill out a very brief survey -- it

1 took, on average, 97 seconds; we had technology that
2 was able to time that, 97 seconds for each survey to
3 be completed -- about the experience of stakeholders
4 in the meeting itself. 25 of the 33 participants who
5 were participating live in the discussions responded
6 to those surveys and the results were overwhelmingly
7 positive, as you can see. A hundred-percent agreed
8 or strongly agreed that their input would inform your
9 decision, yours as the board; 96% agreed or strongly
10 agreed that they understood the options for
11 Dollarway's future; 96% agreed or strongly agreed
12 that the community conversations were well organized
13 and facilitated, and 68% of the group strongly agreed
14 to that; and then a hundred-percent agreed or
15 strongly agreed that they were able to share their
16 perspective during those conversations, and, again,
17 68% strongly agreeing.

18 So this data shows that stakeholders really
19 value the opportunity to give their input and
20 believed it would make a difference, and we actually
21 heard a lot of comments about that. There was an
22 open question at the end of that very brief survey
23 that was optional and we had many, many folks in that
24 open-ended part say, you know, thank you. As you can
25 see in the quotes below, "thank you for hearing us

1 out;" "thank you for including us;" "thank you for
2 giving voice to the Dollarway community as you make
3 this decision and we really got a sense that you are
4 making this decision with us and not for us." And so
5 overwhelmingly the Phase 1 stakeholder meetings went
6 very well. And the quotes you see here were selected
7 because they represented the breadth of open-ended
8 comments that we had seen in that satisfaction survey
9 about the meetings themselves.

10 Jason, can you go to the next slide please?

11 So now that you have a sense of how the meetings
12 took place, I'll talk a little bit about how we
13 analyzed the data in preparation for today.

14 Next slide.

15 So, first, we transcribed the discussion portion
16 of the meetings only. We used an AI software to do
17 that. And then we scrubbed those transcripts for any
18 identifying information and being able to remove
19 anything that was -- that even alluded to an
20 identity. We wanted to make sure we were keeping
21 anonymity for folks. And then we manually checked
22 for transcription errors. Once we had all those
23 discussions in written form, we were able to identify
24 some of the high level trends based on our
25 experience; so what were some of those words that we

1 heard over and over again and sentiments that we
2 heard over and over again and we coded each comment
3 in accordance with that. We analyzed those
4 conceptual tags and summarized those things and
5 prepared the slides that you'll see today for both
6 generally, which I'll go over in just a second, and
7 each scenario. So we didn't specifically ask folks
8 to talk about each scenario, but we were able to pull
9 some of the information that was relevant to each of
10 those scenarios that we'll share later. And,
11 finally, we were able to illustrate some of the main
12 concepts by pulling out some of the wonderful quotes
13 that came out of these meetings. And based on -- the
14 selection of those quotes was based on, honestly,
15 which one was succinct and could fit in a little box
16 on the slide as opposed to in paragraphs and
17 paragraphs and which were the most illustrative of
18 the -- what the group said overall. So you'll be
19 seeing those quotes throughout and those are just to
20 give you a little flavor about what those numbers
21 mean.

22 And the last thing I would say, the analysis
23 process was -- honestly, there were not very many
24 outliers. Above all in the stakeholder analysis what
25 would surprise me the most was how consistent the

1 feedback was from role to role, from person to
2 person. We got a lot of the same sentiments over and
3 over again, and you'll see that in the feedback. So
4 we're excited to share some of that input with you
5 and we'll share it right away before we get into the
6 scenarios with some high-level themes.

7 Next slide, Jason.

8 So here's the top four sentiments of the
9 stakeholders across the board that were most positive
10 about Dollarway. 93% of those folks who participated
11 expressed that Dollarway's culture has improved in
12 the last three years -- and this is what Ms. Smith
13 was alluding to. Most of them had that three-year
14 timeline and not a five-year timeline. They were
15 really thinking of improvements in the last three
16 years. We specifically noted that the administration
17 was able to incorporate student and stakeholder
18 feedback, student engagement in the classroom was up,
19 disciplinary practices were improved, teacher
20 professional learning communities were in place,
21 culture and climate surveys helped to shape the
22 student experience, and student retention was up. We
23 even had one or two students who mentioned that the
24 food and drink availability was improved, which was
25 very important to them as students. So definitely,

1 those cultural pieces had improved and 93% on their
2 own mentioned that.

3 The next one was that Dollarway has this strong
4 family-like community, and that word "family" came up
5 over and over and over again. 90% of the folks who
6 we talked to made this sentiment that this was a
7 family-like community, there were strong
8 relationships between students and adults, adults are
9 supportive of each other. So those adult-to-adult
10 relationships are stronger and there was a sense that
11 everyone kind of takes care of each other; there was
12 always someone to go to when you were in need.

13 The next one, also at 90%, was that Dollarway's
14 academic outcomes are on the rise. We heard things
15 about teacher instructional capacity being increased
16 due to some professional development activities that
17 were happening, interim student outcome data was
18 showing academic improvement, and students were
19 finding the instruction more effective and engaging
20 in the classroom itself.

21 And, finally, the last one was that about -- 57%
22 was that Superintendent Warren's leadership,
23 specifically, has brought about positive change. So
24 by name people were mentioning Superintendent Warren
25 at about 57%. They mentioned her expert

1 understanding of education reform, her communication
2 skills, commitment to shared decision-making, and
3 stability and long tenure as a superintendent, and
4 that lack of turnover was important to the community.

5 Next slide, please.

6 We did also get the top four -- we summarized
7 the top four concerns that they had, and you'll see
8 these numbers are a little less consistent but still
9 pretty high if you're considering that these were
10 unprompted. We didn't ask are you concerned about X;
11 we said, "What are you concerned about?" This is
12 what came up over and over again. The highest one
13 was Dollarway's identity as a critical part of the
14 community, and they were mentioning things like
15 district -- the District's name, mascot, school
16 buildings have a strong community recognition,
17 families have a lot of history in the Dollarway
18 schools. There was a fear of losing that identity
19 and, as a result of community decline and the money,
20 mentioned the Altheimer district and how the school
21 district losing theirs was harmful to the community
22 overall, the sense of community, and that many
23 businesses were relying on those schools for keeping
24 their business up.

25 73% mentioned in some way that Dollarway needs

1 to offer additional services and programs for
2 students, including mental health services, expanded
3 course offerings, college and career pathways, parent
4 engagement efforts, academic remediation and
5 supports, technology assistance, and additional high-
6 quality teachers, as Mrs. Smith identified. So that
7 was about 73%, or three-quarters, of the group. Two-
8 thirds of the group said on their own that they were
9 concerned that they wanted more input in the decision
10 ahead and they wanted to have this input, and they
11 often compared that with "thank you so much for this
12 opportunity; we would like to continue to have these
13 kind of opportunities as the decision gets made
14 ahead." They were specifically concerned about the
15 current vague definitions of these options and we
16 were purposeful about that because we didn't have
17 answers for them; those are your choices to make.
18 But they wanted to know more about the specifics.
19 They were fearful of the decisions being made without
20 regard to community input and -- or the special
21 characteristics of the community. There was an
22 appreciation for the opportunity to weigh-in during
23 these Phase 1 meetings and they would like more
24 stakeholders to get involved in the discussion. The
25 numbers were concerning to a lot of folks; they

1 wanted to see more and more folks to get involved in
2 this -- in these input opportunities.

3 And finally on this, one of the main concerns
4 for about half of the participants was that Dollarway
5 was just not ready to return to local control, that
6 they only had about three years of substantive
7 change, not really five; they weren't seeing the
8 whole five years of impact there; they needed more
9 time to demonstrate growth and develop skills; that
10 Covid and assessment cancellation makes it more
11 difficult to show improvements and results; they were
12 concerned about their ability to prove that they have
13 made these improvements overall; there was some
14 skepticism about the ability of a local-elected board
15 to continue with a positive momentum; there was an
16 attribution of recent growth to being -- they were
17 attributing recent growth to being under state
18 control; and, finally, they were -- they believe that
19 some previous leaders were not necessarily
20 responsible about the use of funds and wanted to make
21 sure that funds were used responsibly going forward.

22 So we'll go over all this feedback in relation
23 to the specific scenarios in just a moment, but we
24 wanted to give you a taste of what we found and that
25 you'll see these things pop up over and over again.

1 Next slide, please.

2 So, finally, just as I alluded to before, there
3 is a Phase 2 of this plan. We have -- we will be
4 presenting some more specifics on each of these
5 scenarios as we move forward. And we're going to go
6 back with those more specific details to the
7 community and ask for more of their feedback. So
8 this will be less about big blue sky thinking, about
9 what their concerns and ideas were, and more
10 specifically about what do you think about this, is
11 it going to work, is it -- what's going to work about
12 it, what's not going to work about it, what should we
13 consider.

14 So next slide, please.

15 In the next phase, which will take place
16 starting next week, we'll be holding three different
17 ways for people to weigh-in. We'll have four open
18 comment -- or open public forums where anyone can
19 come in for the virtual sessions that will be
20 scheduled throughout the week to give feedback on
21 their specific -- on specific scenarios. They will
22 have an opportunity to weigh-in on a feedback survey
23 that will be open until the 25th of November that
24 will be online so that they can go in and say,
25 "Here's what I think about this scenario or that

1 scenario." And, finally, the open comment period
2 where anyone can just write in as you see -- as they
3 see fit.

4 And that concludes the analysis portion of the
5 stakeholder feedback. You'll see my portion for the
6 rest of this, the day-to-day, will be very short. So
7 we wanted to give you enough background so you really
8 understood what was going on. And I'll turn it back
9 over to Jason.

10 MR. WILLIS: Great. Thanks, Lauren and Felicia.

11 So to round up the fourth component of the kind
12 of methods that we used in our analysis of Dollarway
13 School District, the financial and operations
14 analysis had a very high level -- include two
15 important assumptions. The first, the return to
16 local control scenario, which is the first of four
17 we'll present this morning, is used essentially as a
18 baseline for the analysis. So it really presumes
19 status quo would continue with the way that Dollarway
20 is operating with the most substantial change, of
21 course, being that it would go back to local control
22 with its own school board, superintendent, so-on and
23 so-forth.

24 The second set of bullets there that you can see
25 is just an overview of the data and the implications

1 that were analyzed, in addition to the past five
2 years of audit documentation; also looking at the
3 fiscal distress plans, including the quarterly
4 updates to the State Board meeting -- State Board of
5 Education, which all of you have had access to. But
6 also looking at a set of information around budgets,
7 timelines, facilities, operations, recent staffing
8 changes, the opportunities for incentive funding
9 specific to the annexation and consolidation options
10 -- we'll talk about those in a bit. But also looking
11 at transportation, opportunities for potential cost
12 savings that would result ultimately in either an
13 increase in revenue for Dollarway under any one of
14 those four options and/or a reduction in expenditures
15 that really speak to exactly what Mrs. Smith was
16 identifying before, which is basically stemming the
17 tide of a continued decline in their unrestricted net
18 ending balance which is a critical component of
19 maintaining fiscal health for any district in
20 Arkansas.

21 So a little bit more about the financial
22 analysis and our methodology, first that we used a
23 comparative financial analysis set of tools to look
24 at future scenarios. So once I'm kind of controlling
25 for the return to local control scenario, we then

1 would make assumptions about changes in either
2 revenue line items or expenditure line items that
3 would project what Dollarway might look like from a
4 financial and operational standpoint in that
5 scenario, beginning with the next school year, which
6 is the 2021-2022 school year.

7 Importantly, the assumptions that we presumed in
8 the analysis is that we would want to maximize the
9 cost efficiencies. So importantly, particularly when
10 we were looking at issues of school mergers, we
11 really were looking for what were the best ways in
12 which to maximize the cost efficiencies. This didn't
13 include feedback from stakeholders in Dollarway,
14 which would be important should the Board decide to
15 move down any one of those options going forward.
16 But for the purposes of the presentation today and
17 the deliberation over the course of the next month we
18 thought it was important to present some of the
19 maximum opportunities for cost efficiencies through
20 those scenarios, and we'll talk a bit more about that
21 as well.

22 Just a brief note on data sources -- we relied
23 primarily on local and state data here in the State
24 of Arkansas and in Jefferson County and the Dollarway
25 community. We did supplement some of that

1 information with federally based -- for example, U.S.
2 Census Bureau information -- that populated the maps
3 that Mrs. Smith had presented around changes in
4 population, both overall as well as school-aged
5 children.

6 Importantly, we also thought it was important to
7 incorporate some of the other environmental context
8 that was happening in Dollarway. This is in
9 particular referencing economic activity, other
10 government contributions that were coming into the
11 school district's financial situation, but also the
12 changes in local businesses, I think the most notable
13 of which is the opening of the new casino, which I
14 understand just happened about a month ago. And so
15 as activity ramps up specifically with that casino in
16 the Pine Bluff School District they will begin making
17 more substantial contributions to the tax base on a
18 variety of contributions, both through the city but
19 also to the school district. And in some of the
20 scenarios that we'll talk about Dollarway would
21 benefit from those proceeds from the casino that are
22 coming to the Pine Bluff School District.

23 As I mentioned before, we only considered the
24 scenarios for Dollarway and Pine Bluff School
25 District. We removed any of those one-time federal

1 funds that I mentioned, and where reasonable made
2 additional funding assumptions that we added into the
3 projection; so, you know, ongoing new casino revenue,
4 the trigger of temporary one-time state funds as a
5 result of the decision that was made by the State
6 Board.

7 So a couple of key spending assumptions to keep
8 in mind as we go through these three -- these four
9 scenarios, the first of which is really when we were
10 examining the labor costs we looked to identify
11 overlaps in positions. So we basically pulled every
12 job description from both Pine Bluff and from
13 Dollarway School District and did a side-by-side
14 analysis to look for comparables. Right? So in one
15 district it might've been labeled as an instructional
16 aid and in another district it might've been labeled
17 as an instructional assistant; we would equate those
18 two positions as we were considering some of the
19 future scenarios -- for example, on the annexation or
20 consolidation scenario in which you would have to
21 bring together the contracts of both of those
22 individuals that were coming into that single entity.
23 We identified possible efficiencies at the Central
24 Office level for reconstitution, annexation and
25 consolidation scenarios; so looking at how do you

1 minimize the amount of administrative overhead for
2 the school district while maintaining the integrity
3 of the necessary duties that are responsible for the
4 Central Office, from either an overall administrative
5 perspective, from a curriculum instruction
6 perspective, but also from a finance and operations
7 perspective. And, importantly, when we looked at
8 adjusting salaries and benefits we thought it was
9 important to take a conservative approach. So going
10 back to this example of the instructional aid and the
11 instructional assistant, depending on the scenario if
12 you were moving one position into the other,
13 obviously if that other position in say Pine Bluff
14 had a slightly higher salary and compensation level,
15 we assumed the higher level of compensation, which in
16 fact would actually invert the savings, would bring
17 down the amounts of overall savings on the
18 expenditure side of the ledger that Dollarway would
19 be experiencing in any one of these scenarios -- but
20 thought it important to raise that assumption.

21 And some of the major themes that you'll hear
22 today, many of which Mrs. Smith has already raised, I
23 think, importantly is to pay attention to enrollment
24 and enrollment trends in both of these systems. For
25 school districts both here in the state of Arkansas

1 but across the country enrollment is the lifeline,
2 the bloodline, if you will, that keeps a school
3 district going; it is the basis for the vast majority
4 of revenues that school districts receive. And that
5 enrollment, the way that it is distinguished into
6 schools or into a school district, is a critical
7 component of thinking about the overall fiscal health
8 of any school district.

9 One other thing that I will mention before
10 moving into just a pause to take any questions or
11 comments you might have about the methodology is to
12 say thinking about other factors that have been
13 raised already, especially the novice number of
14 teachers and the constant over -- turnover in staff,
15 but also the conditions of facilities weighs on the
16 financial health of any school district, especially
17 when you think about the costs associated with
18 recruiting, training, and bringing teachers up-to-
19 speed in providing high-quality instruction or having
20 to maintain buildings over time that perhaps are not
21 at full capacity or being maximized to the use of the
22 school district over time. We'll touch on those as
23 we move through, but at this point I just want to
24 pause. I know it's about 30 minutes of introducing
25 just the methodology, so I just want to offer an

1 opportunity for the Board to ask any questions you
2 might have about the methodology.

3 CHAIRMAN DEAN: We'll start here with Ms.
4 Newton.

5 MS. NEWTON: I have a little bit of concern when
6 I see the stakeholder meetings only having 33
7 participants, you know -- and I know that y'all
8 reached out and you did all that you could. I guess
9 my question is -- I think she said there was a lot of
10 consistency in the feedback, and my question is: is
11 that consistency because we had such a small pool and
12 we weren't able to reach out and get into the whole
13 community?

14 And then my other concern is, you know, it looks
15 like all of our meetings are virtual -- and I know in
16 the day and age that we're in right now that's
17 probably all that we can do. But that is concerning
18 to me because I know that in rural communities and
19 different parts of the -- even urban communities
20 having access to technology and internet is not
21 always possible for every household. And so that is
22 also a concern.

23 So those were my two big concerns and that
24 centered mostly around stakeholders, because I
25 understand where they're coming from; they want to

1 have input and it's vital to their community, the
2 success of their school district.

3 MR. WILLIS: Yeah. Thank you, Member Newton,
4 for your comment. A couple of things that I'll offer
5 and then I'll invite Felicia to add any additional
6 commentary.

7 We spent an extensive amount of time working
8 with both Mrs. Smith and Superintendent Warren in
9 constructing an outreach strategy that I think was
10 directly responsive to the concern that you raised.
11 In fact, leading up into that outreach the trend has
12 been with that school district that it's been tough
13 to get people to come out and to participate, and I
14 think that's why, you know, when you saw Mrs. Reed
15 kind of present those efforts of outreach we went
16 kind of above and beyond phone calls, emails, two to
17 six follow-ups with every participant that wanted to
18 participate in the session to make sure that we could
19 bring them in. You know, we at WestEd always think
20 that there's room for improvement, and as we head
21 into the next stage of engagement I think we're going
22 to kind of double-down on those efforts, particularly
23 as the decision, you know, before the State Board
24 gets closer.

25 MS. NEWTON: Have you given any thought to

1 providing -- you may have done this, I don't know --
2 providing a space at the District where someone that
3 did not have access to technology -- that would be a
4 space that they could come and participate virtually
5 if that was offered?

6 MR. WILLIS: Yeah. Felicia, do you want to jump
7 in on that one?

8 MS. REED: Yeah. Thank you for the question.

9 We did -- we did offer opportunities for someone
10 to come in virtually, to come into a space into the
11 district and participate virtually and we offered
12 phone only opportunities. So everyone was able to
13 participate either via phone or by coming into the
14 District and actually -- two or three people took us
15 up on just participating via phone and no one took us
16 up on the offer to come into the District to
17 participate with the technology in the building
18 itself. So we did offer those opportunities and we
19 were well aware that not everyone would have access
20 to the technology that they needed, so we try to do
21 as much as we can to accommodate.

22 MR. WILLIS: Oh, yeah.

23 MS. SMITH: So I do want to acknowledge that,
24 you know, putting the stakeholder community feedback
25 together -- piece together was rushed. Okay? So

1 there's not a lot of forefront time; that's why we
2 chose to do the personal contacts, the emails,
3 calling people, asking your friends. Another
4 decision that was made, and it was deliberately made,
5 was to only do feedback from the Dollarway community.
6 We actually had lots of people reach out to us from
7 Jefferson County as a whole, especially Pine Bluff,
8 wanting to give feedback. And we made the decision
9 that we felt like it was very important because this
10 was Dollarway's school district to close off a piece
11 of time just to hear from Dollarway. Previously,
12 when they had tried to establish a community advisory
13 board, we had a very difficult time at the state
14 level trying to get participants or volunteers to do
15 that. We did go into this knowing that we might not
16 get a great turnout, but we felt like it was still
17 important to carve out time and try to do that
18 personal piece with Dollarway. We are hoping on
19 Round 2 to be able to reach directly back out to
20 those before that wanted to participate and open it
21 up for further input, even from more of Jefferson
22 County and not just the Dollarway School District on
23 that.

24 MS. NEWTON: Do you think that because this time
25 you're going to be able to offer some specifics that

1 that might encourage more people to participate?

2 MS. SMITH: I think so. And I think too, also,
3 just that, you know, the reality of "okay, what are
4 we talking about again."

5 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

6 MS. SMITH: I will say that you did -- at the
7 same -- similar timeline you had Go Forward Pine
8 Bluff, who is also releasing their report. They were
9 doing community feedback sessions within Jefferson
10 County as a whole. They were having participation on
11 some of their meetings, but again it was countywide.

12 MS. NEWTON: Right.

13 MS. SMITH: You know, and so all of that was
14 kind of coordinated together. We did work with Mr.
15 -- Dr. Whatley and, you know, we knew what he was
16 doing, and he mentioned in those meetings, "Hey,
17 Dollarway, this is what the Department of Ed. is
18 doing. This is where you can go sign up for that."
19 But we -- I'm disappointed in the number that
20 actually participated as far as the number of
21 contacts, but I don't know that we were completely
22 surprised.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

24 MS. SMITH: Okay.

25 MS. NEWTON: All right. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. I'm going to allow for --
2 Ms. Chambers, did you have a question?

3 MS. CHAMBERS: There's a lot of background noise
4 here right now. Can you hear it?

5 CHAIRMAN DEAN: No, not really. No. We can
6 hear you fine.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: Certainly I think Ms. Reed just
8 answered one of my questions, which is -- when she
9 said Round 2 -- and I'm assuming that's Phase 2 of
10 the State Board engagement plan, and we can cast a
11 wider net or at least try to make sure that -- it may
12 be the same 33, 37, but there's opportunity for more
13 participation. So I think that's -- I think that's
14 very good.

15 I do have a question, and I don't know if it's
16 for the Department or for this group that is helping
17 us. But the decision -- the statement that we're not
18 considering any other schools in Jefferson County or
19 any other districts, I just wanted to confirm at some
20 point, maybe in our work session, why that is. Maybe
21 it's very appropriate because there aren't any other
22 schools to consider or districts to consider because
23 there's no interest. That's something that I have a
24 question about.

25 Second, also a question for the group that is

1 doing this -- and I so appreciated Secretary Key's
2 comments earlier. This is a very big process. I
3 appreciate the thought that's gone into this and this
4 vehicle for communicating it, not only to the Board
5 but to the community in terms of why and how. I
6 think that's so helpful; I know we'll continue to
7 improve on that. But I think this is a very big step
8 and I just wanted to express my appreciation for
9 that.

10 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Chambers, I'll answer the
11 question about the other districts. The other two
12 districts in Jefferson County had expressed
13 opposition --

14 Sorry, I hit the wrong button; okay, I'm trying
15 to avoid my feedback situation here. Okay, I think
16 we're good now. All right.

17 So Watson Chapel in the Go Forward Pine Bluff
18 work -- Watson Chapel had been included by Go Forward
19 Pine Bluff. But through that process or at some
20 point in that process the Watson Chapel school board
21 issued a statement -- or I think they even took a
22 vote and very clearly said they were not interested
23 in any type of consolidation countywide or anything
24 else. And White Hall was in the same situation. So,
25 you know, we -- the State is not really in a

1 situation now to compel either one of those districts
2 to do anything, because they are not in any type of
3 state oversight. So that's why we limited this
4 review to the two districts that are under state
5 authority right now. I hope that helps answer your
6 question, Ms. Chambers.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Woods?

9 MS. WOODS: Ms. Newton asked the one question I
10 had.

11 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Dr. Moore? Ms.
12 McFetridge? Mr. Sutton? I can't see him.

13 MR. SUTTON: No questions.

14 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Thank you.

15 Mr. Lookadoo? Dr. Hill?

16 Okay. All right. Well, if there are no further
17 questions, I think this is a good time to take a
18 break, a pause, really quickly. Let's reconvene at
19 10:40.

20 (BREAK: 10:34 - 10:44 A.M.)

21 MR. WILLIS: So before we dive into our first
22 scenario, just a reminder for the Board this
23 methodology overview lays out the way that we're
24 going to present our findings on each of these
25 scenarios. So we'll start with Lauren doing a bit of

1 a scenario now from a legal and regulatory
2 standpoint; Felicia will touch on some of the
3 stakeholder engagement themes and high-points that
4 came up around that scenario; and then I'll finish it
5 out on the -- thank you -- and then I'll finish it
6 out on the financial and operational analyses and
7 bring us home with the execution strategies for
8 consideration for each of the scenarios.

9 Just a reminder that you have the discussion
10 guide that is color-coded and color-themed that is in
11 front of you. So we're headed into the return to
12 local control segment here.

13 Lauren, you want to touch on the legal
14 requirements and considerations for return to local
15 control please? Lauren, are you there?

16 Oh, I had her on mute.

17 MS. OUTLAW: Are you able to hear me?

18 MR. WILLIS: Yeah, there you are.

19 MS. OUTLAW: My apologies. My apologies.

20 So as we have discussed previously, both Mr.
21 Willis and also Ms. Smith, there are different state
22 codes and DESE rules that govern each of the
23 scenarios by classification, whether it's the Level 5
24 Intensive Support or In Need of Fiscal Distress. So
25 this slide provides an overview of what those

1 different statutory codes and DESE rules indicate for
2 the return to local control.

3 So to start with the state code under the Level
4 5 Intensive Support, the law states the State Board
5 may approve a return to local control upon the
6 Commissioner recommending that it do so -- and all of
7 the citations are also provided. The state code
8 regarding fiscal distress indicates that the
9 Commissioner may return the district to local control
10 if DESE has certified in writing and that the State
11 Board determines that the district has corrected any
12 sort of -- or, excuse me -- any of the fiscal
13 distress criteria, you know, that required it to be
14 taken over by the state.

15 So moving to the return to local control rules
16 for the Level 5 Intensive Support, those rules
17 indicate that the State Board may approve that the
18 Level 5 exit criteria has been met and move the
19 district from Level 5 Intensive Support to Level 4
20 Directed Support for one year. And there are also
21 additional parameters around reporting and
22 requirements -- excuse me -- reporting and monitoring
23 requirements to both DESE and the State Board. This
24 rule also specifies that the State Board may return
25 the district to local control through either the

1 appointment or election of new -- a new board of --
2 or a new local board, including those members.

3 Moving to fiscal distress, these rules also
4 provide that the district may petition the State
5 Board for a return to local control upon DESE
6 certifying that the district has met the Level 5 exit
7 criteria and has not experienced any additional
8 indicators of fiscal distress during the five-year
9 time period, and then also that it's met the DESE
10 requirements for removal from the fiscal distress
11 classification.

12 And so with that, I will turn the next slide
13 over to, again, my colleague Felicia Brown to talk
14 through the findings for local control around the
15 stakeholder engagement analysis.

16 MS. REED: Thanks, Lauren.

17 So for each of these scenarios we'll go through
18 just some highlight pieces that are specifically
19 relevant to each of the scenarios. And to your point
20 made earlier, keep in mind the number of folks; we
21 had 37 folks who responded to the questions. So the
22 numbers are small but the consistency is pretty
23 astounding. So given that we have multiple places of
24 -- multiple sources of data, we want to consider
25 their stakeholder input as one of those sources and

1 see how it aligns with the other pieces.

2 So the three pieces that we'll present for
3 returning to local control is that, again, an
4 overwhelming majority of stakeholders expressed that
5 they desire Dollarway School District to retain its
6 identity, its name, and its history, many citing
7 generations of family members who were proud to be
8 Dollarway Cardinals, and that Cardinal mascot really
9 has meaning to the community.

10 Next slide, please.

11 The second piece is that about half of the
12 stakeholders expressed -- again, spontaneously -- we
13 didn't ask them are you concerned about this, yes or
14 no -- whether they were -- about -- I'm sorry --
15 about half of them expressed that they were concerned
16 that a locally elected school board, including the
17 ability to select school board members, were -- from
18 the local community was a concern for moving forward.
19 They felt that those school board members might not
20 have enough educational background, an eye on
21 education reform, that they might have financial
22 skill gaps, or that they may not be dedicated to the
23 position beyond being a political steppingstone. And
24 about half of the folks mentioned this is different
25 ways. You can see some of those quotes there.

1 Next slide, please.

2 And then, finally, most of the stakeholders
3 expressed in some way this pride in the progress that
4 Dollarway has been making over the last five years,
5 and specifically the last three years, particularly
6 under Superintendent Warren's consistent and strong
7 leadership. But about 57%, a little over half,
8 feared that a return to local control would mean a
9 change in leadership that would reverse that
10 progress; so they wanted to make sure that progress
11 was continuing forward and feared that returning to
12 local control may halt or reverse that improvement.

13 Jason.

14 MR. WILLIS: Thanks, Felicia.

15 So some of the kind of key financial and
16 operational findings for local control -- so again
17 here, resuming that control over all finance and
18 operational functions would revert back to local
19 administrators. I think really importantly one thing
20 to consider in this option is the capacity for both
21 the financial and operational staff in the school
22 district that have benefitted from a tremendous
23 amount of support from DESE and the DESE staff. And
24 that there should be some considerations of what does
25 it mean to pull back on that state support and

1 allowing the school district to return to both
2 maintain decisions around budgeting, accounting,
3 human resources, and facilities, especially in a
4 state in which the unrestricted net ending balance is
5 so close to potentially going negative given the
6 trend that we've presented a bit earlier. We also
7 note that the kind of continued transition of surplus
8 property in those sale transactions, which also have
9 benefitted from state staff support, would revert
10 back to local administrators.

11 This slide here -- and you'll see this repeated
12 several times throughout the remainder of the
13 presentation -- presents a summary of both the
14 revenues/expenditures, which are the two top portions
15 that you can see there for Dollarway School District,
16 followed by the net increase and decrease in balance.
17 It's a simple equation of what amounts of revenues
18 you have minus the expenditures that you are planned
19 to expend in the subsequent school year -- in this
20 case, what the beginning balance looks like and then
21 what the resulting net ending balance would be. Now
22 I will note that these numbers look a little bit
23 different, in part because the slide that was
24 presented earlier by Mrs. Smith is only looking at
25 unrestricted resources. Dollarway also has access to

1 restricted revenues, Title 1 dollars, IDEA special
2 education funds, but also state restricted dollars.
3 Those are also incorporated into the analysis to
4 provide a full picture of Dollarway's financial
5 circumstance.

6 So I'm getting to the execution strategies. So
7 this is the portion where we kind of take a step back
8 and say if the State Board of Education was to
9 certify that the state -- that Dollarway School
10 District had met the criteria for exiting academic,
11 they had met the criteria for financial -- for moving
12 out of financial distress, that they can move on this
13 path. And these would be some of the considerations
14 that we would put in front of the State Board, the
15 first of which is should the State Board [sic] be
16 appointed or elected. Based on our analysis, we
17 think they should be appointed by the State Board of
18 Education. This would allow for a continued kind of
19 control and oversight in maintaining and insuring
20 that the board members have a growing amount of
21 knowledge about Dollarway and the support that the
22 state has been providing to the school district over
23 time.

24 Moving to decision point B, what are the powers
25 and duties of the new school board -- this is -- you

1 will see this consistently -- this is a footnote you
2 can see at the bottom of the slide. This question is
3 legally required to be decided as the governance --
4 as this governance option is considered potentially.
5 And in this case we would suggest, based on our
6 analysis, that the school board provides
7 accountability for sound financial and academic
8 decisions that would be in accordance with pre-
9 determined criteria from the state. So what this
10 allows is really an alignment of expectations from
11 the state to the school district that the school
12 board can follow through on in working with the
13 superintendent and the staff to insure that those
14 pre-determined criteria are being met. We would also
15 suggest that the school board does not choose
16 initially the superintendent for the school district
17 itself. And, again, it would allow some ability for
18 the state to remain involved to help with the
19 transition. In our experience at WestEd, given the
20 experience of the team, this kind of rip-off-the-
21 Band-Aid and kind of quickly transition has never
22 effectively worked well in looking at the state's
23 support to school districts that are in academic and
24 fiscal distress. So even in this option of a return
25 to local control it kind of gives a gradual release

1 of responsibility back to the school district to
2 stand on their own.

3 This decision point C, what reporting to the
4 State Board would be required -- we think this should
5 center around the pre-determined academic and
6 financial criteria that I just referenced. And,
7 again, creates a lot of alignment between what is
8 expected of the state and how the school district is
9 then responding to those criteria and reporting back
10 to the State Board and to DESE in regards to that
11 pre-determined criteria.

12 A couple of notes about the implications for
13 their financial state, their millage rates and for
14 their operations, again, Dollarway in this
15 circumstance would continue under their current
16 state; millage rates would remain the same, unless
17 there was an election that was -- and there was a
18 decision to raise millage above the current
19 maintenance and operation of those 25 mills.
20 Revenues, we would project a continued decline based
21 on continued decline in student enrollment. We've
22 seen even some of the preliminary numbers for the
23 2020-21 school year for Dollarway also continue to
24 show a decline over prior years. So we would expect
25 that the local school district in this case would

1 have to be making continued decisions about cutbacks
2 to insure expenditures were coming in line with
3 available revenues.

4 And, finally, that Dollarway would not have
5 access to the supplemental consolidation or
6 annexation dollars that would be made available by
7 the State, should the Board choose to move in this
8 direction for return to local control based on the
9 criteria.

10 So other staffing changes ultimately would be
11 decided by the Superintendent and the leadership of
12 the school district. That would be out of the
13 control of the State, save the conversations with the
14 Board and with the Superintendent. And then the role
15 of DESE moving forward would be in choosing that
16 Superintendent initially, monitoring that progress
17 against those pre-determined criteria of success, and
18 then providing, where necessary, that technical
19 assistance to key operational positions to insure
20 that kind of maintenance and continuous improvement
21 of the district, either on the curriculum instruction
22 and academics side, the financial and operation side,
23 or any other element of the district's work.

24 Again, we think that these suggestions really
25 offer the opportunity for a smooth transition between

1 the State back to local control for Dollarway School
2 District, should the Board decide to move down this
3 path.

4 So let me pause there -- that is the first of
5 four scenarios that we want to offer our analysis for
6 -- and take any questions that the Board might have.

7 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Dr. Hill, do you have a
8 question?

9 DR. HILL: No.

10 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Is Mr. Williamson on today?
11 Ms. Newton.

12 MS. NEWTON: I guess my question goes back to
13 the financial. You're saying that the balance is
14 going to continue to decline. So I'm not -- if we're
15 already in danger -- you see where I'm going with
16 this?

17 MR. WILLIS: I do. Yes.

18 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

19 MR. WILLIS: Yes. Our role here today is really
20 to present an independent and objective analysis.

21 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

22 MR. WILLIS: But your line of thinking I think
23 is the right place to be looking in terms of their
24 continued decline relative to both enrollment and
25 what they're seeing in their ending balance, which

1 likely brings you to a conclusion that they probably
2 are not meeting the financial criteria based on the
3 two indicators -- two primary indicators that Mrs.
4 Smith presented this morning.

5 MS. NEWTON: And so when you were giving us the
6 financial, you were looking at the best-case scenario
7 -- am I -- am I right -- financially?

8 MR. WILLIS: Yes, based on like what we could
9 see into the future in terms of their enrollment.
10 Now, of course, that could change --

11 MS. NEWTON: Sure.

12 MR. WILLIS: -- in terms of either a more
13 precipitous decline based on certain conditions or a
14 stabilization of those enrollment -- of that
15 enrollment. But we don't see any information
16 currently --

17 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

18 MR. WILLIS: -- that would suggest either of
19 those scenarios.

20 MS. NEWTON: So even that best-case scenario,
21 the finances are going to continue to decline?

22 MR. WILLIS: In our judgment, yes.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

24 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Chambers, do you have any
25 questions?

1 [MOMENT OF SILENCE]

2 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Chambers, do you have a
3 question?

4 MS. CHAMBERS: I do not. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Thank you.

6 Ms. Woods.

7 MS. WOODS: I don't know if this is a question
8 for you or for the State. Do we know why the
9 enrollment is decreasing in Dollarway? Is it school
10 choice, is it just people moving out of the area, a
11 combination of all the factors?

12 SECRETARY KEY: This reflects the trend that we
13 see in the population of Jefferson County over the
14 last couple of decades.

15 MS. WOODS: Okay.

16 SECRETARY KEY: And I think, you know, the
17 school choice has had some impact, but not to the
18 same degree as just the population decline of the
19 county since probably 2000.

20 MS. WOODS: Have we seen more in like the last
21 decade versus the previous ones or -- I mean has it
22 sped up as of recent times, or no? Is it --

23 SECRETARY KEY: I don't think we would say that
24 it has sped up. I think it's been a pretty steady --

25 MS. WOODS: Okay.

1 SECRETARY KEY: -- decline, I'd say probably
2 since 2010. Because 2010 -- if you look at just the
3 balances that were there and the student population
4 that was there in 2010, I think the last decade
5 you've seen some acceleration.

6 MS. WOODS: Okay.

7 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Thank you.

8 Dr. Woods -- I mean Dr. Moore. Excuse me.

9 DR. MOORE: So we currently -- there is not a
10 community advisory board in Dollarway. I actually
11 forgot that there's an option to have an appointed
12 board. Do y'all know, or whoever answered the
13 question -- if that were to be the case and the State
14 Board were to appoint a board, what would be the
15 terms of that? Would -- I mean there would
16 eventually be an election. Is there -- I don't think
17 we have any precedence for that.

18 SECRETARY KEY: That's a question I would say we
19 probably need to take down and get a response to
20 later.

21 DR. MOORE: Okay.

22 SECRETARY KEY: We would have to look at that.
23 Yeah, an appointed board is an option. How that
24 relates to then the ongoing governance and how a
25 board is structured with respect to terms and those

1 types of things, we would get that -- take that
2 question back and get you an answer maybe for the
3 work session.

4 DR. MOORE: Okay. And, second -- again, maybe a
5 question to answer later -- but I know, as Ms. Warren
6 is serving in the capacity as superintendent in two
7 districts is there anything to prevent that -- was
8 there any waivers or exceptions the State had to get
9 to allow that to occur?

10 SECRETARY KEY: I think we --

11 MS. SMITH: (inaudible, not at the microphone)

12 SECRETARY KEY: Right.

13 DR. MOORE: Yeah. I mean if a district weren't
14 under state control would that be something that we'd
15 still be able to do?

16 SECRETARY KEY: I don't remember if we had to do
17 something in the Standards for Accreditation system.

18 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah.

19 MS. NEWTON: Yeah.

20 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah.

21 MS. NEWTON: We did that I think last -- was it
22 last meeting, I think?

23 SECRETARY KEY: We did.

24 MS. NEWTON: Yeah, okay.

25 DR. MOORE: So that would be -- obviously be an

1 annual --

2 SECRETARY KEY: Right.

3 DR. MOORE: -- decision? Okay.

4 SECRETARY KEY: That's if you -- if they
5 maintain --

6 DR. MOORE: Two separate districts.

7 SECRETARY KEY: -- two separate entities. Yes.

8 DR. MOORE: Right. Okay. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Thank you.

10 Ms. McFetridge.

11 MS. McFETRIDGE: I know you've got four more
12 work sessions, I believe, out in the community next
13 week. Is --

14 MR. WILLIS: Yes, that's -- that would be Phase
15 1 of our outreach, in addition to some of the survey
16 input and some of the other feedback we would get
17 before December 1st. Yes.

18 MS. McFETRIDGE: Is there any other -- is there
19 any new information you hope to gather from these
20 sessions that we're not seeing in your information?

21 MR. WILLIS: So the information that we're
22 presenting today has not been presented to the
23 Dollarway community. So in part what we hope to do
24 is present some of the information that we're
25 presenting before you today, to then get the response

1 from the Dollarway community on the more detail
2 behind each of the scenarios. As Mrs. Reed was -- as
3 Felicia was representing, when we originally went out
4 to the stakeholder community we really just had the
5 very large summary descriptions of the four options.
6 So this provides a substantially -- additional
7 amounts of detail for each of the scenarios.

8 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Great. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Mr. Sutton?

10 MR. SUTTON: No questions.

11 CHAIRMAN DEAN: All right. Mr. Lookadoo?

12 MR. LOOKADOO: Dr. Moore asked mine.

13 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Thank you.

14 You can go ahead and move forward.

15 MR. WILLIS: Okay, great.

16 So let's move on now to the second of three
17 options, into reconstitution.

18 And, Lauren, will you jump in?

19 MS. OUTLAW: Yes. Thank you, Jason.

20 So the next scenario that we evaluated, as we
21 were reviewing Dollarway's history and possible
22 options for the State Board to execute for
23 Dollarway's future, was reconstitution. And here,
24 similar to the return to local control slide, we have
25 distinguished between the state code or statute that

1 establishes parameters for reconstitution, in
2 addition to the DESE rules that also, you know,
3 provide additional guidance, definitions, details on
4 how to proceed. We wanted to note that
5 reconstitution under the Arkansas Fiscal Assessment
6 and Accountability program is defined as the
7 reorganization of the administrative unit or the
8 governing school board of directors of a school
9 district, including but not limited to the
10 replacement or removal of the current superintendent
11 or the removal or replacement of the current board of
12 directors, or both. So that is the State's current
13 definition on what reconstitution means. [clearing
14 throat] Excuse me. Again, similar to the local
15 control slide that we discussed previously, we've
16 separated the -- quote, the statutory code and rules
17 by the Level 5 Intensive Support or academic distress
18 classification and also the fiscal distress
19 classification as well.

20 And so, you know, given that we have similar
21 details to get through I will just leave this here
22 for a moment so that everyone can read through it.
23 But also note that the nuances of both reconstitution
24 but also the other scenarios is something that we
25 will continue to discuss throughout this presentation

1 and also, you know, take a deeper dive when we
2 reconvene in our December working session, including
3 recent -- for the reconstitution scenario, the recent
4 Little Rock reconstitution example, talking that
5 through, what that means, how it was done, and
6 addressing any similarities between that decision and
7 the one before the State Board for Dollarway School
8 District.

9 And with that, I will turn it back to Felicia.

10 MS. REED: Thanks, Lauren.

11 I will start by saying that the reconstitution
12 option -- we explained it to the stakeholders by
13 saying basically what was in that little square in
14 the four square slide that you saw before. That just
15 means reconstitution is defined as something will be
16 different in the district. And so I will say most
17 stakeholders said, rightfully so, "Well, what does
18 that mean?" And that's part of what we want to come
19 back to the stakeholders with in Phase 2. So we had
20 some comments here, but this was the most questioned
21 option. A lot of people saw opportunity in it, but
22 also had some concern about the definition being so
23 vague.

24 So the first, we would say about a third of the
25 folks saw reconstitution as maybe a promising option

1 because it might've been open to an innovation that
2 would allow the District to preserve local identity
3 and allow for some local choice. And again many
4 stated that this was unclear as an option, but they
5 were saying this could be an interesting option for
6 us to avoid that loss of district identity and bring
7 in some innovative options.

8 Next slide, please.

9 About three-quarters of the stakeholders really
10 described this desire to seek innovative solutions
11 that would expand offerings for students and staff in
12 the district and attract more students to the
13 district. As we saw, enrollment is declining and
14 many, many of the stakeholders' were aware of that.
15 They shared a lot of great ideas about how Dollarway
16 might be perceived as a place where more students
17 wanted to go and shared some ideas there. So some of
18 them were about, you know, offering magnet programs
19 for specialty coursework, leveraging community
20 partnerships for wraparound services, attaching the
21 district to the university to create a stronger
22 pipeline for both teachers and for students -- for
23 teachers into the district and for students to
24 college, and offering college scholarships to
25 students who might complete their K-12 schooling

1 within the Dollarway district successfully. So they
2 had a lot of ideas and many of them attached those
3 innovative solutions to the idea of reconstitution,
4 given that it was the most broad in the definitions.

5 Next slide, please.

6 And then, finally, again, about 77% of those
7 stakeholders shared that they believe that Dollarway
8 -- that if Dollarway could remain a separate entity
9 it would really give an opportunity to showcase the
10 District as a best-in-class rural district. And this
11 is about their commitment to the idea that they were
12 -- they're progressing. So keeping the District as a
13 separate entity might be its best chance for
14 continuing the progress that the District has made so
15 far in teacher quality, academic work, culture,
16 student services, and a belief that given a few more
17 years of this kind of progress that the District
18 could be -- actually, multiple stakeholders used the
19 term best-in-class, could be showcased as best-in-
20 class in the state or as a model for other rural
21 school districts across the state because of this
22 current trajectory that they're on.

23 That's it for stakeholder engagement. Thank
24 you.

25 MR. WILLIS: Okay. Thanks, Felicia.

1 So in analyzing both this and the next three
2 options from a financial and operational standpoint
3 I'm going to hit on the three elements of this --
4 first, the kind of revenue and taxes side, which is,
5 you know, all the dollars that are coming in to
6 support the school district; second, from the
7 expenditure side that looked at both the labor and
8 non-labor analysis; and then, third, from a kind of
9 facilities capital and debt analysis. We'll also
10 include transportation in there and any of the kind
11 of important highlights on each of these three areas.

12 So in terms of key financial and operations
13 findings for reconstitution, the primary cost
14 efficiencies that we really focused on were at the
15 Central Office and school support level. So, for
16 example, with transportation, I think this is one of
17 the primary decisions in -- on thinking about what
18 would be different about reconstitution. And so in
19 the way that we analyze the financial and operational
20 elements of this we really looked at most and the
21 magnitude of those changes occurring at the Central
22 Office level. Which leads to the second point, that
23 this presumes, at least for the 21-22 school year,
24 should the Board decide to move in this direction,
25 that those school-based operations would remain as-

1 is, see if any changes that would come about as a
2 result of declining enrollment in those schools. So
3 say, for example, enough students were not in the
4 school in the subsequent year you would reduce an FCE
5 to insure that class sizes remained equal to those
6 that are established in the matrix by the State.

7 We would also suggest to kind of pause on any of
8 the unnecessary building repairs and to continue to
9 pursue the sale of that surplus property, generating
10 some one-time dollars that would allow for a bit of a
11 cushion for Dollarway to make some of those bigger
12 financial decisions in the future.

13 So, again, a similar slide here -- what we've
14 added in this circumstance you can now see is two
15 additional columns, one that shows the reconstitution
16 options and how we believe those financials would
17 change as a result.

18 Thanks, Dan.

19 And the final column that would offer the change
20 -- so just basically what is the delta between any of
21 the assumptions that we would make. Importantly on
22 this slide we only showed Dollarway School District's
23 financials, and the reason for that is that we
24 believe under a reconstitution option that the two
25 school districts, Dollarway and Pine Bluff, would

1 remain separate, at least, you know, pending any
2 decision the State Board would make about the
3 relationship between those two school districts. And
4 so we're really still presenting just Dollarway
5 School District's financial status at this point. We
6 do think that in this scenario there would be a net
7 \$470,000 savings as a result of looking at those
8 Central Office positions coming together, which I'll
9 talk about in just a moment.

10 So on the revenue side we don't see any
11 substantial shift from one year -- from one scenario
12 to the next across your federal aid, state aid, or
13 local sources. Again, you're leaving out the access
14 to casino revenue, you're leaving out access to one-
15 time revenue, choosing a potential consolidation or
16 annexation option.

17 On the expenditure side you can see in both the
18 salaries and benefits that net \$470,415 is largely a
19 result of the consolidation of what we think some of
20 these positions might be at the Central Office. So,
21 again, in taking a step back, the way that we
22 analyzed the Central Office positions was to examine
23 the job descriptions for each of the positions that
24 are available in both the Pine Bluff and the
25 Dollarway School Districts and identify those

1 positions that we think could be collapsed in order
2 to maintain at least the minimum amount of effort
3 necessary to continue to operate the school district
4 from a variety of different positions. So again this
5 is our independent objective analysis, and should the
6 Board choose to go forward there would likely be
7 additional analyses required to identify which
8 positions would stay and which would go. But we
9 think this would represent the maximum amount of
10 savings possible on your labor line items for
11 Dollarway under this scenario.

12 I mentioned earlier that we would suggest
13 pausing some of the investments in any kind of
14 routine maintenance and operation for several of the
15 buildings pending some of those future decisions, in
16 large part because, as we've seen over the course of
17 the last five or ten years, many of the buildings
18 that are still under ownership by the Dollarway
19 School District have since been closed. You can see
20 that list at the very top of this slide. I will note
21 that currently the Altheimer Martin Elementary
22 School, the Altheimer administration, and the
23 Altheimer high campus, several of those are due for
24 demolition, so the win could still be for sale to
25 generate some unrestricted general fund dollars for

1 the school district. Another one, I believe, is
2 being turned over to the city for sale -- or for
3 alternate use. But we would continue to encourage
4 the pursuit of the sale of the rest of those
5 properties. And we would also suggest, based on the
6 maintenance and repair plan that Dollarway has
7 submitted, pausing on several of those planned
8 capital projects that constitute nearly \$1.1 million
9 worth of investment by the school district, again
10 pending some of those future decisions, really being
11 for Dollarway High School but also for the bus barn
12 that houses a lot of the transportation for Dollarway
13 School District. We'll talk a little bit in another
14 scenario about the potential options around
15 transportation.

16 So moving to the execution strategies for this
17 option for Dollarway School District, I want to start
18 with the structure of the reconstituted school
19 district itself -- and in particular, again just to
20 remind the Board that this -- should the Board choose
21 this decision as a legally required decision the
22 Board will have to make, along with the broader
23 decision of moving towards this scenario, there would
24 be merged central services between -- with Pine Bluff
25 School District. It would create some of those

1 efficiencies. But we believe that in most
2 circumstances you're still maintaining separate
3 financial operations, separate human resources
4 operations, until there's a decision potentially down
5 the road for a different decision, which kind of eats
6 away a little bit at some of those cost savings. But
7 we still think that those are able to be achieved
8 through a scenario like this.

9 We also think a scenario really reflecting the
10 stakeholders' input reflects innovative options to
11 kind of attract students and improve services that
12 include -- that could include things like services
13 from local providers, magnet programs, and
14 potentially even partnership with UCPB, which is
15 right next-door to the school district, in offering
16 some of those services.

17 From the decision point B on what date Dollarway
18 would be reconstituted, you could begin merging those
19 central services nearly immediately after the
20 decision of the Board that kind of ramps up into the
21 rest of the model, as decided by the Board, by July
22 of 2022. And again it kind of creates an opportunity
23 to set out a plan so that there's opportunities for
24 sufficient discussion on -- leading up to kind of
25 future discussion -- or future execution of that plan

1 against a vision and a structure.

2 We would suggest based on our analysis that, in
3 regards to decision point C around how the local
4 school board would be structured and what powers they
5 would have, it would be a seven-member board that are
6 constituted of both equal parts -- or semi-equal
7 parts of elected, appointed by the State, but also
8 representatives from the university. We think that
9 this again creates an opportunity for the State to
10 continue to help monitor and support the local school
11 district but also have local voice, along with
12 expertise that might be coming from the local
13 university, in UCPB. And this would allow for,
14 again, that combination of educational expertise and
15 community.

16 In regards to the financial implications for the
17 revenue and taxes expenditure and facilities, I
18 talked about the kind of merger of Central Services
19 to help kind of streamline operational capacity and
20 stave off some of the continue enrollment decline
21 that's eating away at revenues, slowing down the
22 implementation of facilities maintenance, allowing
23 for kind of off-setting cost-savings but also real
24 cost-savings in the future of having not needing to
25 make those investments. And ultimately would be

1 reducing the redundancy and tasks as those two school
2 districts at the Central Office level come together.

3 From a staffing perspective, the Superintendent
4 would remain. We would hire -- reallocate one to two
5 staff positions, overseeing some of those innovative
6 programming and communications, and the consolidation
7 of staffing positions, as I mentioned. And the role
8 of DESE would really be one of support for those
9 staffing consolidations, helping to train and build
10 capacity of key staff that would remain, and thinking
11 about how to streamline those functions coming across
12 both of those systems. They would obviously have a
13 role in appointing those school -- some of the school
14 board members and maintaining kind of close
15 monitoring of key financial and academic indicators.
16 I think that's a theme that Mrs. Smith has brought
17 up, that we would also bring up as well, that having
18 those objective criteria that are not necessarily
19 actions but are really outcomes that you desire to
20 see in these school systems would be an important
21 consideration, and I think for any of the options
22 that you are considering; but clearly here in
23 reconstitution would be a role that we would see DESE
24 playing as well.

25 So again, Madam Chair, I'll pause there for any

1 questions that the Board may have.

2 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Thank you.

3 Mr. Lookadoo, do you have questions?

4 MR. LOOKADOO: Yeah. When you're saying -- like
5 so the pause on the plan, spending projects, some of
6 those -- the high school roofing and the bus barn, I
7 think -- are you seeing those as unnecessary for the
8 future to be able to pause on those?

9 MR. WILLIS: We're not necessarily seeing them
10 as unnecessary; we're suggesting the pause on the
11 basis of future decisions that might be made. So if,
12 for example, there was a future decision to merge the
13 high schools from Pine Bluff and from Dollarway, if
14 you make, you know, a several hundred thousand dollar
15 investment in a school that you're basically going to
16 vacate in a year or year-and-a-half we feel that
17 that's money wasted, considering that future option.

18 MR. LOOKADOO: All right. Thanks.

19 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Mr. Sutton.

20 MR. SUTTON: A question about your comment on
21 sale of facilities. Have they tried to sale excess
22 facilities in the past?

23 MR. WILLIS: Our understanding is that the State
24 has been working with the local school district to
25 sell surplus property that is no longer perceived to

1 be needed or used for the school district. Yes.

2 SECRETARY KEY: I can add a little bit to that,
3 if I may. The -- we've been working for a number of
4 years now to get the Altheimer campus in a situation
5 where it can be transferred to the city of Altheimer.
6 I think we had some delays because of asbestos
7 abatement. And we've had partnerships with the
8 Department of Corrections to try to get some of that
9 work done. In the Pine Bluff District, when Dr. Owoh
10 was there, they did liquidate a number of the
11 properties that were kind of on the books still. I
12 don't know how many are remaining, but both districts
13 have -- still do have some old buildings or campuses
14 or facilities that are out of service now that would
15 need to be disposed of.

16 MR. SUTTON: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Thank you.

18 Ms. McFetridge.

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: No questions.

20 CHAIRMAN DEAN: No. Dr. Moore? Ms. Woods?

21 MS. WOODS: I just have one and it's probably
22 because of my misunderstanding of the restricted and
23 the non-restricted funding. So is it accurate to say
24 that the restricted funding goes for the -- the
25 unrestricted funding goes away in every outcome

1 except for reconstitution?

2 MR. WILLIS: In none of those scenarios would
3 Dollarway and/or Pine Bluff lose access to their
4 restricted resources. The difference in what we
5 presented in regards to the financial picture in this
6 scenario is slightly different from the fiscal
7 distress criteria the state holds when looking at and
8 evaluating school districts about whether they would
9 enter state control or be in fiscal distress or not.

10 MS. WOODS: Okay. All right. Thank you.

11 MR. WILLIS: Yeah.

12 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Chambers? Okay. Okay, I'm
13 sorry. I'll just have to scroll through. I can't
14 see. Okay.

15 Ms. Newton.

16 MS. NEWTON: Going back to the facility pause,
17 what percent of -- does Dollarway get as far as
18 partnership funding from the state?

19 MR. WILLIS: I don't have the answer to that
20 question. Perhaps --

21 SECRETARY KEY: We can get that. I mean I know
22 the wealth index has changed, so the percentage of
23 state participation has changed. We can get that
24 information from Facilities for you.

25 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Because I would think if

1 it's a high percent on the partnership that that
2 would not be monies that you would want to leave
3 there. Do you follow what I'm saying?

4 SECRETARY KEY: Yes, I do.

5 MS. NEWTON: Okay. And then my other question
6 was -- I was kind of intrigued by what you had told
7 -- suggested on the board about three elected, two
8 appointed, and then two representatives from the
9 university. Has something like that been done in
10 other places? And if so, what was the success of
11 that?

12 MR. WILLIS: Yes. So then we have examples from
13 elsewhere in the country in which boards have been
14 constituted of both elected members, appointed
15 members by the state, and university partners. And I
16 think as we talked about the rationale we think it
17 offers a great mix of both like educational expertise
18 from a research and evidence perspective, local
19 voice, but also the ability for the state to remain
20 involved as an opportunity to again continue to think
21 about a longer-term transition as opposed to the
22 state immediately stepping out of that situation with
23 the local school district.

24 MS. NEWTON: And so when you're looking at maybe
25 a work session, maybe we could get a little bit more

1 information on that as far as terms, how long they
2 would last, how they would be elected and that sort
3 of thing --

4 SECRETARY KEY: (Nodding head up and down.)

5 MS. NEWTON: -- if we could get some more
6 information on that.

7 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Dr. Hill?

8 Okay. Well, with that, this is perfect timing
9 -- lunch is ready. So what we'll do is break for
10 lunch and we'll reconvene at 12:30.

11 MS. SMITH: (inaudible, not at microphone)

12 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Is that going to mess you up?

13 MR. WILLIS: I mean I would prefer to kind of
14 get through the end of the presentation.

15 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay.

16 MR. WILLIS: My -- yeah, if that's okay.

17 MS. SMITH: Yeah.

18 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Oh, sure. No problem. Thirty
19 more minutes, yeah. No, I don't mind at all.

20 MR. WILLIS: Okay.

21 CHAIRMAN DEAN: I just wanted to make sure we
22 had a good break in there.

23 MR. WILLIS: We'll jam through it.

24 CHAIRMAN DEAN: No -- no problem. Go for it.

25 MR. WILLIS: So moving on to the annexation

1 option, Lauren, do you want to touch briefly on the
2 legal requirements and considerations?

3 MS. OUTLAW: Yes, absolutely. Thanks, Jason.

4 So as we've seen on the previous slides,
5 annexation would involve the Dollarway School
6 District becoming a part of another school district.
7 And so there are legal parameters, again, regarding
8 the law that governs any sort of academic required
9 support or fiscal distress support; there are also,
10 again, rules based on those laws. In all, the laws
11 and rules established requirements where the State
12 Board of Ed. either, you know, can annex a district
13 or is required to actually annex the district, the
14 latter of which being if the school districts had not
15 met either their exit criteria for the Level 5
16 Intensive Support and/or the criteria for fiscal
17 distress and not that level of exit plan. There are,
18 again, various definitions that we will get into I
19 think in more detail for our December 1st meeting --
20 the affected district which would be Dollarway, the
21 one that's losing territory of students, and the
22 receiving district being the one that takes on the
23 Dollarway School District. For this scenario, you
24 know, the action would be going into effect as of
25 July 1st. There are also additional parameters

1 around what the local school board would look like
2 moving forward. So, again, in an effort of time, you
3 know, we will get into those nuances in our
4 considerations on execution strategies, but this is
5 also a piece that we plan to dig further into when we
6 come back on December 1st.

7 Felicia?

8 MS. REED: Thanks.

9 So, again, with annexation the number one thing
10 that came up was that most stakeholders described how
11 the school district was such a critical component of
12 the economic and cultural welfare of the neighborhood
13 itself. And many cited that the annexation of
14 Altheimer seemed to either erase or put in decline
15 that community's identify and history and economic
16 welfare because of the loss of the school district.
17 So that was definitely something they were
18 considering with annexation because that is, in the
19 eyes of the stakeholders, the most likely scenario
20 where Dollarway would sort of be erased from
21 existence.

22 Next slide, please.

23 In 70% of the stakeholders, about two-thirds,
24 there was this fear that having another district
25 annex Dollarway at this point would not allow for

1 continued progress and momentum, as they have
2 expressed that pride in the momentum; and that it
3 would not allow at this point for their hard work and
4 successful progress to be recognized properly. So
5 many teachers and administrators and community
6 members said, you know, if Dollarway just goes away
7 at this point that all that hard work that they've
8 been doing may just disappear and be under the
9 auspices of another district, and there was concern
10 over that.

11 Next slide, please.

12 And then, finally, about half of the
13 stakeholders expressed concern about annexation
14 specifically and its result on that family-like
15 atmosphere of Dollarway. Remember that family was
16 one of the most used words in the stakeholder input
17 meetings and they attributed that family-like
18 atmosphere to the smallness of Dollarway and were
19 concerned that if combined with another district that
20 they would sort of lose that atmosphere that they
21 were prizing so much.

22 Jason.

23 MR. WILLIS: So some of the kind of key
24 financial and operational findings for this option
25 around annexation -- one of the things we can observe

1 is that the rolling average decline in revenues from
2 both school districts that is due explicitly to
3 enrollment is roughly about 4.4%. However, in the
4 financials that I'll show in just a moment that is
5 more than offset by additional revenues that are
6 coming in through both -- the combination of both of
7 the districts. So the size basically creates access
8 to additional resources, both one-time in nature,
9 from the state as a result of the potential decision
10 of annexation. Also, as we've mentioned before, the
11 start-up of the casino in Pine Bluff would create
12 access to resources for the Dollarway community as a
13 result of now being annexed into the Pine Bluff
14 community. And again we would suggest kind of
15 pausing any unnecessary building repairs,
16 particularly in schools in either district, that
17 potentially would not be used going forward in terms
18 of considerations of potential school merger.

19 So here's a summary look at the change in
20 revenues. You can see there that from a revenue
21 perspective there is a pretty substantial uptick in
22 revenues, again due in part to both one-time infusion
23 but also additional revenues that are coming from the
24 casino. And you also see some savings that can be
25 achieved on the expenditure side of the ledger,

1 though those are mitigated by one of the analyses
2 that I had presented earlier that looks at needing to
3 consolidate -- or, sorry -- to equate equal positions
4 across both districts that likely would result in
5 increases in compensation for some of the staff
6 coming from Dollarway to the Pine Bluff School
7 District.

8 So here's just a brief look at the summary on
9 revenues. You can see there for the state aid some
10 of the other -- all other matrix funding includes
11 that one-time infusion of dollars. The way that this
12 is structured in state code is that if the State
13 Board was either to consolidate or annex a school
14 district the school district that is receiving the
15 annexed school district would receive a hundred-
16 percent of that school district's ADA and one-time
17 funds for that year, and then 50% of that ADM in the
18 subsequent year to be used with the transition of the
19 school district into the receiving school district.
20 We also show here on the property tax line item the
21 vast majority of that \$4.6 million is made up of the
22 additional revenue that is being produced by the
23 casino that is currently estimated around \$3.8 or
24 \$3.9 million in additional revenue.

25 On the expenditure side of the ledger, for

1 salaries and benefits we have two substantive
2 changes. The first is on the salaries line item in
3 terms of changes in positions; the other expenditures
4 is due to our analysis around transportation, which
5 I'll present momentarily.

6 Here again -- we showed this during the
7 reconstitution option on the savings of positions --
8 that is that \$505,669. This is largely mitigated by
9 the changes in those total position compensation
10 adjustments which we estimated at about \$330,000,
11 which creates that net of \$172,457 in savings for
12 your labor line items.

13 So, one of the things that we did look at was
14 the merger of school campuses in both the annexation
15 and the consolidation option. The table on the
16 right-hand side represents both -- the elementary
17 schools, the middle schools, and the high schools in
18 both Pine Bluff and Dollarway. Important to this
19 analysis is we looked at two key factors, both the
20 capacity of the building that might be taking in
21 these students and then what the current enrollment
22 is from the one or more campuses that might be coming
23 to that circumstance. What we can see bottom-line
24 for enrollment at the elementary campus level is that
25 there would not be an opportunity, given future

1 projected enrollment, until 29-30; so quite a ways
2 out to consolidate any of those campuses. At the
3 middle school and high school level, however, we
4 would estimate that by the 22-23 year that the
5 enrollment decline will be substantive enough in both
6 the Pine Bluff and Dollarway School Districts that
7 you could merge the campuses at both the middle
8 school and the high school level. And again here we
9 are looking at this from a financial and operational
10 standpoint in looking at that decline versus getting
11 any of the substantive feedback that you've heard,
12 some of which Felicia has referenced, and the impact
13 to, you know, things like academic, school climate,
14 student support, for example.

15 So switching to the transportation side, I'm not
16 going to explain the map on the right. I think we
17 just really wanted to offer it as an example of how
18 we were analyzing transportation and transportation
19 routes. So we basically looked at 5-minute
20 increments, starting as early as 6:00 a.m., going all
21 the way to 8:30 in the morning, in terms of bus
22 routes. And what we were looking for was really
23 opportunities to collapse bus routes. These are
24 commonly referred to as tiers. So certain buses have
25 -- if you hear it as like "single tier," that

1 basically means they have one route that they run
2 from one time that they start to a time that they
3 end. When you hear two-tier or three-tier, those
4 buses -- those single buses are running multiple
5 routes over the course of a period of time. And so
6 one of the things that we were looking for was would
7 there be opportunities in which to merge some of
8 these routes to move from a one- or two-tier to
9 potentially a three-tier that generates the savings
10 that we would be looking for in transportation, and
11 we did find some of those savings overall between
12 both Dollarway and Pine Bluff. There's a total of 29
13 buses that are operated across those school systems
14 on a day-to-day basis during the school year.

15 So this provides an example of how the current
16 tiers with two districts would be modified into a
17 possible three-tier system, if they were a single
18 district. Now importantly -- and, again, a piece of
19 feedback that we think is important to get from the
20 community is that the bell times would have to
21 change. Right? So you would have some schools that
22 would start perhaps a little bit earlier and some
23 schools that would start perhaps a little bit later,
24 which could have impact particularly at your
25 secondary levels on things like extracurricular

1 activities and in thinking about, you know, when
2 students are ready and able to engage in instruction
3 when schools return to in-person instruction.

4 So this provides another view of this data, and
5 in particular where we are able to harvest the
6 savings is from the routes that are above the number
7 of buses needed across time essentially. So what you
8 can see in a three-tier model, which is on the right-
9 hand side of this graph, we can reduce six buses
10 essentially in moving to a three-tier model. So what
11 this equates to is essentially taking those six bus
12 route times, what we estimate to be about a \$40,000
13 savings in each bus in annual operating costs; that's
14 the cost of the driver, additional staff on the bus,
15 any of the maintenance, gas, fuel, so-on and so-
16 forth. That would produce approximately a \$240,000
17 annual savings, the implementation of those changes
18 in bell schedules I mentioned before but also getting
19 more accurate estimates on the bus routes themselves.
20 There are software -- currently, Dollarway doesn't
21 use this software -- that basically helps to optimize
22 the bus routes. Right? So we don't think much about
23 right-hand turns, but they're a big deal when it
24 comes to buses -- right? -- or if they have to stop
25 at a stoplight for two or three minutes. When you

1 add that up over a two-and-a-half to three-hour
2 period, that adds a lot of time. So these kinds of
3 software, which we think would be a necessary
4 investment in getting to optimizing those -- that
5 three-tier system, would cost about \$50,000, thereby
6 bringing down the savings to about \$190,000 across
7 net savings on an annual basis.

8 I just wanted to flash a couple of maps here.
9 You can see the kind of population density really
10 consolidated into the city of Pine Bluff. But
11 obviously having populations that still would need to
12 be picked up by these buses in the formerly Altheimer
13 Unified School District would add some of those costs
14 -- but even having seen that, it would create an
15 opportunity for that \$190,000 savings.

16 One other opportunity -- we didn't analyze this
17 with as much depth as we did looking at the bus
18 routes themselves, but this provides a look at each
19 of the elementary schools that we had mentioned
20 before and the walking distance from a radius
21 perspective around each of the schools. So the blue
22 is basically a one-mile radius, the green is a two-
23 mile radius, and the red is a three-mile radius,
24 especially for elementary schools in which -- based
25 on our analysis, they would remain as they currently

1 are. We typically suggest a one- to two-mile radius
2 potentially that you could use for upper elementary
3 school students for walking distance. And obviously
4 the larger that walking distance that you're
5 requiring for those students the less students that
6 would need to be on the bus, thereby potentially
7 achieving some additional savings. So I wanted to
8 offer that as another piece of analysis that we could
9 potentially go deeper into should the Board express
10 interest in moving in this direction.

11 So a little bit about the execution strategies
12 for consideration here under annexation -- so which
13 school district would be receiving Dollarway School
14 District in this analysis we said was Pine Bluff
15 School District. The date of annexation would be
16 July 1, 2021, based on the Board's decision. We
17 estimate about one to two years' worth of transition
18 to merge the school district functions.

19 In terms -- in regards to the decision point
20 around how the school board would be structured, the
21 State would resume authority if the Pine Bluff School
22 District basically -- or if Dollarway is annexed into
23 Pine Bluff. There would be some limited authority
24 with the board from both Pine Bluff, Dollarway, and
25 the former Altheimer areas based on the potential

1 community advisory board that is set up by the state.

2 In terms of implications for the incentive
3 funding -- sorry -- the incentive fund millage rates
4 and operational, we see here a substantial difference
5 from the reconstitution option in that the
6 availability of both one-time and ongoing revenues is
7 substantial and I think notable in that it eclipses
8 the reduction in revenue as a result of enrollment as
9 compared to a return to local control option or a re-
10 -- a reconstitution option. Sorry.

11 Finally, again kind of continue to pull over
12 from those other options, most of those savings we
13 would see realized in the 22-23 school year,
14 particularly with the merger of those school campuses
15 that would boost the enrollment. In this option, as
16 well as consolidation, we did not introduce the
17 savings that we think would be achieved with the
18 merger of those school campuses, in large part
19 because the analysis really looked at just next
20 school year. But if we were pushing it out into
21 multiple years, 22-23 or 23-24, we would then
22 potentially be able to recognize those savings when
23 we think that that would become a feasibility.

24 The staffing changes would maintain the
25 superintendent, maintain leadership of the Dollarway

1 schools. We would be collapsing some of those
2 Central Office positions in some of the reduced
3 staffing potentially on each of the school campuses.
4 The DESE and the State would continue to resume --
5 or, sorry -- retain authority over the district
6 following the existing timeline and providing that
7 additional technical assistance and capacity-building
8 into the future.

9 So I'll pause there and take any questions,
10 Madam Chair, from the Board.

11 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Dr. Hill?

12 DR. HILL: I don't have any questions.

13 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Newton?

14 MS. NEWTON: You said the millages -- millage
15 rates would remain the same. Do Pine Bluff and
16 Dollarway still have the same millage right now?

17 MR. WILLIS: They do not. Pine Bluff currently
18 has a 2-mill addition above the current 25 M-and-O
19 requirements. So as I -- as we understand it, those
20 millage rates would continue along their existing
21 paths for the current Pine Bluff and Dollarway School
22 District. At the next election, which could be as
23 early as May of next year or November of next year,
24 whichever entity has been -- has that authority could
25 make a decision about whether to put that election in

1 front of Dollarway to bring up that millage rate to
2 equate to Pine Bluff.

3 MS. NEWTON: So if we annex them, part of the
4 district would have one millage and the other part
5 would have the different millage, unless the --
6 unless Dollar -- if the election came about, would
7 Dollarway by itself have to vote for the increase of
8 2 mills or would it be controlled by the whole new
9 part? How would that work?

10 SECRETARY KEY: Again, this is probably a
11 question we'll have to get confirmation on.

12 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

13 SECRETARY KEY: But this is not unprecedented.
14 We've seen other districts that go through
15 consolidations or annexations where one geographic
16 area that was the former district has a different
17 rate, millage rate than the other. The -- I believe
18 that geographic area that has the millage rate has to
19 vote for it and --

20 MS. SALAS-FORD: (Nodding head up and down.)

21 SECRETARY KEY: Yes, Courtney is shaking her
22 head. So it is the affected geographic area, even
23 though they may be part of the same district.

24 MS. NEWTON: So that difference could continue
25 on --

1 SECRETARY KEY: And has. We've had --

2 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

3 SECRETARY KEY: -- situations where that has
4 carried on for a number of years.

5 MS. NEWTON: Okay. My other question is on the
6 transportation information that you gave us. That's
7 really not going to be part of our decision, is it?
8 Wouldn't that be part of a local -- if this were to
9 happen, would those decisions be part of what the
10 local leadership would decide?

11 MR. WILLIS: That's correct. We simply just
12 wanted to present --

13 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

14 MR. WILLIS: -- the possibility of what would
15 happen under an annexation scenario.

16 MS. NEWTON: Okay. And then, my other question
17 was on the state control. I'm not clear on what
18 happens if we choose to go annexation. Because Pine
19 Bluff is under state control, does that continue on
20 the current clock? Does the clock start over? Does
21 the clock stop? What happens with that?

22 MS. FRENO: Ms. Newton, it likely would continue
23 on --

24 CHAIRMAN DEAN: If you would, talk in the mic
25 please. You can use your mic up there, I think. No,

1 never-mind; he said no.

2 MS. FRENO: Ms. Newton, it would probably
3 continue on the current clock with Pine Bluff because
4 Dollarway would be annexed into Pine Bluff.
5 Dollarway would be annexed into Pine Bluff, so it
6 would become a part of Pine Bluff; so it would
7 continue on the current clock.

8 MS. NEWTON: And how much time is left on that?
9 When is their five years up?

10 MS. FRENO: I believe their -- they have three
11 years left.

12 Stacy?

13 MS. SMITH: They're in their third year.

14 MS. FRENO: Pardon me?

15 MS. SMITH: I believe they're in their third
16 year.

17 MS. NEWTON: Yeah. So there would be two years
18 after this year. Okay.

19 Okay, thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Smith, did you have
21 something to add?

22 MS. SMITH: No.

23 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Okay, Ms. Newton.
24 Ms. Chambers?

25 MS. CHAMBERS: Just a -- I've got a process

1 question, and it's not specific to annexation but the
2 relationship to the other exit criteria. Should we
3 consider each one of these options as a discrete
4 decision? And what I mean by that is could you
5 decide to reconstitute and then based on some outcome
6 over a period of time decide to go to annexation --
7 or that's not the way to think about it? You pick
8 one of these four options?

9 SECRETARY KEY: Again, that may be a question
10 we'll need to look at and bring back a response at
11 the work session. I don't know if we could give you
12 an answer for that right now.

13 MS. CHAMBERS: Okay. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Woods? Dr. Moore?

15 DR. MOORE: Yes, I have a lot of questions and
16 probably more pointed discussion for our work
17 session. But, first, looking at the transportation,
18 I thought that was really interesting, but what I
19 would like to see is analysis of time spent on a bus.
20 I don't know if that would be something y'all would
21 do. From my rough reading of it -- well, first, I'll
22 preface it by I don't like kids on the bus at 6 a.m.;
23 I don't like them on the bus at 7 a.m. and the points
24 that we can do that. I know no one does in an ideal
25 world. But the way I look at it, the former

1 Altheimer District sits above the river and there are
2 two ways to get into Pine Bluff, and so it doesn't
3 look like kids are going to be on the bus for an
4 extended period of time going from Dollarway High
5 School to Pine Bluff High School. But that would be
6 something I'd want to know, because I think that
7 certainly is a factor as we look at, you know,
8 potential decisions by the Districts.

9 Second to that, I don't know how far y'all have
10 dugged into the facilities, and I don't know if
11 that's something the Department wants to present
12 later. But I think it is important for us to get an
13 understanding of the current state of the facilities,
14 particularly the high schools. I know Pine Bluff has
15 some plans to get -- firm plans to build a new high
16 school or discussions of plans to build a new high
17 school, and I think --

18 SECRETARY KEY: I think they have a project
19 filed on their -- in their master plan.

20 DR. MOORE: Okay. I think having us hear more
21 about that would be certainly very beneficial.

22 SECRETARY KEY: And on the question, Ms. Newton,
23 you asked about the wealth index, so we are in a
24 transition on the calculation of wealth index. For
25 the current cycle that they're in, the local share is

1 just under 50%; it's about half-and-half -- 46% and
2 54% state contribution. But in the 23-25 cycle that
3 is going to change dramatically and it -- they won't
4 calculate that until we get into that cycle. But
5 it's probably going to be somewhere in the 70-plus
6 range for state share for -- you know, we can't
7 calculate for both districts to combine, but each
8 district separately would be somewhere in the 70-plus
9 percent.

10 MS. NEWTON: So Dollarway would lose 70-plus,
11 but you'd say Pine Bluff also --

12 SECRETARY KEY: Somewhere around 70 as well.

13 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

14 DR. MOORE: Sorry; I did think of one more
15 question, if that's okay.

16 Do any campuses have school-based health clinics
17 in Pine Bluff or Dollarway?

18 SUPT. WARREN: [inaudible, not at microphone]

19 DR. MOORE: Okay. That would be something I'd
20 want us to put on as a point of conversation in our
21 work session to think about, especially with the
22 influx of money in Pine Bluff, what that would look
23 like at our campuses in the future.

24 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. Warren.

25 SUPT. WARREN: Dollarway High School did have a

1 person that coordinated health grants but still
2 continues to operate a center there at the high
3 school -- but only that campus.

4 DR. MOORE: Okay.

5 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Ms. McFetridge.

6 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes. I think it would be
7 important on our workday to also hear the differences
8 of the programming at each high school, what each
9 school is offering the students probably pertaining
10 to CTE courses -- just to hear kind of the basic
11 difference between each high school would be great.
12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Mr. Sutton.

14 MR. SUTTON: I do have some questions that I
15 will probably reserve until the December 1st meeting.
16 But to Dr. Moore's point or question about
17 transportation, and having lived through two district
18 annexations when I served on the board in Marion,
19 transportation becomes a very big issue. It might
20 not appear to be that important as you're studying
21 fiscal responsibilities and academics, but
22 transportation becomes a real bear. I did notice
23 that on one of the screens you mentioned -- or it was
24 on there that a maximum ride time of 100 minutes. I
25 don't know how many students that would affect. That

1 is an awful long time if that is by its definition a
2 student ride time.

3 MR. WILLIS: Board Members, if I may just to
4 respond to that, I can go back and get the actual
5 numbers for the number of students. But it's at
6 least a set of students -- it would be starting on
7 the bus for that 100 minutes; so that would be about
8 an hour and 40 minutes. Yes.

9 MR. SUTTON: Has there been any thought about --
10 you know, let's suppose that the majority of the
11 students that would be on that ride time -- because
12 -- was there any consideration about maybe annexing
13 the elementary with White Hall or a district that's
14 closer? I understand about not the whole Dollarway
15 system. But the younger kids that are having to
16 board buses at 6 a.m. or before, was it looked at to
17 maybe have them go to another district that's closer?

18 MS. SMITH: So I think those are very good
19 detail questions. One thing I want to kind of just
20 remind everyone is the transportation, the actual
21 closing of school buildings or consolidating of
22 buildings, the idea of other programs, those are all
23 like suggestions for painting for a future of what it
24 could be. So WestEd came in as an analysis part and
25 said, "Look, if you think about annexation or

1 consolidation, or even reconstitution, where we're
2 combining transportation, there is an opportunity for
3 money savings." Their analysis is on the extreme
4 side of to save the most money, "here are things that
5 you can do." And so once I think a decision is made
6 those are the conversations then that occur locally
7 with -- you know, I agree, when you point out 100
8 minutes for -- that would probably not be something
9 that would sit well and would not be something that
10 locally they would want to do. So even though they
11 made that suggestion and gave that presentation,
12 there's still a conversation to be had that there is
13 a money-saving opportunity in transportation. We may
14 choose not to go to the far side of that fiscal
15 savings and maybe find a more moderate place, but we
16 will pull some of that data for you.

17 Jason is right, unless you want to see me
18 present the consolidation part -- Jason's flight is
19 not far away, so -- and I know we still want to be
20 fed. So do you mind if I just get him to --

21 CHAIRMAN DEAN: No, go ahead.

22 MS. SMITH: -- do that part?

23 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Take a few minutes.

24 MS. SMITH: Okay.

25 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Do what you need to do.

1 MS. SMITH: But does that help clarify on the
2 scenarios?

3 Okay, great.

4 SECRETARY KEY: And just to say too, before
5 Jason starts that last section, any of these
6 questions that you have now or that you may think of
7 afterwards, please send them to us so we can start
8 working on getting those responses ready for you by
9 that work session. Because I think this -- and one
10 of the things that I've thought about -- and, Stacy,
11 we'll need to look at -- we know that over a course
12 of time of nearly 20 years, or maybe 15 or so since
13 Alzheimer has been consolidated, and you look at --
14 there are probably students that live in that area
15 that have school-choiced to Des Arc or somewhere else
16 that -- you know, you probably would want to know
17 that information and that's something that we can get
18 for you as well so, you know, you won't be thinking
19 that all these kids are going to be on a bus for an
20 hour and 40 minutes. There are other datapoints that
21 would need to be taken a look at. So we'll work on
22 getting that information for you too.

23 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Thank you.

24 MR. SUTTON: Secretary Key, is this presentation
25 that we've been going over for the last couple of

1 hours, is that available to us to print?

2 SECRETARY KEY: Yes, sir, Mr. Sutton. It's on
3 the agenda, posted on the website.

4 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Go ahead.

5 SECRETARY KEY: I think it was added this week
6 -- earlier this week. Yeah, it was added earlier
7 this week.

8 MS. SMITH: But I'll be glad to send it directly
9 to them.

10 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. And, yes, Stacy said that
11 she can send it directly to everyone as well.

12 MR. WILLIS: So to move into our fourth of four
13 options, around consolidation -- again, the kind of
14 code and rules surrounding consolidation do look in
15 some part consider -- similar to annexation.

16 However, the biggest difference under a consolidation
17 option is that you are essentially creating a new
18 school district. So you are dissolving both of those
19 school systems, bringing them together for

20 consolidation. This has implications for the role of
21 the State, in which case you would be establishing a
22 new school district, in which you would then have to
23 establish new collections of data to establish how

24 that school district is doing relative to both their
25 academic and financial performance, relative to what

1 is laid out both in code and in the rules in regards
2 to state's -- the State's support either under a
3 level type of support for academic or under fiscal
4 distress.

5 From the perspective of the relevant stakeholder
6 input for consolidation, we had just over half of the
7 stakeholders stating that they really would like to
8 maintain Superintendent Warren's leadership and/or
9 the successful improvement strategies that she has
10 led in the Dollarway School District. This clearly
11 was an important component of the stakeholders'
12 feedback in recognizing Superintendent Warren's
13 leadership and her ability to kind of steward the
14 school district going forward.

15 We also had seven individuals that acknowledged
16 the potential operational, financial and/or
17 programmatic benefits of consolidation, that bringing
18 those school districts together, if it's from the
19 offerings that potentially are at the high school
20 level or other opportunities in which to create joint
21 training for teachers or for other administrators.
22 Several of the stakeholders acknowledged that
23 benefit. And that 60% of the stakeholders expressed
24 concern about the consolidation of Dollarway,
25 especially as a rural area, with a more urban area of

1 Pine Bluff, citing both -- cultural differences and
2 travel time of buses specifically were cited in those
3 comments from stakeholders.

4 So some of the key finance and operational
5 findings -- again, very similar to our findings
6 around annexation -- the decline in annual revenue,
7 the recognition of the one-time incentive funding,
8 the additional revenues that are coming from the
9 casino, and then pausing any of that unnecessary
10 building and repair to -- and pursuing that sale of
11 surplus property.

12 So, again, the summary of revenues and
13 expenditures for both the combination of Dollarway
14 and Pine Bluff School Districts are represented here.
15 A lot of these changes essentially look similar. I
16 think the one representation that I would offer to
17 the Board, in a circumstance of both annexation as
18 compared to consolidation, is timing. But
19 annexation, given the law and the code would likely
20 happen much more quickly than in a consolidation
21 option in which you are dissolving both of the
22 systems and bringing them together. So a lot of the
23 representation of savings here would likely fall
24 farther into the fiscal year next year, the 21-22
25 fiscal year, as opposed to annexation which would

1 likely become -- savings that could be realized
2 earlier on in the fiscal year.

3 So this is just a look at those revenue
4 combinations for both Dollarway and Pine Bluff School
5 District -- again, the expenditure savings that we
6 recognized from both the position consolidation at
7 the Central Office level. And here we represent some
8 of the total position compensation changes that net
9 that \$669,000 loss. We also just -- for showing that
10 potential savings of the merger of the high school,
11 we estimate that it would be about a \$681,000 savings
12 if the two high schools were to come together leading
13 into the 22-23 school year. Again, we didn't include
14 this in the summary figures that we showed in the
15 previous slides, but we think -- as representation
16 for the Board in considering these options we thought
17 it was important to at least put a pen out there in
18 terms of what some of the cost savings might be
19 achieved through the merger of the high schools.

20 So in terms of some of the execution strategies,
21 the school district that would be consolidated with
22 Dollarway School District, as we mentioned before,
23 would be Pine Bluff. This would begin in earnest --
24 or, sorry, legally on July 1, 2021, with about one to
25 two years of transition -- again noting that the

1 consolidation efforts would likely take a little bit
2 longer, given a lot of those decisions would be
3 within the locality's purview as opposed to an
4 annexation type of timeline and the circumstances
5 under which Pine Bluff is currently under state
6 control currently and still has two, two-and-a-half
7 years remaining in that timeline.

8 The local school board in terms of its structure
9 and powers, they would have to elect new permanent
10 boards in either the first or second election after
11 the July 1, 2021 decision; so that would be November
12 of next year or the subsequent election in 2022, in
13 the 2022 calendar year. The school board would
14 include representatives -- representation from
15 various geographic locations in the county that would
16 include Pine Bluff, Dollarway, the Altheimer area,
17 based on the way the boundaries are drawn. And the
18 school board would have an ability to make those
19 decisions for former Dollarway schools or former Pine
20 Bluff schools at least initially.

21 Implications for the finance side is that the
22 State's incentive fund would become triggered for the
23 consolidation option. Both school districts in this
24 case would derive that benefit from the newly opened
25 casino and economic activity. We've talked a bit

1 about the differences in the millage rate and the
2 implications of that and a little bit about the
3 excess property as well. We've also touched on --
4 again, looking very similar to the annexation option
5 -- some of the savings realized in the 2022-23 year
6 with a possible merger of those campuses, should the
7 District in a consolidated option decide to move in
8 that direction.

9 In terms of staffing changes and what would
10 occur, there would be newly-formed district
11 leadership at the decision of the school board at
12 that point. And in regards to the State's role,
13 DESE's role could continue to provide some of that
14 technical assistance in capacity-building that would
15 be offered but not through any kind of formal, you
16 know, fiscal distress or academic distress, as those
17 timelines would start over again in July of 2021.

18 So with that, Madam Chair, I'll pause there and
19 take any questions you all may have.

20 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Mr. Sutton -- Lookadoo.
21 Sorry. Dr. Hill. Ms. Newton.

22 MS. NEWTON: And I'm not sure which scenario
23 this would go under and which one it would fit under,
24 or may be multiple. But I would like to see some
25 analysis on what would it look like if out of the two

1 districts there was a district conversion, similar to
2 some -- what -- some of the charters that we've seen
3 in the last few days where one high school became a
4 career center or something along that line, which one
5 of those would it fall under, and would there be
6 costs that would -- where we could do that.

7 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Ms. Chambers?

8 MS. CHAMBERS: No questions.

9 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Ms. Woods? Dr. Moore?
10 Ms. McFetridge? Okay. Mr. Sutton?

11 MR. SUTTON: No.

12 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. All right.

13 DR. HILL: I do have one based on Ms. Newton's
14 point.

15 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Sure. Use your mic, please.

16 DR. HILL: Oh -- based on Ms. Newton. Is that a
17 possibility what she's talking about, like the school
18 of innovation or something like that, that would get
19 creative down in the -- in that rural area to help?
20 Is that -- I mean I know those things up in
21 northwest; is that something to consider?

22 SECRETARY KEY: I think it's something that
23 could be considered. I don't know how -- I don't
24 think it could be considered as part of the Board's
25 action because the statutory process is for either

1 conversion charter or school of innovation are
2 clearly stated and spelled out to how that would go
3 and there are timelines, especially with a conversion
4 charter. So while those are definitely options that
5 could enhance the opportunities for kids in those --
6 in that city, I'm not sure that it's something that
7 really y'all can act on within the timeframe we're
8 dealing with.

9 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Well, if there are no further
10 questions -- thank you so much for your time, Mr. --

11 MS. SMITH: Yeah. So we have a few slides left,
12 but Jason -- I think they're ready for some lunch.

13 MR. WILLIS: Okay, let's do it.

14 CHAIRMAN DEAN: No, no, no. I want you to
15 finish. I didn't realize that we had slides left.

16 MS. SMITH: You just have a few left?

17 MR. WILLIS: Let me --

18 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Yeah.

19 MR. WILLIS: Let me take maybe two minutes --

20 CHAIRMAN DEAN: No --

21 MR. WILLIS: -- to sign off --

22 CHAIRMAN DEAN: -- go ahead.

23 MR. WILLIS: -- and then I will --

24 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Finish whatever you need to do.

25 MR. WILLIS: -- I want to turn it over to Mrs.

1 Smith --

2 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay.

3 MR. WILLIS: -- to close us out.

4 So I think just again reminding the Board about
5 the decision tree in making this decision about
6 Dollarway, we are currently at the November 13th
7 meeting; we have a work session that is planned for
8 December 1st. All of your questions, you know, at
9 the guidance of Commissioner Key and Mrs. Smith and
10 the rest of the staff will be supporting and being
11 prepared for that session on December 1st. I also
12 recall that we are planning our second phase of
13 engagement, again incorporating a lot of the
14 questions that you're asking for the Board
15 themselves. For your benefit we also included some
16 of the major themes for both the stakeholder
17 engagement and the fiscal and operational analysis,
18 and again a kind of full summary of some of the key
19 points for each of the options for you to review as
20 well.

21 And with that, I will turn it over to Mrs. Smith
22 and she can take us on to the end of the
23 presentation.

24 MS. SMITH: So I appreciate the WestEd staff and
25 I know, Ms. Dean, you were probably getting ready to

1 say --

2 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Yes.

3 MS. SMITH: -- say all of that.

4 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Yes.

5 MS. SMITH: Again, just kind of echoing what
6 Secretary Key said, all of your questions -- anything
7 -- I mean this is y'all's thoughts and opinions; you
8 can email those directly to me, you can send them to
9 Gina. We'll make sure and take those down and make
10 sure we bring all that back to the work session so
11 that you have all the information that you need.

12 As far as today goes, I mean I will leave it up
13 to you and the Board to decide if you want to come
14 back after lunch and discuss and list some more stuff
15 or if you want to wrap it up from here and email.
16 We're completely at your disposal on that.

17 CHAIRMAN DEAN: I think it would be good -- it's
18 up to the Board. I don't have an issue with staying
19 to discuss because I know there are people that had
20 questions, but it's up to the Board -- or we can wrap
21 it up; it doesn't matter.

22 DR. MOORE: I probably have a few lingering
23 questions to ask.

24 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay.

25 DR. MOORE: But I don't --

1 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. I don't have an issue
2 with that at all.

3 MS. SMITH: Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. So thank you so much, Mr.
5 Willis. Thank you, Ms. Brown and Ms. Outlaw, for
6 joining us today. Very thorough presentation and we
7 thank you so much for your work and just the
8 professional level that you've done it on. We
9 appreciate it. This will help us exponentially as
10 far as making a decision that's best for our kids.
11 Thank you so much; appreciate you.

12 All right. And with that, we'll break for lunch
13 and we'll be back --

14 SECRETARY KEY: 1:00?

15 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Yeah, 1:00.

16 MS. WOODS: I don't have any questions.

17 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Do you have a question? Okay.

18 MS. WOODS: No. I mean I just wanted to power
19 through, you know. It's up to you.

20 DR. MOORE: Oh, I don't care.

21 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Well, I mean I don't mind if we
22 stay. No, I just -- I know he has a flight to catch.

23 MR. WILLIS: I'm okay. I texted Stacy --

24 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay.

25 MR. WILLIS: -- and I told her I was okay for

1 another 17 minutes or so.

2 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Then, let's do it. 17
3 minutes, okay. Okay, that's fine. I just was
4 wanting to make sure you got to your flight.

5 MR. WILLIS: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay.

7 MS. SMITH: Yeah. Do you guys have some
8 specific questions or comments that you want us to
9 pull together?

10 DR. MOORE: I did have another -- something
11 maybe for our work session to discuss would be pre-K
12 and early childcare options, both in Dollarway and
13 Pine Bluff, and what that looks like in the
14 community.

15 MS. SMITH: Okay.

16 MS. CHAMBERS: Ms. Smith, in terms of the
17 timeline you have -- and the additional feedback from
18 this next phase of engagement, is that right, to
19 bring to that work session?

20 MS. SMITH: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. CHAMBERS: Great. Thank you.

22 MS. SMITH: I think that was part of y'all's
23 reasoning when you decided December 1st, just because
24 it would be after the stakeholder feedback.

25 MS. NEWTON: Ms. Smith, could -- at the work

1 session could you maybe on each one of these give us
2 exactly what our decision points would be? Because I
3 know we've heard a lot of things that I think -- you
4 know, we talked about transportation and buildings
5 closing and different things like that that are
6 really not going to be -- I don't feel like those
7 will be our decisions; I feel like those will be
8 local decisions. So could we get exactly what our
9 decision points would be under each one of the
10 different scenarios, what our choices would be? Does
11 that make sense?

12 MS. SMITH: Uh-huh. And I appreciate that
13 comment because I think one of the things that we
14 wanted to make sure that we maintain throughout this
15 whole process was we want to paint a vision of what
16 we're moving towards. And so I think -- and I
17 appreciate WestEd, because I think they kind of tried
18 to do that; if you -- you know, if you choose
19 annexation, these are the things that the District
20 can think about doing and painting towards. And so I
21 agree with that for your role the next time start
22 thinking about what are the decision points and then
23 what are those things that we're painting towards
24 that are really local decisions.

25 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Do we have any other questions?

1 Mr. Sutton?

2 Okay. All right.

3 DR. MOORE: I have another one. As we look in
4 the state, have more districts been annexed or
5 consolidated? And do we have pros/cons from, you
6 know, the past 20 years?

7 SECRETARY KEY: I'd say, over the history,
8 consolidation has been the most common.

9 DR. MOORE: Why is that?

10 SECRETARY KEY: Why? I think it depends on the
11 trigger that --

12 DR. MOORE: Right.

13 SECRETARY KEY: Consolidation, if you're under
14 350 prior to the law that allows the waiver for 350,
15 that -- the number of implications there of why you
16 would consolidate or annex -- annex is usually -- or
17 friendly consolidation is usually when you have two
18 groups that agree.

19 DR. MOORE: That choose.

20 SECRETARY KEY: You've also had situations
21 though where the Department has had to do what we
22 call starburst where a district has been split up
23 between a number of surrounding districts because of
24 some of the issues that y'all brought up today, like
25 transportation, density, population density. So, but

1 consolidation I would say is typically the more
2 common and in -- but in both cases, you know,
3 annexation and consolidation both qualify for the
4 incentive funding and that's -- you know, so that's a
5 consideration that local districts have had as well
6 when they've made that decision.

7 DR. MOORE: At the point that -- I know when
8 Altheimer -- previously, I think there were a couple
9 of districts that went into Altheimer. Was Altheimer
10 annexed into Dollarway, or consolidated, do you know?

11 SECRETARY KEY: I think it was consolidated.

12 Right, Ms. Warren?

13 SUPT. WARREN: (Nodding head up and down.)

14 DR. MOORE: Okay. I think any --

15 SECRETARY KEY: And let me back-up. Another
16 reason is when you create a new district with
17 consolidation it -- there are elements of how you
18 determine the representation then for the new
19 district. So there are mechanisms --

20 DR. MOORE: School board.

21 SECRETARY KEY: -- under Act 60 from 2003 that
22 kind of lined out how you would create a new school
23 board in a consolidated district under Act 60. So
24 I'd say that's another reason most of these we've
25 seen are consolidations.

1 DR. MOORE: Okay. I know obviously because of
2 the -- at that point in time with Altheimer district
3 that has really changed the landscape of that rural
4 area. I think any literature or information we have
5 on best practices in consolidation or annexes from
6 prior ones would be helpful for us as we're looking
7 at this.

8 SECRETARY KEY: I know there were some studies
9 that were conducted; probably nothing much recent.
10 But I'd say between the years of '03 and 2010, 2013 I
11 believe the OEP may have done some analysis of that
12 that we can go back in the archives and see what we
13 can find.

14 DR. MOORE: Okay. I mean I know it's -- for
15 some communities it's still a sore spot across the
16 state, and so I think the communities where it's --
17 where they have overcome it and really seen success I
18 think would be helpful for us to hear from.

19 MS. SMITH: No, I think that's a good point and
20 we'll make sure to pull some of that. And I think
21 another piece that's really important about this is
22 -- and I just said it a second ago -- but it's not
23 about that we annex or we consolidate or reconstitute
24 and it's done; we really need to create a fluid plan
25 for the districts moving forward that connects two,

1 four, six -- what it will look like in 10 years and
2 what are they moving towards. And so those are some
3 of those pieces. Again, it may not -- those
4 decisions may not be made by this board, but those
5 are very important discussions to insure that it goes
6 well and has to occur shortly after.

7 MS. NEWTON: I'm not sure if I missed it or
8 what, but how would the board be made up if we go
9 with annexation? Does it go with the Pine Bluff
10 board or would there be representation in zones? How
11 does that work?

12 MS. SMITH: So I believe in the scenario that
13 was presented here, I think that it was that they
14 would -- so it would be still under state authority;
15 however, if the State Board at some point or
16 Commissioner Key wanted to begin the process of
17 appointing a limited-authority board, you know, as
18 we're moving forward with Pine Bluff and Dollarway
19 together, I think that's a consideration to think
20 about.

21 MS. NEWTON: So at that point where Pine Bluff
22 was being released, then we could consider zones and
23 that sort of thing at that particular time?

24 MS. SMITH: Yes, ma'am.

25 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

1 MS. SMITH: And I do think there is a phase-in
2 of training. You know, if we -- again, thinking
3 about this very intentionally, when would we want to
4 start that and when would we want to try to have that
5 limited authority and those pieces.

6 SECRETARY KEY: I think if you go back to the
7 consol- -- the last segment with the consolidation
8 option, thinking in terms of consolidation means you
9 take two or more separate districts and you make them
10 one new district, then Jason alluded to it: the
11 timeline stops. I mean you're talking -- because you
12 no longer have a district that's in Level 5 support;
13 you have a brand-new district that you're changing
14 your LEA numbers. You basically have a -- I don't
15 want to say a re-set of accountability, but as it
16 relates to the state authority over a district you
17 have that to consider as well.

18 So, you know, I'm sure those were all things --
19 and those are probably questions that as you think
20 about it you'll come up with other questions and
21 other details that you'll want us to dig into and
22 bring to that work session.

23 DR. MOORE: I do have one last lingering -- so
24 going way back to the beginning of our conversation,
25 I know it was said that if Dollarway continues there

1 will be some severe fiscal issues. I think if WestEd
2 or our team could paint a clearer picture of what
3 that would be, what those decisions would have to be
4 for Dollarway going into the next school year if
5 nothing were to change just within their own budget
6 would be helpful.

7 SECRETARY KEY: I can -- I think we can answer
8 that today. You're talking about massive reduction
9 of headcount, of staffing. That is -- when you have
10 -- when district operations is 80% or so -- 75% to
11 80% of the funding is tied up in personnel, there's
12 very few other places to cut. And that's one of the
13 things that -- you know, I'm just -- you know, I know
14 Barbara is sitting there and she's probably saying,
15 "I wish you'd hush." But we've just got to be
16 straight; I mean that's where we are. And what we
17 have done is tried to -- we've worked very hard to
18 raise -- increase salaries to hold people there, you
19 know, to reduce that outflow of -- with the turnover.
20 And so there are a number of things that we've tried
21 to do to get the academics solidified, and I think
22 we've been successful in that -- but at the same
23 time, you have that balance.

24 And so when we think about that question, Dr.
25 Moore, what are the implications, the implications

1 are really some tough decisions with respect to
2 staffing.

3 DR. MOORE: And along those lines, is that
4 Central Office, is that building? It's a pretty
5 small district to begin with and I guess there's no
6 more buildings to be consolidated within the
7 district; correct?

8 SECRETARY KEY: Talking about buildings?

9 DR. MOORE: Right.

10 SECRETARY KEY: I think we -- I think with what
11 we've done at this point it's been effective, but I
12 don't see a lot of room for any additional moving of
13 kids into the building or around in the buildings.

14 DR. MOORE: Okay.

15 MS. SMITH: Yeah. I mean most of the building
16 structures -- I think earlier in the slides we were
17 showing where most of them have about 200 to 300
18 students in a building. So, you know, when you start
19 thinking about in terms of, you know, consolidating
20 again, additional buildings, closing another building
21 -- I mean those would have to be some real
22 discussions going forward, if they were to stay and
23 remain open. But you would have to have some
24 substantial cuts in teaching staff.

25 Any other questions?

1 CHAIRMAN DEAN: I don't think -- there are no
2 other questions.

3 MS. SMITH: So on December 1st we have our
4 working session. We'll make sure -- so as we start
5 pulling these reports and pieces together, we'll
6 start collecting it and see if we can get some of
7 these to you ahead of time so that you actually have
8 them to read before we come to the December 1st
9 meeting, if that's appropriate. And then on the
10 December 1st, Ms. Warren and anyone from her team
11 that you would like to have to be a part of that
12 conversation -- we would like Ms. Warren to be, you
13 know, here to answer questions specific to her
14 district and just her views and thoughts. I think
15 that's a key point and so we'll make sure that she is
16 here.

17 As far as any kind of public comment or feedback
18 or anything like that, as far as the work session or
19 on the December 10th board meeting, is there anything
20 as far as that, guidelines of communities asking that
21 -- we want to just -- just make sure that it's very
22 public, that they know that the 1st is happening and
23 that there will be the work session, if people want
24 to attend and listen to that. But then public
25 comment would be available on the 10th; is that

1 correct?

2 MR. WILLIS: Uh-huh.

3 MS. SMITH: Okay. Anything else that you want
4 to make sure that I've covered or any questions that
5 you have? And if you think of something between now
6 and then, reach out and we'll try to get it to you.
7 Okay? It's a lot of information today. I appreciate
8 your patience.

9 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Okay. Thank you. That's it.

10 MS. SMITH: And thank you, Jason; appreciate
11 you.

12 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Yeah, thank you. We want to
13 make sure you get to your flight.

14 We'll adjourn --

15 MR. SUTTON: Good job, Stacy.

16 CHAIRMAN DEAN: Yes. Thank you to the team, and
17 WestEd as well.

18 If there's nothing else, we'll be adjourned and
19 we'll head upstairs to lunch, which is 20A -- 201A.
20 So we're adjourned. Thank you.

21

22

23

24

(The meeting was concluded at 12:27 p.m.)

25

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 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, State Board of Education, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on November 13, 2020, 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.

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