

In The Matter Of:

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

September 12, 2019

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(501) 680-0888*

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ARKANSAS DIVISION OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019
10:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

MS. DIANE ZOOK, Chairman
MS. CHARISSE DEAN, Vice Chairman
MS. SUSAN CHAMBERS
MR. BRETT WILLIAMSON
MS. OUIDA NEWTON
DR. FITZGERALD HILL
DR. SARAH MOORE
MS. KATHY McFETRIDGE
MR. CHAD PEKRON

NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS:

MR. JOHNNY KEY, Secretary of Education
MS. STACEY McADOO, Arkansas Teacher of the Year

DESE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. LORI FRENO	General Counsel
MS. COURTNEY SALAS-FORD	Deputy General Counsel
MS. MARY CLAIRE HYATT	Attorney Specialist
MS. JENNIFER DEDMAN	Attorney Supervisor
MR. TAYLOR DUGAN	Attorney

LOCATION:

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
- Auditorium
#4 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: We'll move to the Action Agenda.
3 Mr. Dugan, we're ready for you when you are. And I
4 thank you again for providing the nice binders for us
5 so we can -- at least if we're not organized it won't
6 be your fault.

7 MR. DUGAN: Well -- Taylor Dugan, Division of
8 Elementary and Secondary Education, Attorney for
9 Legal Services. I am really excited about these
10 binders. I know my colleagues have had to hear about
11 them, you know, all week, and I hope it does make
12 things more organized, even though Ms. Link is going
13 to be taking over these actions past this month.

14 MR. DUGAN: So the first thing on the agenda,
15 Madam Chair, is --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Wait just a second. We have a
17 person without a binder.

18 MR. DUGAN: There should --

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Does anybody have two?

20 MS. DEAN: Thank you.

21 MR. DUGAN: I guess I'll outline a little bit --
22 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Dr. Hill arrives to the
23 meeting.)

24 MR. DUGAN: Dr. Hill, good morning.

25 DR. HILL: Good morning.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Welcome.

2 MR. DUGAN: -- what's in the binders. So --

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Dr. Hill, would you like to
4 raise your chair?

5 DR. HILL: Huh?

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You look very low. Would you
7 like -- that's good. Okay, now I've got my people in
8 order.

9 MR. DUGAN: All right.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. I'm sorry, Mr. Dugan; I
11 apologize.

12 MR. DUGAN: Excuse me. So what's in these
13 binders, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the cases that are
14 dealing with the licensure actions today. I've also
15 put on the inside the relevant rules for the ones
16 we're going to hear today and a Motion of Continuance
17 that's for a later case. But the first one that is
18 on the Action Agenda is Jessica Lynn Williams. And
19 so that should be the very first case that the Board
20 has in front of them.

21 MR. DUGAN: Madam Chair, may I proceed?

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Please.

23 MR. DUGAN: Thank you.

24 A-1: CONSIDERATION OF REVOCATION OF TEACHING LICENSE -
25 LICENSURE ACTION CASE NO. 91-11, MS. JESSICA WILLIAMS

1 MR. DUGAN: So Ms. Jessica Lynn Williams is in
2 front of the Board today because she was found guilty
3 of a disqualifying offense. She is not present
4 today, neither is her attorney; however, I put the
5 email communication between me and Mr. Ernie Witt,
6 who was the attorney that represented -- or is
7 representing Ms. Williams in this matter, who also
8 represented her during her criminal charges.

9 And so I'm just going to go through real quickly
10 the exhibits here, but then also at the request of
11 the Educator read the letter that she sent me asking
12 for her license to be suspended instead of revoked.
13 I will let the Board know that once I received this
14 letter I communicated with her counsel, which are in
15 the emails that I provided as Exhibit Six (6) -- DESE
16 Exhibit Six (6). When I found out she was
17 incarcerated, I sent her notice of the disqualifying
18 offense to her address of record and also to the jail
19 where she's incarcerated. She's incarcerated at the
20 Scott County jail. Mr. Witt did send a waiver
21 request, so I communicated with Mr. Witt as far as
22 could we set up a Skype, could we set up some type of
23 phone conversation; so I did let Mr. Witt know that
24 those were options that could be provided. And we
25 moved it from the August agenda to September once we

1 received this letter to confirm whether or not that's
2 something we could do. I even contacted the jail;
3 they let me know that she could have 5 minutes
4 because they only have one line. And that's when he
5 provided me with more documentation and those emails
6 saying they're waiving their appearance, however,
7 would like me to read this letter to the Board asking
8 for a suspension rather than a revocation that the
9 statute asks for if there is no waiver request.

10 So, first, what we have as DESE Exhibit One (1)
11 is her license; so just entering that into the record
12 to show that she is a licensed educator.

13 DESE Exhibit Two (2) is the Sentencing Order
14 from the Scott County Circuit Court, which shows that
15 Ms. Williams was convicted of Sexual Assault/First
16 Degree and also Indecent Exposure. She's serving the
17 nine months in the Scott County jail for the Indecent
18 Exposure; however, she was sentenced to 120 months of
19 probation for the Sexual Assault in the First Degree,
20 which is classified as a felony.

21 And so after receiving that information I sent
22 Ms. Williams a copy of the disqualifying notice
23 letting her know of these charges and that she has a
24 right to ask for a waiver. Like I said, I sent that
25 to her address of record and also to the Scott County

1 Detention Center, and received what is DESE Exhibit
2 Four (4) from Ms. Williams' attorney, Mr. Ernie Witt,
3 stating that she would be requesting a waiver for
4 this disqualifying offense. So that's why I tried to
5 coordinate with them how we could get that done with
6 her being incarcerated. And so that's the hearing
7 notice for August 8th, for last month, but I moved it
8 to this month just to make sure that if there was
9 anything I could do to help facilitate, even though
10 she's incarcerated, asking for the waiver; and so
11 that's where we have the letter that I put in the
12 packet. And I apologize, because it was written in
13 pencil, that it's so hard to read, so I did type up a
14 copy of it. But I am going to read it to the Board
15 since I communicated that with the attorney that that
16 would be -- that I would do that.

17 And one other thing that I put in the binders,
18 Ladies and Gentlemen, is the rules dealing with these
19 types of hearings, because I received a question as
20 far as what can the Board do in these situations. On
21 the third page, section 3.05, those are "After a
22 hearing, the State Board may take one (1) or more of
23 the following" options [sic].

24 So this is the letter that the Department
25 received on August 1st from Ms. Williams: "Dear

1 Sirs: It is with great respect and humility I write
2 to you on this 1st day of August 2019. In June of
3 2019, I violated Arkansas Code Annotated 6-17-410(c).
4 My actions were immensely irresponsible and
5 inappropriate. Over my tenure as an educator I
6 prided myself on my integrity and professionalism.
7 While off contract in June 2018, I allowed my
8 personal circumstances and vulnerability to impede my
9 judgment. I was negligent, careless and destructive.
10 I hindered students from learning, teachers from
11 teaching, and administrators from leading. I
12 abandoned a school district and a community that
13 passionately cares and supports one another. There
14 is no doubt that I will live with sorrow and regret
15 for the rest of my life. A profession I was designed
16 for will forever live in my heart. I was Nationally
17 Board Certified, obtained my Masters in Educational
18 Leadership in May of 2018. Education was truly my
19 passion. I sincerely apologize to the ADE for my
20 incredibly distasteful and unethical actions. I am
21 pleading with the ADE to suspend my license rather
22 than revoking. I fully understand my guilt and the
23 repercussions that come with it. I would embrace the
24 opportunity for my 13-year career and dedication to
25 be fully considered. I am grateful for the time and

1 consideration of the Arkansas Department of
2 Education. Sincerely, Jessica Williams."

3 And so that's the letter, Ladies and Gentlemen,
4 that I received from Ms. Williams. And so I'd ask
5 that that also be taken into consideration with
6 whatever the Board decides.

7 (WHEREUPON, DESE EXHIBITS ONE (1) THROUGH SIX
8 (6) were entered into evidence.)

9 MR. DUGAN: And if there's any questions, I'm
10 here for questions.

11 MR. PEKRON: Mr. Dugan --

12 MR. DUGAN: Yes, sir.

13 MR. PEKRON: -- I believe I saw in here that she
14 was required to register as a sex offender?

15 MR. DUGAN: That's correct.

16 MR. PEKRON: And so even -- she couldn't teach
17 regardless of whether she has a license?

18 MR. DUGAN: Well, she would have -- she would
19 have to have a waiver of this offense. The Board can
20 waive any offense, but there is no disqualification
21 just because someone is a sex offender.

22 MR. PEKRON: Other than the fact she couldn't
23 come near a school.

24 MR. DUGAN: That's correct. You're right. Now
25 that I think about it -- thank you for the reminder.

1 You are exactly right. Yeah.

2 MS. ZOOK: Would you repeat that?

3 MR. PEKRON: Other than the fact that she can't

4 --

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Come near a school.

6 MR. PEKRON: -- come near a school --

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

8 MR. PEKRON: -- because she's a sex offender.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Within so many yards.

10 MR. PEKRON: So this whole thing seems a little
11 academic.

12 MR. DUGAN: Correct. There is that. I forgot
13 about that. Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right. And isn't this one of
15 the ones where they said if a person's license had
16 been revoked that we can't un-revoke in this kind of
17 instance?

18 MR. DUGAN: That's correct, Madam Chair. Under
19 the law currently and the rules that are emergency
20 and the ones that are drafted that will be going out
21 for permanent promulgation, that's correct. But the
22 statute does state that if it was for a sexual
23 offense or a violent offense it is permanent
24 revocation. So in this case, Ms. Williams' license
25 -- it would be a permanent revocation, and that's the

1 current law on it.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do you know which level
3 of sex offender she is --

4 MR. DUGAN: So --

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- or whether she has appealed
6 that?

7 MR. DUGAN: There are four different levels of
8 when someone is on the Registry -- one, two, three or
9 four. I do not know which one they classified her
10 as. Four is a violent sexual predator, but -- so I'm
11 not sure which level. She would -- once she was
12 convicted then she would have to schedule a meeting
13 with Sherry Flynn, and she would end up doing an
14 assessment on her, and from that assessment they
15 would determine which level she is.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank you. That's -- you're
17 finished with your presentation?

18 MR. DUGAN: That's correct. Yes, ma'am.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do we have any more
20 discussion?

21 Do I have a motion?

22 MR. PEKRON: I'm not sure exactly how it should
23 be phrased, but I move to approve the recommendation
24 of revocation.

25 MS. DEAN: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Motion by Mr. Pekron, second by
2 Ms. Dean.

3 Do we need to take a voice-vote or do we need to
4 take a roll-call?

5 Okay. Let's take the vote and then if it's not
6 clear, we'll say --

7 All in favor?

8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?
10 Will you pass that along?

11 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am, I will.

12 A-2: CONSIDERATION OF WAIVER OF DISQUALIFYING OFFENSE -
13 LICENSURE ACTION CAE NO. 19-14, MR. BRYAN LITTLE

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Next case.

15 MR. DUGAN: Next case is -- the second one on
16 the agenda is Mr. Bryan Gerald Little. Mr. Bryan
17 Gerald Little is represented by Mr. Ethan Nobles of
18 the Nobles Law Firm.

19 And so just real briefly, Madam Chair, since
20 this one we do have an attorney present, if I may
21 just review the rules very quickly on the procedures?

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Please.

23 MR. DUGAN: And so these -- also in the packet,
24 this is the first page of the State Board Hearing
25 Procedures. And I'm going to -- we've exchanged

1 exhibits and done all those things. So I'm going to
2 go to 8.03: Each party will have the opportunity to
3 present an opening statement of no longer than five
4 (5) minutes, beginning with the representative of the
5 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. The
6 Chairperson of the State Board may, only for good
7 cause shown and upon the request of either party,
8 allow either party additional time to present their
9 opening statements.

10 And then, after that, each party will have
11 fifteen (15) minutes to present their cases,
12 beginning with the representative of the Division of
13 Elementary and Secondary Education; then the next one
14 would be the Educator. And then if there's any
15 witnesses that would be giving testimony they would
16 need to be sworn in. And then, finally, five (5)
17 minutes for closing for each side.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. You may proceed.

19 MR. DUGAN: So this is going to be the second
20 case, Ladies and Gentlemen --

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I tell you what, let me --

22 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- swear anybody that's going to
24 be giving testimony first. Any of those of you who
25 will be giving testimony please stand and raise your

1 right hand. Let me find this. Okay. Do you swear
2 or affirm that the testimony you're about to give
3 shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
4 the truth?

5 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. You may be seated.

7 MR. DUGAN: And for an opening, Madam Chair, I'm
8 going to waive opening. I'm just going to go through
9 my presentation of the documents to just show that by
10 a preponderance of the evidence -- why we're here
11 today. So with that, I'll waive my opening.

12 And, Mr. Nobles, do you have an opening that
13 you'd like to present to the Board?

14 MR. NOBLES: I'd like to just briefly --

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Uh-huh. And just identify
16 yourself for the record.

17 MR. NOBLES: My name is Ethan Nobles, the Nobles
18 Law Firm in Benton, and I represent Bryan Little.
19 And I'll keep this brief. There's just a few things
20 I'd like to bring to you-guys' attention.

21 First off -- and you will see this on the
22 Sentencing Order -- I do want to point out that he is
23 eligible to have his record sealed after his
24 probation is served. We anticipate a year
25 approaching the court and sealing his record,

1 expunging his record of any and all offenses.

2 Secondly, I just want to point out --

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: May I ask you, is there a
4 difference between expunged and sealed?

5 MR. NOBLES: I think we just call it "sealed"
6 under the new law.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. And if you will, speak
8 into the microphone.

9 MR. NOBLES: I'm sorry.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank you.

11 MR. NOBLES: Yeah, there's no difference, I
12 think it's just the term as the law changed; sealed,
13 expunged, same thing for our purposes.

14 Second, after representing a number of folks in
15 criminal matters, typically they're sorry they got
16 caught and that's about it. Mr. Little, I believe,
17 is contrite, and you will see this in a little bit.
18 He understands that he had a problem and he has taken
19 active steps to work on it. We will present his drug
20 completion certificates. And when you will review
21 your packets, you will see a number of letters of
22 support, people who worked with him; they want him
23 back. He belongs back teaching. He made a mistake,
24 he's paid for it, and he has -- he's working to
25 reform himself. He's ready to get back to work.

1 He's a great teacher and we just need to see him back
2 in the classroom.

3 MR. PEKRON: Mr. Nobles, can I ask you a quick
4 question for framework, just for discussion?

5 MR. NOBLES: Yes, sir.

6 MR. PEKRON: Is your client asking for no
7 consequence or a lesser consequence?

8 MR. NOBLES: Absolutely not. He's asking --

9 MR. PEKRON: No, I'm sorry, I'm asking -- I'm
10 sorry, I'm not asking it correctly. Is he asking for
11 a complete waiver from the Board or is he asking for
12 a suspension or some lighter penalty?

13 MR. NOBLES: He is asking for a waiver at this
14 point in time, and that's -- yes.

15 MR. PEKRON: Okay, thank you. I'm sorry I
16 wasn't clear.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Mr. Dugan.

18 MR. DUGAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 This is going to be the second case that's in
20 the binder, which is titled at the top Bryan Gerald
21 Little. And for my first exhibit as usual is the
22 Educator's license. This is a copy of Mr. Little's
23 license showing what licensure areas that he has. We
24 received -- this one you'll see that the notice for
25 the -- that he would have the opportunity to request

1 a waiver is from August 20th; because to my
2 understanding Mr. Little is a teacher over at Pulaski
3 County Special School District and he's currently
4 suspended without pay. That letter is DESE Exhibit
5 Number Six (6). And so I was trying to get him in
6 front of the Board as quickly as possible in case
7 there was a waiver granted, so that way he could get
8 back to work. So that's the second exhibit just
9 showing that we had notice. The Sentencing Order,
10 that's DESE Exhibit Three (3) and it shows that Mr.
11 Little pled guilty to Possession of a Controlled
12 Substance and then also that he pled guilty to
13 Possession of Drug Paraphernalia and was sentenced to
14 two years probation, and that he also performed 30
15 hours of community service, and his driver's license
16 is suspended for six months with hardship. And
17 Exhibit Four (4) is Mr. Nobles requesting the waiver,
18 to be in front of the Board today. And Exhibit Five
19 (5) is the waiver hearing notice. But luckily Mr.
20 Nobles is here today, so that shows we got good
21 notice on him.

22 (WHEREUPON, DESE Exhibits One (1) through Six
23 (6) were entered into evidence.)

24 MR. DUGAN: And so that concludes my
25 presentation. I just wanted to show the Board by a

1 preponderance of the evidence that this is one of the
2 enumerated offenses that falls under 6-17-410; so
3 therefore this Board has the authority to take
4 action, grant a waiver, not grant the waiver -- which
5 if not granting the waiver that would be a permanent
6 revocation. But what also was put in y'all's packet
7 -- again, the 3.05 is the things that's stated in the
8 rules after a hearing, what the Board may do in these
9 types of cases.

10 And so if there's any questions of me I would
11 love to answer questions.

12 MS. NEWTON: Does the Department have a
13 recommendation?

14 MR. DUGAN: It doesn't have a recommendation.
15 But I have no objection to granting a waiver for Mr.
16 Little because it's similar to other cases where the
17 Board has granted waivers.

18 MR. PEKRON: Mr. Dugan, I notice in the original
19 letter, Exhibit Six (6), it states that he was
20 charged, among other things, with Possession with
21 Intent to Deliver. Was that nolle prossed?

22 MR. DUGAN: Mr. Nobles might be able to speak to
23 that better than I can. Usually -- I was a
24 prosecutor actually in this county for a little
25 while, and so whenever I was doing the Sentencing

1 Orders I always would put -- nolle prossed that
2 charge would be there, on there, and -- on the actual
3 Sentencing Order as an additional offense. Because,
4 Mr. Pekron, if you look on there they'll say Offense
5 Number 1, Offense Number 2, Offense Number 3; so
6 these are the offenses that he was charged with. And
7 so, therefore, I would say nolle prossed -- like the
8 second line down of each charge we would check off
9 that charge was nolle prossed. But Mr. Nobles would
10 probably know that answer better than I would.

11 MR. PEKRON: Thank you.

12 MR. DUGAN: You're welcome.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Any other questions of Mr.
14 Dugan?

15 Okay. Mr. Nobles.

16 MR. NOBLES: Okay. Before we get going, I would
17 like to address your question.

18 MR. PEKRON: Thank you.

19 MR. NOBLES: When they had initially picked up
20 Mr. Little that was one of the charges, was Intent to
21 Deliver. It was addressed. By the time they got
22 around to actually charging him, they did not charge.
23 It wasn't nolle prossed; he just wasn't charged.
24 When they picked him up that was one of the charges
25 listed, but it never -- the charge -- the only thing

1 that we addressed that he admitted to are in the
2 Sentencing Order.

3 MR. PEKRON: Thank you.

4 MR. NOBLES: With that said, I'd like to call
5 Mr. Little.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Sure.

7 MR. NOBLES: And I suppose I will ask the
8 questions.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Y'all have to share the
10 microphone. Thank you.

11 MR. NOBLES: All right. We can do that.

12 DIRECT EXAMINATION

13 BY MR. NOBLES:

14 Q Would you state your name and address for the record, sir?

15 A Bryan Little.

16 Q Address?

17 A 2401 Countryside Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas.

18 Q And when were you arrested for the charges we're looking
19 at today?

20 A April 20th. And I wanted to thank everybody for listening
21 to me today and giving me the opportunity to share my story.

22 Q And how old were you on April 20th of this year?

23 A 46 years old.

24 Q 46 years old. Would you tell the Board briefly about the
25 circumstances giving rise to your arrest?

1 A Absolutely. My addiction began in the year 2014. I began
2 having numerous foot and -- feet problems. I went through
3 three successful surgeries where they had to reconstruct my
4 feet. And between the years 2014 to 2016 I was prescribed --
5 and I'm not blaming anyone because I was smart enough to know I
6 should've gotten help sooner, and that's where I have to admit
7 my guilt. I should have gotten help sooner. From 2014 to
8 2016, I became addicted to painkillers. It's been a struggle.
9 The night of April 20th was somewhat of a blessing for me
10 because it gave me the opportunity to go get the help I needed.
11 So I stand here before you a better man, a better husband, a
12 better father, and I will be a better teacher. And, again, I
13 appreciate you listening to me today.

14 MR. NOBLES: We have some --

15 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Dan Davis hands a
16 separate microphone to Mr. Nobles.)

17 MR. NOBLES: I get my own microphone.

18 We have some additional exhibits I would like to
19 present. Before doing that, I'm going to ask Mr.
20 Little to identify what they are, and I will pass
21 these out in a second.

22 MR. NOBLES: (continuing)

23 Q First, I have a Quapaw House, Incorporated certificate.
24 What is this that I'm looking at, Mr. Little?

25 A Immediately after my arrest I entered the Quapaw House,

1 which is in Hot Springs, Arkansas; it's a recovery center where
2 I stayed for a month, and I graduated from the program after a
3 month.

4 MR. NOBLES: I'd like to pass these out. I'll
5 start here and -- so there is one additional exhibit.
6 I have, of course, a second one.

7 MR. NOBLES: (continuing)

8 Q Would you identify what this exhibit we're looking at is
9 here, Mr. Little?

10 A Yes, sir. This is a letter from -- after I graduated or
11 after the program at Quapaw I decided that I wanted to continue
12 with outpatient treatment here in Little Rock. So after I came
13 back home from Hot Springs, each week I've been following up
14 with Quapaw here in Little Rock. And they've written a letter
15 to verify everything I'm telling you now and giving you some
16 sort of insight into me.

17 MR. NOBLES: I'd like to enter -- pass this one
18 out as well.

19 (WHEREUPON, Educator's Exhibits One (1) through
20 Three (3) were entered into evidence.)

21 MR. NOBLES: (continuing)

22 Q Continuing with a few questions -- I'll get my statute
23 back out. So you got arrested in April. And when did you
24 enter your guilty plea, approximately?

25 A I think it was the 22nd or -- the 22nd.

1 Q Of July; right?

2 A Yes, sir. Yes.

3 Q And have you abused any medications since that -- any non-
4 prescribed drugs since that time?

5 A No, sir. I take weekly tests. I also have invested in
6 tests to take at home. Because one of the things I've lost
7 along the way was my trust with my family and my friends, and
8 my job now is to build that trust back up. And every day I
9 wake up happy and I'm so glad -- and I hope this comes out
10 right -- I am glad that this happened because it got me here
11 today, because I don't know where I would be maybe if April
12 20th didn't happen.

13 Q And have you at any time denied that you had a problem
14 that needed to be worked on?

15 A No, sir.

16 Q None?

17 A I take full responsibility for that.

18 Q Okay. In fact, has your wife stood by you through all of
19 this?

20 A She is definitely my better half and she has stuck with me
21 through all of this. My children, my coworkers, all my family
22 -- the support system I have is unbelievable, including the
23 school Lawson Elementary where I'm a teacher, where I've been
24 for 14 years now.

25 Q And your wife is here today, is she not?

1 A Yes, sir.

2 Q Okay. Now is it your understanding that you can go back
3 to -- which school were you at before?

4 A I'm at Lawson Elementary here in Pulaski County, where
5 I've been for 14 years. They're currently -- I have full
6 support from my principal, all the staff members, the
7 community. We're a small community school, and I want to be
8 that recovery story for them. It would've been easy for me to
9 run and hide and to, you know, let all this go away and
10 disappear and try to get my life back later on. I want to step
11 back in that school and be a recovery story for these kids and
12 their parents. Right now they have a position for me. I could
13 step back in there tomorrow, with your blessing.

14 Q And they are holding your position open?

15 A They have. Pulaski County has stood by me, and my school
16 and all the staff.

17 Q And you've seen the exhibits that were attached to the
18 packet?

19 A Yes, sir.

20 Q Are those -- some of those exhibits from people you work
21 with?

22 A Some are, yes, sir. Some are from parents, some are from
23 various members of that community.

24 Q And was your principal not one of those who's written --

25 A He is.

1 Q -- a recommendation?

2 A And he wanted to be here today. He was the gentleman that
3 was in an accident in Pine Bluff about a month or two ago. He
4 wanted to be here today, and I told him, I said, "You take care
5 of yourself this time; let me take care of this." And he's
6 been by my side the whole time.

7 Q And you've been a teacher for 14 years?

8 A 14 years at Lawson, 15 years with Pulaski County.

9 Q Have you ever wanted to do anything else in your career?

10 A Funny story, I actually teach at the school, Lawson, which
11 is where I went as a kid. So when I graduated college I had
12 one goal and that was to get back to Lawson and help those kids
13 in that community, just like I was helped. My own kids went to
14 that school. Now I'm a teacher there. It's much more than
15 just a job for me; it's a second home. And I plead and ask you
16 to please give me a chance to go back there to share my story,
17 to encourage others with the same problem I have.

18 Q Just one more question: are you ever going to let anything
19 like this happen again?

20 A No, sir. But this has been a great learning moment for
21 me. As a teacher, we always talk about putting tools in our
22 toolbox. I have a new tool in my toolbox. For one, I have
23 compassion now. I'm a forgiving person because I see how many
24 people have forgave me. Also, I know more about addiction than
25 I thought I ever would now. And I do ask you again please

1 consider my waiver. I would love to walk back in that school
2 with my head held high, ready to teach these kids again.

3 MR. NOBLES: Thank you, Mr. Little.

4 MR. LITTLE: Thank you.

5 MR. NOBLES: And that's it from us. We would
6 rest at this time, I suppose --

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

8 MR. NOBLES: -- and look forward to your
9 decision.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. Dugan, do you have anything
11 further?

12 MR. DUGAN: Waive closing, Madam Chair.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do you have a closure,
14 Mr. Nobles?

15 MR. NOBLES: I don't. I think I summed it up in
16 the opening and Mr. Little just summed it up. If
17 y'all have any more questions for Mr. Little, we'd
18 invite those.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'll check.

20 MR. NOBLES: Okay.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'm going to start on this end
22 down here.

23 Ms. McAdoo?

24 [clearing throat] Excuse me.

25 Dr. Moore? Mr. Williamson?

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes. Mr. Little --

2 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- are you active in a 12-step
4 program?

5 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir, I attend meetings -- it's
6 called Keep It Simple; it's located in Bryant,
7 Arkansas -- and I will continue to do that.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: You're working your program?

9 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay. Mrs. Little, I
11 understand it's hard. Ala-Non is out there; I don't
12 know if you're aware of that.

13 MRS. LITTLE: (Nodding head up and down.)

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: You know, I don't have a
15 problem giving somebody that's trying to help
16 themselves a second chance at all.

17 MR. LITTLE: And I appreciate that, sir.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Addiction affects in some way
19 or another probably everybody in this room. And I
20 hate that, you know, you went through all this, but I
21 can understand what you're saying that, you know, it
22 probably saved your life.

23 MR. LITTLE: It did. It did. Thank you.

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Anyway, that's where I am.

25 MR. LITTLE: I appreciate it.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. McFetridge?

2 MS. McFETRIDGE: What do you teach and what
3 grade level do you teach?

4 MR. LITTLE: The first three or four years of my
5 teaching I taught 2nd grade. For the last -- close
6 to 10 years -- well, eight -- I'd say between eight
7 and ten, I've taught 5th grade.

8 MS. McFETRIDGE: And what's your subject area?

9 MR. LITTLE: I teach math, science and social
10 studies, but I'm certified to teach all of it. Yes,
11 ma'am.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Dean? Ms. Chambers?

13 MS. CHAMBERS: So the waiver that we're talking
14 about is -- what does that look like? What's its
15 form? And maybe it's to Taylor that the question
16 goes to.

17 MR. NOBLES: It might be. Yes.

18 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am. Would you mind
19 repeating the question?

20 MS. CHAMBERS: Well, what form -- when we talk
21 about a waiver, what would the waiver look like?
22 What conditions, if any, would be associated with
23 that?

24 MR. DUGAN: So the Board could put conditions on
25 the waiver. It could grant a waiver flat-out and

1 then he wouldn't have any conditions, or they could
2 grant a waiver and put conditions on the Educator --
3 and those conditions are the ones that are in the
4 rules. A suggestion could be that he be on probation
5 during the time that he's on his criminal probation;
6 once he completes his criminal probation then that
7 will complete the probation for his waiver. The
8 Board could ask that he provide documentation of
9 meetings that he attends, that -- the Ala-Non or
10 something of that sort. So if there are trainings
11 that the Board would think that would be beneficial
12 to the Educator could be also -- if the Board granted
13 a waiver with these terms. So, yeah, the Board has
14 full discretion to do that.

15 MS. CHAMBERS: How long is the criminal
16 probation?

17 MR. DUGAN: So it is for 24 months. However, if
18 he does everything that he needs to do and, you know,
19 checks in with his probation officer, passed all drug
20 tests, in my experience one year.

21 And in your experience, Mr. Nobles, in Saline
22 County it would be about one year, wouldn't it?

23 MR. NOBLES: It would be one year. Right.

24 MR. DUGAN: Yeah. So --

25 MR. NOBLES: And the conditions aren't -- you

1 know, we don't have huge fines or anything. I fully
2 expect this will be done in a year. Some of --

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Microphone.

4 MR. NOBLES: Oh.

5 MR. DUGAN: It might be.

6 MR. NOBLES: Yeah, it could be a year. If he
7 meets all of his conditions -- he doesn't, you know,
8 refuse to meet with the probation officer or get in
9 any more trouble then of course we're looking at no
10 probation at all. But from my experience with him, I
11 don't see a time when he's not going to meet with
12 probation officers or pay his fines or do what's
13 required. I've represented a lot of defendants in
14 the criminal justice system, and you worry about some
15 of them. I don't worry about Mr. Little.

16 MS. CHAMBERS: But to the point, it does so help
17 to hear from an individual, and your sincerity is
18 very obvious. My concern -- and I don't know
19 anything about addiction -- my concern is the
20 recency; this just happened. And it's obvious that
21 you have a lot of support --

22 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

23 MS. CHAMBERS: -- and a lot of expectation that
24 you'll do well. I'm trying to figure out what the
25 Board's role might be though relative to insuring

1 that the kids over this period of time, as you
2 continue to create distance between the event --

3 MR. LITTLE: Right.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: -- and being through your
5 probation -- what we could do to insure that you are
6 successful. And I don't know, Taylor, if there any
7 things that you could recommend. Maybe it is --
8 maybe minutes and attendance to these meetings is
9 sufficient. But I very much appreciate your
10 testament.

11 MR. LITTLE: Thank you.

12 MR. NOBLES: Could I just say one thing?

13 Lawyers don't shut-up, do we?

14 He is still participating in Quapaw House;
15 correct?

16 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

17 MR. NOBLES: I don't think -- correct me if I'm
18 wrong -- that he'd have any objection at all of
19 providing or having progress reports provided to the
20 Board showing that he's doing what he needs to be
21 doing.

22 MS. CHAMBERS: Do they do some type of drug
23 testing, random drug testing?

24 MR. LITTLE: They did when I was in in-house
25 treatment. They haven't recently. But --

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Go to the microphone.

2 MR. LITTLE: Oh, I'm sorry. When I was in-house
3 they did, but since I've been out I've been drug-
4 tested by the probation officer monthly. But no, not
5 -- I can ask them or I can go get it tested
6 somewhere. You know, I will do whatever.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: As long as you have a probation
8 officer will they continue --

9 MR. LITTLE: Oh, yes, ma'am.

10 MS. CHAMBERS: -- to do tests?

11 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am, every month.

12 MS. CHAMBERS: Okay.

13 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: But that ends in a year?

15 MR. LITTLE: One year.

16 MR. NOBLES: Right. And if I could just
17 mention, if he comes back positive they will revoke
18 his probation. So that is something that's -- from
19 our standpoint, the school would report it to the
20 Department of Education immediately. So --

21 MS. CHAMBERS: It's something that could be
22 factored into the waiver?

23 MR. NOBLES: Right. And if he flunks any drug
24 tests then probation is done.

25 MS. CHAMBERS: Okay. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Dr. Hill?

2 DR. HILL: I understood that -- that's from the
3 school -- the school has those -- like your principal
4 you were saying is the person that you were -- is not
5 here today. Do they have parameters that you've got
6 lines within the school as well?

7 MR. LITTLE: I'm sorry. Not that I know of.

8 DR. HILL: Okay.

9 MR. LITTLE: But I -- like I said --

10 DR. HILL: Since that's your support group --

11 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

12 DR. HILL: So, and I've dealt with it before. I
13 was just -- you know, as a -- as your institution
14 that you're with each and every day --

15 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

16 DR. HILL: -- they see you every day.

17 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

18 DR. HILL: And so I'm going to support your
19 opportunity --

20 MR. LITTLE: Thank you.

21 DR. HILL: -- to do that --

22 MR. LITTLE: Thank you.

23 DR. HILL: -- to get back in there. But I think
24 the people that you're working with each and every
25 day are the people that you're most accountable to --

1 MR. LITTLE: Absolutely.

2 DR. HILL: -- and the people that you see are
3 the ones that you should adhere your responsible
4 behavior to. And they should even be more so
5 concerned, because we won't see you.

6 MR. LITTLE: Right.

7 DR. HILL: So even though we put the pre-
8 requisites or requirements in there, we don't meet
9 but once a month.

10 MR. LITTLE: Right.

11 DR. HILL: I want to know who's seeing you every
12 day.

13 MR. LITTLE: Right.

14 DR. HILL: And then if your behavior becomes
15 something of such -- then they have an opportunity to
16 do that. So that's my concern, that that institution
17 that's working with him on a day-to-day basis have an
18 opportunity to -- at any time there may seem to be
19 erratic behavior that they have an opportunity to say
20 -- to be able to pull a drug test or be able to do
21 anything.

22 MR. DUGAN: And, Dr. Hill, thank you for that
23 response. Because the Board, in my, you know, brief
24 time helping out with these cases, has put that
25 condition on Educators to where they had to provide

1 some type of documentation from the school.

2 DR. HILL: Yes.

3 MR. DUGAN: And I know Mr. Little does have
4 support of his principal, just that he doesn't have
5 any violations.

6 DR. HILL: Right. Because I mean if something
7 happens in two weeks it would be next month before we
8 hear it. So I want to know who's there every day for
9 those babies, the kids, because he's working with
10 babies now.

11 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Newton?

13 MS. NEWTON: Thank you for coming and taking
14 responsibility and being willing --

15 MR. LITTLE: Thank you.

16 MS. NEWTON: -- to use this as a growing
17 experience. I guess my question would be, Mr.
18 Taylor, could we then -- if we did a year probation
19 and then the requirement of the monthly drug test,
20 but also at the end of the year could we get
21 something back from -- I don't know if you plan on
22 continuing with Quapaw for the full year -- or get
23 from some professional that at the end of the year he
24 has been clean and is still on-track to maintain his
25 drug-free lifestyle. Would that be something that

1 would be possible?

2 MR. DUGAN: I think that sounds fantastic. Yes,
3 ma'am.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. Pekron?

5 MR. PEKRON: Mr. Dugan, as you know, we had two
6 cases earlier today that we pulled from the Consent
7 Agenda for different, but related, circumstances.
8 Could you talk a little bit about the matrix and how
9 if this had not been quite what it was how it
10 would've been reflected in the matrix?

11 MR. DUGAN: Yes, sir, Mr. Pekron. I would -- my
12 response would be that PLSB cases have their certain
13 -- they have to apply the Code of Ethics to the
14 Educator. And in this situation since this was a
15 criminal offense that wasn't on school grounds, those
16 types of things, it wouldn't fall within the Code of
17 Ethics.

18 MR. PEKRON: Mr. Little, I feel compelled to ask
19 you a difficult question.

20 MR. LITTLE: Go right ahead, sir.

21 MR. PEKRON: Were you ever under the influence
22 when you were teaching?

23 MR. LITTLE: No, sir. But I will be honest.
24 When I -- after my surgeries there were times when I
25 had taken pain pills, but never an abundance. But I

1 want to be honest with you -- yes, to get me through
2 the day because of my surgeries, yes, sir, I have
3 taken pain pills before I left the house in the
4 morning or at lunch maybe taken one just for my feet.
5 Yes, sir.

6 MR. PEKRON: But not any illicit substance?

7 MR. LITTLE: Oh, no, sir. No, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. Williamson.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. I just want everybody to
10 understand -- and I know you've heard this time and
11 time again, and your family has too. But this is --
12 this disease of addiction it won't ever end for him.
13 He'll have to fight this for the rest of his life.
14 And, you know, getting a drug test, Ouida, like you
15 said, at the end of the year -- I mean that's just a
16 flash in time. This is something that he and his
17 family will fight for the rest of their lives.

18 And do you have a sponsor? I meant to ask you
19 that earlier.

20 MR. LITTLE: I do not have a sponsor. I've been
21 meeting with a therapist. I have not got a sponsor
22 yet.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay. I think that's really,
24 really important to get one. If you're active in a
25 12-step program they're going to make you get one.

1 MR. LITTLE: Right.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: And I think that's -- to me
3 that's more evidence that you're in a 12-step
4 program.

5 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: And I mean, you know, I can't
7 control that; you know that. But I would really try
8 to compel you to get that.

9 MR. LITTLE: I will.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: It will be a lot of help. And
11 there are going to be some crappy days. Okay.

12 MR. LITTLE: Thank you.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: So you've just got to hang in
14 there and you just -- you've got to stay focused on
15 that.

16 MR. LITTLE: If I can say this, it's like I've
17 been born again because --

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Come back to the microphone.

19 MR. LITTLE: Oh, I'm sorry. There were so many
20 years that I went through life on pain pills that it
21 was one of the first things I thought of every
22 morning. And now when I wake up I think about what
23 I'm going to do productive for the day and how I'm
24 going to get better each day. So it's a lifestyle
25 change, like you were talking about.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: It really is.

2 MR. LITTLE: So I appreciate that.

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: It really, really is. I can't
4 stress that enough. The only way to get over it is
5 to die.

6 MR. LITTLE: Exactly.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay. And, you know, I don't
8 want you dying next week and I'd rather you retire
9 and spend some time with your family for awhile and
10 die when you're supposed to.

11 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

12 MR. WILLIAMSON: Okay. I do think that I would
13 put a condition on anything that we do that, you
14 know, you get a sponsor. Okay.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. McAdoo.

16 MS. McADOO: At one point when you were sharing
17 with us you mentioned that you wanted to be the
18 recovery story for your community. When I was in
19 elementary we had the D.A.R.E. program. Have you had
20 any thoughts or communication with your school or the
21 district to see how that might look in partnership
22 with --

23 MR. LITTLE: I have not -- sorry. I have not
24 yet, but I didn't -- to be honest I hadn't thought of
25 the D.A.R.E. program. I was thinking more like a

1 good support group for the parents of the community.
2 But to incorporate the D.A.R.E. program into the
3 school, that is a great idea. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. McFetridge.

5 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'm just curious, what is your
6 pain level now? Are you still suffering from your
7 surgeries?

8 MR. LITTLE: Ma'am? I'm sorry.

9 MS. McFETRIDGE: Are you still suffering from
10 your surgeries?

11 MR. LITTLE: No, ma'am.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: What is your pain level now?

13 MR. LITTLE: It's at a zero. I -- it's amazing
14 once you admit you have a problem with pain pills and
15 you ask the Lord to help you. It's -- my life is so
16 much better today than it was just six months ago,
17 and I truly believe without the Lord's help I
18 wouldn't be here today. And then the Lord has worked
19 mysterious things in my life; just -- I feel no pain
20 anymore, I really don't. And I think I was -- my
21 heart always wanted to do what was right, but my mind
22 wouldn't let me. And now my mind understands that I
23 can live in this world without ever taking a pill
24 again, and that's where I'm at today. So my pain
25 level is gone, to be honest with you. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Anyone else?

2 Did this go through drug court? Do y'all have
3 drug court there in that county?

4 MR. NOBLES: We do. It did not go through drug
5 court. No.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

7 MR. NOBLES: We took the First Offender
8 probation instead and the terms that were offered.
9 It was advantageous to plea to the charges and be on
10 probation and serve his time and get off in a year.
11 So --

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Thank you.

13 Any other questions, comments?

14 Do I have a motion?

15 MR. PEKRON: I'd actually like to make a
16 comment.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

18 MR. PEKRON: Mr. Little, I commend you for
19 everything that you've done. I think you're on the
20 right path. I'm concerned that this is too soon and
21 that -- I'm concerned about the precedent that we
22 would be setting here. My thought would be that a
23 one-year suspension would be the appropriate
24 resolution. I don't know how prior cases have been
25 treated in the past, but that's my feeling.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do you want to make a
2 motion to that effect and see if you get a second, or
3 do you want to discuss it with your other people
4 first?

5 MR. PEKRON: I'd like to hear if anybody else
6 has any other thoughts on that.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Does anybody have any
8 thoughts or reactions to the comments by Mr. Pekron?

9 Ms. Chambers.

10 MS. CHAMBERS: It's where I started, it's the
11 recency. Everyone I think that's heard your story is
12 pulling for you; you just haven't had much time yet,
13 and I was trying to think -- and to your point on
14 precedent. Is there some way while you're on
15 probation and probably most vulnerable in terms of
16 really living this new discipline, is there some way
17 to insure that the kids are safe and that you are
18 clean? And that's what I was wrestling with. Is
19 there some way to do that to bridge during this time?
20 And I don't know.

21 MR. LITTLE: Can I -- may I explain?

22 MS. CHAMBERS: Please.

23 MR. LITTLE: And I genuinely appreciate both
24 concerns. And if you don't mind, I'm going to go
25 back to what Dr. Hill said; the people that can hold

1 me accountable the most, besides my wife and my
2 children, are my coworkers -- and they see me as much
3 or more than my own family. Again, everyone in that
4 building understands what I went through. They know
5 my story just like you guys do now. Going to see
6 them five out of the seven days every week for me or
7 for them would -- they would be able to see the
8 transformation I've made. It's not them hearing
9 about it, like I'm telling you guys, but they would
10 be able to see it on a daily basis. And I promise
11 you they would be the first to tell you, "Hey, he
12 doesn't need to be in the building anymore." But
13 what I think is going to happen is it's going to be
14 just the opposite and they're going to be, "Yes, he
15 is that recovery story." And I know the time is
16 soon, I do -- but I don't know if there's anybody
17 that's wanted to beat this addiction as bad as me
18 that's ever stood up here. I will not go back.
19 There's nothing that could happen in my life that
20 would push me backwards. I love my life the way it
21 is today. And I respectfully respect your opinions,
22 but every day I get better. I'll never take a step
23 backward. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Did any of the people that you
25 spend your time with in the schools bring to the

1 attention of you or the principal their concern prior
2 to the April?

3 MR. LITTLE: No, ma'am. No, ma'am.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So the people that you're saying
5 are your support --

6 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- did not recognize the issue?

8 MR. LITTLE: No, ma'am. And like I was saying
9 earlier, this stuff -- I was a functioning addict
10 where I thought I could -- you know, it would help me
11 get through the day instead of being someone that
12 just did it for the pleasure. I -- you know, I
13 convinced myself "oh, I need it to do this." And --
14 no, ma'am.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Thank you.

16 Ms. Dean.

17 MS. DEAN: So this happened on April 20th of
18 this year?

19 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

20 MS. DEAN: You spent a month at Quapaw?

21 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

22 MS. DEAN: And you graduated May 22nd?

23 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

24 MS. DEAN: So what have you been doing until
25 now?

1 MR. LITTLE: I have a weekly -- do you mean like
2 for recovery?

3 MS. DEAN: Well, as far as occupation, any work.

4 MR. LITTLE: I was still getting summer pay
5 because I did not get suspended until the letter -- I
6 think it was August something.

7 MS. DEAN: Okay.

8 MR. LITTLE: So I had all my summer pay and all
9 that.

10 MS. DEAN: Summer pay. Okay.

11 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

12 MS. DEAN: If you were not able to go back to
13 teaching immediately, what would be -- what's your
14 alternative?

15 MR. LITTLE: I'll be honest, I'm -- I came here
16 hoping that I would be given a chance to go back into
17 teaching. I have been -- I made an impact while I
18 was at the recovery centers by working with the other
19 people. And a couple of my therapists have suggested
20 maybe working with kids that are in addiction
21 facilities. So that's an option. But I'll be
22 honest, I want to go back to my school. I want to
23 walk in there and be that positive role model again.

24 MS. DEAN: Thank you.

25 MR. LITTLE: Thank you.

1 MS. DEAN: Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Dr. Hill.

3 DR. HILL: Yeah, just a comment. I am kind of
4 like -- I mean both -- when we're talking about too
5 soon, I think that can be looked at both ways. And I
6 say that because y'all know how I feel about out-of-
7 school suspension. You suspend some person away from
8 an environment that can help them and then you want
9 them to do better; but the people who they need to be
10 with they're not with them and they're out in the
11 streets with people they don't need to be with. So
12 if we ever want to see him be empowered -- and I
13 understand, because I'm thinking about my children in
14 that situation; if it was not a small community -- an
15 urban big city and nobody could hold each other
16 accountable -- how big is the town?

17 MR. LITTLE: We have a school that we're lucky
18 to have 300 kids in the whole school. But I think we
19 had 250 last year.

20 DR. HILL: And that's my point of accountability
21 with the school. Brett mentioned a sponsor.

22 MR. WILLIAMSON: That's critical. That's
23 critical.

24 DR. HILL: I think that as he -- that's it. And
25 so, but I would like to see that sponsor be somebody

1 at the school, because everybody is accountable when
2 a child is hurt; I mean the whole -- the entire
3 institution, and so I think it has to be an effort.
4 Teamwork will make the dream work in your instance.

5 MR. LITTLE: Yes, sir.

6 DR. HILL: And if you don't have a good team,
7 supporting team, you're going to cause everybody to
8 sink. And so you've got to hitch up to a quality
9 support team that's going to be there with you. And
10 that's my concern is the accountability from your
11 teammates to hold you accountable -- and if that is
12 not in place, then I'm against it. As long as those
13 people will hold him accountable to those
14 expectations -- because in this case expectation
15 drives performance. That's what he has to do; he has
16 to perform that way each and every day. But I'm not
17 opposed to throwing him out of a situation that could
18 actually be empowering to help him get to this next
19 level through some transitional period. That's my
20 feeling. But I don't know what that is because it
21 hasn't been put out there. So those are my
22 conditions for that.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Chambers.

24 MS. CHAMBERS: So I'm ready to make a motion,
25 with help.

1 One of the things I so appreciate about this
2 Board is we work really hard at trying to be
3 consistent and being mindful of precedent, but never
4 taking our eye off the individual circumstance that
5 we're facing. So that's what you're hearing today.

6 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: Which is I think our role, our
8 responsibility.

9 I'd like to move that we give you a waiver with
10 conditions. I'm going to solicit the conditions from
11 the -- from my peers. Certainly one is a mentor or
12 supervisor.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: A sponsor.

14 MS. CHAMBERS: A sponsor. And, Taylor, I'm
15 assuming what makes most appropriate bookends for
16 this timeframe is during the probation, although I'll
17 solicit if folks think it needs to be longer.

18 MR. DUGAN: It doesn't have to be, Ms. Chambers,
19 for the criminal probation to run concurrent. When
20 I've looked at old State Board orders I've seen
21 that's what the Board has done in the past, that
22 they've run probation concurrent to the person's
23 criminal probation. But the Board does not have to
24 do that. Like Mr. Nobles said, you know, if he does
25 everything right it could be one year; if the Board

1 wanted to have probation longer than that, obviously
2 that's an option. So y'all aren't bound to that, but
3 that is something y'all have done in the past.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: So I'll just take a cut at this.
5 Given this is -- you were taking that medication for
6 five years --

7 MR. LITTLE: Yes, ma'am.

8 MS. CHAMBERS: -- and you've just been clean for
9 three months, four months, so I'll recommend 24
10 months for the conditions that we're suggesting. I
11 too think it's important that the drug testing
12 continue -- I mean, obviously you're participating in
13 that -- and that would be part of this, one of the
14 conditions.

15 Are there others that individuals would want to
16 see in this?

17 MS. NEWTON: I think recently we had a case
18 where we had a principal or a supervisor give some
19 letter of support. Was it by semester -- I think
20 each semester that the person was, you know, still on
21 track, still doing their job, still -- so that would
22 be four times during that --

23 MS. CHAMBERS: 24 months.

24 MS. NEWTON: -- 24 months.

25 MR. DUGAN: So every six months, Ms. Newton --

1 MS. NEWTON: Yeah.

2 MR. DUGAN: -- provide that?

3 MS. NEWTON: At the end of each semester provide
4 that letter that he is on track and doing what is
5 being asked. And during that second year I'm
6 assuming there probably wouldn't be any more drug
7 testing by a probation officer. So do we want to
8 maybe have a couple of times in there, have some drug
9 testing also?

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Monthly.

11 MS. NEWTON: Monthly. Okay.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'm assuming the drug tests that
13 are done now are at the expense of the -- whatever
14 unit the probation officer works for.

15 MR. NOBLES: Of the State.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And the drug tests that were
17 done after the -- if he gets out from under probation
18 during this second probation by us you'd have to
19 stipulate who would -- at whose expense that drug
20 test would be done.

21 MS. NEWTON: I would say at the expense of the
22 Educator.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

24 MR. NOBLES: And I'd also ask that you speculate
25 -- you stipulate what type of drug test is it going

1 to be.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah.

3 MR. NOBLES: There's urine, urinalysis --

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: There's urine, there's hair,
5 there's several different things.

6 MS. NEWTON: Yeah, I don't know, so I'll pass on
7 that one.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Well, I don't know -- I know --

9 MR. PEKRON: What does the probation office do?

10 MR. NOBLES: Urine.

11 MS. CHAMBERS: How about a continuation of that?

12 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. And the probation officer
14 has a clear understanding of how long the drug stays
15 in your system?

16 MR. NOBLES: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Okay. Does anybody else
18 want to add anything to Ms. Chambers' motion?

19 Do I have a second?

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: We have a motion by Ms.
22 Chambers, second by Mr. Williamson.

23 Let's take a voice-vote please.

24 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Pekron.

25 MR. PEKRON: No.

1 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Hill.
2 DR. HILL: Yes.
3 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Williamson.
4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes.
5 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Chambers.
6 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.
7 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. McFetridge.
8 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes.
9 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Moore.
10 DR. MOORE: Yes.
11 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Newton.
12 MS. NEWTON: Yes.
13 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Dean.
14 MS. DEAN: Yes.
15 SECRETARY KEY: Okay.
16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Six-one. Okay. Let's see if I
17 can restate this. You have a waiver to continue
18 teaching. You will be under this Board's probation
19 for 24 months. After your other probation is over,
20 you will at your expense be given a drug test. And
21 we will expect from your principal, whoever that
22 might be, a letter at the end of each semester. Is
23 that correct?
24 Okay.
25 MR. DUGAN: And just to clarify, was something

1 with a sponsor too? Because I did have that in my
2 notes.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Oh, yes.

4 MS. NEWTON: Yeah, I'm sorry.

5 MR. WILLIAMSON: That's what I was about to say.
6 We didn't get that included in there.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: So I'd like to alter the
9 previous motion that, you know --

10 MS. CHAMBERS: I think it was in there.

11 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah, she had it. I just didn't
13 restate it. And I think it doesn't need to be
14 somebody random at your school; it needs to be
15 someone who understands the responsibility of a
16 sponsor in an AA program or NA program.

17 MS. McFETRIDGE: Can we ask for a letter from
18 the sponsor as well, quarterly? I think that would
19 be helpful.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Well, you'd have to make another
21 motion. This motion has already passed.

22 MS. McFETRIDGE: No, I think we're fine.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I mean that's fine if you want
24 another motion. It's just I can't --

25 MS. McFETRIDGE: No.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. You're excused.

2 MR. NOBLES: Thank you.

3 DR. HILL: We trust you.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. Dugan --

5 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- here are the ones that we
7 passed as written, and the ones that were pulled are
8 in the front. And the one -- this one that needs to
9 be rewritten --

10 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am. I'll draft an order
11 this afternoon.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

13 A-3: STATE BOARD REVIEW OF PLSB EVIDENTIARY HEARING
14 RECOMMENDATION - JERRI LYN ODOM

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: The Odom case is the one I have
16 next, but I don't see it in our --

17 MR. DUGAN: And so the PLSB cases I haven't put
18 in there because if they have the transcripts and all
19 the evidence they're around 400 to 500 pages each.
20 So those are the ones I sent through the secure
21 server.

22 For Ms. Odom's case -- and I'd emailed the Board
23 the Motion for Continuance --

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

25 MR. DUGAN: -- from the Educator's attorney.

1 I'm excited that the Educator has gotten an attorney;
2 I think it's great when folks get attorneys and are
3 represented. So I have no objection to that
4 continuance. She just retained counsel and it
5 already -- it had been after the agenda item was
6 placed. Around Tuesday or Wednesday of last week is
7 when Mr. Hensley contacted me stating that he was
8 going to represent her. But that's why I asked for
9 something in writing, because as you can see from the
10 case number on this one it's a 2017 case and I'm
11 trying to get them moving. And so, he asked for this
12 continuance for the -- to be put on the October
13 agenda; so I have no objection to that.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do I have a motion to
15 that effect?

16 MR. PEKRON: So moved.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Moved by Mr. Pekron. Second?

18 DR. MOORE: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'm sorry? Oh, okay. Dr.
20 Moore. I couldn't -- I didn't look fast enough.

21 Motion by Mr. Pekron, second by Dr. Moore.

22 All those in favor?

23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Against?

25 There being none, the motion passes.

1 A-4: STATE BOARD REVIEW OF PLSB EVIDENTIARY HEARING

2 RECOMMENDATION - ROBERT TOMAS EDWARDS, III

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And the next case is Robert
4 Tomas Edwards, III.

5 MR. DUGAN: That's correct. And this is the one
6 that Mr. Pekron had removed from the Consent Agenda
7 last month.

8 And so, Ms. Freno, did you want to introduce
9 this one or would you like me to introduce it?

10 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Freno points to Mr.
11 Dugan.)

12 MR. DUGAN: Okay. I'll go grab my other binder.
13 The reason I didn't put this one in that binder is
14 because you will see that in PLSB cases they each get
15 their own.

16 So this is Mr. Robert Tomas Edwards, III. We
17 had an evidentiary hearing on this case a few months
18 back, and in that case the board had recommended the
19 sanction of probation with the trainings and the
20 fine, and Mr. Edwards had accepted that.

21 So I'll let Mr. Coleman come on up, and Mr.
22 Edwards. These are the two --

23 MR. PEKRON: Mr. Dugan, before they start I'd
24 just like to say that I'm recusing from further
25 consideration --

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

2 MR. PEKRON: -- of this matter.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Freno, does -- or Mr. Dugan,
4 one, when he recuses does he have to leave the room
5 or can he just not vote?

6 MR. PEKRON: I'll just leave.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Well, wait just a second and
8 we'll listen, because we'll need to know at some
9 point for others as well.

10 MS. FRENO: Lori Freno, Department -- or DESE.
11 He said that he would leave. I mean it probably is
12 the best idea if he leaves. There is no actual
13 criteria, as long as he doesn't vote.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right. And so it's up to you;
15 you can leave or just not vote.

16 MR. PEKRON: I'll step out.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

18 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Mr. Pekron exited the
19 room.)

20 MS. FRENO: And while we're here I just want to
21 point out that -- and Mr. Dugan can help me with this
22 -- but today, if it is determined that there is going
23 to be a full hearing on this, this is something that
24 there will not be a hearing today on, very similar to
25 like a charter when -- if you decide to reconsider.

1 At that point there has to be an opportunity for both
2 parties to brief the matter and bring it before the
3 Board.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank you.

5 MR. DUGAN: And so this is Section 16 of the
6 rules dealing with the Code of Ethics for Educators
7 where the State Board may remove a PLSB
8 recommendation, kind of like this morning, from the
9 Consent Agenda; and that the State Board will request
10 that the review be placed on the Action Agenda for
11 its next available regularly scheduled monthly board
12 meeting and provide its rationale for the review.
13 And at this meeting the Educator or his attorney may
14 elect to appear at the subsequent review meeting and
15 have the opportunity to make a statement at the board
16 review for up to 10 minutes, and the PLSB may have up
17 to 10 minutes also.

18 And so Mr. Coleman is the attorney that
19 represents the Educator in this case. And I spoke
20 with him prior to this -- and the rules state that he
21 goes first, but he asked if I would go first. And I
22 have no objection if the Board has no objection to me
23 going first.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So the -- what we're deciding
25 right now is if we believe that there is enough

1 information to go forward with a hearing, but not to
2 actually have the hearing today?

3 MR. DUGAN: So I would say that -- and always
4 giving benefit to the Educator -- is that he be
5 afforded the time to review all those documents,
6 review all the transcripts and be able to have ample
7 time to review all the hearing transcript, and make a
8 brief and write a brief, and be able to come and
9 argue that brief. So I would just ask the Board that
10 today, after sending those documents to the Board,
11 that the Board has reviewed -- after hopefully
12 reading the transcript from the hearing that was had
13 and --

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

15 MR. DUGAN: -- all the exhibits that it falls in
16 line with that sanctioning matrix, which our
17 guidelines -- and that the sanction was appropriate
18 from the evidence that was presented at that hearing.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. So what we're deciding is
20 whether or not -- after you all read the full
21 transcript, whether or not we think that the evidence
22 is such that we want another full hearing, which
23 would be next month; or do we believe once we have
24 seen all the evidence and read all the evidence that
25 we believe that PLSB made the proper recommendation.

1 Okay.

2 MR. DUGAN: And would y'all like to know what
3 that recommendation was?

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: That would be great.

5 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: The first and the second
7 recommendation.

8 MR. DUGAN: And so do you remember, Eric, the
9 first recommendation? Would you mind providing me
10 with that? I remember there was a suspension.

11 MR. JAMES: Two year suspension.

12 MR. DUGAN: Two years. So the only difference
13 was it was a suspension of license for two years;
14 assess a \$75 fine; require Educator to complete the
15 following course-works, and there were two trainings
16 for him to complete; and required the Educator to
17 prepare a written reflection for each book, due
18 within 90 days of the State Board order; provide
19 copies of curriculum required by the University; and
20 require Mr. Edwards to pay -- or Dr. Edwards to pay
21 all of those costs.

22 After we had the hearing that day -- I believe
23 it was back in -- was it back in April?

24 MR. COLEMAN: April 26th.

25 MR. DUGAN: April. Back in April we had a full

1 hearing. We had witnesses presented, exhibits
2 presented, and Mr. Edwards testified, but also he had
3 members of his board come and testify. And I think
4 -- I can't speak for our Evidentiary Hearing Panel,
5 but I think that was some of the most persuasive
6 evidence and was why they modified the sanction from
7 the Ethics Subcommittee. Because in the process with
8 the PLSB what happens is the case -- someone makes an
9 allegation, and then it's validated by Mr. James; and
10 then it's taken to the Ethics Subcommittee and they
11 authorize whether or not to investigate; and then
12 it's assigned to an investigator -- they go
13 investigate, they go and make a report, and they
14 provide just that report to the Ethics Subcommittee;
15 and the Ethics Subcommittee reviews that and makes a
16 recommendation of that sanction, which the Educator
17 can either accept that or reject that and ask for an
18 evidentiary hearing. And one thing I love about
19 evidentiary hearings is people getting to bring in
20 their own witnesses, bring their own exhibits, and
21 letting those Evidentiary Hearing Panel members judge
22 the credibility of those witnesses. And so I think
23 that after having the hearing they were able to make
24 their determinations and deliberate in executive
25 session and came to an appropriate sanction after

1 being present at that hearing and with the evidence
2 that was presented at that hearing.

3 MS. CHAMBERS: I'm sorry. And so the second
4 recommendation was?

5 MR. DUGAN: Probation. They -- yeah, so they
6 had changed the suspension to probation of two years.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: Thank you.

8 MS. NEWTON: So do you think, based on what you
9 heard that day, that this was the appropriate
10 sanction?

11 MR. DUGAN: I do. And ultimately what -- I just
12 really love hearings, I do. And the reason I love
13 hearings is people getting to come and bring evidence
14 that was not just, you know, written out. They're
15 able to bring witnesses, bring letters of support, or
16 maybe make an argument that hey, here's something --
17 a different way to look at this. And so we had our
18 panel members there, and I believe that this one we
19 -- who did we all have on the panel? We had three of
20 our panel members that, you know, came to a
21 concurrence after hearing all those witnesses and
22 reviewing all the evidence that this would be an
23 appropriate sanction. Because, again, I remember the
24 board members at the hearing really testifying to the
25 fact that they appreciated Mr. Edwards' work with the

1 district as the superintendent; he was a new
2 superintendent. And, again, credibility and
3 everything like that always comes into play when you
4 have a hearing, so --

5 Is there anything, Mr. Coleman, you'd like to
6 add?

7 MR. COLEMAN: No, that's good.

8 MR. DUGAN: And so if the Board believes that --
9 after reviewing that transcript that that was an
10 appropriate sanction, then the Board can, you know,
11 move to accept that; or if they do not, then what I
12 would do is I would provide Mr. Coleman that
13 transcript and all that stuff, so that way he could
14 fully brief it and be able to have the opportunity to
15 really present argument.

16 If anybody has any questions --

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: I'm looking for somebody to
18 make a move here.

19 MR. COLEMAN: I will tell y'all I spent a lot of
20 time, effort and energy --

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Come a little closer to the mic.

22 MR. COLEMAN: -- putting a presentation together
23 for the PLSB, and he has accepted that recommendation
24 for purposes of the hearing or meeting here today.
25 It's my impression that both the PLSB and my client

1 are agreeable to what the result was from the April
2 26th hearing, and we would urge that acceptance to
3 this Board.

4 MR. DUGAN: Mr. Edwards is here today, Ladies
5 and Gentleman, if the Board has questions of Mr.
6 Edwards.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: That would be appropriate even
8 though we're not having a hearing, the full hearing?

9 MR. COLEMAN: I might not want to do that --

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I started to say --

11 MR. COLEMAN: -- if we're not going to have a
12 full hearing --

13 MR. DUGAN: Okay.

14 MR. COLEMAN: -- unless we have a full hearing.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Not to suggest to his attorney
16 that that might be a bad idea, but --

17 So did everyone have the -- I know we've been
18 having lots of meetings this month. Did everyone
19 have an opportunity to read the full transcript that
20 was provided us?

21 [AFFIRMATIVE ANSWERS AND NODS]

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

23 MS. DEAN: So what we're doing is --

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Deciding whether to have a full
25 hearing or go with PLSB's second recommendation, not

1 their original.

2 MS. DEAN: And your client is okay with the
3 recommendation?

4 MR. COLEMAN: Yes, ma'am.

5 MS. DEAN: Okay. So I move to accept the
6 recommendation of the PLSB and not to review.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do I have a second?

8 DR. MOORE: I'll second that. I think -- I
9 don't remember -- I think I originally seconded the
10 pulling of it last month. And I think after reading
11 the transcript we had much more information, and so I
12 feel comfortable moving forward.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. So I have a motion by Ms.
14 Dean, a second by Dr. Moore to accept the second
15 recommendation of PLSB that was presented to us last
16 month.

17 Roll-call.

18 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Hill.

19 DR. HILL: Yes.

20 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Williamson.

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes.

22 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Chambers.

23 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.

24 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. McFetridge.

25 MS. MCFETRIDGE: Yes.

1 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Moore.

2 DR. MOORE: Yes.

3 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Newton.

4 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

5 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Dean.

6 MS. DEAN: Yes.

7 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. Seven votes yea.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Motion passed. We will accept
9 the recommendation; no hearing next month.

10 MR. COLEMAN: Thank you all. Appreciate it.

11 MR. DUGAN: You're welcome, Mr. Coleman.

12 A-7: CONSIDERATION OF WAIVER OF DISQUALIFYING OFFENSE - RICK
13 NAPIER

14 MR. DUGAN: And, Ms. Zook, will we hear Mr.
15 Napier's --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'll have to ask my Board.

17 MR. DUGAN: Okay, thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Typically, when we add
19 something to the agenda it's heard at the end of the
20 business day, the action agenda. Do you want to wait
21 and hear the Napier case at the end of today, or do
22 you want to go ahead and hear it now since it is a --
23 also a case of a teacher waiver?

24 MS. NEWTON: Now.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do I have a motion?

1 MS. NEWTON: I move that we hear it now.

2 MS. DEAN: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Newton moved; Ms. Dean
4 seconded.

5 All in favor?

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

8 Okay. Would someone get Mr. Pekron? He may not
9 have known it wasn't going to --

10 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Mr. Pekron returns to
11 his seat on the Board.)

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: There he is.

13 MR. DUGAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, this item,
14 like Ms. Zook mentioned --

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: This is in your folder, by the
16 way -- the last item in your folder.

17 MR. DUGAN: This is an item, Ladies and
18 Gentlemen, that just was added to the agenda.
19 There's two things that Mr. Napier would need motions
20 on today: whether or not he gets a waiver, because it
21 does deal with the criminal offense; and then,
22 secondly, under our new rules the reinstatement of
23 his license that was revoked back in 1999.

24 And so I'm going to proceed, Madam Chair, going
25 through kind of the disqualifying offense first. And

1 what I have in the last bit of the packet is the
2 documents that I've put together for Mr. Napier's
3 case. Mr. Napier was able to get this all completed.
4 It was about 4:00 yesterday, wasn't it, Mr. Napier?

5 MR. NAPIER: Yes, sir.

6 MR. DUGAN: Yes, sir. So we're going to go
7 through those a little bit together, and if you guys
8 have any questions please let me know.

9 But the disqualifying offense notice I sent to
10 Mr. Napier yesterday via email, letting him know that
11 the charge of bank fraud, when I was analyzing it and
12 I looked at the criminal information from the 1998
13 case, and I looked at 6-17-410, I felt that it could
14 fit in with the forgery and the theft of property
15 statutes; so it fell under 6-17-410 that he would
16 need to get a waiver of that disqualifying offense.
17 That was a charge back in 1998, and that was the
18 charge that led to the revocation of his license in
19 1999.

20 Mr. Napier did request that he would ask this
21 Board for a waiver. I attached in pages 5 through I
22 believe it's 13 -- 5 through 15, that is the
23 information about the charge way back in 1998 in
24 which Mr. Napier was convicted of bank fraud and
25 false statements. He was sentenced to six months in

1 the federal penitentiary and that he have five years
2 of supervised probation. He did complete that
3 probation, and I'll talk more about that because
4 that's one of the requirements with the reinstatement
5 of a revoked license -- to show that he completed all
6 that. But he did complete all of that in 2004, paid
7 all restitution, completed that probation, and has
8 had no other offenses since. And that's the first
9 issue. If there's any questions of me as far as
10 whether or not the Board would grant -- do a motion
11 to grant a waiver of this disqualifying offense, or
12 if they have questions of Mr. Napier here as far as
13 that goes -- but I felt that there would need to be
14 separate motions.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do you have a recommendation?

16 MR. DUGAN: I would say grant the waiver. It's
17 been a long time. That way, y'all could hear the
18 reinstatement of a revoked license.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do I have a motion to
20 that effect?

21 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to approve.

22 MS. DEAN: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Motion by Ms. Chambers, second
24 by Ms. Dean.

25 All those in favor?

1 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

3 Motion passes. You may proceed.

4 MR. DUGAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 So now we're to the reinstatement of a revoked
6 license, and this would be governed under the
7 emergency rules of Educator Licensure. And the
8 procedures for this case are very similar to the
9 background check procedures, is that each party will
10 have 5 minutes to make an opening statement; then
11 each party will have 10 minutes to present their
12 cases; and then, finally, would have 5 minutes for
13 closing.

14 I'm just going to reserve the right of waiving
15 an opening and just will present the case for the
16 documents. But if Mr. Napier -- if you would like to
17 make an opening statement?

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: First of all, would you stand
19 and let me swear him in?

20 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am. Are you the only
21 witness?

22 MR. NAPIER: Yes.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do you swear or affirm that the
24 testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,
25 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

1 MR. NAPIER: Yes, ma'am.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: All right. Thank you. You may
3 proceed.

4 MR. NAPIER: I was here back in July of last
5 year; I think most of you remember me. And I was
6 told at that time that I needed to get with our local
7 Senator and Representative and try to have a -- get a
8 bill passed that would become an act to help someone
9 in my --

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: We didn't ask for a lot, did we?

11 MR. NAPIER: Not a lot. It was a long, hard
12 road.

13 But just to kind of refresh your memory about
14 me, I was -- I live in a real rural area in Arkansas;
15 we're about 50 miles north of Russellville, about 40
16 miles south of Harrison. My wife, who's with me
17 today, she's a principal of a rural school. And back
18 in 2000 -- the reason I really got real interested in
19 it, after I had my license revoked I coached AAA
20 basketball, helped with the Pee Wee programs at both
21 our little schools. Deer and Mt. Judea have
22 consolidated together. We didn't really have anybody
23 to do anything; you know, it's hard to get people to
24 do. And our numbers are -- of course, they're
25 falling; so we've been trying to keep that together.

1 But just a little refresher on that -- the problems
2 that I had was over a financial issue. Like he said,
3 I had -- when I had my license revoked it was over
4 this financial issue and the bank fraud charge they
5 had brought against me. But I've never had any
6 trouble before this or nothing after, and definitely
7 I think my wife would skin me if I did. But what I
8 wanted to tell you is that I spent 20 years in
9 education, 13 years in a high school at Lonoke,
10 Arkansas, Clarksville, Charleston for nine; and then
11 I was nine years with coaching college basketball,
12 Division I level, at Arkansas State, Oral Roberts,
13 and South Alabama, and I was able to coach at Deer
14 for a year before all this kind of blew up. And it
15 wasn't a large amount of money, but it was just the
16 situation I was in; I was trying to buy time and just
17 made a mistake, and I regret it so much. But that
18 didn't get me down; I went ahead and started a
19 business and we've been very successful in that. And
20 in the meantime -- I don't know, I think I may have
21 told y'all about this -- I've been bound with cancer
22 for about -- it'll be nine years in October and --
23 prostate cancer -- and it got really bad the last two
24 or three years, and I almost decided not to do this.
25 But when I was going back to -- on February 23, 2017,

1 my wife was serving as the Curriculum Coordinator for
2 the schools, both schools, and was having to spend a
3 lot of time at Mt. Judea. Well, our principal had
4 went in to get a -- just a simple procedure done on
5 her lung -- she was kind of a heavy smoker -- and
6 passed away. Same -- the very same day our coach,
7 who had been there for 40 years and the pillar of the
8 community -- he had been in the hospital for about
9 two weeks -- he was an older gentleman and he had a
10 lot of trouble with -- he was having trouble with
11 pneumonia, then he got worse and worse -- he passed
12 away on the same day. So those kids -- two pillars
13 that they looked to and needed was not there. So my
14 wife, of course, stepped up and -- she was asked to,
15 and she's been there ever since. And --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You have a minute-and-a-half.

17 MR. NAPIER: Okay, I'll finish up real quick.

18 The last thing I'm going to say, I've been
19 helping ever since; been volunteering my time as much
20 as I can at the school, even at the elementary, high
21 school, whatever.

22 But what I'm asking you to do -- you told me
23 what I needed to do -- Mr. Key had explained to me in
24 detail -- and I've tried to fulfill those
25 requirements. And any consideration I would sure

1 appreciate very much. And God bless you guys.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Mr. Dugan.

3 MR. DUGAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 So when Mr. Napier made this request back on --
5 let me go back to the actual day -- I believe it was
6 August 26th, he sent the Department notification that
7 he was wanting to ask for his license to be
8 reinstated. Yes, August 26th, that's when I received
9 it. And so I started working with Mr. Napier on
10 trying to get the requirements provided in those
11 rules, and so that's what I've put in this packet --
12 because the rules stated that he needed to provide us
13 a written request notifying the Office of Educator
14 Effectiveness and PLSB of an attempt to seek
15 reinstatement of his license. So he notified the
16 appropriate parties and let them know that that's
17 what he was wanting to do, and that's what's on page
18 16.

19 He did complete an updated criminal records
20 background check; he paid those costs. That's --
21 obviously when I did his background check that charge
22 that caused the whole issue of his license being
23 revoked is what came up. So he's done an updated
24 criminal background check.

25 He did provide three reference letters from

1 educational professionals that were notarized, and
2 those start on page 17 through page 19.

3 He also provided documentation of having
4 completed any and all requirements of his criminal
5 sentence. Because if you look at page 20 that's the
6 document from the United States District Court
7 showing that his probation period had ended there;
8 that's dated March 2, 2004. I also just wanted to
9 follow-up, so I did email the District Court, the
10 Western District Court here -- the federal courts
11 here in Arkansas, where I just, you know, sent Ms.
12 Sullivan an email saying, "Good evening. I'm helping
13 Mr. Napier in his application to have his teaching
14 license reinstated. The rules require proof that he
15 completed all terms of his criminal sentence and paid
16 all restitution. Can you confirm that he completed
17 all the terms of his criminal sentence and all of the
18 restitution is paid?" And she responded back that
19 "Mr. Napier was sentenced to six months in prison and
20 five years supervised release, on July 29, 1999; he
21 was also sentenced to pay \$37,480.30 in restitution.
22 A full monetary satisfaction of judgment and release
23 of lien to Defendant Rick Napier was entered on the
24 docket on March 12, 2004. As far as completion of
25 his sentence and supervised release, that would have

1 also been completed, and there are no further
2 instances of noncompliance docketed on the record."
3 So I just wanted to get that confirmation that that
4 had been completed.

5 And then, finally, yesterday, he had completed
6 all the 36 hours of professional development that he
7 needed to complete. And I followed up with Licensure
8 to forward this over to him and they let me know that
9 that met that requirement.

10 So as far as the rules go, he's met all the
11 requirements as far as what's needed to ask the Board
12 to reinstate his license. But it's up to the Board
13 as far as whether or not -- it has full discretion on
14 whether or not to grant that request.

15 If there's any questions please let me know.
16 Hopefully I didn't leave anything out. I went
17 through that quickly, I understand.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And for the Board's information,
19 the bill that had to get passed is -- in previous
20 years if you had a -- if your license had been
21 revoked you could not -- the Board could not
22 reinstate. That is changed now under certain
23 circumstances, this being one.

24 MR. DUGAN: It's not a violent offense or a
25 sexual offense.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: No. Right.

2 Do we have any questions? Is there any --

3 MR. PEKRON: And what are you going to do if we
4 give you your license?

5 MR. NAPIER: I'll go to work.

6 MR. PEKRON: Do you have a job lined up?

7 MR. NAPIER: First, I'll have to -- I mean we
8 have a lot of cattle, so I'll be chasing after them
9 for the next few months. But as soon as a job comes
10 available in our area -- and what I'm doing right
11 now, I'm volunteering with our local elementary
12 program. Matter of fact, that's why my throat is a
13 little sore; I've got from 2nd grade all the way up
14 to 6th grade I'm working with at this time,
15 volunteering my time. In our area a lot of schools
16 -- basketball is all we have. And so what I'll end
17 up doing, if a job does come open then I will be
18 applying for a position there. I'm hoping to end up
19 pretty close to -- you know, in our school district,
20 if things work out like we think they can. But --
21 and as you guys know, in the school business things
22 change from day to day.

23 MR. PEKRON: Well, I just want to say I
24 appreciate and commend you for all your hard efforts
25 to -- the fact that you had to go all the way to the

1 Legislature to get the law changed to get your
2 license back shows a lot, and I just want to commend
3 you on that.

4 MR. NAPIER: Well, I missed it a lot. I miss
5 those kids.

6 MS. NEWTON: What is your area of certification?

7 MR. NAPIER: In physical education, health, and
8 a minor in History.

9 MS. NEWTON: So you do have a certification to
10 teach history as well?

11 MR. NAPIER: Yes -- and one of my passions. I
12 love history.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Will you have to do some
14 updating of those from --

15 MR. NAPIER: I hope I won't have to do more than
16 the 36 hours I just did, but --

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Okay.

18 MR. NAPIER: But, yes, I'll have to probably do
19 something.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You had to do --

21 MR. NAPIER: Yes, ma'am.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Dr. Hill? Ms. Chambers?
23 Ms. Dean? Mr. Pekron, did you have another question?

24 MR. PEKRON: No.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. McAdoo? Dr. Sanders? Dr.

1 Sanders -- sorry. Anybody else?

2 Okay. Do I have a motion?

3 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll move to reinstate Mr.
4 Napier's teaching license.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I have a motion to -- from Ms.
6 McFetridge to reinstate the license. Do I have a
7 second?

8 DR. HILL: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Dr. Hill seconds.
10 All in favor?

11 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?
13 Congratulations.

14 MR. NAPIER: Thank you so much.

15 SECRETARY KEY: Madam Chair, may I make a --
16 just a brief comment --

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Sure.

18 SECRETARY KEY: -- on this process?

19 You know, Mr. Pekron, I really appreciate you
20 commending Mr. Napier, because it's been -- just with
21 our part of this process it's been a little over a
22 year. But I have to commend the Department folks
23 that have worked with this all the way back into the
24 session. You know, and this bill, it's not just for
25 one person, but I think this is a good example of how

1 Government because of one person and a team of folks
2 who really get behind it can work for the people.
3 Senator Elliott, you know, had -- two sessions ago I
4 think had tried to figure out how can we have
5 legislation that would establish a pathway for
6 reinstating a revoked license under certain
7 circumstances. It came at the end of the session in
8 2017; there was not enough time to really vet
9 everything. And then Mr. Napier's situation came up
10 last summer and that got another set of legislators
11 involved. But our team put together a draft and
12 started working on this. It brought together a lot
13 of the legislators that knew we needed to do
14 something. We got a path forward through
15 legislation. But just the work that our team has
16 done -- because what you have to realize, we had to
17 -- it wasn't just passing the legislation; we had to
18 get rules. You all saw the rules on that; we had to
19 go through an emergency process. You know, the first
20 time we sent it over to the Bureau of Legislative
21 Research and Arkansas Legislative Council they sent
22 it back to us and said, "Well, this isn't an
23 emergency." Well, it was for Mr. Napier, you know.
24 And, you know, so we were able to send it back to
25 further explain why we needed this expedited

1 timeline. They did consider it; they heard it; they
2 approved it. You know, and to think from August 26th
3 till today Mr. Dugan was able to help Mr. Napier get
4 all his background checks, Mr. Napier went through 36
5 hours -- all these things that happened. So -- and,
6 today, really culminating with your decision to say
7 yes, we, you know, have a reinstatement of his
8 license.

9 Expect that there will be others. Okay? I just
10 want y'all to know that there's a likelihood that
11 there will be other Arkansans who had some situation,
12 you know, maybe 20 years ago that will get another
13 chance now, under certain conditions, to get back in
14 the classroom.

15 But I want to commend the team. I want to
16 commend Mr. Dugan specifically for all the effort
17 he's exerted. And just overall, the process works
18 when people collectively come together and say "we're
19 going to make it work."

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank you for that, Mr.
21 Secretary.

22 SECRETARY KEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 A-5: DISTRICT REQUEST FOR WAIVERS GRANTED TO OPEN-ENROLLMENT
24 CHARTERS: SEARCY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Next item, the waivers. Ms.

1 McLaughlin.

2 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Good morning.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Be sure and give your nice
4 folders back to Mr. Dugan; he worked real hard on
5 those.

6 MS. McLAUGHLIN: It turns out I have some
7 folders for you too.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay, great. We love
9 organization.

10 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Well, good. Kelly McLaughlin
11 with the Division of Elementary and Secondary
12 Education.

13 Today, we have a district request for Searcy
14 County School District. They are here to request
15 waivers for Flexible Schedule. Just as a reminder,
16 they will have 20 minutes to make their presentation,
17 and any opposition will have 20 minutes as well; and
18 then the District will then have 5 minutes to respond
19 before the Q&A begins.

20 Act 1240 of 2015 allows a school district to
21 petition the State Board of Education for all or some
22 of the waivers granted to an open-enrollment public
23 charter school. So we do have representatives from
24 Searcy County School District appearing today. Their
25 90 days will expire on November 6, 2019. They are

1 requesting for three years, which would end on
2 September 13, 2022. We have Superintendent Alan
3 Yarbrough; Dr. Kim Fowler from the OUR Education
4 Service Cooperative; we have Lori Gray, Literacy
5 Instructional Facilitator; Benneta Caston, Leslie
6 Intermediate School principal; and Becky Sullivan,
7 Federal Programs Coordinator. And they have board
8 resolutions; with your approval, I would like to pass
9 those out to you.

10 (WHEREUPON, A-5(a) Exhibit One (1) was entered
11 into evidence.)

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And they don't have to be sworn
13 in; is that right?

14 MS. McLAUGHLIN: They do.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: They do have to be sworn in?

16 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Would everyone that will --
18 plans to give any kind of testimony please stand and
19 raise your right hand? Do you swear or affirm that
20 the testimony you're about to give shall be the
21 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

22 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You may be seated.

24 Is there anyone here in opposition, do we know?

25 MS. McLAUGHLIN: I'll go check.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Thank you.

2 State your name.

3 SUPT. YARBROUGH: My name is Alan Yarbrough, and
4 I'm the superintendent of the Searcy County School
5 District in Marshall.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Congratulations on such good
7 grades within your district.

8 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Thank you, Ma'am.

9 Madam Chair and Board and Secretary Key, thank
10 you today for giving us the opportunity to come
11 present this request. And I just want to say, after
12 sitting back there, thank you for the work that you
13 do for the students in the State of Arkansas -- and I
14 know you probably don't hear that enough, but I do
15 appreciate that. And being able to see first-hand
16 coming down here today really makes me appreciate
17 that. So thank you very much.

18 Just a little background on Searcy County School
19 District: we are the Searcy County School District,
20 not the Searcy School District, and so we have that
21 problem a lot to distinguish ourselves. But we are
22 located in north central Arkansas; we have about 785
23 students, and our district is made up of three
24 campuses. We have Marshall Elementary, which is a K-
25 3 campus; Leslie Intermediate School, which is a 4-6

1 campus; and Marshall High School, which is a 7-12
2 campus. We're separated by about 2 and 10 miles of
3 Highway 65, U.S. Highway 65; so we travel that a lot
4 back and forth through the course of the day
5 transporting students from campus to campus.

6 So the purpose of my request -- and I'll be
7 brief. The purpose of my request is that we're
8 asking the State Board to grant us under the Act 1240
9 waivers nine days of early dismissal. And the
10 purpose for this request is that we are in the
11 process of implementing professional learning
12 communities throughout our school district. We
13 currently have professional learning communities
14 established and working on our elementary campus;
15 we've been in that process for about two years. And
16 so after looking at our test data we've determined
17 that we believe that that process needs to carry
18 forward onto the other campuses in our school
19 district, and we are very mindful of the fact that we
20 need to improve reading scores within our district.
21 Now even though our reading scores compare very well
22 to other districts around us in the state, we believe
23 we can do better, and we believe that the PLC process
24 is going to allow us that vehicle through which we
25 can bring that improvement to our staff and

1 ultimately to our students.

2 So that's a brief summary. We have worked very
3 closely at the elementary campus with Solution Tree.
4 We have also worked very closely and started a
5 partnership with the Arkansas Public School Resource
6 Network to provide us support in this process. And
7 then also the OUR Co-op staff has been very
8 supportive to us in helping us get our teachers
9 trained and our administrators trained so that we can
10 begin this process and hopefully be very effective at
11 it.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do y'all have any questions
13 about that before I ask mine?

14 Dr. Moore.

15 DR. MOORE: I appreciate that y'all have already
16 reached out with parents and others and communicated
17 your plans. As far as transportation and any after-
18 care programs, will those be in effect during these
19 nine days?

20 SUPT. YARBROUGH: We have an ABC preschool which
21 is under our umbrella. So we will work with our
22 staff there to provide any extra daycare that might
23 be necessary for our teachers as we go into this; we
24 also provide that for, you know, our parents. So
25 obviously that is something that we considered. We

1 will have to continue to plan for that, if you
2 approve us to do this today.

3 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. McFetridge.

5 MS. MCFETRIDGE: So you were able to do this at
6 your elementary schools without having this extra
7 time needed; is that correct?

8 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Yes, ma'am. Yes, ma'am. We
9 have time built in the day where we're able to have
10 team meetings and have a common planning time there.
11 But in order for this process to really work, you
12 know, we would like to use some of that expertise
13 that we've developed with our elementary staff to
14 work with our other campuses and our other teachers.
15 And so in order for us to do that the only real
16 opportunity that we have is to dismiss early and
17 bring our staff together so that they can work as a
18 collaborative team district-wide.

19 MS. MCFETRIDGE: So then this would include the
20 elementary schools?

21 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Yes, ma'am.

22 MS. MCFETRIDGE: Okay. Because that wasn't
23 really clear. I think my concern is that's a lot of
24 instructional time lost. I understand the benefits
25 of your PLCs, but that is a lot of time --

1 instructional time missed.

2 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Yes, ma'am. We have time
3 banked on our high school campus, if -- I think we
4 provided you with a dismissal schedule.

5 MS. McFETRIDGE: Uh-huh.

6 SUPT. YARBROUGH: So we do have quite a bit of
7 time banked on the high school campus. Because of
8 our transportation that we have in the district, the
9 high school has about 20 minutes extra a day. We
10 also have some time, we believe, banked at the
11 intermediate school. So, yes, we are going to
12 dismiss early. But also I'd like for you just to
13 keep in mind that we do have some extra time within
14 the day that we feel like we can compensate for that
15 lost time.

16 MS. McFETRIDGE: But not at your elementary
17 schools?

18 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Not so much at our elementary
19 schools. That is the K-3 campus. That is one area
20 that we don't have that extra time built in
21 throughout the day.

22 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. But you have met with
23 your parents and they feel okay about this?

24 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Yes, ma'am. We have done
25 extensive work with our board. I have provided you

1 with a resolution there that our board passed in
2 August for us to come and ask for this waiver. I
3 also spent quite a bit of time at the beginning of
4 school talking to our parents about today and us
5 coming and asking for this waiver and what we would
6 do with that time and how we would utilize that in
7 preparing them, you know, for those days that we
8 would dismiss early.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. Secretary.

10 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Yarbrough, there are other
11 school districts that have followed a similar model,
12 and I know at least what we've heard from them is
13 that that time lost -- you know, we think of it as
14 time lost. But the collaboration that occurs in that
15 time actually translates to more effective teaching,
16 so the time that you have in those classrooms becomes
17 just basically -- you're gaining time, if you will,
18 with the same or shorter amount of time just because
19 of the teacher alignment, the collaboration. That's
20 some of the feedback we've gotten from like Vilonia
21 and some of the PLC pilots. Have you looked at other
22 districts or other schools in your area or in the co-
23 op region that are doing something similar to this?
24 That's the first question.

25 Second question is, because Leslie is quite a

1 bit of a distance, describe in a little bit more
2 detail how this is going to help overcome that
3 disconnect that just happens with vertical alignment
4 when you've got holes -- you know, a set of grades
5 that are separated physically?

6 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Yes, sir. That's a very good
7 -- very good question. And obviously in our co-op
8 area we have several schools that are undertaking
9 this process; some have been -- like our elementary
10 school, have been in this process for quite sometime.
11 I would point out to the State Board of Education
12 that our elementary school is an "A" school based on
13 the state rankings, and I contribute a lot of that to
14 the work that they're doing in the PLCs. So we are
15 very mindful of the time that we're using. And, as
16 Secretary Key said, we believe this process will
17 enhance our instruction across the board in the
18 district. And we believe that whatever time we lose
19 with those students through this early dismissal
20 we're more than going to make that up in having more
21 efficient and more expertise in the classroom as we
22 instruct students.

23 Our Leslie Intermediate School, at Leslie, you
24 know, it is eight miles, as you're aware, south on
25 Highway 65. So we do have somewhat of a disconnect

1 there from time-to-time. It is difficult for us to
2 bring all the staff together in the district. And so
3 that's really going to be an important component into
4 these early dismissals so that we can bring those
5 staffs together. You know, I've said this for years,
6 you know, if you put a group of elementary teachers
7 in a room together for 30 minutes they'll solve all
8 the problems of the world. And I mean that jokingly;
9 so I don't -- but if you allow teachers time to come
10 together and collaborate they are able to do a lot of
11 work and to solve a lot of problems, and those
12 problems are specific to children and to students.
13 And so we believe this process is going to give us
14 that opportunity to solve those problems that are
15 specific to students, individual students.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Dean? Ms. Chambers? Dr.
17 Hill? Ms. Newton?

18 MS. NEWTON: I don't really have a question,
19 just a comment. I want to commend you for your good
20 work up to this point. But more than that, I want to
21 commend you for not being satisfied where you're at,
22 being willing to recognize that we can all get better
23 and this is a way that you think that you can do more
24 for kids. And so that's our goal that we want
25 everyone to realize that we can always do better for

1 kids. So thank you for that.

2 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Yes, ma'am. We believe that.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. The question I had, are
4 you on block or regular schedule --

5 SUPT. YARBROUGH: We are on --

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- at your high school?

7 SUPT. YARBROUGH: We are on a regular schedule
8 at the high school.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

10 SUPT. YARBROUGH: We are in the early stages of
11 being fully certified as a School of Innovation at
12 the high school.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Uh-huh.

14 SUPT. YARBROUGH: So, you know, we are trying to
15 be very progressive with what we do with our students
16 in Searcy County School District. So we have since
17 last year went back and made some modifications to
18 our schedule. So we do have some time built in that,
19 you know, we're going to be able to have some common
20 planning time for our core teachers throughout the
21 course of the day. And so we have that on every
22 campus.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

24 SUPT. YARBROUGH: But we will have that at the
25 high school as well, even though we are on

1 traditional schedule.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah. I was just concerned if
3 it was block that they would be missing the same
4 class every time.

5 SUPT. YARBROUGH: No, ma'am.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. And is your curriculum --
7 I know you said you're into RISE and PLCs and getting
8 better. Have y'all adopted a curriculum that is
9 aligned with the Science of Reading concepts and
10 RISE?

11 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Yes, ma'am. We are in that
12 process. We have done that. I had a group with me,
13 but I had to promise them that they wouldn't have to
14 stand up here with me and ask any questions. So they
15 --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: But they promised to tell the
17 truth, if they did.

18 SUPT. YARBROUGH: I told them the truth. But,
19 yes, ma'am, that is correct; we have been in the
20 process for that. And I appreciate Dr. Fowler from
21 the co-op coming with me today and taking her time as
22 well.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. If there's no other
24 questions, is there any opposition?

25 MS. McLAUGHLIN: No.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do I have a motion?

2 MS. NEWTON: Move to grant the waiver.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Newton moved to grant the
4 waiver.

5 MS. McFETRIDGE: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Ms. McFetridge.

7 All those in favor?

8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Your motion passes.

10 SUPT. YARBROUGH: Thank you, Ma'am.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Good luck. We'll be anxious to
12 hear from you in a year to see how it went.

13 A-6: CONSIDERATION OF FOURTH ROUND FOR ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE
14 (ABC) 2019-2020

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Our final item should not
16 take that long, so let's do it before we break for
17 lunch. Number 6, the ABC program -- and I'm sure we
18 have Ms. Underwood.

19 MS. UNDERWOOD: Good morning.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Good morning.

21 MS. UNDERWOOD: Susan Underwood with the
22 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education,
23 Arkansas Better Chance Program.

24 We have brought to you the Round Four of the
25 Arkansas Better Chance grants. You have in your

1 board packet --

2 MR. PEKRON: Excuse me; can you pull the
3 microphone down a little bit?

4 MS. UNDERWOOD: You have in your board packet a
5 chart that tries to explain what we're doing. Let me
6 kind of walk you through this.

7 The Blytheville School District has requested to
8 join the Crowley's Ridge Educational Co-op ABC
9 Program. The 40 slots approved by Blytheville School
10 District ABC Program would remain on the school
11 campus, but it would be administered by the Crowley's
12 Ridge Educational Co-op.

13 The second one is that Crowley's Ridge Co-op has
14 requested to convert 40 home-visiting slots to
15 center-based to continue the high-quality preschool
16 services for children in the Earle School District
17 community. That conversion rate of the 40 home-
18 visiting equates to 14.95 center-based slots, which
19 we would round to 15 slots. Thus, the remaining
20 amount of the \$218,504 for the payments 3 through 10
21 for Crowley's Ridge would include the original award
22 of 250 center-based slots, the 40 slots from
23 Blytheville pre-k, and then the 40 home-visiting
24 slots converted to the 15 center-based, giving the
25 Earle ABC site a total of 55 slots.

1 Therefore, we are requesting approval for the
2 Crowley's Ridge Education Cooperative ABC Program,
3 with a total of 305 center-based slots, for the total
4 grant amount of \$1,460,004.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Any questions?

6 And I think she stepped away, but I will mention
7 to the Board Dr. Moore is a liaison from the Board to
8 the Early Childhood ABC -- oh, there you are. I
9 didn't see you. Sorry.

10 Anybody have any questions?

11 Do I have a motion?

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Move to approve.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Moved by Ms. McFetridge.

14 MR. PEKRON: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Mr. Pekron.

16 All in favor?

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Very good.

19 MS. UNDERWOOD: And I do have one thing that
20 just transpired this week. As of this week there has
21 been a termination of an ABC grant with the agency
22 Kid-to-Kid Child Development Center, based on a
23 failure to follow ABC regulations. Therefore, we are
24 requesting an approval of the reallocation awarding
25 those returned slots to the Pine Bluff School

1 District ABC Program to provide high-quality
2 preschool services to additional children in that
3 community. So this would include 80 slots that they
4 have been awarded, with the additional 20 additional
5 slots, beginning with payments 3 through 10 in the
6 amount of \$79,456. That would result in a total
7 award of 100 slots, with the total grant amount of
8 \$476,736.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. I'll have to get legal
10 counsel on this, whether or not she can add something
11 to her agenda item that was not given to us ahead of
12 time and for which we have not voted.

13 Can we -- will that require a motion to hear it
14 or will it need to be postponed till next month, or
15 what is the procedure there? She had a spot on the
16 agenda; this is a separate amount and discussion
17 about transferring, which I'm sure will be no
18 problem. But I need to know procedurally what I need
19 to do.

20 MS. FRENO: The State Board can add -- Lori
21 Freno. The State Board can add an agenda item with a
22 two-thirds vote. Consequently, I would think you
23 could add something to an agenda item with a two-
24 thirds vote.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do I have a motion from a

1 board member to add this item?

2 MS. DEAN: So moved.

3 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Moved by Ms. Dean; second by Ms.
5 Chambers.

6 All those in favor?

7 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

9 Okay. Okay, now tell us again.

10 MS. UNDERWOOD: Okay. This week we had a
11 program terminated -- that was the agency Kid-to-Kid
12 Child Development Center -- because there was a
13 failure in ABC regulations. So what we're asking you
14 to do -- those slots that were approved to Kid-to-
15 Kid, prior approved in April, we're asking you to
16 reallocate those returned slots to the Pine Bluff
17 School District ABC Program so there will be more
18 high-quality preschool services for additional
19 children in that community. So Pine Bluff already
20 has 80 slots that were approved in April. So we
21 would add those reallocated 20 slots, beginning with
22 payments 3 through 10, and that would be an
23 additional \$79,456. So that would equate to 100
24 total slots for Pine Bluff, and the total grant
25 amount of \$476,736.

1 SECRETARY KEY: And if I may, Madam Chair, this
2 was a request that I made to them to look and see if
3 -- a few weeks ago, I was in Pine Bluff and I got to
4 visit their pre-k center. You all -- if you get a
5 chance, you will want to go see that pre-k center.
6 Dr. Owoh was just very pleased and bragging on that
7 group of educators and that principal there and said
8 that their data show that those kids that leave that
9 program are on level and ready when they hit
10 kindergarten. But they had a waiting list; they
11 could've served more kids. They had plenty of room,
12 classrooms that are ready. All they have to do is
13 get a teacher in there and get the kids in there. So
14 I came back and asked the team, "Hey, can -- how can
15 we add more seats there?" And just, you know, by
16 the, you know, providence that -- we had a situation
17 with closure of a center, and that freed these slots
18 up; so they jumped on it.

19 Again, this is an example of how I think we want
20 to see transformation work, because we knew there was
21 a place, we knew there was a need, and they found a
22 way to make it happen. So just appreciate, Susan,
23 you and the team having this done and being able to
24 bring this to the Board on such short notice.

25 MS. UNDERWOOD: And let me add to that, I did

1 call all of the ABC programs in the Pine Bluff area
2 to see if there were availability. What was reported
3 to Secretary Key, there was over 50 four-year olds on
4 the waiting list and 50 three-year olds on the
5 waiting list. So when we went back and did our
6 homework, some of those children had already found
7 places to be served. All of the ABC centers in the
8 Pine Bluff, Dollarway, Watson Chapel area are full,
9 but we do have a partner with Head Start. Head Start
10 said that they could take the three-year olds. And
11 so when I called the coordinator back, at this time
12 there's around 21 children that need to be placed --
13 the four-year olds that need to be placed in Pine
14 Bluff. So we can place those children in these 20
15 slots. If there is an opening, we can place the
16 final one. And the three-year olds can be served by
17 the Head Start program.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Now it's my understanding if one
19 of those is a foster child that you can go over the
20 number; right?

21 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So if you find out that's true,
23 then wa-la.

24 Do we have a motion?

25 DR. MOORE: I have a question.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You have a question? Sorry.

2 DR. MOORE: So the center that's closing -- that
3 is closing, are those students going to be
4 communicated with that they will have new spots
5 elsewhere, or how will that work?

6 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes. They have not been in
7 operation this year.

8 DR. MOORE: Okay. So it's --

9 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

10 DR. MOORE: As a parent of a young child, I
11 always worry that those kids were going to be --

12 MS. UNDERWOOD: Sure.

13 DR. MOORE: -- shuffled around right away.

14 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, they have found other
15 locations.

16 DR. MOORE: So they don't have any kids there at
17 all.

18 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

19 DR. MOORE: Okay, that was it. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Any other questions on this end?
21 This side?

22 Do I have a motion?

23 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to approve the reallocation
24 of seats to the Pine Bluff ABC Program.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Chambers moves; second by --

1 MR. PEKRON: Second it.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- Mr. Pekron.

3 All those in favor?

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 MS. UNDERWOOD: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Uh-huh.

7 Okay. We're going to break for lunch and we
8 will return -- I think it's scheduled -- it says
9 1:00. The first two items are Succeed Scholarship
10 Transfers, so I don't think it would be a problem if
11 we started at a quarter-till. And then the
12 Opportunity School Choice number 3(a) was pulled.
13 And then, so we will go to the Opportunity School
14 Choice, the other one. That way, we won't be pushing
15 people time-wise.

16 DR. HILL: Public comments will be at the end?

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: At the very end, yes.

18 (LUNCH BREAK: 12:09 - 12:50 p.m.)

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'll call the meeting back to
20 order.

21 B-1: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: de LEON

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And our first item is a Succeed
23 Scholarship Transfer, and we'll turn this over to Ms.
24 Salas-Ford.

25 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you, Madam Chair, Members

1 of the Board. The first item on the agenda is a
2 Request for Transfer of Succeed Scholarship. This is
3 similar to ones you've seen in past months. The de
4 Leon family is requesting a transfer from St. Edwards
5 to North Little Rock Catholic Academy as a result of
6 the closing of St. Edwards at the end of last school
7 year. And I don't believe anyone is in the audience;
8 there may be someone on the phone.

9 MR. MCGREGOR: Jeff McGregor is on the phone.

10 MS. SALAS-FORD: I'm sorry; did you say Mr.
11 McGregor?

12 MR. MCGREGOR: Yes.

13 MS. SALAS-FORD: Okay. Is Mr. or Ms. de Leon on
14 the phone?

15 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

16 MS. SALAS-FORD: I don't believe so.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do you have any --
18 [clearing throat] -- excuse me. Do you have any
19 questions of Ms. Salas-Ford, or do I have a motion?

20 MS. NEWTON: Move to approve.

21 DR. HILL: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Motion by Ms. Newton; second by
23 Dr. Hill.

24 All in favor?

25 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Transfer granted.

2 B-2: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: MCGREGOR

3 MS. SALAS-FORD: Okay. The second item is
4 another Request for Transfer of Succeed Scholarship.
5 This family is requesting a transfer from Bentonville
6 Christian Academy to Clover Community School. And
7 Mr. McGregor is on the phone if you have any
8 questions.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Any questions of this parent?
10 If not, do I have a motion?

11 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to approve.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Chambers moved to approve.

13 MR. PEKRON: Seconded.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Mr. Pekron.

15 Any objection?

16 All in favor?

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

19 Motion passes.

20 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank you very much.

22 B-3: OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL CHOICE APPEALS

23 a) WILLIAMS FAMILY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL CHOICE APPEAL

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: 3(a) was pulled this morning and
25 the child was granted the Opportunity School Choice

1 transfer.

2 b) HARRIS-HUDSON FAMILY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL CHOICE APPEAL

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: The next one is the Harris-
4 Hudson Family. They're in a Level 5 district, and
5 Opportunity School Choice allows a family to request
6 a transfer if they're in a Level 5 district or in an
7 "F" school. And since Little Rock School District is
8 in Level 5 that gave them the opportunity to make an
9 Opportunity School Choice transfer request. And, Ms.
10 Dedman, if you'll walk us through that?

11 MS. DEDMAN: I'm afraid the parties have not
12 arrived. We're looking for Dr. Saunders and Ms.
13 Harris-Hudson still.

14 SECRETARY KEY: It's my understanding Dr.
15 Saunders is not going to be here. Dr. Hernandez, can
16 you confirm that Dr. Saunders is not planning on
17 being here?

18 DR. HERNANDEZ: That's correct.

19 SECRETARY KEY: Okay, thank you.

20 MS. DEDMAN: In that case, we do not have the
21 parent yet. The notice letter was set for --

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Well, we're early, so --

23 MS. DEDMAN: -- 1:00.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah, I didn't expect us to just
25 flip through those others.

1 Okay. Is Ms. Salas-Ford still in the room? If
2 she is -- no, we've lost her now. I wanted to keep
3 going.

4 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Salas-Ford returns
5 to the auditorium.)

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You didn't know I'd get back to
7 you quite so quickly.

8 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yeah.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Sorry. The parent wasn't here
10 yet and it does say 1:00.

11 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yeah. We were out there
12 looking to see if anyone outside was parents.

13 B-4: REQUEST FOR FINAL APPROVAL: DESE RULES GOVERNING THE
14 EDUCATOR COMPENSATION REFORM PROGRAM

15 MS. SALAS-FORD: Okay. So we are on Item Number
16 4. We are requesting final approval of the
17 Division's rules governing the Educator Compensation
18 Reform Program. The Board released these rules for
19 public comment on June 13th, and we held a public
20 comment hearing on June 27th. There were a few
21 comments received; however, no substantive changes
22 were made. And just to refresh your memory, these
23 are the rules that govern administration of the
24 \$60,000,000 for teacher salaries.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. I'll start. It seemed

1 that some of the concerns that were expressed are
2 legitimate financial concerns. So can you help me
3 understand what, if anything, is going to be done to
4 ease their concerns? Or is it just a matter of
5 you've had -- you'll have one and two and three
6 year's notice, so it is what it is?

7 MS. SALAS-FORD: So one of the concerns that we
8 heard from multiple people was regarding being able
9 to use these funds towards steps in the -- step
10 increases in the Masters level.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yes.

12 MS. SALAS-FORD: And so we did amend the rules
13 so that the funds can be used for that purpose, even
14 though that's not part of the calculation, which
15 means that if a district uses their funds to increase
16 Bachelors and Masters in year-one or year-two or
17 year-three, when it comes to year-four if they are
18 financially not able to meet the increase for
19 Bachelors using these funds they would have to use
20 their own state and local funds.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

22 MS. SALAS-FORD: And then in terms of concerns
23 beyond the four years, there's both their ability to
24 plan going forward given the four-year timeframe and
25 then also, of course, you'll have your usual

1 increases in foundation funding. And then we fully
2 anticipate that the legislature will be revisiting
3 this type of funding as part of the adequacy reports
4 going forward.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Anybody else have any
6 questions? None on either side?

7 Okay. Do I have a motion?

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Move final approval.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Motion by Mr. Williamson.

10 MS. DEAN: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Ms. Dean for final
12 approval.

13 All in favor?

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

16 Motion passes.

17 MS. SALAS-FORD: Okay. Thank you.

18 B-5: REQUEST FOR FINAL APPROVAL: DESE RULES GOVERNING THE
19 SCHOOL DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE TRUST FUND

20 MS. SALAS-FORD: And then we also have for your
21 consideration the Division's rules governing the
22 School District Educational Excellence Trust Fund.
23 These were a result of the same act that had to do
24 with the \$60,000,000. They were also released for
25 public comment on June 13th, and a public comment

1 hearing held on June 27th. No comments were received
2 on these rules. And so we are requesting final
3 approval pending ALC review.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Any questions?

5 Do I have a motion?

6 MR. PEKRON: Motion to approve.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Motion by Mr. Pekron; second by

8 --

9 MS. DEAN: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- Ms. Dean.

11 All in favor?

12 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

14 Motion passes.

15 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank you, Ms. Salas-Ford.

17 Mr. Ballard, I think we'll take up yours now.

18 We're still waiting on the parents. I don't know if
19 we know for sure if the parent is coming, but we will
20 give them time past 1:00 because it did say 1:00 on
21 the agenda.

22 B-6: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISIONS

23 a) CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL ACTION ON
24 OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION:
25 HOPE ACADEMY OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS, BENTONVILLE, AR

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Number 6, Reginald Ballard will
2 do the presentation.

3 MR. BALLARD: All right. This is a
4 consideration for the Charter Authorizing Panel
5 action. Last month we had our charter application
6 hearings and we heard -- and had one decision that
7 was made for a granted charter for Hope Academy of
8 Northwest Arkansas. So this is just a Consideration
9 of the Charter Authorizing Panel Action on the Open-
10 Enrollment Public Charter School Application, Hope
11 Academy of Northwest Arkansas, Bentonville, Arkansas.

12 On August 13, 2019, representatives of Hope
13 Academy of Northwest Arkansas appeared before the
14 Charter Authorizing Panel requesting a charter in the
15 Bentonville School District. By a unanimous vote,
16 the Panel approved the request. No request for the
17 State Board of Education to review the decision made
18 by the Panel was submitted. The State Board may
19 exercise a right to review and conduct a hearing on
20 the Charter Authorizing Panel's determination at the
21 State Board's next meeting.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Has everyone had a chance to
23 look at this, and do you have any questions?

24 Ms. Newton.

25 MS. NEWTON: Is there someone from the charter

1 here or are we able to ask questions? I have -- I
2 noticed, and with some help, that one of the things
3 they've asked for a waiver of is the School
4 Counselor. And I know that we're trying to make sure
5 that every child has access to a qualified, excellent
6 school counselor, and 6-18-201 is the one they're
7 asking a waiver of. And so I'm concerned not only
8 for these students, but for once we grant this waiver
9 then that opens the door for other places to come in
10 and ask for this same waiver. So I'm concerned with
11 that. Maybe someone could answer that question.

12 MR. BALLARD: Absolutely, yes. Legal counsel
13 Mary Claire Hyatt is right behind me.

14 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Division of
15 Elementary and Secondary Education.

16 So there's no one here from the charter. I will
17 tell you what they put on the waiver request, and you
18 have that information and we can go over it. This is
19 the first time that this waiver would've been granted
20 of the new School Counseling act, which is something
21 I pointed out to the Charter Panel at the time. So
22 their request was a waiver from employing a counselor
23 who's also a certified educator. They are going to
24 -- let me make sure; I'm reading this too. So the
25 charter plans to use counseling and medical services

1 with a proven positive track record working with
2 children in another program overseen by the
3 sponsoring entity. These service providers are able
4 to provide expanded services for the charter.

5 And then I asked them, because they originally
6 asked for a waiver of the old Student Services law,
7 to review the new legislation and reflect on what
8 pieces of that they would need. And they did ask for
9 a waiver of the entire section, stating "our
10 organization has counseling services in place and
11 will be moving an existing member of staff over to
12 the position of Student and Family Case Manager.
13 This staff member has a Masters degree in social work
14 and has experience with case management in an
15 educational setting. This individual will be charged
16 with carrying out a written plan for a comprehensive
17 school counseling program that will include all the
18 components mandated by Act 190 of 2019." So one of
19 the things we talked about at the hearing was did
20 they need a waiver of the entire new legislation
21 since they were going to be meeting components of it.
22 And they did choose to go forward asking for a waiver
23 of all of the sections of the new legislation.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I think their -- the answer, the
25 way that I heard it, is they will -- it will be an

1 MSW as opposed to a guidance counselor. So they
2 actually will have as much, or more, training; they
3 just won't have the educator license. So, and this
4 is a specialty charter, so it wouldn't be one that we
5 will bring them up later and say, "Well, you don't
6 have enough of this kind of kid and enough of this
7 kind of kid," because this is a very -- I'm not
8 trying to persuade anybody's vote; I just am
9 explaining what I heard. It's a very specialized
10 charter that is working in partnership with the
11 Bentonville School District.

12 MS. NEWTON: I understood that. But I think
13 what my biggest concern is --

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yes.

15 MS. NEWTON: -- as with these 1240 waivers, is
16 when we approve this one then there's going to be
17 another one come behind them. And I -- you know, I'm
18 very impressed with the charter, what their intents
19 are and what they're going to do. But I am very
20 concerned about waiving this entire section because
21 of the precedent that it sets in the future.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I think another thing that
23 Ms. Newton is bringing forth is part of this State
24 Board was there when if you had -- if a district had
25 a child in -- that you could ask for those waivers.

1 The way the law has changed, if any charter has that
2 waiver -- it doesn't matter if it's on one end of the
3 state and the traditional district is on the other
4 end of the state -- that now opens the door for those
5 traditional districts to do that. And that is
6 something that you might want to pull them in for
7 review for that purpose; I don't know.

8 Anybody else have other concerns, questions?

9 MS. NEWTON: I really think that we need to not
10 get in too big of a hurry. I think we need to really
11 think about what we're doing. And I don't know if
12 that would entail a review, but, you know, we've had
13 discussions on 1240s before.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: This isn't --

15 MS. NEWTON: I know that.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Oh, okay.

17 MS. NEWTON: But --

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

19 MS. NEWTON: But where are we going.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

21 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I understand.

23 MS. NEWTON: And once we do this, then that door
24 for the 1240 is opened. And so we need to make sure
25 that we want to open that door, is what I'm saying.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So that would mean that you
2 would need to move to review, because you can't delay
3 an approval --

4 MS. NEWTON: Right.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- once it comes to us without a
6 review. Is that correct?

7 MR. BALLARD: I think we're double-checking the
8 rules.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: She's getting her rules.

10 MS. HYATT: Just a short 80-page rule. Sorry.

11 So if you -- you know, if you have additional
12 questions and you want to have the charter applicant
13 or the granted charter come before you so that you
14 can ask those questions, it would be appropriate to
15 do a review at the next State Board meeting. You
16 would need to provide today the information -- or as
17 much of the information as possible so that the
18 charter applicant can be prepared to discuss those
19 things at the hearing or at the review with you guys.
20 I think one of the other times we've done this we did
21 allow you to submit additional questions in the next
22 few days following the State Board meeting, so that
23 you could make sure that you had thoughtful comments
24 to give to the charter applicant, which I think would
25 be fine to do again, if you chose to do a review.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

2 MS. HYATT: But the decision today is to review
3 or not review.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

5 MS. NEWTON: The only way that we could even
6 consider this is to review. So I make a motion to
7 review.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. We have a motion to
9 review made by Ms. Newton.

10 Do I have a second?

11 MS. McFETRIDGE: Second.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Ms. McFetridge.
13 All in favor?

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

16 If you'll notify them --

17 MS. HYATT: And would you guys mind just going
18 down and giving the reasoning and the information
19 you'd like for them to have at the review. And then
20 if there are any additional comments, if you'll send
21 them individually to the Charter Office so we can get
22 that in the next couple of days.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah. Part of the law that we
24 are reminded of is that you have to have specific
25 things you want them to bring to you so you can

1 review; so they can not only make their presentation,
2 but they can respond to those questions that you
3 might have.

4 So, Ms. Newton, do you --

5 MS. NEWTON: I guess just --

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Or let me start with Mr. Pekron.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do you have any specifics that
9 you would like to hear?

10 MR. PEKRON: Nothing specific.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Ms. Newton.

12 MS. NEWTON: Just specifically how they're going
13 to make sure that every portion of this section that
14 they're going to waive -- how they're going to serve
15 kids through that, and why did they want the whole
16 thing waived.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Dr. Hill? Ms. Chambers?
18 Ms. Dean? Anyone on this side?

19 And I guess we -- correct me if I'm wrong -- we
20 can say to them, "No, you can't have this waiver;" is
21 that correct?

22 MS. HYATT: So at the review hearing you can
23 decide either to affirm the decision of the Charter
24 Authorizer; to take any other action that you wish,
25 which could be sending it back to the Charter

1 Authorizer to re-hear that; to change something that
2 the Charter Authorizer did; request additional
3 information for another meeting -- pretty much you
4 have a lot of flexibility. So at the review hearing,
5 if there's still disagreement about that part, I'll
6 make sure to advise you of all of your options at
7 that time.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So I guess my question in
9 general -- it doesn't have to specifically do with
10 this -- is can we deny a waiver?

11 MS. HYATT: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

13 MS. HYATT: Yes.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: And we can also deny 1240
15 waivers?

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yes, apparently now the way I
17 read the new rules. Right.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: So --

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

20 MS. NEWTON: I just want us to think about it --

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yes.

22 MS. NEWTON: -- before we open the door.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Oh, I understand.

24 MS. CHAMBERS: And to your point, it would be
25 interesting to know, especially if we're getting into

1 something that does set a precedent, why it has to be
2 as broad; so that they're thinking about could they
3 take care of their needs and be narrower in their
4 request. And I know sometimes they just say, "Well,
5 let's ask for the whole thing so we don't have to go
6 back," which I can't say that I blame them. But that
7 I think will help the way we think about it.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And you know they can always do
9 partnerships with Bentonville, with their counselor.

10 MS. NEWTON: Right.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I mean there's a lot of ways --

12 MS. NEWTON: Options.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- that they can do that. Yeah.

14 MS. NEWTON: Right.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. We're good.

16 B-3(b): HARRIS-HUDSON FAMILY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL CHOICE APPEAL

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. And do we know yet if the
18 parents for the Harris-Hudson family --

19 MS. DEDMAN: (Shaking head from side to side.)

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: They're not here yet?

21 MS. DEDMAN: No.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Do we know if they're
23 coming?

24 MS. DEDMAN: The parent is not here yet, but
25 also it's possible the parent will not come. My

1 understanding is that she received a conditional
2 offer from another district; so she may not appear.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. I think we'll go ahead
4 and hear it then and see the pleasure of the Board.
5 You want to tell us about it?

6 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, ma'am. This is an Opportunity
7 School Choice --

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And you need to identify
9 yourself.

10 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, ma'am. This is -- I'm
11 Jennifer Dedman, an attorney for the Division.

12 This is an Opportunity School Choice appeal for
13 a family wishing to transfer from Little Rock School
14 District to one of the two districts that they listed
15 on their application. When you see their application
16 you'll note that there is an opportunity to transfer
17 to either Bryant or Benton listed; they have the
18 districts ranked number one and number two. Because
19 one district issued a denial before the other, the
20 appeal is only of the denial from Benton School
21 District. Neither the parent nor the district has
22 appeared today, unfortunately, so we will not be able
23 to hear evidence from either party.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: This is another Opportunity
25 School Choice where this child is in a Level 5

1 classified district and they're requesting to go to
2 Benton or Bryant. And the rejection was based on --
3 by Benton that they weren't the nearest district,
4 which we -- that is in the law, but it's not
5 something that we've seen used before.

6 So, do I have a motion or do you have questions
7 of Ms. Dedman?

8 MS. NEWTON: I have a question.

9 DR. MOORE: Can we table?

10 MS. NEWTON: Did you say that she'd been
11 conditionally admitted to another school?

12 MS. DEDMAN: We've received information that she
13 may have received a conditional acceptance to another
14 school, but we do not have anyone here to give
15 evidence of that today.

16 MS. NEWTON: Do you know what school?

17 MS. DEDMAN: It may have come from Bryant.

18 MS. NEWTON: Bryant, okay.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: But her first choice is still
20 Benton; right?

21 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, ma'am. And this appeal is
22 only of Benton's denial.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

24 DR. MOORE: Can we table it until next month or
25 does --

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: No. I think with schools -- I
2 mean we could, yes. But with school starting I think
3 to expedite a decision would be in the best interest
4 of the student. That's your Chair's opinion. That
5 doesn't mean that's y'all's opinion.

6 DR. MOORE: Have we heard -- was there a
7 communication that the parent was planning on being
8 here today?

9 MS. DEDMAN: There was a notice letter sent to
10 the address of the parent by Certified and regular
11 mail, as well as to the email address the parent had
12 been communicating with me through.

13 DR. MOORE: Okay.

14 MS. DEDMAN: So there's been no further
15 communication from the parent.

16 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do I have a motion?

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Move to deny.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: We have a motion to --

20 MR. PEKRON: Actually, can I just ask a
21 question? I'm sorry, Ms. Zook; I'm getting familiar
22 with some of this. So the way this worked was they
23 applied for Bryant first; Bryant --

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: No, Benton.

25 MR. PEKRON: Oh, they applied to Benton first?

1 MS. DEDMAN: They applied using a single
2 Opportunity School Choice application and listed two
3 districts, ranking them as their first and second
4 choice. They received a denial from Benton School
5 District first, and, therefore, they appealed the
6 denial from Benton School District, which was listed
7 on -- you'll see on their application was their first
8 choice.

9 MR. PEKRON: Okay.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Move to deny the request.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Say it again.

12 MR. WILLIAMSON: I move to deny the request to
13 transfer to Benton.

14 MS. DEAN: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I have a motion to deny by Mr.
16 Williamson, a second by Ms. Dean.

17 All those in favor?

18 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

20 Motion denied.

21 MS. DEDMAN: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Let me get my bearings.

23 B-7: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT AND APPROVAL OF
24 DISTRICT SUPPORT PLAN: DOLLARWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. We are down to the

1 legislative reviews. The first one on the docket --
2 is Dollarway here?

3 DR. HERNANDEZ: Dr. Bryant is here.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Oh, okay.

5 DR. HERNANDEZ: Ms. Warren is out, not feeling
6 well today, so --

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Oh.

8 DR. HERNANDEZ: She's dealing with some health
9 issues.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I hope it wasn't because we
11 invited her here today.

12 DR. HERNANDEZ: No, no. No, ma'am, it was not.

13 Okay. Good morning. Mike Hernandez, State
14 Superintendent, Office of Coordinated Support and
15 Service.

16 And today we're going to start out with our
17 legislative report with Dollarway.

18 To give you some background of the process, as
19 we did last year is this is kind of that beginning
20 phase where we've received our school level plans
21 from the schools; the districts have reviewed those,
22 along with us. We've developed the district support
23 plans -- or the district has developed the district
24 support plans, identified how they're going to
25 support the schools throughout this year. In

1 addition to that, we've reviewed those, and in your
2 packet -- this year we did it a little bit different;
3 we added kind of a little bit more detail in the ADE
4 support plans, and so that kind of gives you a real
5 sense of what the support actually looks like in the
6 schools.

7 And so we've really been pushing in a lot with
8 Little Rock in terms of our services. We have added
9 some additional staff and coordinated some more
10 support for each school district. So you'll see that
11 there's ongoing things and multiple things that are
12 working with the districts this year and really
13 trying to hone in on their exit criteria, whether it
14 be of a fiscal nature or an academic nature, and
15 start to move the schools towards those qualitative
16 and quantitative measures. And so that's kind of the
17 work. And if there -- as we go through these,
18 there's questions about the support or how we're
19 doing that -- those are the kinds of reports that'll
20 come back in subsequent -- how are we doing in terms
21 of the district support plan, how are we doing in
22 terms of our support that we're giving to the school
23 districts.

24 Also as a part of your report -- and I won't go
25 through a lot of these slides because I've got 43 of

1 them and I know it takes a lot of time, but a lot of
2 these slides are just some of the data. As we -- the
3 only thing that we got back initially were how are we
4 doing on ACT Aspire in terms of the ready and
5 exceeding students. And so we looked at those and
6 saw a lot of mixed -- you know, in some cases we saw
7 from grade level to grade level they did -- there
8 were some gains and there were some losses when you
9 look at math and literacy -- and I'll show you kind
10 of an example of what I'm talking about. But in some
11 year-over-year grades -- if I look at reading here,
12 for example -- and this is Dollarway, at James
13 Matthews Elementary -- and I see that in 2018 11.3%
14 of the students were meeting that readiness benchmark
15 in reading, and then the next year in 3rd grade it
16 went up slightly. But if you look at the 3rd grade
17 from 2018 to the 4th grade in 2019, you see a little
18 bit bigger gain. And so by and large in all the
19 districts, as you look through these slides -- and
20 they're part of that -- I'll make sure you have this
21 presentation -- but they're also inside that -- the
22 legislative report as a link in there. And so, you
23 know, we see a lot of -- a mix; you know, we see that
24 in some places we're losing ground, in some places
25 we're gaining ground, and that's what we're trying to

1 move the districts towards, seeing that consistent --
2 consistency. But as we move towards these multiple
3 measures with our ESSA school indexes, these aren't
4 the only things that we're looking at. You know,
5 we're going to start to get in these -- this data
6 that comes in October that tells us how we're doing
7 in terms of growth on average and each school how are
8 they growing their students based on their individual
9 past performance, how is the EQSS things like
10 science, attendance; in high schools, how is the
11 graduation rate doing, how are their on-time credits
12 and all those factors that go into moving the needle
13 and how we see achievement as a whole, as opposed to
14 just these. So this is the data that we have now as
15 the preliminary pre-appeal data, and so that's what
16 we shared with you just to give you a sense of how
17 some of these things are going in the various grade
18 levels.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I think the thing that I noticed
20 initially is following a cohort.

21 DR. HERNANDEZ: Uh-huh.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And that was disturbing because
23 from 3rd to 4th -- they went down in both 3rd and 4th
24 grade.

25 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. And so when you look at

1 the cohort from, in this case, English, you see that
2 they do go down; in math, they do go down; in
3 reading, they do go up -- and so that's the parts
4 that we see in cohorts. And some cohorts in some
5 areas you're going to see places where they go up.
6 So, for example, in this one 5th grade -- from 5th
7 grade to 6th grade you see that they go up in all
8 three areas. So that's what I meant by being, you
9 know, not -- there's not consistency, and that goes
10 to that part about, you know, making sure that
11 teachers clearly understand the curriculum that
12 they're offering, that they clearly understand how
13 they're instructing, and there's that consistency
14 across the district. And that's what we're trying to
15 move to and why we set those criteria the way that we
16 did.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Have they done an aligned
18 curriculum and -- or literacy that aligns?

19 DR. HERNANDEZ: So they are in the process of
20 that. That's one of the things that they've reached
21 out to us about and we've kind of been working --
22 right now, they're in their second year of working
23 with Solution Tree in their PLC process where they've
24 identified essential standards and done the work of
25 aligning their curriculum and developing those things

1 and matching the state standards. We haven't had as
2 much emphasis, like we have in Little Rock, with
3 going in and doing the literacy work, and that's
4 started this year is going in and watching the
5 implementation of RISE. The District, when they
6 first chose what their Science of Reading pathway
7 was, they did BRAINSread. And so they've gone back
8 -- which was one of our improved pathways. But
9 they've gone back in their elementary grades and
10 started the Science of Reading part -- I'm sorry --
11 the RISE training. One of the issues with some of
12 these other pathways is there's not the coaching that
13 goes along with it. And so that's what we're working
14 on with them now is making sure that they have
15 coaching; they have a literacy specialist that's
16 coming on-site weekly, going in the classrooms,
17 making sure that implementation is going on, and then
18 making sure we have the materials and things that we
19 need in the classrooms to make it happen.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So the curriculum they have now
21 they're having to adapt to match --

22 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. And in some cases there's
23 some --

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: That's almost impossible for any
25 teacher.

1 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. No, I agree; it's hard.
2 And that's one of the things that we're, you know,
3 keenly aware of, as we've learned with Little Rock,
4 to make sure that we're helping and coaching along,
5 those kinds of things -- and that's with all of our
6 schools. And so when we get to Lee County we'll talk
7 a little bit about that, is making sure that they
8 have the materials. And so we've just now -- last
9 year when we took over they didn't have the materials
10 that were needed. And so they're now getting the
11 materials, starting to get trained, and then we're
12 going to be there to watch and make sure
13 implementation is happening, so --

14 Okay. So in a general sense what I tried to
15 give you here is, you know, what are the main focuses
16 at the school level. And you can see that the main
17 focuses are around culture, literacy and mathematics.
18 And as a district what they're focusing on really
19 supporting is the reading and writing instruction
20 piece, and then also continuing that year-two of the
21 PLC-at-work process. You know, last year was kind of
22 that first "let's learn how this is supposed to work
23 with our collaborative teams," and this year they've
24 had -- they have all that back understanding and are
25 able to start doing more of the deeper work. And

1 which they know -- you know, they've looked at their
2 scores and aren't happy with where they're at; but
3 they feel like this is the right work that they're
4 doing and that's going to help them to continue to
5 build and grow in these areas.

6 As far as the support that we're providing at
7 the district level, along with Solution Tree
8 district-level coaching, we have principal support.
9 From the Solution Tree aspect, they're working with
10 the principals directly. On our end we're really
11 emphasizing making sure that they're getting in the
12 classrooms as principals, doing observations and
13 supporting the teachers that need support. We also
14 have some curriculum instruction support that's
15 there, and a lot of that is going to revolve around
16 literacy; that's going to be our focus in looking at
17 RISE implementation -- or Science of Reading
18 implementation and helping make sure that all of the
19 material is aligned and what makes sense for the
20 schools.

21 We do have special ed. support that's going in
22 and working with their team. In addition to that, we
23 continue -- because of the District being on fiscal
24 distress, we have fiscal support there. As well as
25 we've added the behavior component where the District

1 has already been working with doing PBIS, but just
2 continuing that implementation and trying to help
3 with those kids that are not necessarily just the
4 normal type behavior issues, but some of those
5 higher-level behavior issues. When we think about
6 what they call -- just like with behavior, we have
7 those tiers. And so when we talk about Tier 3
8 behaviors and higher-levels of issues in the
9 classroom, this is kind of the support for that as
10 well.

11 As I mentioned, the District has started in
12 their second year. They've partnered with some of
13 the other school districts, Pine Bluff being one of
14 them, and running a new ALE program through Arkansas
15 River Co-op, and that's housed on one of Pine Bluff's
16 campus, the Belair campus. They also are working on
17 their retention of their quality teachers and have
18 identified lead teachers within their school district
19 that -- and in essence what they do is those teachers
20 are kind of the leads for their collaborative teams.
21 And so in order to do that, they've increased and
22 looked at an alternative way of compensating those
23 folks to kind of keep those folks in the district
24 that they feel are effective and are also going to
25 help lead those teams within the schools.

1 The big thing here with the special ed. is that,
2 you know, they've started to work on aligning and
3 making sure that what goes on in the SPED classrooms
4 is the same as what's going on in the general
5 classrooms; it's differentiated for those students,
6 but they're not off doing something different that's
7 not part of the general classroom. So that kind of
8 helps in making sure that kids are getting access to
9 what they need to be successful in school.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Are you talking about the
11 students with learning disabilities or the students
12 who are cognitively impaired?

13 DR. HERNANDEZ: I will have to maybe defer to
14 Ms. Davis on that one when she comes up. She's here.

15 The other part is with the -- I mentioned with
16 the literacy support. What we're trying to do with
17 that is -- you know, the District has been working in
18 their process that they've been trained in with the
19 BRAINSread. And instead of coming in and saying,
20 "Hey, these are all the things that you're doing
21 wrong," we're really trying to make sure we're
22 partnering with the co-op and working alongside with
23 the District, and not make it in a nature of
24 monitoring but more of coaching and support. And
25 that's kind of our process. Otherwise, you run the

1 risk of, you know, people shutting down and there's
2 this, you know, animosity between the support and the
3 people that are getting the support. So we're
4 working on that. That's something really new for the
5 District. And there has been some cases of, you
6 know, wondering, you know, "Hey, how is this going to
7 look" and all those things; so we've been working
8 through those details.

9 One big factor that's a kind of concern is, as
10 I've talked to you before, we're trying to amp up and
11 start a Community Advisory Board for the District.
12 And one of the issues that we've run into is we've
13 extended the deadline, extended the deadline; we
14 currently only have about three people that have
15 applied to be a part of that Community Advisory
16 Board. We're still -- you know, the District is
17 actively out there putting things in the newspaper,
18 trying to recruit, but we're just not seeing that
19 level of people that want to be part of the Community
20 Advisory Board. So that's a big concern for us is,
21 you know, wanting to move the District back towards
22 some form of local governance; when you don't have
23 people that are interested in stepping up to do that,
24 that's a concern. And so --

25 Yes, sir.

1 DR. HILL: Why do you think that is?

2 DR. HERNANDEZ: We don't really know, to be
3 honest. I think some of it -- what I've heard in
4 talking to Ms. Warren is that there's not -- seems to
5 be -- general interest because this is that second
6 time that the District has been taken over, that --
7 you know, on one-hand she thinks people are generally
8 satisfied with the way the District is going and
9 there's, you know, a lot more positivity about the
10 District. But just in certain areas, when you look
11 at the zones there's just people that are in those
12 particular zones that aren't interested in being a
13 part of the District that doesn't necessarily -- are
14 part of a board that may not have full autonomy and
15 authority to do what they feel like needs to be done.

16 DR. HILL: Do you think there's some -- possibly
17 be some ways that we could kind of promote more
18 engagement by group sessions, talks, surveys, trying
19 to get people --

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: I think everything is on the
21 table now. You know, we thought we would have some
22 pretty good interest by, you know, some of the
23 newsletters and things that they're getting out and
24 doing in the community. They have a lot of things
25 that are going on community engagement-wise, but just

1 haven't been able to get people that say, "Yeah, I
2 want to go on and fill out the application." So
3 that's something that we're still going to continue
4 to work on and think of other ways that we can
5 potentially get people to want to do that. We've got
6 some flexibility where we've even moved past the idea
7 of "hey, you don't necessarily have to be in this
8 zone for the community advisory board; you just have
9 to live in the District." Now we've had other people
10 that have inquired about being part of the Community
11 Advisory Board, but they may live in Little Rock or
12 other places, and we've -- we haven't gone to -- we
13 don't think we have the authority to do that part of
14 it. But we have kind of loosened the requirements on
15 being in a specific zone.

16 DR. HILL: You know, just from past experience
17 -- and this is just something -- you know, I don't
18 know if that's -- because I haven't taken the pulse.
19 But oftentimes, when people are not engaged they
20 usually don't think their voices are heard when they
21 do get engaged.

22 DR. HERNANDEZ: Right.

23 DR. HILL: So here's a suggestion, may be
24 totally -- may not even apply. But oftentimes, in
25 those -- in the communities you find the three or

1 four largest churches and reach out to the pastors,
2 and then maybe that can be an engagement approach to
3 stimulate that type of conversation and then it could
4 move forward. Because I think it's just critically
5 important that you know the pulse of what's going on
6 with the people that you're trying to serve or
7 whatever will work.

8 DR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

9 MS. NEWTON: I have one quick question. Where
10 are we on the five-year timeline with Dollarway?

11 DR. HERNANDEZ: So with Dollarway they were
12 taken over December -- say December twenty --

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: '15.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: '15.

15 DR. HERNANDEZ: '15. Is that right?

16 MS. NEWTON: I knew there was two different
17 things that we did, so I didn't know when the five
18 years started.

19 DR. HERNANDEZ: The five years will -- the
20 fourth year will finish this year, in December.

21 MS. NEWTON: Okay. So we have one more year.
22 Okay.

23 DR. HERNANDEZ: Right.

24 MS. CHAMBERS: Dr. Hernandez, this may become
25 more evident as we go through --

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Microphone.

2 MS. CHAMBERS: This may become more evident as
3 we go through each district plan. But it would be
4 helpful if we could start to see the exit criteria
5 and performance to that criteria so that we can
6 consistently see where are they relative to where
7 they need to be.

8 DR. HERNANDEZ: Right.

9 MS. CHAMBERS: That would be one request, if we
10 aren't already doing that.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: There's a link to it.

12 MS. CHAMBERS: That would be great, but as we
13 talk about kind of where they're at and what
14 adjustments would be recommended to hit those
15 timelines.

16 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, ma'am. So the link to the
17 live document for exit criteria is there. And here's
18 kind of the -- by when we set those, especially once
19 we establish what our first set of exit criteria was
20 going to look like for Little Rock, then we patterned
21 a lot of those off towards --

22 MS. CHAMBERS: Right.

23 DR. HERNANDEZ: -- the end-of-the-year. And,
24 you know, what we're real careful about is, you know,
25 there's lots of training that's going on and movement

1 towards those things. But when we talk about
2 evidence, that's what we're trying to put in that
3 document. And so we're still in that phase of
4 training and doing actions and activities that move
5 us towards that, but not necessarily is there that
6 evidence. And there's a few of those. So if you
7 look at -- when we get to Pine Bluff, for example,
8 there's a link in that exit criteria where it talks
9 about -- one of the exit criteria is identifying an
10 instructional model. And so Pine Bluff has actually
11 developed what they see along -- Lee County has
12 actually done this too -- is they've identified, you
13 know, what are those instructional pieces that
14 they're committed to as a school and then overall as
15 a district. So they're taking steps, when you look
16 at all of those things, in different areas; but we're
17 trying to put in examples of evidence so you can see,
18 and we can see, where it's just not -- they didn't go
19 to just a training, but there's actually some
20 tangible things that are being produced. And that's
21 kind of what those lagging indicators or evidence is
22 geared towards is -- you know, we want to see, you
23 know, meeting schedules and things that shows that
24 they have a system in place, that they're ongoing and
25 things like that in terms of collaborative team

1 meetings. So we will continue to do that as we start
2 to get more evidence that these things are happening
3 around the qualitative. The quantitative -- at least
4 we're not going to have that information always
5 until, you know, October. When they come out we'll
6 see what that -- how they did in relation to that
7 quail -- or quantitative information.

8 MS. CHAMBERS: Thank you.

9 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. But the last thing --
10 there was a question that had been asked about summer
11 school. So for Dollarway their main focus for summer
12 school is credit recovery; so there wasn't any
13 additional summer school that was offered by the
14 Dollarway School District.

15 DR. MOORE: And I think elementary summer school
16 is really important. Is there, you know, planning
17 for next summer? Would that be something the
18 District would look at?

19 DR. HERNANDEZ: Let me see where Ms. Davis is.

20 Dr. Bryant -- I'll let Dr. Bryant come answer
21 that one.

22 DR. MOORE: All right. And I'll go ahead and
23 ask, too, along those same lines: is there a 21st
24 Century program or any afterschool program that the
25 District has for students?

1 DR. BRYANT: Yeah. So, originally we did apply
2 for a 21st Century grant; it was not approved. But
3 we do partner with other entities that are in the
4 state -- in the community who have the 21st Century
5 grant. When we started to look at summer school for
6 this past summer, the participation we could not get.
7 We sent out request after request after request, and
8 I think the largest number we got -- like middle
9 school, for example, 27 students. That was it. We
10 couldn't generate the interest.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: What was the attendance at the
12 credit recovery?

13 DR. BRYANT: Credit recovery, very good.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: It was?

15 DR. BRYANT: Because they knew that this was --
16 this was not an optional thing in order for them to
17 get back on task in order to graduate, the attendance
18 was very good.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So the carrot was there.

20 DR. BRYANT: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: What about your student and
22 staff attendance?

23 DR. BRYANT: Student and staff attendance has
24 improved tremendously. One of the biggest issues
25 that we faced within the past was staff absenteeism.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yes, I know.

2 DR. BRYANT: And we contribute our -- the past
3 year our absentees were health-related, almost 100%.
4 We did have a lot of teachers who had some long-term
5 illnesses. But as far as just missing just to miss,
6 mostly -- 100% of all of them were tied to some type
7 of illnesses.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. So it was like Family
9 Medical Leave --

10 DR. BRYANT: Yes. Yes, Family Medical Leave.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- not Monday/Friday absences?

12 DR. BRYANT: Yes, Family Medical Leave or short-
13 term illnesses, like the flu or pneumonia.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And what about students?

15 DR. BRYANT: Students has been up. We have not
16 had a lot of problem with student absentee. For
17 whatever reason, they seem to want to come now. But
18 we haven't had a lot of problems with student
19 absentees.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And have you all started your --
21 or have you all had a dyslexia audit or special ed.
22 audit yet?

23 DR. BRYANT: We have not. We do -- we're
24 working on our dyslexia plan even as we speak. We
25 have a visit scheduled coming up very, very soon.

1 But we have not had that yet. No, we haven't.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: They're coming to do the audit
3 for you?

4 DR. BRYANT: Yes. Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

6 DR. BRYANT: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Good. And anybody else have
8 questions of him while he's up here?

9 Ms. Dean.

10 MS. DEAN: Could you tell me more about what
11 you're doing around community and family engagement?
12 I didn't really see --

13 DR. BRYANT: Around school and --

14 MS. DEAN: Community and family engagement.

15 DR. BRYANT: Oh, community and family
16 engagement. We have a young lady that this is her
17 fulltime responsibility and she is doing some
18 phenomenal things; right now, she's working with a
19 group of parents and trying to teach them how to
20 monitor cell phone usage of their -- for their own
21 students. They are involved in health screening;
22 she's getting them involved in health screening. She
23 goes the extra mile in getting them into her lab for
24 computer training. And then we have the monthly
25 meetings in the community that has grown

1 tremendously; which it's kind of odd that we didn't
2 have for the advisory council because those meetings
3 have grown. Yeah.

4 MS. DEAN: It may behoove you-all to -- I don't
5 know if this is something that is discussed, but as
6 far as Dr. Hernandez speaking about the missing
7 slots, those open slots that may be something that
8 could be discussed at those meetings.

9 DR. BRYANT: Absolutely.

10 MS. DEAN: There seems to be good turnout and
11 there seems to be growth as far as interest and
12 engagement. That may be another avenue for you to
13 engage the public about, you know, some civic
14 responsibility and opportunities.

15 DR. BRYANT: Yes. We accept all opportunities.

16 MS. DEAN: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Chambers? Dr. Hill? Ms.
18 Newton? Mr. Pekron? Anybody on this side?

19 You can finish, Dr. Hernandez.

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: Just a couple of clarifications
21 on the family and community engagement piece. Now
22 that we do have the toolkit, Kim Wright -- we've
23 talked about their -- instead of having them part of
24 a pilot program that they're working on, they're
25 actually going to be reaching out individually to

1 their family and community people at each district
2 and walking them through the toolkit and making sure
3 that they understand all the components and how they
4 would be implemented in the school. And we've had
5 that conversation with Ms. Warren as well, so she's
6 aware that that's something we're going to be working
7 on this year.

8 In reference to the dyslexia piece, we have had
9 Ms. King go through and start to -- she did a desk
10 audit. That has been sent to the schools to review,
11 and that's what's triggered the next step which is
12 the on-site visit where they'll go in and start
13 seeing what needs to be done and verify what's in the
14 -- what they were able to see based on the desk audit
15 and stuff like that. So that work is --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: To find out what screening and
17 what service --

18 DR. HERNANDEZ: Correct.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- and what program they'll use?

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: Right. And they -- you know,
21 if, you know, like we said last year, it's not where
22 it needs to be -- and that's something that the
23 districts recognize and are welcoming the help to say
24 "how do we make sure we're doing these things right."
25 It's just, you know, getting people -- now that

1 school has got started, getting them in there. We
2 talked about going in the fall, and so we're at that
3 point now where we're starting that with them.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah, I understand. But I also
5 understand that the law has been in place the whole
6 time that they've been under Level 5.

7 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, ma'am. Okay.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Did you want to go over the
9 fiscal part with us?

10 DR. HERNANDEZ: So the fiscal part -- we do have
11 kind of a unique situation with Dollarway. There
12 were a lot of things this year where -- we're moving
13 along in terms of progress related to their financial
14 practices. But there were a lot of things this year
15 that were of a maintenance nature that we spent some
16 money that were one-time expenditures that lowered
17 the balance a little bit. But the expectation is in
18 making this budget we don't anticipate there being a
19 lot of issues. They're also dealing with that kind
20 of decline in enrollment, which there's going to have
21 to be some adjustments made in this year's budget to
22 make sure we're still doing well and viable by the
23 District. But they're still, we think, on track to
24 be okay financially.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: What is their tax base down

1 there?

2 DR. HERNANDEZ: As far as their assessment?

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: No. What I mean, like industry
4 -- is there anything other much than homes that are
5 bringing in --

6 DR. HERNANDEZ: You know, we had -- no, there's
7 not a lot of large business type things that are in
8 primarily their area of the District. I know we've
9 had -- there's been that discussion, and y'all have
10 heard this as a board, of trying to pull the
11 industrial park out of other districts and make it
12 part of theirs, and that's been one of the coming and
13 asking about during public comment, about changing
14 boundary lines. But there isn't -- and the
15 arrangement with the new Saracen Casino, we know that
16 that's going to be primarily in Pine Bluff School
17 District. But if there's any other -- we haven't
18 been made aware of any kind of other implications
19 that that might have for Dollarway.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah. I think, you know, the
21 thing that comes to mind, because we're dealing with
22 Little Rock now, is that district consolidation,
23 annex and reconstitution would all be in play because
24 of their location and the districts around them are
25 not in federal court. So, you know, helping the

1 community maybe that would increase the interest in
2 the Community Advisory Board kind of, you know.

3 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. No, that's a --

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Let's get this going.

5 DR. HERNANDEZ: That's been something that, you
6 know, we've heard a lot come from -- people in the
7 community have had that discussion about a potential
8 consolidation there. But I think everything in terms
9 of the District would be on the table as we move
10 forward.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Any other questions?

12 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So in this one what we're
13 asking you is approval of the legislative report and
14 the district support plan; that's one of the
15 requirements under a Level 5 district. And so that's
16 the document that's in there as well, so that's why
17 the agenda item is written a little bit different
18 this month.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I think we don't hear it from
20 this District or some of the others, but, you know,
21 we constantly are hearing, "Well, you don't have a
22 plan, you don't have a plan" -- and every year every
23 district has a plan. And so I think that the more
24 people that can hear that and the more often we have
25 to say it --

1 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- then the better.

3 DR. HERNANDEZ: You know, we've got -- and
4 that's -- the hardest part is there are lots of
5 required plans, and so just trying to work together
6 to make them align. So now, you know, in essence
7 what we've built this to is you've got -- like I
8 mentioned earlier, you've got the school level plans
9 that the District says "how am I going to support
10 that;" the State then says, "How am I going to
11 support that." And all of that needs to be moving
12 towards this -- what they're doing for exit criteria.
13 And so that -- by doing that, that really is the exit
14 plan. If they're doing these things, then that
15 should help them move towards meeting those goals.
16 And so it's -- we're hoping that when people see
17 these that they're pretty explicit and we're giving
18 updates on progress as we move along.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah.

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: And then the culmination of it
21 is when we look at our ESSA School Index did we move
22 it; did we move those, you know, in a positive
23 trajectory.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Remind me what the new name of
25 NSL funds are. It's --

1 DR. HERNANDEZ: ESA.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah, ESA.

3 DR. HERNANDEZ: Enhanced Student --

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Enhanced Student Achievement.

5 DR. HERNANDEZ: -- Achievement. Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. I think one thing that we
7 want to emphasize to the Level 5's is we will want
8 some good pre and post data on how they're spending
9 that money, because we're not closing the gap in many
10 of these districts and that's what that is actually
11 intended to do.

12 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Not news to you.

14 DR. HERNANDEZ: No. No, ma'am.

15 Okay. So I will --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: All right. Anybody have any
17 questions, or do I have a motion to accept the
18 report?

19 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to accept the report.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Chambers moved to accept the
21 report. Do I have a second?

22 MS. DEAN: Second.

23 MR. PEKRON: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: We have twin seconds. I heard
25 Ms. Dean first.

1 All in favor?

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

4 Thank you, Dr. Hernandez.

5 B-8: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT AND APPROVAL OF

6 DISTRICT SUPPORT PLAN - EARLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

7 DR. HERNANDEZ: All right. So we're at Number
8 2, Earle School District.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I see Ms. Knowles is here.

10 DR. HERNANDEZ: She is.

11 And so, again, we had the scores -- and I'll
12 just ask are there any questions about these before
13 we get into the discussion portion? Again, you know,
14 there are some things that seem to be in a positive
15 direction and some things that, you know, don't seem
16 so positive in building that consistency, again, with
17 what the District is doing.

18 MR. PEKRON: Can I ask a question --

19 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, sir.

20 MR. PEKRON: -- on the scores? This is not just
21 here but I've seen it in a lot of places. Maybe some
22 of my teacher colleagues up here can enlighten me.
23 But why is it that the English scores are always
24 substantially higher than the other scores in terms
25 of readiness?

1 DR. HERNANDEZ: Stacy -- I think I will defer
2 that one to Ms. Smith of why we see -- she --

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: She isn't here.

4 DR. HERNANDEZ: We'll get that question
5 answered. But, you know, that seems to be -- you
6 know, I don't know why it is but there's always been
7 that difference in math and literacy, math always
8 being lower than the -- at least the English part of
9 it. But --

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And English is actually the one
11 that got re-normed --

12 DR. HERNANDEZ: It did.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- and lifted. But it -- you
14 know, I mean you'd think that the reading would be
15 higher than their ability to use it; but in fact,
16 that's not -- that also includes writing.

17 MR. PEKRON: Yeah. You know, it seems to me
18 like unless there's something about how something is
19 being taught in a particular school it should be
20 fairly consistent.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And sometimes it may be the
22 literacy is aligned and the math isn't, or vice-
23 versa.

24 MR. PEKRON: Right.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You know --

1 MR. PEKRON: I was just curious. As I was
2 looking through these, out of all of these I noticed
3 that the English -- as I was going through these I
4 saw that the English is always -- appears to be --
5 some were substantially higher than the other --

6 DR. HERNANDEZ: We'll get your question answered
7 when Ms. Smith comes back.

8 MR. PEKRON: Okay. Thank you.

9 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So with Earle, their
10 emphasis, again, is on literacy, mathematics -- at a
11 school level is where they're focused at. And then
12 also they're not a district that has been part of the
13 Solution Tree PLC process in the past, and part of
14 the reason with that is some of it is some financial
15 constraints. So we know that part of the district
16 being on fiscal distress -- part of the reason
17 they're in State takeover is fiscal distress; there
18 was some issues with their federal funds. And so the
19 amount of ESA funds, the amount of title funds that
20 are available, they're utilizing those things; but
21 they're not by-and-large -- you know, they don't have
22 access to the same kinds of funds in terms of 10.03
23 funds that the other district has, which is -- it's a
24 good thing in a sense. Because academically, you
25 know, they had one school that was a "C" -- or, I'm

1 sorry -- a "D" and one school that was -- had a
2 letter grade of "F," and so they didn't get 10.03
3 funds across the district, which is a subset of Title
4 1 funds. And so, you know, they're having to utilize
5 a lot more local district funds to do a lot of these
6 improvement efforts. And so we did -- as part of the
7 statewide initiative in supporting schools with
8 10.03, we've got their school signed up for PLC
9 leadership academies. And what that is is allowing
10 their leadership team to go through a process of
11 learning how do they become a good collaborative team
12 within their school and show leadership around PLCs.
13 We have been in discussion about standing some of
14 that work up directly; in the meantime, between
15 coaching academies, allowing a coach to come in and
16 help them continue that work and help develop their
17 teachers, and how to work collaboratively; but that's
18 still kind of in that planning process as we try to
19 get the books closed and find funds available to do
20 that with.

21 At the district level, they have a focus on
22 reading and mathematics instructions. Before Dr.
23 Wilde left, he talked about using a lot of what we
24 call instructional rounds, and that's where the
25 teachers are going around and seeing other effective

1 teaching within their buildings. And then,
2 obviously, they're still focusing on the professional
3 learning community aspect, but trying to really --
4 they're doing a lot of it on their own. And so we
5 really like to see the training and more of the
6 coaching happening, and they want to do that; it's
7 just like I mentioned earlier, trying to find the
8 resources to be able to do that. Same thing with the
9 district, we're doing a lot more in terms of the
10 district level coaching. John Hoy -- Mr. Hoy is
11 back; he works primarily with Lee County and Earle,
12 and that's from -- you know, just a lot of times when
13 we take over these districts we have the -- Tish
14 being a first-year, first-time superintendent and
15 it's from, you know, how do I do this, how do I do
16 that. You know, every superintendent we have has
17 strengths, but there are a lot of things if it's the
18 first time doing it you just -- you've got to have
19 somebody you can talk to, somebody you can ask
20 questions and, you know, bounce things off of that's,
21 you know, kind of in that supportive way and not
22 necessarily "oh, you're doing this wrong; you know,
23 we've got to fix it."

24 We have some principal support. We do have an
25 emphasis on TESS and LEADS, but we're also doing a

1 lot -- as we did last year, a lot of walking
2 alongside the principals. Rocky Malone works
3 primarily with that district. In addition to that,
4 we have Lynette Thrasher that does curriculum
5 instruction support. She has helped them develop
6 their school level plans, district level plans, and
7 has been doing a lot of work with them in trying to
8 identify the resources. What they started with is --
9 because they didn't really have a solid curriculum in
10 place and identified what the essential standards
11 that they were going to teach this year, they worked
12 with a group through Marzano Associates and actually
13 purchased what we call Proficiency Scales, and those
14 kind of helped really take the standards and reduce
15 them down to something that was manageable. And so
16 they worked to kind of design the units and taking
17 the curriculum or the resources that they had and
18 built that curriculum out at least for the first
19 unit, and then those collaborative teams are doing
20 the ongoing work of continuing to build that out
21 throughout the year. And so they're doing a lot of
22 the good, right work, but it's hard. It's hard,
23 especially when we talk about human capital. You
24 know, there are still positions within the school
25 district where they've got long-term subs, and that's

1 probably our biggest battle was all the work that we
2 did last year -- whenever a whole new crop of
3 teachers walk in it's -- we're starting over. And so
4 that's something that we've been battling and talked
5 a lot about is how -- you know, what can we do to
6 recruit and retain, especially when they're in a
7 county where they're competing with, you know, right
8 down the street West Memphis and Marion. And so that
9 hasn't gotten any better. But we're still trying to
10 think of ways and how we can potentially use ESA
11 funds to alter salary schedules and things like that.

12 We are providing the literacy support, special
13 ed. support, fiscal support, and, like I mentioned
14 earlier, the 10.03 funds to allow them to do things
15 with Solution Tree and that kind of stuff, so --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: How did they -- the rollout of
17 the new curriculum, their literacy curriculum go?
18 Because I know that they had that selected before the
19 end of the year.

20 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Tish, do you want to talk
21 a little bit about that?

22 SUPT. KNOWLES: Tish Knowles, Superintendent,
23 Earle School District.

24 So we -- as Dr. Hernandez said, we bought the
25 Proficiency Scales from Marzano Research for ELA and

1 math. And we had six days this summer that our
2 teachers came in and actually worked on those scales,
3 after they had been to a two-day HRS training through
4 Crowley's Ridge Co-op and ERZ. And so we feel like
5 that support went very well. And so we're looking --
6 as our literacy plan we're looking at, yeah, using
7 our Arkansas state standards and aligning that and
8 making sure we have those essential standards picked
9 out. As Dr. Hernandez said, we kind of worked on the
10 first unit; so the teachers -- we have instructional
11 facilitators who are leading that work, and they
12 worked alongside Jenny Stroud and Lynette Thrasher.
13 And so we feel really good about that work.

14 And so as we're walking in the buildings -- and,
15 of course, we're using the Brainspring Phonics First
16 instructors and we're also -- they've been trained in
17 the Science of Reading, and we have a few new ones
18 that will do that. Our instructional facilitator has
19 come from a 7-8 building, so she begins this month
20 the training in the Science of Reading. And then all
21 of our team, leadership team and all, have begun to
22 work on their modules for awareness and making sure
23 that we have those in place, and then they're using
24 the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness. So as we're walking
25 and going through walk-thru's in the building and

1 we're looking and seeing what they're doing, we're
2 looking for evidence of is that Science of Reading --
3 are we seeing evidence of that in the classroom. And
4 if we're not, we're making that a purposeful visit,
5 that we take that time and say, "This is what we
6 see." We did just an overview of this as what we
7 should -- our instructional model; this is what we
8 should always see, this is what we should sometimes
9 see, this is what we should never see. And we went
10 through those and talked about the visits of the
11 first two weeks of school -- what did we always see,
12 what did we sometimes see, what should we never see
13 but we saw. And so I think kind of hitting home with
14 the teachers that has been -- it's been an eye-
15 opening experience and I think we have a lot of
16 teachers onboard with that.

17 We have -- Felicia Watson is here; she's our
18 Student Success Coordinator, and so she is going in
19 and looking at things as far as attendance and those
20 types of things. And then we have our PBIS coach
21 this year and he has already -- first week of school
22 he had already identified teachers that need that
23 extra classroom management to help them get onboard.
24 And so just working with that, with our proficiency
25 scales, and taking and putting a stamp on our

1 curriculum -- not somebody else's curriculum that we
2 use, but make sure we're aligned there.

3 It's a lot -- there's a lot of work. There's a
4 lot of work to do. It's not a done-deal, so --

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I know you jumped on your
6 dyslexia at the end of last year and got the program
7 going.

8 SUPT. KNOWLES: Uh-huh.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: So have you had your paper audit
10 of that yet?

11 SUPT. KNOWLES: Well, we -- they're doing a desk
12 audit.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: A desk audit.

14 SUPT. KNOWLES: Uh-huh. And then they'll come
15 back to us. But we actually had two that we sent
16 through training for the Shelton Academic Reading
17 Approach; so we sent two. And then we had 16
18 teachers who went through Phonics First and one who
19 went through Structures for the high school level,
20 and so I feel really good about that. I feel that
21 those things are being utilized and we're seeing
22 evidence of that in the classroom.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And you've done your screening?

24 SUPT. KNOWLES: Yes. They finish -- I believe
25 Friday they finish the screenings.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

2 SUPT. KNOWLES: And they're working on -- they
3 did all the DIBELS last week. And then we've already
4 been working with the co-op staff; we've had a
5 meeting with a literacy specialist and Becky Naylor,
6 who is our ADE support team. And so we've already
7 scheduled through December the days that they will be
8 there. And then we have the Department coming in;
9 Lynette Thrasher and John Hoy have been working with
10 us.

11 And so I feel really good about the principals
12 getting in the rooms -- and, you know, third week of
13 school they had been in all the rooms, everything,
14 every week, and so I feel good about that. I've
15 tried to walk -- I've been -- every week I've been in
16 the buildings and been in the classrooms. And I
17 think just the presence maybe is helpful, and just
18 talking, having those conversations, those critical
19 conversations with those teachers. And so one of the
20 ways we have talked about keeping our -- everybody
21 accountable is that when I walk I take notes and put
22 that in LEADS. And the notes -- the things that I
23 see in the classrooms I indicate and that's how I
24 rate the principals, and they know that; and so if I
25 see an ineffective teacher in the classroom, that's a

1 rating for the principal. And so I think just having
2 those checks-and-balances, it's doable; but it just
3 has to be -- it just has to happen, every day you
4 need to see the change.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And if you haven't already
6 looked into it, I know the cohort from 5th to 6th in
7 all three areas was the only place you really saw
8 improvement in all three areas from the 5th to the
9 6th. So I don't know what they're doing, but maybe
10 they could continue to do it and mentor others.

11 SUPT. KNOWLES: Uh-huh.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Anybody else while she's here?

13 DR. MOORE: I know I've asked this before, but I
14 know -- and as Dr. Hernandez says, teacher turnover
15 and staffing is one of your greatest challenges. At
16 the high school level how much do y'all utilize
17 online instruction this year?

18 SUPT. KNOWLES: Well, we really -- we really --
19 we struggled with Virtual Arkansas last year. And so
20 one of the things we did last year is that we were
21 using Virtual Arkansas in those lower level courses,
22 and so we bumped that; we've switched that around so
23 we have the areas that we -- where we don't have
24 teachers are the upper level classes. And we're
25 trying to use the V-A for upper level courses because

1 we feel like those students are more in tune with
2 that. You know, when you walk down the hall as a
3 superintendent and you have a high school student
4 come up to you and say, "Please get us a math
5 teacher," that hits you really hard, and that's what
6 we've got. And so I'm very passionate about us
7 making sure that we are filling those needs. We have
8 our community and parent liaison; we've actually
9 coded part of her salary to help us. We're doing
10 individualized plans with all of our teachers on
11 ETPs. The Department has something; so June Luneau
12 had shared that with me back in July, and we actually
13 have sat down with anybody who's on an ETP and ALP or
14 anything with an exception and we've gone through the
15 plan. And they actually have a written plan that
16 they have signed, sealed and delivered, and with my
17 name or Ms. Maples' name on it. And we're looking at
18 those monthly to make sure those checks-and-balances
19 -- because when we have teachers who are not
20 progressing toward that certification, even though we
21 struggle to find them, we don't want that and we want
22 what's best for our students. We owe our students
23 what is best. We have a wonderful bright, new, shiny
24 building; it is the talk of the town. And we want
25 our students to be happy and we want our teachers to

1 be happy and we want to succeed.

2 DR. MOORE: Thank you. I have just one more
3 question, if you don't mind.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

5 DR. MOORE: Do y'all -- are y'all offering
6 afterschool programs this year in conjunction -- or
7 at your schools?

8 SUPT. KNOWLES: We are not at this time. And
9 that's something we'll revisit once we have -- we
10 have parent-teacher conferences Monday. And so once
11 we look at those then we will revisit to see which
12 students need tutoring. We will have What I Need
13 Wednesday, since we have the early-out on Wednesday.
14 And so we have been through training. This is our
15 second year with Judy Elliott -- Dr. Judy Elliott,
16 and she comes to Crowley's Ridge Co-op; and so it's
17 our second year with that. And one of the things
18 that our group has learned, it's a multi-tiered
19 system of support, RTI -- it's all the same; it
20 overlays and it all fits in well with our PLCs. And
21 so our -- on our What I Need Wednesdays we're looking
22 at students, what do they need; is there somebody
23 that needs -- do they need to have enrichment, do
24 they need to have intervention, do they need an extra
25 layer of support, and we're looking at those. So

1 we're doing that.

2 I want Ms. Watson to talk about how she's doing
3 that. They were doing that at the high school. But
4 I'll tell you a little bit -- at the elementary is
5 where we're targeting those and which of those
6 students we need, and on Wednesdays they get that
7 extra layer of support along with the regular
8 interventions they're already getting during the day.

9 But, Ms. Watson -- would you mind if she would
10 share with you about What I Need Wednesday for high
11 school?

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: It's your time.

13 SUPT. KNOWLES: Thank you.

14 MS. WATSON: Hello. Felicia Watson, Student
15 Success Coordinator, Earle School District.

16 On Wednesdays, for the What I Need, twice a
17 month we will be dedicating for different activities
18 and lessons for our student success plans, class
19 activities, class meetings, and, as she said, any
20 other things that -- meeting with the principal and
21 the IF's and teachers that other students may be
22 needing some extra attention to different things.
23 But we have a calendar of activities laid out already
24 for the student success activities, and I will be
25 meeting with them -- we meet every-other-week to

1 discuss different things that are needed. So that's
2 what we're doing, 30 minutes on Wednesdays. Every
3 Wednesday we have early release, so that's the day we
4 choose to do all of that. But, of course, we would
5 do it any day that's needed. But we are dedicating
6 Wednesdays for that so the teachers won't be
7 surprised walking in "this is what we need to do;"
8 they already have it laid out, they already know on
9 October 2nd this is what we're doing, and vice-versa.

10 DR. MOORE: Okay.

11 MS. WATSON: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Anything else?

13 Okay.

14 DR. HERNANDEZ: She had mentioned that the new
15 elementary school has been built. And that, you
16 know, was a great culmination in getting that process
17 -- because if you remember, when we first took over
18 the school district the building -- we were already
19 in financial -- having financial issues. The
20 building was projected to be \$1,000,000 over budget,
21 and so we had to pare that down and really limp
22 along. And so we finished the year. It was always
23 going to be a razor-thin margin to just get us closed
24 at the end of the year, and so we definitely did
25 struggle with that. And we're going to be making

1 adjustments this year in dealing with kind of what it
2 looks like based on preliminary numbers -- just a
3 slight dip in enrollment so far. But we're going to
4 make adjustments and carry on with that, now that
5 we've got the building equipped and all the things
6 that we needed to do to make that happen. And so,
7 you know, Dr. Wilde and Tish, they did a great job of
8 bringing that in and making it happen.

9 So everything else I think up here we've talked
10 about pretty much. So, any other questions related
11 to Earle?

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I guess to be sure you'll do
13 your pre and post data on how you're spending your
14 ESA money.

15 And your staff and student attendance, can you
16 speak to that -- or do you want her to?

17 DR. HERNANDEZ: So, and this is just an overall
18 statement for all schools is, you know, I'd mentioned
19 a little bit last night at our workshop that this is
20 looking at -- student attendance and teacher
21 attendance has always been part of the school
22 improvement process. And by my experience with it,
23 and looking at these reports, it's always been this
24 activity that schools have done that have -- to
25 produce information, and it's always inconsistent

1 from building to building; it's inconsistent from
2 report to report. And the districts provide the
3 data, but a lot of times there's not anything done
4 with it. And so what we're -- right now we have in
5 the plan to do monthly type attendance reports around
6 students. But we're also kind of learning some
7 lessons from what some of the districts are doing,
8 like Little Rock with Attendance Works; Pine Bluff
9 has started that process as well. Because what we
10 really want to look at is not just raw numbers of
11 attendance but we want to look at chronic absenteeism
12 and look at that data historically; but then also
13 have some strategies related to that about what do
14 you do with this information when it comes. So we're
15 tweaking that and thinking about how -- the best way
16 to display that information so it's part of their
17 living process and not just an activity that they do
18 for compliance, and I think that's important.

19 When it comes to the staff attendance -- I don't
20 know if Sheila is back there -- if she's back there,
21 she can wave -- they've been working really hard with
22 Little Rock School District, our finance folks,
23 Kathleen Crain, in trying to figure out how can we
24 use our systems --eFinance specifically; how can we
25 use that system to be able to produce reports that

1 are -- that make sense. The challenge is that every
2 district has their own unique set of circumstances.
3 Some school districts may have bereavement, some of
4 them may not; some don't really do well at coding
5 FMLA. So when they send us data it's hard to
6 decipher what does it mean. So if it's hard for us,
7 we know it's hard for them to figure out what does it
8 mean and what do we do with it. And so we've tried
9 -- I don't know how many iterations of a report.
10 We've been working all through the summer. So this
11 has been ongoing, and we finally got to a place where
12 we thought we had it, and it would show, you know,
13 90% of the teachers had missed 10 or more days, you
14 know. And so we have been going back and then every
15 time we find out little caveats. So we're really
16 trying to be thoughtful in what we do with the
17 teacher attendance piece because we want to make sure
18 we've got quality data where they're not just
19 spending time gathering information. But then also
20 we've been doing a lot of research about how do we
21 work with policy and incentives to deal with the
22 teacher attendance problem, because it's got to be
23 both. You can't incentivize your way out of it
24 because that doesn't work, but then there's some
25 policy things that we're trying to work with our

1 districts about, with, and try to get them to adopt
2 some of these procedures so that becomes more
3 meaningful and they can do stuff with it.

4 So that's kind of just a general statement
5 around what we're doing with attendance. We are
6 looking at it; we're just trying to think of better
7 ways to do that and make it meaningful. Because I
8 know you guys -- every time you get a report the
9 attendance looks different and it's hard to know what
10 it means and what it looks like, and we've had that
11 same frustration.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I know in the early days we --
13 it was by school, and if you missed five to ten days,
14 or ten or more days, you could get down to the
15 teacher level and -- because, you know, Ms. Knowles
16 and I and Mr. Hoy, we were all trained under Dr.
17 Wilde to see these leading indicators. But it is
18 troubling.

19 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Okay.

20 So next we've got Lee County School District --

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank y'all very much.

22 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Oh, sorry. Y'all need to
23 do the motion.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah, we need to have a motion
25 to accept the report.

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: Move to accept the report.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Moved by Ms. McFetridge.

3 MS. DEAN: Second.

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Ms. Dean.

5 All in favor?

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Now you can move on.

8 B-9: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT: LEE COUNTY SCHOOL
9 DISTRICT

10 DR. HERNANDEZ: All right. So Lee County -- of
11 course, we took over the school district right at the
12 end of March, and that was right before -- right in
13 the middle of testing season. Principals, as you
14 remember, both decided they were not going to be with
15 us any longer, and so we really jumped in there,
16 tried to make sure some of this happened. And so
17 these are the test results from the District. And as
18 you can see, you know, not necessarily what we want
19 them to be, but it's part of the -- even though we've
20 taken -- we took the District over for standards,
21 we're actively working in all aspects and all
22 systems, trying to get the District in a good place
23 to where we can make some decisions. Dr. Bowles has
24 expressed an interest in, you know, after these
25 October reports come out, consideration of coming and

1 asking for that designation of Level 5. And that's
2 something that we've talked about as well is just
3 because it's a standards issue, there are also some
4 fiscal implications. We did add fiscal distress to
5 the District later on, but we never did go through
6 the process of reaffirming state authority under
7 that. And so that's going to be a decision for the
8 Board -- do we want to just leave it as, you know,
9 the standards part of it, do we want to do something
10 related to fiscal additionally, or do we want to look
11 at the academic part of it. And so -- but
12 regardless, we're still working and trying to do
13 these things.

14 When it comes to the school level plans, that is
15 a component that's a little bit different than most
16 of our districts and also looking at science. Dr.
17 Bowles is real adamant about science education and,
18 you know, he's even found a way within the elementary
19 school to add kind of a science lab to give kids an
20 opportunity. Because we moved the elementary school
21 to Anna Strong Middle School, which had a lot of
22 things that -- like a science laboratory and things
23 like that that aren't typical in an elementary
24 school. So that's why you're seeing that component
25 there as well.

1 They're also in their first year of working with
2 Solution Tree. They came in at the end of May --
3 towards the end of May and did a needs assessment for
4 the District and then have started the coaching; they
5 started out this summer doing some trainings. And
6 then, in addition to that, they've been back on-site
7 in recent weeks working with the principals, working
8 with the staff and the district leadership, and
9 helping set up these collaborative teams,
10 identification of essential standards, and getting
11 that buy-in collectively of staff. Obviously, this
12 is new to a lot of them there; so to say it's just
13 going smoothly would be wrong, and so I won't say
14 that. It is definitely a lot of work, a lot of
15 mindsets that are going to have to change in terms of
16 what the work looks like in, you know, kind of the --
17 and we run into this in a lot of underperforming
18 districts, is that the mindset is that, you know, our
19 teachers may not be ready for this or, you know, this
20 may be -- when you have a lot of teacher turnover
21 this may be wasted professional development and stuff
22 like that because they're just going to leave and go
23 somewhere else. And so, you know, our hope is that,
24 through the process of building this knowledge, if
25 they go somewhere else it's just going to benefit

1 those other schools that much more. But through that
2 collaborative nature of working together and trying
3 to solve these bigger issues that that's going to
4 make them want to stay, they feel a part of the team,
5 they feel valued, they feel trusted and those kinds
6 of things.

7 They have looked at a model in terms of what
8 they're putting out for instruction; and so that's
9 something they're going to be monitoring, working
10 towards, is making sure that there's consistent
11 instruction in all the classrooms. We'll be again
12 working with the same -- Mr. Hoy is working closely
13 with Dr. Bowles, and, you know, he's definitely -- it
14 doesn't matter if it's 7:00 in the morning or 9:00 at
15 night he's calling and wanting help from everybody;
16 so he's not shy, definitely, to want help. He has
17 very much walked into a scenario that is very, very
18 difficult.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You might want to introduce him
20 to those on the Board who haven't met him before.

21 DR. HERNANDEZ: I introduced him last time, but
22 this is --

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. -- no, Mr. Hoy.

24 DR. HERNANDEZ: Oh, Mr. Hoy. I didn't -- I
25 don't know if I haven't introduced him before, but

1 John Hoy was the Assistant Commissioner of Public
2 School Accountability. And so just much like Dr.
3 Owoh that worked at the Department had said, "Hey,
4 send me in," he did that for us at Helena-West Helena
5 several years ago when we needed somebody to do that.
6 So he has experience in this kind of work and that's
7 why we had him in the area working with Dr. Bowles
8 and those kinds of things. So we're very happy to
9 have him with us.

10 But like I said, the situation there is, you
11 know, difficult and nobody wants to take a school
12 over right at the end of the year. That's probably
13 -- if we ever have to do that again -- I know
14 sometimes we have to do things, but that's something
15 we've really got to look at is some of the timing of
16 these things. Because it's just -- there's just a
17 lot of moving parts, trying to get a year closed and
18 then get it ready for next year that just makes it
19 really problematic, especially when, you know, all
20 the things that were in place or not in place -- that
21 made it difficult. But I know we have to do what we
22 have to do, so -- but it is -- I've found that to be
23 more difficult than a middle-of-the-year takeover.

24 So the big work -- and it's, you know, an all-
25 hands-on-deck approach with every area. There isn't

1 an area within the District that we found, from food
2 service to special ed. to all of it, that doesn't
3 need attention. And so we are spending a lot of time
4 in Lee County and trying to help coach and support.
5 And Dr. Bowles has kind of gotten his team assembled
6 now that, you know, we didn't have a lot during the
7 summer and getting ready. So we're kind of starting
8 over, just to where things that -- staff that was
9 there towards the beginning of summer that were
10 responsible for ordering materials and getting things
11 in, we're just now catching up and getting some of
12 those things in. So a lot of the training,
13 specifically around literacy, we're just now starting
14 to get some of those materials in and getting them in
15 the hands of teachers and things like that, so we can
16 go in -- as our literacy support is going in and
17 coaching and working with people, making sure they
18 have their stuff. And so, that's been a challenge
19 just over the summer trying to get all those things
20 moving.

21 In addition to that, there was a lot of facility
22 work that had to take place. So I mentioned about
23 moving buildings. One of the things the District did
24 last year is they moved -- were planning on moving
25 all K-6 kids to Whitten Elementary, but the problem

1 with that was there was not enough space in that
2 building. And so, during the course of the year they
3 moved 6th grade to high school; not a real good
4 communication with the parents. That kind of left
5 this Anna Strong Middle School to be Central Office,
6 and so a very much under-utilized facility. And so
7 one of the things -- when Dr. Bowles came onboard we
8 walked the building a lot, looked around and
9 realized, hey, this is a great space; we don't have
10 to put kids in portables, we can house everybody on
11 one campus. But it didn't look very good. And so,
12 you know, Dr. Bowles took the bull by the horns and
13 really just got in there and -- from, you know, tiles
14 on the floor -- it was really funny because, you
15 know, when we talked about Dr. Owoh, a lot of -- we
16 go to visit him and we always hear the kind of "oh,
17 he's" -- you know, "Dr. Owoh is like our Moses." And
18 so when me and Commissioner Key went to visit one day
19 his employees said, "Hey, he's like Pharaoh; he's
20 getting behind us, making us do things." And so I
21 always think that's funny, but it's very much true;
22 he's very --

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: It's nice to know they know
24 their Bible.

25 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, that is true.

1 He very much, you know, pushes his folks and
2 gets the most out of them, and that's what I -- you
3 know -- is he always going to do things right? No.
4 But he's going to go full-force in doing them, and
5 that's to be expected; you can't teach the hard work
6 aspect of it. And so that's -- you know, he really
7 did a lot more things than I probably would've felt
8 comfortable doing over the course of the summer to
9 get the elementary school and high school in shape,
10 but he got them done to where they've got new
11 bathroom facilities, which kids are excited about. I
12 would encourage if you have Facebook and would Like
13 the Lee County School District, they're doing a
14 really good job of promoting the things, and it's
15 things --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I was going to tell them that
17 they interviewed the kids.

18 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: The water fountain was like a
20 big deal.

21 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, getting a new water
22 fountain.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: They're saying, "And we've got
24 new teachers and they care about us," you know.

25 DR. HERNANDEZ: Right.

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: It's great.

2 DR. HERNANDEZ: So it's all of those things.
3 And we always talk about the systems; all those
4 things are so important. Because we can talk about,
5 you know, the academic piece all the time, but if all
6 those other things aren't where they need to be the
7 academics -- you know, it's just -- it's an awful
8 place to be and nobody wants to be focused on that
9 part. So that's why it's important that we do all
10 this work holistically.

11 They have set up a new ALE program and getting
12 some more kids, because it definitely wasn't where it
13 needed to be. They have most of their staff hired.
14 That's another aspect of Dr. Bowles is he is very
15 much the recruiter. I think that came from his time
16 in Forrest City in really trying to think outside the
17 box in trying to recruit. So he's got pipelines
18 coming from, you know, the U of A Center; he's got --
19 you know, he's calling people from Teach For America;
20 he's even working with some of the foreign providers
21 that bring in some people from out-of-country as well
22 to do teaching. And so he has worked hard to get
23 staff in place.

24 It's kind of a weird story, but we started out
25 the year -- at the end of the year last year --

1 (TIMER BELL RINGS)

2 DR. HERNANDEZ: Was that my timer? Thanks.

3 We started --

4 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You're done.

5 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. We started the end-of-
6 the-year last year with having a finance staff that
7 was in place. And so once we got into the summer we
8 changed to a different finance team, because it was
9 just in such a mess; we worked with another finance
10 team. We've had to make that change again, and we're
11 now on to our third finance team, and so we've been
12 really heavily involved with that training. We feel
13 like we've got the right people in place that are
14 definitely coachable and wanting to do the right
15 things, but it takes a lot of work. And sometimes
16 even with our staff, you know, we're taxed a lot with
17 districts all over the state. So to give the
18 individual attention we've had to rearrange some
19 things and do some things differently that we're
20 going to get better at with these schools in
21 providing that additional support.

22 We also will kind of start tackling the policies
23 as well. And so if you look at that ADE support plan
24 specifically for Lee County, you'll see a lot of
25 activities that we have planned throughout the year

1 and who the responsible parties are and how we're
2 going to accomplish those things.

3 So I think I hit everything that I thought I was
4 going to, so --

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

6 MS. McFETRIDGE: I know the end of last school
7 year they had just problems with students being able
8 to graduate; they hadn't earned -- gotten all their
9 credits for graduation. I know the Department worked
10 really strongly with those students to make sure they
11 got on target. Were they able to find a staff person
12 specifically for that position, a counselor position?

13 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes. They took them for us --
14 from us.

15 MS. McFETRIDGE: Oh, they did?

16 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. So I think last time we
17 talked about looking for a counselor -- and I
18 couldn't remember where in the timing we talked about
19 them trying to find a counselor for Marion, and I
20 don't remember if we -- if he ended up getting them
21 at that time or we were still talking about they
22 wouldn't let them out. But he did end up getting a
23 counselor to come on staff within the high school.
24 But the team that worked really closely with Lee
25 County last year, Dr. McIntosh and Krista Harrell, he

1 actually hired them and so they work for him now.
2 They were part of setting up that senior watch team
3 and helping make sure that those kids got to
4 graduation. So they now work with Lee County School
5 District.

6 MS. McFETRIDGE: Thank you.

7 MS. NEWTON: How far down the timeline will you
8 start looking at a Community Advisory Board? One of
9 the things I was impressed with with Earle, with Dr.
10 Wilde, was he started from the beginning trying to
11 train the community how to look for things and how to
12 do their own monitoring so that one of these days
13 they would be able to go back and be successful. How
14 long are we going to be before we'll start looking at
15 that process?

16 DR. HERNANDEZ: So I'll give my personal
17 opinion, and the Commissioner may want to chime in.
18 Just in my experience in -- it's always going to be
19 different in every scenario. And so in working with
20 the Earle School District there was a good
21 relationship between us and the school board at that
22 time where they really wanted help, they wanted to
23 learn better and do better, and so that was a natural
24 thing for us to do there. In my experience in
25 working with the Lee County School District in the

1 first takeover and the second takeover, and the board
2 meetings in between, having that group to stay on in
3 an advisory capacity type role probably wouldn't be
4 in the best interest of the District -- but that
5 doesn't mean that it's not something we can't look
6 at. Right now, the law doesn't have the provision
7 about requiring a Community Advisory Board, so we
8 just kind of judge where we are in that process. But
9 I think it's a valid point for maybe Dr. Bowles to
10 take back about having some kind of advisory folks
11 that he could start building, so in the event that we
12 do a Community Advisory Board in the future we could
13 have some people ready to do that.

14 SECRETARY KEY: Just to add to that, the statute
15 regarding takeover due to standards violations I
16 don't think has the same language regarding Community
17 Advisory Boards. I stand to be corrected, but -- I
18 don't see my attorney staff back there, but I'm
19 pretty sure that's the case; it's not the same
20 language as what we have in the fiscal distress or
21 the facilities distress. So there's no hard-and-fast
22 trigger on that, unless state takeover is reaffirmed
23 under one of those other statutes. And under Act
24 930, which is the academic side -- we're at Level 5
25 -- that idea of a Community Advisory Board -- that

1 whole concept has been changed so that there's more
2 flexibility with what you can or can't do with a
3 current city board, you know, as far as the authority
4 that's limited, whether you remove the board or leave
5 the board in place for advisory.

6 So really I would concur with Dr. Hernandez in
7 saying that each scenario is different, and I think
8 it really has to be different when you have a
9 situation where the district is -- it's been multiple
10 times that state authority has had to be exerted.
11 So, but it is something that in each of these
12 districts we have those conversations with the
13 superintendents because they're the ones on the
14 ground in the community hearing what the patrons are
15 saying, and we kind of have those discussions of when
16 would be a good time. Dollarway is a good example;
17 Mrs. Warren was very concerned that the community was
18 not ready, up until the point that she felt like it
19 was time -- and then you heard earlier the
20 difficulties we're having now of getting the
21 applicants.

22 So it's really a tough call to just give a
23 blanket -- as we have to do in statute, you know,
24 statute says this is how you do it. But when it's
25 actually operational it becomes a lot more

1 inconsistent in how you can apply that.

2 MS. NEWTON: I just was impressed with thinking
3 about building the capacity of the community. You
4 know, at some point, you know -- and they may not be
5 ready for it now, but I think at some point in the
6 future we need to think about, you know, we're
7 wanting to improve student performance and -- but we
8 also need to think about the community itself, you
9 know; what can we do to build the capacity there so
10 one day they will have the knowledge and the
11 expertise that they will need.

12 SECRETARY KEY: Well, I think part of the reason
13 I was excited about Mr. Hoy being willing to come
14 back is that he really modeled what that could look
15 like. You know, when I first started working with
16 him in his role as superintendent at Helena-West
17 Helena, and he was taking everything to the board --
18 and I remember asking him, "Mr. Hoy, why are you
19 doing that?" You know, "Why" -- you know, "You know
20 you don't have to take everything." And he was
21 taking a vote; he was treating that Community
22 Advisory Board just like a board. And he explained,
23 "It's about teaching them how to be a board" --

24 MS. NEWTON: Right.

25 SECRETARY KEY: -- at that point in time. And

1 so having his expertise back helping to coach in our
2 -- in these districts I think brings an element that
3 we didn't have before.

4 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.

5 MS. DEAN: That segways into the question that I
6 had for Mr. Bowles. I didn't see a lot -- it was a
7 short statement as far as your community and family
8 engagement, that there are highly paid staff members
9 that are responsible for increasing the engagement in
10 the community. I just wanted to kind of -- and it
11 says that you are working with the District to try to
12 increase that community engagement. So I was just
13 wondering what things that you've been doing, how
14 often are you having community meetings, things of
15 that sort?

16 SUPT. BOWLES: Yeah. So kind of to Dr.
17 Hernandez's point, one of the things that we walked
18 in thinking immediately is that we really did have to
19 kind of do some training. We did have to do some
20 training around just really kind of what the vision
21 would be for the District. And I think initially
22 that was a bit of a change because I think with the
23 change came a lot of higher expectations. And so
24 kind of what my plan has been so far has really been
25 to just meet with as many small groups as I possibly

1 can.

2 So to Ms. Zook's point, when you follow us on
3 Facebook you'll see that last week I had a meeting
4 with the mayor, and during that meeting all of the
5 officers were there -- and they stopped by, a couple
6 of them, too. So they really got to know me, and so
7 just to meet with them.

8 And then also we had the back-to-school fair and
9 we kind of made it into a big bash where we had the
10 DJ's, the bouncers; and so we had -- the entire event
11 was community sponsored. So we were able to reach
12 out to all of the different sponsors there in the
13 community and they were more than happy to assist.

14 What we found, which was a real pleasant
15 surprise for us, is that through our means of social
16 media and just kind of broadcasting what we're
17 working on, different members of the community
18 actually reach out to us and say, "Well, hey" -- an
19 example of that would be the science -- not the
20 science, but the greenhouse. And so we had planters
21 to say, "Hey, listen, you know, we can actually kind
22 of help out," you know. And some of the farmers
23 would say, "Well, you know what, I think that's
24 poison ivy; you might" -- so, you know, you had a lot
25 of the community members to --

1 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Might be marijuana, but --

2 SUPT. BOWLES: Yeah, right. They found ways to
3 insert themselves in what we're doing, and so we're
4 always welcoming them to come in.

5 And so one of the charges that I charged my team
6 to do was -- of course, we're having our leadership
7 meetings on a biweekly basis. And my challenge has
8 been to them to at least involve at least two or
9 three parents in that process and in those meetings.
10 Because I think that becomes a real good training
11 ground, as Dr. Hernandez mentioned, for parents so
12 that they understand from the ground level this is
13 what we're trying to do, this is the direction we're
14 going, and in that process we also receive a lot of
15 their input.

16 MS. DEAN: I'm glad to hear you to say that,
17 because I'm thinking from the same perspective of
18 having the community consistently involved and having
19 an expectation that there's always going to be an
20 opportunity for me to be involved and engaged. So I
21 know some of the previous districts have monthly
22 meetings, but to hear that you-all are having
23 biweekly --

24 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes.

25 MS. DEAN: -- where you're including parents, I

1 think that's good. But I think it's going to be
2 important for you to have something -- it's great
3 that you're doing these separate events and the
4 community is getting involved. But I think it will
5 be important for you to have something consistent
6 where parents and community members know, okay, if I
7 miss this month I know we'll have it every month.

8 SUPT. BOWLES: Right.

9 MS. DEAN: So they get in the habit of how can I
10 fit this in my schedule, how can I make sure that I
11 take the time to become engaged. So I think that's
12 really good.

13 I also want to know have you had support from
14 your faith leaders in the community?

15 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes. Well, actually one of our
16 district leadership team members actually has a local
17 church in the community, and so we've had the
18 opportunity to connect with them. They were actually
19 a part of the painting project that we did for the
20 high school.

21 MS. DEAN: Oh, awesome.

22 SUPT. BOWLES: And so just kind of talking with
23 them and kind of getting some of their ideas. And
24 then we also connected with a group -- they're a
25 graduate -- a former graduate of the District who we

1 partner with who runs a nonprofit. And you've
2 probably seen online we're doing the True Scholars;
3 and what that's going to look like is, in October,
4 she has solicited I believe 20 or so of the alumni
5 from the school -- you know, previous alumni who are
6 actually coming in and they're going to do like a
7 type of mentoring program for our kids and talk to
8 them even about some of what they're doing in their
9 careers, just kind of bringing that back to the
10 District. So it's just another form, another way for
11 us to kind of connect with the community and some of
12 the members that have already graduated and eager to
13 come back and join in what we're doing.

14 MS. DEAN: That's good. Sounds like you're --

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I know one of the things --
16 excuse me.

17 MS. DEAN: -- making progress. I do want to
18 encourage you as the community -- the family and
19 community engagement to framework -- and the toolkit
20 has just been rolled out, so that's a new opportunity
21 for some more support from the ADE. So I would
22 really admonish you to take advantage of that.
23 According to Dr. Hernandez, and in talking with Kim
24 Wright, they will be reaching out to districts and
25 doing some one-on-one there. So that's another

1 avenue of support for you. So, thank you. Keep up
2 the good work.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I know one of the things they're
4 doing and just started in Blytheville is they're
5 inviting employers to come in and talk to their
6 juniors and seniors about job opportunities, what
7 kind of skills you might need to do this, and how to
8 apply, and, you know, get them excited about their
9 next steps. And maybe help pay for part of their
10 college if they go or maybe make a good employee and
11 stay right there or become a teacher and come back.

12 SUPT. BOWLES: Right.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Anybody on this side?

14 SUPT. BOWLES: Yeah, we actually kind of took a
15 different spin on what we were doing around progress
16 reports this year. Typically what we find a lot of
17 times within the hours that you have some parents are
18 not able to attend and so-forth. So we -- it is
19 actually something that I did as a high school
20 principal in Osceola, where we actually asked those
21 businesses where those -- where they work, and asked
22 them, "Hey, do you mind if we come during your lunch
23 time, set up a table, and will bring the materials so
24 the parents" -- so just kind of another way that you
25 don't always have to come to us, but we can actually

1 meet you where you are.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Terrific idea.

3 MS. DEAN: That reminds me I did want to ask,
4 are you all doing home visits of any sort?

5 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes, yes, yes. And we actually
6 have -- we hired a Student Support Specialist and her
7 primary job is going into the homes. She -- her
8 previous background is she worked as a social worker
9 for so many years through MidSouth. And so, part of
10 her responsibility is that. Also during that first
11 period -- after like the first 30 or 45 minutes when
12 we take attendance, we look through the roster and we
13 see that we may be missing some kids -- her job is to
14 immediately get on the phone, start calling parents,
15 "Hey, we don't have your child today. Is everything
16 okay? Are they sick? What can we do?" And so we're
17 trying to also extend those means as well.

18 MS. DEAN: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Anyone else? Anything for Dr.
20 Hernandez?

21 Yes.

22 DR. MOORE: I have one last question. Do y'all
23 have an ABC program --

24 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes.

25 DR. MOORE: -- in your District? How large is

1 that?

2 SUPT. BOWLES: We have four classrooms and about
3 20 students per class.

4 DR. MOORE: Is it housed at the elementary
5 school?

6 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes.

7 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

8 MS. DEAN: I do have one more.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yes, Ms. Dean. Go on. Go on
10 and run with it.

11 MS. DEAN: It's concerning the previous issues
12 of things before you even got there, which was the
13 issues with students getting close to time to
14 graduate and not realizing that they weren't where
15 they needed to be. So I was wondering if you-all are
16 doing anything with the parents and keeping parents
17 informed? I don't know if you start at 9th grade
18 saying, "Hey, this is what your child needs to
19 graduate," and just keeping them abreast of where
20 your child is every year, however often -- at least
21 annually.

22 SUPT. BOWLES: Right.

23 MS. DEAN: Is there something that you-all have
24 in place there for parents to be more involved and
25 engaged in making sure that their child stays --

1 SUPT. BOWLES: Stay on track, right.

2 MS. DEAN: -- on track?

3 SUPT. BOWLES: Well, you know, one of the things
4 that they did prior to my coming -- I guess when I
5 got there the Department started doing student plans
6 -- student success plans. And actually what they
7 were able to do, they actually had a junior takeover
8 in which they brought all the parents who had juniors
9 and sophomores and they started then the work of
10 walking them through, hey, this is what transcripts
11 are; this is where your child is, and then they
12 continue to move in that effort. What we've also
13 done over the summer was we hired a graduation coach
14 and that person's primary responsibility is exactly
15 that: what's the next step, what are the steps to get
16 the kids toward graduation, and then also making sure
17 that they have a real landing spot once they
18 graduate. That was one of the -- that was one of the
19 most concerning things for me. Although we were able
20 to get those students over the threshold, when we had
21 those conversations about what's the next step it was
22 pretty bleak for us. So that's one of the reasons
23 why I thought that, you know what, if we had somebody
24 specifically operating in this capacity that would --
25 you know, we felt like that would help. So we've

1 connected with the EACC, local community college.
2 They've come in, they tested all of our juniors and
3 seniors. And we found out that it doesn't matter how
4 many times you take the test, you can take it as many
5 times as you want. So we took it as many times as we
6 could because we want all of our students to have
7 that college experience. And a lot of them are
8 taking part in concurrent credit, but then a lot of
9 them are also taking part in a lot of technical
10 programs as well. And our report from a lot of them,
11 they're really enjoying it, would love the
12 opportunity to continue that even after graduation.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Anybody else? Any more for Dr.
14 Hernandez on Lee County?

15 Do I have a motion to accept?

16 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to accept.

17 MS. DEAN: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Moved by Ms. Chambers --

19 SUPT. BOWLES: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- second by Ms. Dean.

21 Thank you very much.

22 All in favor?

23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

25 MS. CHAMBERS: Can we thank you, Dr.

1 Hernandez; mid-reports -- these deep dives and the
2 superintendents really giving color commentary,
3 there's consistency. But to a point you made
4 earlier, each district is really different, and it
5 sure helps to hear them talk about what they're
6 doing.

7 DR. HERNANDEZ: It does, yes.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Could we pause for about --

9 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, ma'am.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- 10 minutes, and then come
11 back?

12 DR. HERNANDEZ: Sounds great.

13 (BREAK: 2:37 - 2:49 P.M.)

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: We will come back to order.

15 B-10: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION REPORT AND APPROVAL OF
16 DISTRICT SUPPORT PLAN: PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And is this Moses or Pharaoh
18 that's up?

19 DR. HERNANDEZ: We have Moses for this one.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: What does that make you? Dr.
21 Hernandez, we want to know what that makes you.

22 DR. HERNANDEZ: Oh, I don't know.

23 So, again, we started out with the elementary
24 schools and, you know, still kind of the same
25 approach; mixed bag. The District did start out with

1 some of the Solution Tree work towards the end of the
2 year. We are actually -- ADE teams were able to
3 attend some of those trainings and the school events
4 that we thought that -- we were real concerned about
5 how the staff would take to that, how they would
6 engage in it. And we were very pleasantly surprised
7 in just interactions with the teachers and staff, how
8 excited they were and energized over the summer, and
9 feel like -- and Dr. Owoh can speak more to this --
10 is that, you know, that work seems to be going well
11 and energizing for the teachers.

12 I'll skip through some of these. Let's -- if
13 there's any questions about any of that data, just
14 let me know.

15 Their focus in their school level plans in
16 general is around literacy/mathematics, establishing
17 collaborative teams, and we've also had kind of an
18 emphasis on behavior. One of the things that we had
19 last year, we had a lot of students that were being
20 expelled from school and so we've talked a lot about
21 ways to curb that. And that was one of the impetus
22 for us to staff-up and hire a behavior specialist
23 type role that goes out and supports the schools in
24 terms of making sure that they have good procedures
25 in place, good policies in place, that they're --

1 we've done extensive work with the handbook, student
2 handbook this year in trying to not necessarily
3 change the overall function of it but the actual --
4 what it looks like. So there was a lot of things
5 within the handbook that referred to criminal codes,
6 and so we really worked to kind of pull that stuff
7 out and make it more based on what's the normal codes
8 that are identified within eSchool. And so, that's
9 been part of the work in trying to -- just really
10 trying to think about ways that we can assist with
11 behavior. They are going through the BX3 training
12 and we're looking at what the potential implantation
13 of PBIS type stuff would look like within the school
14 district.

15 At the district level they've been supporting by
16 providing -- using their 10.03 funds for the support
17 of the Solution Tree embedded coaching, establishment
18 of the PLC teams with an emphasis on reading
19 instruction and family and community engagement. And
20 then we're providing some of the principal coaching
21 and district level coaching. We really tried to --
22 with a school that's doing embedded coaching with
23 Solution Tree, we really tried to steer clear of that
24 and to make sure that it holds true to theirs; that
25 way, we don't have mixed messages for principals and

1 teachers by, you know, maybe one of the SESS
2 principal coaches coming in, saying, "Do it this
3 way," Solution Tree person coming in, "Do it this
4 way." So in those instances we have a heavy emphasis
5 on supporting around master schedule building and
6 then making sure that the evaluation support system
7 is in place and that they're implementing that very
8 well.

9 We're also working closely with special ed.
10 We've had the desk audit related to dyslexia.
11 They're scheduling their time to go on-site to do
12 their site visit.

13 And from a fiscal standpoint, you know, when we
14 first took the district over for fiscal distress
15 there were some real concerns about where that budget
16 would end. And so Dr. Owoh and his financial staff
17 -- Leroy Harris is their chief operations officer
18 that also does human resources and takes care of
19 finances -- they've just done a tremendous job of
20 saying no -- and that's the easiest way to say it, is
21 they said no a lot. They've really looked at how do
22 they maximize all their NSL dollars, all their title
23 dollars, and have really come back better than
24 expected in terms of how they were able to end this
25 year. And so the District is well-positioned to move

1 forward and not have to worry about -- they did make
2 those significant cuts to staff. And at the same
3 time as they were doing that -- and not -- they were
4 re-doing their central office. And so that came as
5 being onboard fully now during the summer and there's
6 a lot of excitement around those groups. Many of you
7 have had the opportunity to meet Wanda VanDyke or
8 Jonathan Crossley. They're really go-getters, and so
9 they pair really nicely with Dr. Owoh in trying to
10 keep things moving within the district.

11 Some of the highlights -- they are kind of in
12 that first full year of Solution Tree. They do have
13 master schedules that are in place that allow for
14 that collaborate team time. And so that was one of
15 the things that we helped a little bit with, but it's
16 primarily the Solution Tree folks that helped them
17 think through what that can look like. We just
18 helped them make sure that it's still compliant, has
19 all the right times and things that are available.
20 They had been one of the districts that jumped out
21 there and started with this new idea of instructional
22 model. Is it perfect? That's something we're
23 evaluating and working with, but it's a step in the
24 right direction for them to get general agreement
25 about what instruction should look like, how their

1 delivery methods will be.

2 I mentioned the district leadership team.

3 One of the big projects that I'm working with
4 right now with Dr. Owoh is around facilities. The
5 campuses, they've done a really good job of taking
6 all of the excess buildings and getting those
7 appraised, getting them on the market, and selling a
8 lot of these properties that have just been on the
9 books where the District has had to maintain, keep
10 insurance on them, and have really reduced that
11 amount of inventory from their district. At the same
12 time, we closed one of the elementary schools.
13 They've got the school up and running and going well
14 with the new bus routes, all those types of things.
15 We're starting to look towards the future. Now that
16 we're -- it's really -- and I attribute this really a
17 lot to Dr. Owoh is that, you know, sometimes when you
18 go into these districts it takes a long time to get
19 traction and get things settled. And for me -- and
20 he may say "you're crazy," but I feel like it's
21 really settled. There's some work -- we're really
22 having discussions about academics and not having all
23 these "the world is on fire and everything is broken
24 and we're trying to fix things," like we have
25 experienced in other districts. So we're actually

1 starting to think strategy and long-term in terms of
2 facilities and what that could look like. We know
3 we've got a pretty good middle school set-up; we've
4 got good elementary schools; and they do have a pre-k
5 center; and they're utilizing one of their other
6 buildings as the -- almost a countywide ALE type
7 program. But where we really struggle with is the
8 high school, and so the high school being, some parts
9 of it, very aged, I guess, in terms of how many years
10 it's been there and kind of the conditions of the
11 facilities. And the way it's set up is that they've
12 just added buildings over time, so it almost looks
13 like a college campus, which is that open-air
14 experience. But it's not in the best neighborhoods;
15 but it's also kind of a safety concern about how do
16 you monitor and keep all those students safe in that
17 structure. And so what we have plans to do is -- Dr.
18 Owoh has given names to identify a widespread
19 facilities committee that also will include at least
20 one of the old former board members, and I know there
21 are several community members where we're going to
22 start having discussions. And the reason for this is
23 there's a master facility plan that's due February
24 1st and that also has implications on any partnership
25 program applications that we might want to make. And

1 so we'll actually be meeting next Tuesday night with
2 this first committee meeting to outline what does the
3 master plan have in it, also where are we trying to
4 go, and start to build consensus around where we
5 think facilities in Pine Bluff should go in terms of
6 high school, elementaries, all of those.

7 In addition to that, we're going to work hard
8 with their staff -- I met with our facilities folks
9 yesterday to go on-site -- and basically re-do all
10 the surveys in their master plan. And what that
11 entails, it's simply going in and making sure, you
12 know, what is the lifecycle in a building of the
13 walls, the HVAC system, the windows, the roof,
14 plumbing, all of those things, to make sure we have
15 accurate data within the system so we can start
16 making these long-range plans to say how are we going
17 to have -- afford this. At the same time, a lot of
18 the budget work that Dr. Owoh's team has done is
19 starting to identify funds that we can utilize to
20 help pay for the cost of some of these potential
21 renovations, additions, and things like that.

22 So that's -- I know that sounds not academics,
23 but it's an important piece of it. And so that's the
24 -- some of the ongoing work that we're doing right
25 now in addition to all the other support mechanisms

1 that we're working with on the District.

2 And then I mentioned earlier about we're really
3 having a keen eye on trying to reduce the suspensions
4 and expulsions for this year.

5 So I think that's all we had specific to Pine
6 Bluff, but if there's questions --

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah. What kind of things are
8 you doing that are resulting in fewer suspensions?

9 SUPT. OWOH: Jeremy Owoh, Superintendent, Pine
10 Bluff School District.

11 One is just, one, making sure that we revise the
12 student handbook so that it's clear and that we're
13 teaching the student handbook, not only to our
14 scholars, our students, but also making sure parents
15 are completely aware of what the expectations are.

16 But then, also giving incentives; not rewarding
17 the expected behavior but rewarding our students, our
18 scholars who are going above and beyond to insure
19 that the school setting is safe and that they're on
20 time and prepared for class. And so continue to
21 celebrate those achievements; so we're doing more of
22 that.

23 And, indirectly, we started doing that with
24 teachers as well to really encourage them to be on
25 time, to be present at work. And then we're also

1 doing that with our administrators, rewarding the
2 positive behavior that we desire across the District.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I think it would be interesting
4 to know the reading levels of the kids that get
5 suspended most frequently.

6 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you, Mrs. Zook. We -- that's
7 some of the data we really started to look at is not
8 just the reading level, the literacy level of the
9 students who are being suspended or the individuals
10 who've been recommended for expulsion, but also the
11 other academic areas -- how are they doing in
12 mathematics, how are they performing in other classes
13 -- if these students have conditions or educational
14 issues that were not assessed --

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

16 SUPT. OWOH: -- earlier on. And really
17 assessing what those students are facing on the
18 ongoing -- is there a social issue among the
19 students; and so really focusing on the root causes
20 and not just the results that we're seeing.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right. And with the dyslexia, I
22 know you said you've had the desk audit. But are you
23 getting a lot of referrals from 3-12 as far as those
24 kids that need to be screened?

25 SUPT. OWOH: We're not, which is concerning. I

1 think the total number last year across the District,
2 we had about seven -- and a for 3000, 3100 student
3 enrolled district that's kind of concerning. So what
4 we -- that is concerning.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: It would be great if it was
6 true.

7 SUPT. OWOH: Right. And so what we have
8 discussed with our new curriculum team at the new
9 district admin is really providing training for all
10 of our educators K-12 -- preK-12 just on the
11 understanding what dyslexia is and how to plan for
12 instruction in the Tier 1 in the everyday classroom
13 --

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

15 SUPT. OWOH: -- to meet the needs of students
16 who may not have been screened, and identify what the
17 markers -- who are sitting in the class who have
18 those markers and it hasn't been identified. So,
19 making sure that all of our educators are trained to
20 address those learning needs of our students.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Have you done any new adoptions
22 relative to RISE, Science of Reading --

23 SUPT. OWOH: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- and the dyslexia teaching?

25 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, ma'am, we have. That's the

1 work that was started last spring. We went through a
2 complete textbook adoption for both literacy, English
3 Language Arts, as well as mathematics. And one of
4 the things that we're appreciative of is that Stacy
5 Smith -- during the summer, she met with our
6 curriculum team and went over all the proposed
7 textbook adoptions to insure their alignment with
8 Science of Reading. And so we made sure that the
9 curriculum addressed Science of Reading and that the
10 resources, instructional resources also align so that
11 we're not training on Science of Reading, but then
12 having resources that contradict the support that the
13 training has provided.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

15 SUPT. OWOH: And so even with that we wanted to
16 make sure before our teachers entered the classroom
17 in August that they received as much training on the
18 textbooks that we started in July, after we -- after
19 the textbook adoptions were approved, with the
20 training. So our teachers have been inundated with
21 training all summer with the textbook adoptions,
22 Science of Reading, as well as the PLC collaborative
23 team instruction.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Just remind them that it's like
25 teaching your first year again -- but, boy, once you

1 get it down and you get that study every night and
2 ready for the next day, then all the years going
3 forward are a difference in daylight and dark.

4 SUPT. OWOH: Right. And I want to commend my
5 teachers, our teachers, because they were -- our
6 teachers and administrators, they asked for the
7 additional training. So they were not only proactive
8 in telling us at the district office that they needed
9 it and that's the type of support that they wanted;
10 they were there, prepared and ready to obtain that
11 training, and then insuring that it took place -- the
12 training that they learned transferred into the
13 classroom.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I think that's one thing
15 that you have going for you, because I know your
16 community came and said, "We need help," and the
17 teachers were calling and saying, "We need help."
18 And so you've got everybody working together for the
19 good of the kids.

20 SUPT. OWOH: Right, I agree. And Dr. Hernandez
21 mentioned that things seemed to calm down. Once we
22 had the right people, the teachers and the students
23 and administrators saw that. And we're still -- we
24 still have growing pains, but I believe everyone is
25 starting to see that we're all on the same side and

1 wanting the best for our scholars. And with that,
2 we've started to really see a lot of ground covered
3 in a short period of time.

4 So I'm definitely excited and pleased about
5 where we are and where we'll be in the next few
6 months and years.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And then keeping some pre and
8 post on your ESA funds.

9 SUPT. OWOH: We have done that. One of the
10 things that I'm fortunate with is having been able to
11 hire my two assistant superintendents who will
12 support our principals and our teachers and students.
13 And that -- those are the things that they have in
14 place. So anything that we've adopted -- instruction
15 materials, any support systems -- we all have tied it
16 to an evaluation system to it to insure that we're
17 measuring student impact, so --

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. This side? Ms. Newton?

19 MS. NEWTON: Just a similar question to what I
20 asked a few minutes ago. Have you taken the pulse of
21 your community to see when is an appropriate time to
22 start building the capacity of your community members
23 to start having -- you know, start learning about
24 when the appropriate time comes for them to start
25 having input in governance? Have you started

1 thinking about that?

2 SUPT. OWOH: We haven't vocally or publicly
3 started that conversation. The community has not as
4 a whole mentioned that. What is great about Pine
5 Bluff School District or Pine Bluff community, they
6 have been very involved since day-one since I've been
7 there. And so where we have not had an official
8 advisory committee, I've been requested -- like every
9 month I meet with the retired teachers. There's a
10 small subgroup association that meets with me; we
11 talk about disciplinary issues, we talk about
12 educational teacher support, novice teacher support.
13 And then they've also volunteered to lead
14 professional development opportunities in the
15 afternoon for our novice teachers and teachers who
16 are 1240 waivers. So I've met with them on an
17 ongoing basis, of course, as well as Mrs. Warren.
18 We're both involved with educational alliance within
19 the city. The mayor has us participating in the Town
20 Hall. Recently, I've been able to meet with the
21 Coffee with the Chiefs, which most of the interfaith
22 leaders within the community -- so I meet with them
23 and share updates with them. We also attend the
24 Rotary Club; we did that a month ago. And then we
25 have an upcoming meeting with the Kiwanis Club just

1 to keep them updated. So not officially have we had
2 conversations, but we have an open-door policy
3 throughout the District and so we have community
4 members who've been engaged. After our report to the
5 public session next month we'll have bi-monthly --
6 not monthly, but bi-monthly engagement sessions where
7 we just provide an hour update to anyone who would
8 like to attend in the District.

9 MS. NEWTON: Yeah. I just want to make sure
10 that we don't leave out the capacity-building of the
11 community leaders, so that when the time comes, you
12 know, they are ready. And so -- and it may not be
13 time to even think about that yet, but I think that
14 we don't want to overlook that and its importance of
15 Pine Bluff being successful in the future.

16 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, ma'am.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. Pekron? Dr. Hill? Ms.
18 Chambers? Ms. Dean?

19 MS. DEAN: I do.

20 Dr. Owoh, good to see you again.

21 SUPT. OWOH: Great to see you.

22 MS. DEAN: Just a couple. You answered a lot of
23 my questions, thank you, but I still have a couple
24 concerning our community and family engagement. One
25 of the things as we talk about community engagement

1 and how -- we're really trying to go toward student-
2 focused education and that also has to do with how
3 different each community is and the challenges that
4 each community has. A concern of mine in Pine Bluff
5 is the recent approval for a casino in the area. If
6 you can, do you -- can you elaborate on that and if
7 you -- because this is my concern: when it comes to
8 casinos there's an opportunity for gambling, and we
9 also know that with gambling there can also be --
10 there's a possibility for --

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Debt.

12 MS. DEAN: That's not the word I'm looking for.
13 Unintended consequences -- that's the word I was
14 looking for -- unintended consequences when it comes
15 to gambling addictions, and we know how serious that
16 can be and how that can affect individuals, families,
17 children, and how it can affect the community. So
18 have y'all been thinking about that proactively,
19 about the possibility of that becoming an issue in
20 Pine Bluff and how that can affect your children and
21 your families and your community?

22 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, Mrs. Dean, we have. You're
23 right; we've been thinking about and reflecting on
24 the unintended results.

25 MS. DEAN: Yes.

1 SUPT. OWOH: Now as a superintendent, you know,
2 I'm looking forward to that increase in --

3 MS. DEAN: Yes.

4 SUPT. OWOH: -- tax revenue --

5 MS. DEAN: Right, I know.

6 SUPT. OWOH: -- for our district.

7 MS. DEAN: Yeah.

8 SUPT. OWOH: So I want to be --

9 MS. DEAN: I understand.

10 SUPT. OWOH: -- transparent with that.

11 MS. DEAN: I understand.

12 SUPT. OWOH: But we also know what some of the
13 unintended consequences could be for that, the new
14 casino, both positive --

15 MS. DEAN: Right.

16 SUPT. OWOH: -- and negative.

17 MS. DEAN: Right.

18 SUPT. OWOH: But also, of course, we've been
19 recently approved for the two medical marijuana
20 facilities as well.

21 MS. DEAN: That's right.

22 SUPT. OWOH: And so with that, there's also some
23 unintended results with that. But one of the things,
24 when Dr. Hernandez mentioned about we had the
25 opportunity to restructure our central office, we

1 hired -- we had the opportunity to reduce several
2 positions, and so we hired a Director of
3 Communications/Community Engagement.

4 MS. DEAN: Okay.

5 SUPT. OWOH: And one of her tasks has been to
6 create a Parent Academy. And so some of those --

7 MS. DEAN: Well, good.

8 SUPT. OWOH: -- things are -- will be covered.
9 We want money management, making sound decisions,
10 healthy decisions when it comes to supporting your
11 family, our scholars. And so in November we'll
12 launch our first Parent Academy.

13 MS. DEAN: Awesome.

14 SUPT. OWOH: And so we'll have sessions for
15 parents on those types of matters that may impact our
16 scholars and directly impacting the family structure
17 and the community.

18 MS. DEAN: Great.

19 SUPT. OWOH: But, you know, we've had a positive
20 interaction with the organizers, the owners of the
21 casino. They've started already sowing into our
22 school district. So we're looking forward to a
23 positive partnership --

24 MS. DEAN: Yes.

25 SUPT. OWOH: -- with them.

1 MS. DEAN: Oh, and you hit on the Parent
2 Academy; that was another thing I was going to ask
3 you about. So that's -- I think that's great and I'm
4 glad that you are prescriptive about how you're
5 dealing with these issues in the Parent Academy. And
6 as I said before, it's just understanding your
7 community and, like you said, the pros and the
8 possible cons that could come with new development
9 and new opportunities in the community. But I'm
10 looking forward to seeing the good things that can
11 come from all of these new developments in Pine Bluff
12 and I'm glad that you are there --

13 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

14 MS. DEAN: -- to help lead them into a really
15 positive future. So, thank you for the work that
16 you're doing.

17 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. McAdoo? Dr. Moore?

19 DR. MOORE: I know that teacher retention is an
20 issue. What was your retention rate from last year
21 to this year? Do you have any vacancies or have you
22 been able to fill it all?

23 SUPT. OWOH: We had single-digit vacancies. In
24 fact, I believe we started the year with all
25 vacancies filled. We lost one math teacher and we're

1 just ending the process or concluding the process of
2 hiring a math teacher. Again, our parents are very
3 vocal that they do not like online educational
4 programs, and so they want a teacher -- a licensed
5 teacher in front of our scholars; and so we've been
6 very aggressively looking for a teacher to fill that
7 need. One of the things that we had to do last year
8 was a reduction-in-force. And so with that, and
9 consolidating our elementary campuses, we were
10 fortunate that we didn't have as many openings that
11 the District has traditionally had.

12 DR. MOORE: I do know you have a number of Act
13 1240 waiver teachers. Do y'all have any new ones
14 this year that haven't been in programs, or are they
15 all in programs leading to licensure?

16 SUPT. OWOH: Currently, all of them are in
17 programs leading to licensure. We're fortunate that
18 most of them were already in the licensure program.
19 Recently, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
20 has developed and launched a program for elementary
21 K-5 teachers to start Praxis boot camp prep sessions
22 to prepare the teachers who are on 1240 waivers for
23 the Praxis assessments, and then as well as providing
24 the opportunity to enter into a Master's program that
25 leads to licensure. So as of today, all of our

1 teachers who are on 1240's are on the path to
2 licensure.

3 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

4 SUPT. OWOH: Uh-huh. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Others?

6 Okay. A lot of my friends that went to UAPB
7 became teachers, and I don't know if they still
8 graduate a lot of teachers or not. But I keep
9 thinking if we could get UAPB to really become like
10 the place to go to get a really good education and
11 how to teach reading and how to understand kids and
12 the Science of Reading and kids with dyslexia and the
13 Masters level program, you know, that could be just a
14 goldmine for you and a goldmine for the state if they
15 went other places to work. So maybe since Higher Ed.
16 and ADE -- maybe we could sort of nudge them a
17 little. My husband was down in Pine Bluff giving a
18 presentation the other day and some of the business
19 community were talking to him about they were
20 interested -- they had not heard this Grow Your Own
21 thing, the cadets and all of that. So, you know, I
22 don't know what kind of relationship you have with
23 the Dean's over at UAPB or the president of the
24 college, but that would just be -- I mean that's low-
25 hanging fruit, as far as I'm concerned.

1 SUPT. OWOH: I agree. We have a strong,
2 positive relationship/partnership with the
3 University, as well as SEARK, our two-year
4 institution in the city. In fact, Dean Russ and I
5 and the -- our other superintendents, local
6 superintendents, we meet often. And Dean Russ is
7 very active in pursuing Science of Reading support
8 for not just our teachers who are 1240 waivers, but
9 all of our teachers who --

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

11 SUPT. OWOH: -- need that additional support.
12 But also we've talked about -- and they've been part
13 of the conversation with our Teach Pine Bluff
14 initiative, as well as the teacher cadet program.

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

16 SUPT. OWOH: And so we -- those conversations
17 have been initiated and will be ongoing.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Good. Does anybody else have
19 another question?

20 Thank you very much.

21 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And do I have a motion to
23 approve the report?

24 MS. DEAN: So moved.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Moved by Ms. Dean.

1 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Ms. Chambers.

3 All in favor?

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

6 Motion passes. Thank you very much.

7 B-11: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT AND APPROVAL OF
8 DISTRICT SUPPORT PLAN: LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Little Rock School District.

10 DR. HERNANDEZ: Do I have a motion to pass on
11 this one?

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You'd like a good vote; right?

13 DR. HERNANDEZ: Just thought I'd try that.

14 So, again, we have -- the data that we captured
15 here were primarily the eight schools that we've been
16 focused on as it relates to exit criteria. But we
17 had this data -- again, like I said, if you have
18 questions about any particular part -- but remember,
19 this is the pre-appeals data and not the overall ESSA
20 School Index. And again we saw, similarly as we had
21 the other schools and the other districts, is kind of
22 that up and down depending on which area that you're
23 looking at.

24 So as far as an overall -- of course, when we
25 look at all the school-level plans, kind of the

1 things that we teased out as being kind of the high-
2 level focus is around literacy and math; also a focus
3 on student attendance, as evidenced by their Feet in
4 the Seat program. They've now taken that from the
5 school -- the subset of schools that they were doing
6 now to a district-wide effort.

7 Also, in looking at kind of the idea of HRS
8 Level 1 and the PLC process, a safe, supportive,
9 collaborative environment and culture. And so in the
10 elementary schools their primary focus is around
11 PLC's, but in that middle school/high school level
12 we're seeing some work related to high-reliability
13 schools, which that really interplays together as far
14 as being very much in similar work. As far as the
15 District, heavy emphasis on -- in their level --
16 district-level support plan on literacy; also the
17 equitable access to high-quality instruction, and
18 then really trying to emphasize and support a safe
19 and collaborative culture within their schools.

20 The District ADE support plan is also in your
21 document and you can see that we're still providing
22 -- Ms. Whitlow is kind of the ADE lead -- or I guess
23 we're calling it DESE -- I can't say that, I always
24 forget to say that -- as far as the lead person that
25 helps work directly with the District leadership

1 team. We do have two experienced building-level
2 principals, Rocci Malone and Brent Miller, that's
3 working with the elementary schools. Ms. Malone is
4 working primarily with middle school and high schools
5 from a curriculum instruction support. We do have
6 Ms. Thrasher that's available; she helps in some
7 scenarios. But between Ms. Whitlow and now with Ms.
8 Worsham being onboard with Little Rock, they work
9 primarily together on those issues. We also have
10 Julie Amstutz that -- she replaced one of the ladies
11 we had last year working specifically with the
12 District on special ed. With Science of Reading
13 support, we have Kathy Mascuilli that's working
14 primarily with the District in taking on the role of
15 what Ms. Pride -- Dr. Pride worked with last year.

16 Fiscal support, we have that available. We do
17 provide purple pages. But like I had mentioned last
18 night, we really don't have a deep emphasis on
19 working with the school in terms of fiscal type
20 issues.

21 And then the behavior support -- one of the
22 things that as we were getting into the schools and
23 having discussions with teachers, something that kept
24 popping was discipline and problems within some of
25 these schools. And so we have Dr. Michael Watson,

1 that's our behavior specialist, that's working with
2 them as well.

3 And then, finally, the work that we're
4 continuing to do -- actually tomorrow we're working
5 with the District on an equity lab, and that's just
6 part of that human capital process, to do a deep-dive
7 into the data and have those discussions with
8 principals. They've done an initial one here as a
9 group, but we're going to start doing these a little
10 bit more regularly with the schools. And one of the
11 key factors there is that, you know, we have data
12 systems that provide data that we can see, and a lot
13 of it is not necessarily in our data systems; it's
14 information we collect, and some of it is information
15 that they keep in the district. And so, part of the
16 process is to review that data collectively. If we
17 can see trends or see data that may not be accurate
18 on our end, but it gives the District opportunities
19 to say "hey, why is this" -- and I'll give you a
20 quick example is in terms of sometimes we see things
21 on our end and say "hey, we have teachers that are --
22 very few teachers are rated as ineffective;" and so
23 sometimes what that means is -- when you start having
24 these conversations with the principal, they say,
25 "Well, hey, I'm new, I rated this person." So it may

1 be a mechanism of how they didn't close the system
2 out right or they're truly -- they may think they
3 have an ineffective teacher but they're not doing the
4 actual work in the system to show that, and that's
5 where our data is pulled from. And so that's some of
6 the discussions that'll go on tomorrow.

7 Overall, we've talked about a lot of these
8 things -- you know, the implementation of the new
9 reading material. One kind of newer thing that --
10 we've just kind of been sitting in on and listening
11 to discussions; Hall High School is piloting the new
12 95% group training, which is kind of a reading
13 emphasis type work and phonics type program for the
14 high school level, which I think that seems to be
15 pretty new and not a lot of people involved with
16 that. I didn't get to personally sit in the
17 training, but I know Ms. Whitlow did and she was very
18 high on the training that was being given. So I
19 think that's a --

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Let me elaborate a little bit --

21 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- on that. There's a person
23 who is well-trained in reading and dyslexia and all
24 things to do with reading and Science of Reading, and
25 she -- the principal wanted to do it for 9th through

1 12th, but the 11th and 12th grade teachers were not
2 excited about it. So they're doing it with 9th and
3 10th and every English class for 30 minutes every day
4 they; the students are getting reading instruction
5 and then the English as part of their block. And so
6 we're hoping that as the upper-level teachers see the
7 results and the positive change in those students
8 that they will then, you know, buy into it as well.
9 But this lady is from Mountain Home and she comes
10 three days a week, plus she provides training for the
11 teachers, you know, to do those kind of things. So
12 I'm hopeful about it, and I appreciate Dr. Roberts
13 for allowing this to -- in doing this for his
14 students.

15 DR. HERNANDEZ: One of the questions that's come
16 up with the others is how are they doing as far as
17 their identification. And you can see the numbers
18 that we were given and related to elementary and
19 secondary in terms of students that are receiving the
20 dyslexia intervention. So we are seeing some
21 increases, especially at the secondary level, which
22 is a lot better than what we've seen.

23 The group -- you know, we mentioned some of this
24 last night is that, you know, the CNI and the
25 executive directors at both the elementaries seem to

1 be doing well, collaborating. And especially, as Mr.
2 Poore had said, is we're -- you know, seem to be
3 really at a good place in where that relationship
4 with the Department and the staff are working well
5 together and then having some meaningful
6 conversations that are turning into actions. Things
7 seem to be happening a lot faster as far as getting
8 things done.

9 There has been professional development provided
10 in these different areas, the restorative justice,
11 CPI and PBIS. There's been two additional schools
12 that are identified to do the Leader in Me program,
13 which that's something that, you know, I've had
14 personal experience with and knew is a good program
15 that's been about training and how to help kids think
16 about those things, help staff think about those
17 things. The Feet to the Seat -- I mentioned this
18 earlier -- is that that's moved to more of a
19 district-wide scope. And, you know, my belief is
20 that's more of a helpful way of thinking about and
21 looking at attendance because it's kind of embedded
22 in their normal process, as opposed to just something
23 that they're just providing information on. And
24 that's -- the chronic absenteeism is kind of a better
25 way to look at things; because if you're not tracking

1 that stuff you may say, "hey, a kid has missed two
2 days," and no big deal. But if they're doing that
3 repetitively, two days a month, two days a month, two
4 days a month, that can be -- that overall adds up to
5 an issue, especially when you pair it to potential
6 chronic absenteeism of the teachers.

7 And then as far as some of the facility type
8 things, there's been some security cameras added at
9 the secondary school, and then also A/C as part of
10 the -- I believe you got the sheet that had a lot of
11 the projects that were being completed and things
12 like that out of the funds that were available.

13 And then I mentioned about the equity labs that
14 are scheduled for tomorrow, Friday, the 13th; so I
15 hope it goes well.

16 So that's primarily what we have. I know we've
17 -- there's a lot more things we can talk about. But
18 if there are specific questions about the report or
19 about the way we're going and -- or any questions for
20 Mr. Poore --

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Mr. Pekron? Ms. Newton? Dr.
22 Hill? Ms. Dean? This side?

23 DR. MOORE: Yes. So is the District doing NWEA
24 again this year?

25 SUPT. POORE: We are. This will be the third

1 year for NWEA in the District. K-2 we adopted with
2 the state, rolling that out as an option. And then
3 last year was the first year for 3-10.

4 DR. MOORE: Okay.

5 SUPT. POORE: We also are using NWEA as another
6 way to look at reading scores through -- I'm probably
7 going to get the name incorrect. There's a portion
8 that you can use within that assessment tool that
9 actually lets you do some screening too with that.

10 DR. MOORE: So will they be doing pre-tests?

11 SUPT. POORE: Yes. So we -- the great thing
12 about now being year-two is that we can actually when
13 the fall scores come in, which will be ready by the
14 first of October, we will have -- and that'll change
15 our school improvement plans, by the way -- school
16 support plans -- that they will have that and they
17 can look at it from fall to fall, or they can even
18 look at it from spring to fall. There's a variety of
19 ways that we'll be able to slice-and-dice that and
20 look at it to see what's going on with our kids.

21 DR. MOORE: Good. Do you feel that building
22 principals and teachers have been fully trained to
23 use that well?

24 SUPT. POORE: Yeah, absolutely. We had a lot of
25 training last year on that and we've already had that

1 organization in I believe once this fall already to
2 do additional training and also provide training for
3 new folks.

4 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I noticed under the exit
6 criteria, the first one, the objective one, it says
7 4-29-19 Little Rock School District had -- 22 schools
8 were offered leadership coaching, four of the schools
9 declined. Can you help me understand that?

10 SUPT. POORE: I don't have that report in front
11 of me, so I may be -- are we -- is that the PLC?

12 DR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, sir.

13 SUPT. POORE: So, and -- so on the PLC one of
14 the things that -- where that's at -- first, I want
15 to frame -- this got brought up in one of your
16 conversations in your meetings that you've all held.
17 This is actually the second year for the District to
18 go forward with PLC -- it's not just this year -- and
19 that's how it was demonstrated before in front of all
20 of you. This is the second year of the District
21 doing a full-bore set of training for PLC. Last
22 year, the PLC training occurred for all schools; this
23 year, it occurred for -- we have a very intentional
24 focus on getting extra support through the state --
25 and that's the unique partnership that we demonstrate

1 to you: the state and Little Rock District working
2 together. I believe, and I could be wrong, that the
3 reason that several of the schools didn't go into the
4 PLC model was that they chose to do high-reliability,
5 and that was our secondary schools.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Could you find that out for
7 sure?

8 SUPT. POORE: Yeah, I could double-check but I
9 think that's correct.

10 MS. WHITLOW: That's correct.

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Oh, you did.

12 SUPT. POORE: I'm correct.

13 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

14 SUPT. POORE: That's Cloverdale and Fair and
15 McClellan that chose that route to go in the high-
16 reliability.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. And I heard at your CAB
18 report the report on summer school. I know you're
19 obviously as disappointed as I. I don't guess I
20 understood why it was just 20 days, the participation
21 and the absenteeism. And I didn't see any pre and
22 post data on your summer school. Do you have that?

23 SUPT. POORE: We're coming back with another
24 report on that, Ms. Zook, to deliver to the CAB next
25 week; so you'll -- we'll get that to all of you as

1 well. That'll be a little bit better thing. But we
2 are going to have to retool that summer school
3 program. And really what we've started to do is talk
4 with the City a little bit more about it, that -- the
5 City's model makes a lot more sense because the City
6 has those kids available to be with them all day.
7 And for a parent what ends up happening -- that's one
8 of the reasons our absentee rate I think is there, is
9 that we're working with the kids until 1:00 and then
10 send them home. Well, for a parent you'd much prefer
11 to have your kids engaged all day long. So if we can
12 partner with the City and have the instructional
13 pieces that we currently do still there up through
14 the lunch hour, whatever, and then tie more into a
15 recreational aspect for the afternoon, that's where I
16 think we're going to head. And the mayor is very
17 excited about trying to work with us on that.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Well, and I think any time you
19 do something it may not always succeed; but at least
20 if you're aware and try to change it --

21 SUPT. POORE: And the other change that we'll
22 make to help with our data trend is -- it goes back
23 into NWEA. A tool that we didn't use and that's on
24 us was we could've used NWEA in the summer because
25 NWEA actually has four times that you could assess

1 the students during the course of a year.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right.

3 SUPT. POORE: And we did not use that tool for
4 the way that we monitored that, and we will in the
5 future.

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Right. Because I know one of
7 the intents of Senator Clark's bill was to change not
8 only the name, but we want some pre and post data.
9 For example, I know you're spending a lot of money on
10 the City Year and -- but do you have pre and post
11 data on is it making a difference?

12 SUPT. POORE: We did receive information from
13 City Year I believe late last week or first of this
14 week in terms of some of their data reports that
15 they've gathered; so we do have that now.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And can you tell me what it
17 says?

18 SUPT. POORE: We could provide that to you and
19 get that to you as a board. It's pretty positive.
20 You know, one of the challenging things about that
21 data is that when you're talking about a City Year
22 program you're looking at young people that are
23 coming in and they're working with kids on all sorts
24 of things -- some math tutoring, some reading
25 tutoring. But they're also working with them just to

1 have engagement and support. And, of course, their
2 end of doing reading and math tutoring is not the
3 only thing that happens to impact those children's
4 achievement results; it's what's happening within the
5 classroom environment and what's happening in Tier 2
6 settings as well. So they'd probably have the most
7 minimal aspect of, you know, what those scores
8 ultimately could be like, but they're essential in
9 terms of that extra layer of support for young people
10 coming in. I mean, they're there before anyone else
11 and they leave after everyone has left.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah, I don't doubt --

13 SUPT. POORE: So they're really attached to
14 them. And I think if you look also at, you know,
15 attendance data, all the things -- but you have to
16 understand that they're kind of an extra support
17 mechanism within the schools.

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Uh-huh. I just know that the
19 NSL, now ESA money is to narrow the gap --

20 SUPT. POORE: Sure.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- and I don't think we have
22 seen that happen. I mean we don't know what it would
23 be if they weren't there --

24 SUPT. POORE: That's right.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: -- because we don't have pre and

1 post. But if you can figure out some way to quantify
2 that, then we'll know, yes, that's the best use of it
3 or, no, that's not the best use of it.

4 SUPT. POORE: But one of the things that
5 happened this afternoon, I left the Chamber -- North
6 Little Rock Chamber meeting with (inaudible) and we
7 were talking about our work together with all the
8 districts. Guess what the other district said? "If
9 we're serious about, you know, us combining and
10 working together as four county school districts, why
11 can't we have City Year? Why can't we have Sixth and
12 Goal football? Why can't we do several other things
13 that are going on in Little Rock?" So there is a
14 belief in the approach -- and, of course, I strongly
15 believe in it too.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And also I'm getting a lot of
17 reports that there's inconsistency in your special
18 ed. IEP conferences; like one of them will say, well,
19 dyslexia is not a learning disability; another says,
20 well, it is; and, no, it doesn't belong in IEP. Is
21 there some effort on your part or -- to help Ms.
22 Steele understand, and then her help her supervisors
23 understand, exactly what all of this is and how to
24 make those IEP conferences true student-focused IEP
25 conferences?

1 SUPT. POORE: Well, one of the things that -- I
2 appreciate some of the folks that are dyslexic audit
3 -- dyslexic supporters that have come to us this fall
4 and asked for a meeting and met with Hope and
5 Chandle, and also Sherry Chambers, to be in the room
6 to talk about that very thing.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Uh-huh.

8 SUPT. POORE: So there is work being done on
9 that particular area to kind of work through some
10 things. The neat thing about that is like -- a good
11 example is Ms. Humphries was one of the individuals
12 in the room, and from what I heard she shared
13 positive things that are going on within those
14 conferences that she's been in, and I'm appreciative
15 of that.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I haven't talked to her.

17 SUPT. POORE: But she also shared some
18 disconnects --

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah.

20 SUPT. POORE: -- that said this could be some
21 things we're doing better. So, yes, we are working
22 on that. I hope you also -- I'm proud of the data
23 that shows what's happened already, just in a short
24 period of time, in terms of our work to try to screen
25 students and some of the gains that we've made.

1 Obviously, we still have more work to do in that
2 particular area, but good stride. And the other
3 thing is that all the new materials coming in I think
4 are also having a positive impact, from what I can
5 tell. But we'll have a little bit better feel for
6 that. Probably really the winter MAP would be more
7 telling than anything to see what impact some of
8 those things are doing or having.

9 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I think, you know, the Board has
10 to put up with my frustration. None of this is new;
11 the definition of specific learning disabilities has
12 not changed in 40 years, the identification process
13 hasn't changed in 15. So I'm very frustrated when
14 districts are still working on it and "we're getting
15 that worked out" and -- it's not just you; you know,
16 it's everybody. And that's very frustrating to me
17 because in the meantime, we've got kids that are
18 falling through the cracks and waiting to be served
19 and parents that we want to use our public schools.
20 But, you know, they're scrambling now for the Succeed
21 Scholarship because they're not -- their children's
22 needs aren't being met. So you just happened to be
23 in front of me, you know. The other superintendents
24 I could've, you know, said the same thing.
25 Unfortunately for you, more parents from this area

1 call me than from Earle or Lee County.

2 SUPT. POORE: And, of course, the other thing is
3 that there's a stat that shows we receive a large
4 number of students that want to come in to get
5 special ed. services in our district as well --

6 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: There you go.

7 SUPT. POORE: -- you know, so -- but we all have
8 work to do. And this is another one of those things
9 that I mentioned last night of really good
10 partnership between ADE and the special ed. unit,
11 with Stacy Smith. I had a debrief moment last night;
12 I was like, gosh, I totally forgot to bring up the
13 work with Stacy and Ms. King in terms of working with
14 dyslexia. But they've been tremendous from
15 everything from helping us with selection of
16 materials to then kind of even working through some
17 of the training elements. Because there were so many
18 things coming at all of our teachers at one time and
19 they really helped us work with the companies to kind
20 of create a better way to do the training, tie it in
21 to multiple school districts -- North Little Rock,
22 Benton and Bryant and Little Rock School District,
23 all working together -- which I'm sure you all would
24 like to hear that that kind of collaboration is
25 occurring between the districts on some of the

1 literacy training.

2 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And also on the pullout program,
3 the grouping program in the Wilson, helping the
4 supervisors and teachers and principals understand
5 that there is a certain amount of time to be spent
6 with a small group of four, the 45 minutes. And so
7 you can't have eight in there and do four for 30
8 minutes and four for 30 minutes, because that's not
9 with fidelity or rigor.

10 SUPT. POORE: If you're talking about our
11 academic schedule in the elementary -- is that you --

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'm talking about the students
13 who are going in to the special ed. teacher for their
14 intervention.

15 SUPT. POORE: And maybe you can give me a little
16 bit more information on that --

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay.

18 SUPT. POORE: -- so I can follow-up on that.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I'll catch you on that.

20 SUPT. POORE: Okay.

21 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Anybody else?

22 Do I hear a motion?

23 SUPT. POORE: May I just mention one other thing
24 that I think --

25 CHAIRMAN SUPT. Sure.

1 SUPT. POORE: -- you'll like to hear? Actually,
2 I could mention a couple of things, if you don't
3 mind.

4 One of the things that I said last night was
5 about performance, and it fits in a little bit to the
6 conversation that Ms. Zook has brought up. But one
7 of the things I didn't quite do as good a justice for
8 that I needed to finish off with is, you know,
9 although the rigor has been amped up in our state --
10 and our state, if I didn't mention this, we're at a
11 C-minus. Okay. Now that's nothing to just say, oh,
12 that's fantastic; we're there. But compared to D's
13 and F's that we've had before, this state is at a C-
14 minus and that goes -- gives credit to all of you and
15 to our Commissioner and his staff. But for Little
16 Rock, you know, if you look at our numbers -- and
17 that's why Ms. Zook is so intense and so many of you
18 have been intense on this -- is that it still shows
19 for Little Rock, even though there's a higher level
20 of rigor. And I truly do believe people are getting
21 better, we still have a lot of work to do.

22 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Sure.

23 SUPT. POORE: And so I just want to make sure I
24 added that on to end.

25 Two, three other things that I'll share, one

1 that fits into Ms. Dean's work as we are doing a lot
2 of things with community on social/emotional
3 learning. We have a special grant tied to the city
4 on that; we also have used trauma-informed education
5 training with our pre-k's this year; and we're also
6 expanding Tendogy which is a way to keep kids engaged
7 rather than just sending them home, and that's going
8 extremely well; and CPI and restorative justice
9 training -- those things were captured a little bit;
10 it's actually on this slide right now. But those are
11 big things to try to create de-escalation.

12 I want to give a shout-out to Ms. McAdoo who's
13 Teacher of the Year. She came to me right --
14 somewhere in May or June, before she went on her
15 world tour, and shared that -- "is there a way that
16 we could" -- and I think this could be replicated
17 elsewhere. But she said, you know, "We do this;" she
18 said, "It's so wonderful what happens to me right
19 now, with all of you and with the state. Can we not
20 do that in Little Rock with our other Teachers of the
21 Year?" So we had a high school Teacher of the Year,
22 middle school, elementary. "Could we do something
23 with those folks?" So they were a part of our
24 convocation; but, guess what, they also are going to
25 be meeting with me now throughout the school year.

1 They're going to have a signature project that
2 they're tied to that they're passionate about. The
3 high school person is a librarian. She wants to do
4 the tech cards that we initially brought into
5 Bentonville; now we have it here for the CALS System.
6 The elementary person is going to do a signature
7 project on how to use yoga in the classroom during
8 the instructional time of the day to help students
9 with their behavior and their focus. She did this at
10 Gibbs last year and it was really pretty amazing. So
11 I want to give Stacy a shout-out on that.

12 And then, lastly, you know, when you think about
13 our district and you think about all the ups and
14 downs and things that are going on right now, as of
15 today -- and I got to share this with staff, with the
16 Commissioner yesterday, and then we talked about it
17 again today a little bit -- if you look at our
18 enrollment -- and our enrollment -- you know, last
19 year we lost 650 kids; this year, right now we are up
20 100 students. Okay. And that's huge, guys. That
21 was Mike calling his wife, his mom, calling the
22 mayor, calling the Commissioner, because us up 100,
23 that's a game-changer for the District. It says so
24 much about the belief this community has in what's
25 going on in our schools and that, you know, we've got

1 some things that people are holding onto. And I
2 think that's why we have so much community
3 involvement taking place right now; again, over
4 \$27,000,000 of volunteer hours last year.

5 So I'm real excited to share that with you and
6 I'm sure Ms. Howell will be following up with me now
7 to write an article on that, I hope.

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I think part of that is
9 adding the 9th grade out at Pinnacle View. Because I
10 know a lot of those parents who were looking at
11 Catholic and Mount Saint Mary's, but they -- "Oh,
12 great, you've got a school; we had a good experience
13 here, let's just stay with it." So, you know, keep
14 moving on in that direction.

15 That Tendogy that you talked about, I got a
16 chance to tour that and I'll talk to the Board about
17 it tomorrow.

18 SUPT. POORE: Great.

19 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: You know, I'm very excited about
20 that as well.

21 MS. McFETRIDGE: Can I ask you if you -- do you
22 have a communication plan about getting all these
23 good things out in the community and clear up some of
24 this negativity that we've heard?

25 SUPT. POORE: I had one person share something

1 last night, when I pushed something out on athletics,
2 that said, "Well, how about doing an academic pep
3 rally?" And I said, "Gosh, I hope you're watching
4 our Twitter right now because our Twitter is
5 exploding." So that's probably been our biggest
6 platform in terms of how we push out positivity. And
7 this year we probably have another 10 or 15 schools
8 that are really using that tool and making it so that
9 we have that many more kinds of explosions.

10 We have -- one of the ideas of the Teacher of
11 the Year is to have one person or more, either, tied
12 to a specific stakeholder group, just sharing out
13 positive messages. You know, we have so many great
14 people coming into Little Rock all the time to do
15 speeches. We tried to get Ruth Bader Ginsberg to be
16 the first one to share a message to our District, but
17 we couldn't get her. But we're going to do some of
18 that.

19 So our communication plan -- Pam Smith does, in
20 my opinion, a really good job but it's a constant
21 battle on that. But, you know, there's never enough
22 -- and you probably have felt that before in
23 Springdale of how come we don't see more positive.
24 But, boy, we really try to work hard on that and
25 we're trying to get -- so it's not just the District

1 thing, but it's the whole school. We're encouraging
2 that with academic programs, robotic teams, debate
3 teams, and, of course, athletic and performing arts
4 as well. And I think our presence -- I know I'm
5 scrolling through a lot more Little Rock stuff every
6 day. Commissioner has commented on that too.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I wonder too -- we were talking
8 about the good idea that Ms. McAdoo shared. I wonder
9 if those teachers could rotate at the CAB meeting?

10 SUPT. POORE: Oh, to sit on the --

11 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah. I don't know. She may
12 think this is a penalty, as opposed to a prize. But,
13 you know, maybe offer the opportunity. I don't know.

14 MS. McFETRIDGE: And one of the things that has
15 worked so well in Springdale for years is Dr. Rollins
16 has a monthly patron shelf meeting where he invites
17 the community in and his upper leadership staff talk
18 to them about different programs and new and upcoming
19 ideas coming into the district. He gets kind of a
20 feel for thoughts and ideas coming then from not
21 just, you know, district employees and parents, but
22 community-wide, mayor's staff, you know, the Council,
23 Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs -- just a whole different
24 arrangement --

25 SUPT. POORE: I'll check into that with him. I

1 will share --

2 MS. McFETRIDGE: It's worked really well.

3 SUPT. POORE: -- we've done think-tanks in that
4 same regard, both on career tech, athletics and
5 performing arts, to bring in all sorts of people. We
6 also have brought in groups -- we brought in all the
7 private schools. And I know that may sound like
8 that's just the craziest thing ever, but we brought
9 in all the private schools because there are things
10 that we've done, whether it's the tech card or
11 whether it's -- you can sign up for online courses
12 tied in with the ASPRC [sic], that if a private
13 school -- they need -- have needs for sometimes
14 online courses. If they sign up, then actually --
15 guess what -- Little Rock can get credit for that
16 student for a partial credit; so we've tried to do
17 some unique things with them as well. So we're
18 trying to take some of that same approach. And we
19 also have -- we do monthly superintendent citations
20 where we bring in kids and staff and community
21 members to honor them, and that's always live on TV
22 as well.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Okay. Any more questions?

24 SUPT. POORE: And can I leave one last thought
25 for you?

1 When you -- I'm sorry, Ms. Zook; I know you're
2 ready to go and --

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: No, we've got things after you,
4 so we're not going anywhere.

5 SUPT. POORE: This will be the last thing.

6 Last night in the conversation about board
7 development -- I just wanted to share one more
8 thought for you -- is that when you think about board
9 development, superintendents -- every one that I've
10 been aware of, and probably would've been Dr. Rollins
11 too -- is that when you get ready to have a slate of
12 candidates you bring them in initially for training.
13 And that didn't get brought up last night. So
14 whenever we're getting ready to go do a board one of
15 the things is that you go publicize the opportunity,
16 and as those folks get ready to go get their
17 signatures they need to have a meeting prior to that
18 so that they understand what governance looks like.
19 And that can be done in conjunction with the state,
20 with me, with the School Board Association. Because
21 they need to know before they go out and start to
22 campaign what their role really is and so that they
23 can be in the right place in order to -- that's an
24 initial training. And then, of course, there's all
25 sorts of training that occurs after the fact.

1 But that's one thing that I felt like you should
2 hear that needs to be a part of the sequence and the
3 timing and the thinking as to making sure that we
4 always have that training prior to a board ever even
5 -- a board officer even going out to try to get
6 elected.

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Yeah. I think Ms. McFetridge
8 had mentioned that, but maybe in one of the other
9 settings. I don't know. They've all run together.

10 SUPT. POORE: That makes sense.

11 MS. McFETRIDGE: I think it's a great idea.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do I have a motion?

13 MS. NEWTON: Move to approve.

14 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Newton moved to approve.

15 MS. McFETRIDGE: Second.

16 MR. PEKRON: Second.

17 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Ms. McFetridge.

18 All in favor?

19 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

21 Thank you, Dr. Hernandez.

22 MS. CHAMBERS: Madam Chair, may I ask a quick
23 question of Dr. Hernandez?

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Sure.

25 MS. CHAMBERS: This was -- again, this was so

1 helpful. The question is at the macro level -- it's
2 even kind of a process question -- have we reported
3 in the past on across the state where by a percentage
4 our schools fall Level 1 through 5? And the reason I
5 ask is it's obvious with these great updates that
6 we're hearing how much work is involved, and so I'm
7 trying to figure out the transition or the movement.
8 Are more and more schools needing less and less
9 support, or are they needing more and now we -- are
10 we able to meet that need with resources?

11 DR. HERNANDEZ: I'll take a stab, and Deb and
12 Commissioner may want to jump in.

13 So the idea is that when we talk about the
14 levels -- so school districts in need of levels of
15 support, the only major time that that's brought in a
16 public way is typically around Level 5, because it
17 requires classification; they need a Level 5
18 intensive support. Every district -- the label --
19 the reason our mindset about why we don't do that is
20 that -- because it becomes this kind of labeling
21 system in addition to letter grades. And so the way
22 we approach it is the level of support is more about
23 us, how do -- what kind of support are we providing
24 towards the District; and so sometimes it's for a
25 season. So, for example, if, you know, somebody

1 calls me and says, "Hey, I'm really struggling with
2 our master plan" or "we're struggling with --
3 financially," well, that's going to be a
4 collaborative effort. So we're going to provide that
5 level of support to that district for -- let's just
6 say it's a month or two weeks or even a day. And so
7 districts by and large may be receiving multiple
8 levels of support. They may be going to our website
9 and looking at information; that's just a general
10 support that we provide information about dyslexia,
11 using our guide. But if they call and say, "Hey, we
12 want somebody to come in and work side-by-side and
13 show us how to do this so we can collaborate on a
14 plan," then that's a more intensified level of
15 support and so that may last for a period of time.
16 The only ones that seem to become more and more
17 public are when school districts, school boards come
18 and ask us for a more -- a higher level support, like
19 a Level 4 -- they want Level 4 directed type support
20 where they're saying, "Hey, come and tell us what to
21 do." We still have the option of not doing it, but
22 "we want you to be more intentional about helping us
23 with different aspects of our district."

24 So that's -- I know that probably is not super-
25 helpful, but that's kind of our approach and why we

1 don't have basically a list, if you will.

2 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, that covers a lot of it.

3 The other thing too that we need to keep in mind is

4 legislation that passed in this last session

5 specifies levels of support that must be provided by

6 the Department, depending on the percentage of

7 students that are in need of support in reading on

8 their ACT Aspire. So that is going to create a

9 number of districts that are receiving Level 3

10 support, a number of districts that are receiving

11 Level 4 support. So it's not intended to be rigid;

12 it's intended to be fluid with respect to the

13 Department. I mean it goes back to what is the

14 relationship. And the relationship is we need to

15 come in, provide you whatever level of support that

16 you need for whatever period of time it takes to get

17 you to a better place, and then -- you know, and that

18 has really caused us to have to retool the Agency.

19 It's less about making sure that we have folks here

20 that are specialists in compliance issues versus

21 people who are really experts at helping solve

22 problems. So that's -- Ms. Coffman, Stacy Smith -- I

23 mean so many of our -- really all of our Assistant

24 Commissioners have to think differently, and then Dr.

25 Pfeffer and I have to think differently, Dr.

1 Hernandez has to think differently about what
2 activities we are involved in. And as positions come
3 open who do we bring onboard with the team to fill
4 what is now a need that's starkly different than what
5 it was five years ago.

6 But he's right in that we really try to avoid
7 keeping lists and keeping -- you know, here's the
8 number we have, because it's so fluid, you know, in
9 the number of people we have that are receiving Level
10 3 support. That was really critical at a point in
11 time when we were developing -- helping districts
12 develop their 10.03 federal grant plans. They got
13 those submitted and we backed away. You know, so if
14 we gave you a list it would change the next day very
15 possibly.

16 MS. CHAMBERS: And that's very helpful. Just to
17 clarify, I'm not personally interested in a list; I
18 was interested in trends. Level 5 -- and these
19 updates have really helped me understand how much
20 work is involved when a district is in a situation
21 that is Level 5. And so my interest was in are we
22 learning about things we can do say at Level 3 or 4
23 that keep districts from moving into those areas.
24 And it's not even a moment in time but trend-wise are
25 we getting better or are we sliding in a direction we

1 don't feel good about.

2 MS. COFFMAN: Deborah Coffman, Department of Ed.

3 -- Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

4 So we have to think about this as a continuous
5 cycle of inquiry ourselves, and we say, "What does
6 our data tell us? What are the needs?" And when we
7 do our needs assessment, "what are the needs." We
8 look at the whole state, we look at individual school
9 districts -- what are the needs, and then we make a
10 plan for how we're going to provide the support to
11 those schools. But a part of that cycle is do --
12 plan-do-check. So what are we doing? So right now
13 our people out there in the field -- that's where a
14 lot of them are today; they're out in the field
15 working with school districts to insure that their
16 needs are being met. And then in our check is then
17 we're looking at our data all the time to say, "Oh,
18 did that really bring about the effect that we
19 expected?" And we're looking not just at test scores
20 to say did the test scores go up, but we're looking
21 at our criteria -- are they -- do they have less
22 flags that would come up in our risk assessments, do
23 we see better behaviors. You know, we're just --
24 we're looking at them more holistically across all of
25 those systems, but that then informs that continuous

1 cycle again, okay, here's new data, how do we plan to
2 provide support. And so that's why it's so fluid,
3 but also it's -- it follows that gradual release
4 model. Our goal is that every district operate
5 effectively and efficiently for every child. And so
6 if we keep that in mind, then we're always providing
7 the support that helps them move toward that goal and
8 we're stepping back; we take down the scaffolding
9 when it's no longer needed because we don't want them
10 to become dependent on us. We're not staff members;
11 we're support -- we're support, we're external
12 support. And so if we were there telling you what to
13 do every day, why do you have to think about what to
14 do every day? Our job is to help you be prepared to
15 know how to think every day. And so that's where
16 it's so fluid in that when it's -- when we've been in
17 there supporting we need to step back and say, "Okay,
18 can you do it on your own? Because if you can do it
19 on your own, hey, I've got other people I can go
20 support," which is what we should be doing. We
21 shouldn't go to live there. And so that's where that
22 fluidity happens on a daily basis. That's how in our
23 cycle it's fluid that we're looking at the data all
24 the time.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: And I think that's something in

1 the 21st Century -- because people got used to a
2 plan, a plan, a plan, and now it's fluid -- it's like
3 a lava lamp; you know, it's changing all the time --
4 based on who the administrators are and the students
5 you get and the teachers you have and how many are
6 this and how many are that. And so we need some
7 flexibility.

8 MS. COFFMAN: So we always have a plan. The
9 plan can be changed. The plan needs to be updated.
10 You know, I was listening a while ago to the
11 conversation; I thought, oh, that's a standard
12 operating procedure. But you ought to be checking
13 those all the time to see if they're working; if they
14 don't, you change them -- and that's just good
15 commonsense, you know. You need to know what you're
16 supposed to do. You write it down. But then if it's
17 working you continue, and if it's not working you
18 change it, and you make mistakes and you get back up
19 and you try again. And that's just what planning the
20 work and then working the plan really does for you.

21 So the plan-do-check works. It works at the
22 State level, it works at the district level, it works
23 at the school level, it works at the classroom level,
24 it works at the student level. So I think we're
25 trying to help people see that and become really

1 masterful at following that continuous cycle of
2 inquiry.

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Thank you.

4 Anybody else?

5 B-12: CONSIDERATION FOR RELEASE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: DESE RULES
6 GOVERNING CLASS SIZE AND TEACHING LOAD

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Hyatt, we're on Number 12.

8 We have people who have been waiting all day to
9 do public comments, so it's nearing.

10 MS. HYATT: I'll try to be brief. Mary Claire
11 Hyatt, Department of Education, Division of
12 Elementary and Secondary Education.

13 On Number 12 these are the Rules Governing Class
14 Size and Teaching Load for your consideration for
15 release for public comment. Changes to these rules
16 were made to incorporate provisions from Act 979 of
17 the 2019 legislative session. So I respectfully
18 request that you release them for public comment, and
19 I'd be happy to answer any questions that you have.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Any questions?

21 Do I hear a motion?

22 MS. DEAN: I move to release for public comment.

23 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Dean moved.

24 MR. PEKRON: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Mr. Pekron.

1 All in favor?

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

4 Motion passes.

5 B-13: CONSIDERATION FOR RELEASE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: DESE RULES
6 GOVERNING THE STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION OF ARKANSAS PUBLIC
7 SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

8 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: The next set of rules is the
9 Rules Governing the Standards for Accreditation of
10 Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts. These
11 changes were made to incorporate lots of acts: Act
12 82, Act 190, Act 670 -- no -- 641, 676, and 1083, all
13 of 2019, from this past session. And so I request
14 that you release them for public comment, and I'm
15 happy to answer any questions.

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Any comment?

17 MS. NEWTON: I --

18 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Ms. Newton.

19 MS. NEWTON: I did have one comment. And it was
20 just something that when I read through it, it didn't
21 -- let me show it to you and then -- it's under
22 Standard 1(c), under Student Performance; it's
23 1(c)2.6. The first time I read it I thought -- well,
24 I thought it meant that students in grade 9, grade
25 10, grade 11 and grade 12 each time would have to be

1 trained in that, the first time that I read it. And
2 then I read it again. So I don't know if we need to
3 make that a little bit clearer -- you know, because I
4 had to read it twice before I caught what it meant.

5 MS. HYATT: I appreciate that comment. And I'll
6 just give you the rationale, but I'm happy to make
7 the change.

8 MS. NEWTON: I understood that it meant that one
9 time in grades 9 through 12. But the first -- I'm
10 just saying the first time I read it I was thinking
11 it was meaning grade 9 --

12 MS. HYATT: Each year.

13 MS. NEWTON: Each year. So, and that's
14 something you could either leave alone or whatever.
15 I was just --

16 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: I found it helpful that you
17 highlighted in yellow the adjustments; appreciate
18 that.

19 MS. NEWTON: Yeah, that was very helpful.

20 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Do I have a motion?

21 MS. McFETRIDGE: Move to release for public
22 comment.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Motion by Ms. McFetridge, second
25 by Mr. Williamson.

1 All in favor?

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Opposed?

4 Motion passes. Thank you very much.

5 (OFF THE RECORD FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS - 4:05 P.M.)

6 (BACK ON THE RECORD - 4:37 P.M.)

7 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Nothing else to come before this

8 party, I will accept a motion to adjourn for today.

9 MS. DEAN: Move to adjourn.

10 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Moved by Ms. Dean.

11 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

12 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: Second by Ms. Chambers.

13 All in favor?

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRMAN ZOOK: This meeting is adjourned.

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18 (The meeting was concluded at 4:37 p.m.)

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A-1: JESSICA WILLIAMS

DESE EXHIBITS 1 - 6

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A-2: BRYAN LITTLE
DESE EXHIBITS 1-6
EDUCATOR'S EXHIBIT 1-3

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A-3: JERRI LYN ODOM
EDUCATOR'S EXHIBIT 1

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A-5(A): SEARCY SCHOOL DISTRICT

EXHIBIT 1

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A-7: RICK NAPIER

DESE EXHIBIT 1

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 September 12, 2019, that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

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

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

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: September 19, 2019.

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

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