

BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JUNE 13, 2019

10:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

LOCATION:

Arkansas Department of Education
#4 Capitol Mall - Auditorium
Little Rock, AR 72201

I N D E X

| | Page |
|--|----------|
| Exhibits Index | 4 |
| Motion and Vote to Amend Action Action | 5 |
| Waiver Request - Ft. Smith School District | 6 |
| Waiver Request - Van Buren School District | 9 |
| A-1: Licensure Hearing - Chrystal Vega | 11 |
| A-2: Consideration of CAP Decisions | |
| a) Capital City Lighthouse Charter | 17 |
| b) Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter | 25 |
| c) Pine Bluff Lighthouse Charter | 26 |
| d) SIATech Charter | 27 |
| e) Haas Hall Academy | 31 |
| f) Future School of Ft. Smith | 33 |
| g) Cabot Academic Center of Excellence | 34 |
| h) Lincoln High School | 35 |
| i) Badger Academy | 37 |
| j) Washington Academy | 50 |
| Covenant Keepers Charter Update | 51 |
| B-1: O'Kelley Family School Choice Appeal | 76 |
| Intro to Succeed Scholar Transfer Requests | 127 |
| B-2: Succeed Scholarship Transfer - Williams | 128, 136 |
| B-3: Succeed Scholarship Transfer - Berry | 128 |
| B-4: Succeed Scholarship Transfer - Horton | 129 |
| (cont.) | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| B-5: Succeed Scholarship Transfer - Hoffman | 130 |
| B-6: Succeed Scholarship Transfer - McCain | 133 |
| B-7: Succeed Scholarship Transfer - Ventura | 135 |
| B-8: Succeed Scholarship Transfer - Johnson | 135 |
| B-9: ABC 2019-2020 Contracts | 137 |
| B-10: Second Round ABC 2019-2020 Grants | 146 |
| B-11: ABC 2018-2019 Funding/Foster Care | 147 |
| B-12: Remaining ABC Funding | 149 |
| B-13: 2018-19 Summary of Accreditation for Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts . . | 154 |
| B-14: Emergency Rules - Educator Comp. Reform. | 55 |
| B-15: Public Comment - Educator Comp. Reform | 73 |
| B-16: Emergency Rules - Ed. Excellence Trust Fund. . . | 74 |
| B-17: Public Comment - Ed. Excellence Trust Fund . . . | 75 |
| B-18: Legislative Report - Dollarway | 160 |
| B-19: Legislative Report - Earle | 180 |
| B-20: Legislative Report - Lee County | 201 |
| B-21: Legislative Report - Pine Bluff | 225 |
| B-22: Legislative Report - Little Rock | 249 |
| Adjournment | 301 |
| Court Reporter's Certificate | 306 |

E X H I B I T S

A-1: LICENSURE HEARING - CHRYSTAL VEGA

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

Educator's License

EXHIBIT TWO (2)

Sentencing Order (03/05/19)

EXHIBIT THREE (3)

Notice of Disqualifying Offense (03/19/19)

EXHIBIT FOUR (4)

Notice of Hearing (05/10/19)

EXHIBIT FIVE (5)

Educator's Email

B-1: O'KELLEY FAMILY SCHOOL CHOICE APPEAL

LAKE SIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT EXHIBIT ONE (1)

Letter from ADE to Lakeside School District (01/11/19)

LAKE SIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT EXHIBIT TWO (2)

Statistical Report

O'KELLEY EXHIBIT ONE (1)

Letter from O'Kelley Family to ADE (04/20/19)

w/ misc. medical documentation

B-10: ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE 2019-2020 CONTRACTS - ROUND 2

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

Report on Round 2 ABC Grants

B-18: LEGISLATIVE REPORT - DOLLARWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

2018-2019 Student Discipline Data

P R O C E E D I N G S

AMENDMENT TO ACTION AGENDA

CHAIRMAN BARTH: We do have a few changes to the agenda that are being requested, most -- the three of them due to natural disasters that have hit our state. And so we have the Fort Smith District and Van Buren District with waiver requests. I'm going to ask that we put those as the first two action items of the morning since I believe at least some of those principals or officials are here. So if we could do those as the first two action items.

We then also have the Capital City Lighthouse decision to eliminate some grades for next year because of flooding. And we already have a Capital City Lighthouse item in -- item two which is the Charter Authorizing Panel. And so let's just consider it -- I would ask that we consider it first with the Charter Authorizing Panel decision since those would be together.

And then we also have an update on the Covenant Keepers situation, and so I talked to Ms. Hyatt and we will just do that at the end of the Charter Authorizing decisions, if that's appropriate, to kind of keep things -- keep the items together.

So I would entertain a motion if y'all are

1 comfortable with that to alter the agenda in that
2 way.

3 MS. DEAN: So moved.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Dean, second by
6 Ms. Chambers.

7 All in favor say "aye."

8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

10 Okay. Thank y'all.

11 ACTION AGENDA

12 FT. SMITH SCHOOL DISTRICT

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Now we're down to our Action
14 Agenda. And as we said, we're going to pick up with
15 a couple of waiver requests due to the flooding; Fort
16 Smith is first, and then Van Buren. But Ms. Freno is
17 going to introduce those items.

18 MS. FRENO: Thank you, Dr. Barth. Lori Freno,
19 Department of Education. I'm so sad that you're
20 going to be going. I just had to get that out.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you, Lori.

22 MS. FRENO: And the Fort Smith and Van Buren
23 School Districts are here today. They're both
24 seeking a waiver of the Minimum 178 Hour Student/
25 Teacher Interaction Time. These waivers are both a

1 result of the recent catastrophic flooding that
2 happened in the area, in western Arkansas. The --
3 Fort Smith is seeking a three-day waiver; Van Buren
4 is seeking a one-day waiver. The superintendents are
5 going to -- are here, if you have any questions. And
6 as you have pointed out, these are two separate
7 items; so if you could vote on those two items
8 separately that would be great.

9 Arkansas Code Annotated 6-15-202 provides that
10 the State Board may grant a waiver for up to one year
11 upon a showing of good cause. And so if you have any
12 questions -- the first item did you say, Dr. Barth,
13 is Fort Smith?

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Fort Smith is first. Uh-huh.

15 So welcome. And I think we know the basic
16 facts, but if you would introduce yourself and then
17 provide us a little more context for the request we'd
18 appreciate it.

19 SUPT. BRUBAKER: Sure. Well, my name is Doug
20 Brubaker; I'm superintendent of Fort Smith Public
21 School District. And that final week of school we
22 had been watching the news and saw that the waters
23 were rising and we were hearing words like
24 "unprecedented," "historic," "life-threatening." And
25 so over that -- over Memorial Day weekend we were

1 spending time with our Crisis Response Team and also
2 with the county and the word that we got was that an
3 increasing number of ways into town were closing.
4 And so we have 600 teachers and staff who live
5 outside of the district, and so really there were
6 several primary issues. One was who was going to
7 supervise the kids, provided they could get to
8 school; secondly, you know that any time there's a
9 flood situation you have public authorities coming
10 out and saying "turn around, don't drown." Well, we
11 have a lot of kids who walk to school every day,
12 particularly at the elementary level, and they walk
13 by themselves, and so there was a lot of concern
14 about that. So after consulting with our team, with
15 our board, with the -- and letters of support from
16 our different stakeholder groups we made the decision
17 to close school for those final three days.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Are there any
19 questions?

20 Ms. Zook.

21 MS. ZOOK: Had you already given finals? Were
22 these just days when people were maybe doing some RTI
23 and things like that or did you -- what was scheduled
24 for those days?

25 SUPT. BRUBAKER: Right. So semester tests were

1 scheduled during that time, and so we worked out
2 make-up days and that's taking place throughout the
3 month of June.

4 MS. ZOOK: I move that we grant the request.

5 MS. DEAN: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Motion by Ms. Zook,
7 second by Ms. Dean.

8 Any further discussion?

9 All in favor say "aye."

10 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

12 Thank you. Good luck --

13 SUPT. BRUBAKER: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- with the completion of the
15 year which is still underway.

16 VAN BUREN SCHOOL DISTRICT

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. And now we'll turn
18 over to the Van Buren case. Welcome.

19 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Thank you. I'm Harold
20 Jeffcoat; I'm the superintendent of the Van Buren
21 School District. And there's not a whole lot more
22 that I can add. Dr. Brubaker and I stayed in close
23 contact through this Memorial Day weekend as we were
24 planning for how we were going to react to the
25 situation. In our school district we were able to

1 have school that Tuesday, so we made the decision
2 though that we would close for Wednesday because we
3 knew there were -- there was more rain, heavy rain
4 coming and additional water on its way, and we were
5 already in a really difficult situation. We did
6 though have an opportunity, Ms. Zook, to plan for our
7 semester tests because we did come back for that one
8 day. I will tell you that with the bridges that were
9 closed we were without close to 70 staff members and
10 -- but we made it work; it worked out. But we did
11 feel like it was best -- in the best interest of our
12 school district and our community. We stayed in
13 close contact with all of our officials, emergency
14 personnel, and everyone was very pleased that we were
15 able to close that last day of school.

16 So we are requesting that you allow us to waive
17 the last day of school.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any further
19 requests and information?

20 Ready for a motion?

21 MS. NEWTON: Move we grant the waiver.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right.

23 MS. McFETRIDGE: Second.

24 DR. HILL: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.

1 Newton, second by Ms. McPetridge.

2 All in favor say "aye."

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

5 All right. Safe travels back.

6 SUPT. JEFFCOAT: Thank you.

7 A-1: CONSIDERATION OF REVOCATION OF TEACHING LICENSE -
8 LICENSURE ACTION NO. 19-06, CHRYSTAL ESTELLE VEGA

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. We are now down to our
10 published action agenda items. The first one is
11 Consideration of Revocation of Teaching License.
12 I'll turn it over to Mr. Dugan.

13 MR. DUGAN: Good morning, State Board.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Good morning.

15 MR. DUGAN: And, Dr. Barth, thank you.

16 Taylor Dugan, staff attorney for the Arkansas
17 Department of Education.

18 Just before I proceed, I just want to double-
19 check to make sure -- I placed these exhibit packets
20 in front of all the board members. If there's anyone
21 that did not get one, I apologize, but I do have
22 extra copies. The one that's in front of the Board
23 today is a licensed educator by the name of Chrystal
24 Vega. I did communicate with Ms. Vega, so -- I
25 didn't see her in the room, but if she is here I'd

1 ask that she come forward. And that's why I put this
2 one on the action agenda, Dr. Barth, because I have
3 communicated with this educator.

4 This action gives the Board the authority under
5 6-17-410 that the State Board shall not issue a
6 first-time license, nor renew an existing license --
7 [coughing] excuse me -- and shall revoke any existing
8 license not up for renewal of any person who has a
9 true report on the Child Maltreatment Central
10 Registry or has pled guilty or nolo contendere to or
11 having been found guilty of any of the following
12 offenses by any court in the state of Arkansas, or of
13 any other offense by a court in another state of a
14 similar -- or of a similar offense by a federal
15 court.

16 And since I did communicate with Ms. Vega -- she
17 did not request the waiver, so she did not answer the
18 notice. So the statute also states that if they
19 decline to answer the notice that the State Board
20 shall hold a hearing to establish by a preponderance
21 of the evidence that cause for the proposed action
22 exists.

23 And so if I may proceed, Dr. Barth, I would just
24 like to go through the exhibit packet to establish by
25 a preponderance that this action exists.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Please proceed.

2 MR. DUGAN: So on y'all's exhibit packet what is
3 marked as ADE Exhibit One (1), that's the educator's
4 license. And I put that in the evidence packet just
5 to show the Board that Ms. Vega is a licensed
6 educator here in the state of Arkansas.

7 What I have marked as ADE Exhibit Two (2),
8 there's two pages on this document. And this is the
9 Sentencing Order that shows that Ms. Vega pled no
10 contest to Sexual Assault in the First Degree which
11 is a disqualifying offense listed under Section 4-17-
12 410. And we received the information on this case
13 from the PLSB because they had an investigation and
14 the criminal charges ended up stemming from the
15 conduct.

16 And what I've marked as ADE Exhibit Three (3) is
17 the notice that we sent to Ms. Vega on March 19,
18 2019, showing that she has the disqualifying offense
19 and that she has the right to request a waiver to be
20 here today.

21 We sent Ms. Vega notice on May 10, 2019, that
22 the hearing would be held today and at this time.
23 That's marked as ADE Exhibit Four (4).

24 And I also put in the exhibit packet ADE Exhibit
25 Five (5) which just shows a little bit of email

1 communication between Ms. Vega and I showing that she
2 knows of the hearing.

3 I also communicated with her last -- yesterday
4 afternoon, just reminding her again that -- of the
5 time of the hearing and that it was -- where it was
6 located at.

7 And so with that, unless there's further
8 questions I would entertain those and love to. But
9 if not, that's all I have for my presentation.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. And just one more
11 question. Is Ms. Vega in the --

12 MS. FREN0: She is not.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. Thank you.
14 Any questions to my left?

15 Anything to my right?

16 So the recommendation is revocation from the
17 Department?

18 MR. DUGAN: By operation of law, that's correct,
19 Dr. Barth.

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Move to accept the
21 recommendation to revoke the license.

22 MS. DEAN: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Mr.
24 Williamson, second by Ms. Dean.

25 All in favor say "aye."

1 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

3 Okay. A question, Mr. Dugan, totally unrelated
4 to this case, but -- this issue. The legislation
5 that was passed in the last session -- it may be a
6 Dr. Pfeffer question -- that does allow us to come
7 back to these decisions at a later date in some
8 circumstances. Could you just walk us through that,
9 where we are on that?

10 DR. PFEFFER: Yes. So the legislation allows
11 the State Board of Education to promulgate rules that
12 would outline the process by which an educator could
13 potentially petition to have a license reinstated.
14 However, there are certain offenses that would
15 disqualify them even from that process. I -- you
16 know, we will outline that in the rules and regs;
17 those are being developed right now. And I believe
18 --

19 Taylor, can you remind me, who's going to be
20 working on those rules?

21 MR. DUGAN: I am, Dr. Pfeffer.

22 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. I thought he was. So he'll
23 be working on that.

24 And you may want to add some details to that.

25 MR. DUGAN: Dr. Barth, the act that does allow

1 for the reinstatement and to revoke a license,
2 there's certain situations, like Dr. Pfeffer said,
3 that the applicant will never be able to apply for
4 reinstatement. Those are sexual in nature and also
5 if it was a violent offense. In this instance right
6 here, since this is a sexual assault Ms. Vega would
7 not be allowed to apply to reinstate her license
8 under that current law that was passed.

9 I've been working with Mr. James also as far as
10 coming up with those procedures, because the rule or
11 that law pretty much gives us very wide authority as
12 far as what that process is going to be, and so I
13 have drafted a version of that process. Right now
14 it's with Licensure to have them review it to see if
15 they have other things to add. But in this certain
16 case this is one where she would not be able to.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Great.

18 All right. Anything else?

19 MR. DUGAN: May I step aside?

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I'm going to give you these --

21 MR. DUGAN: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- and then you may.

23 MR. DUGAN: I appreciate you.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Thank you.

25 Appreciate it. Thank you.

1 A-2: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISIONS

2 a) CAPITAL CITY LIGHTHOUSE CHARTER SCHOOL

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We are now down to
4 the Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel
5 Decisions, and first up is Capital City Lighthouse.

6 And so, Mr. Ballard, are you also going to
7 handle the most recent decision related to the
8 school?

9 MR. BALLARD: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So whichever order you
11 want to do them in, whatever is more natural for you
12 --

13 MR. BALLARD: Okay.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- the first thing or the more
15 recent action.

16 MR. BALLARD: Okay. We'll do the most recent
17 action, which is the amendments that were made by the
18 Charter Authorizing Panel due to the catastrophic
19 flooding.

20 Lighthouse Academy came and asked for an
21 amendment to their charter to redesign their grade
22 levels served. We have representatives here from
23 Lighthouse Academy today that will be speaking to
24 those amendments -- that amendment request and those
25 changes.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. So we'll
2 first consider the amendment request that was not on
3 the agenda that just got added, which is the
4 flooding. So y'all can come forward and explain.

5 I guess the recommendation came from -- the
6 Charter Authorizing Panel --

7 MR. BALLARD: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- affirmed that request.

9 MR. BALLARD: The Charter Authorizing Panel --

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Right?

11 MR. BALLARD: -- approved this request.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Are there questions or
13 would you like more detail about this?

14 MS. NEWTON: (inaudible)

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah. So if y'all could speak
16 to the nature of the amendment, just because we
17 didn't have paper on that, that would be really
18 helpful.

19 MS. NOEL: Good morning. My name is LaShawnda
20 Noel, Regional Director of Operations for Lighthouse
21 Arkansas. With me is Ms. Amanda Crowder; she is
22 Regional Academic Director for Lighthouse.

23 As the other two districts stated, several weeks
24 ago -- a few weeks back the state of Arkansas, we --
25 I'm sorry -- we experienced historic flooding.

1 Capital City Lighthouse sits adjacent to Burns Park
2 which was affected by the flood due to the McClellan-
3 Kerr Navigation System. We took a lot of water onto
4 the property. It actually destroyed our modular
5 building which housed our upper grades, grades 6-8 --
6 and because of this the modular and the damage, it's
7 unrecoverable. It would be difficult for us to turn
8 the building over as quickly as need be. And so what
9 we are doing today is we are asking for consideration
10 of grade reconfiguration to only house K-5 at our
11 North Little Rock campus.

12 This is some of the damage; these are pictures
13 of some of the damage. And again, as you can see, it
14 would be difficult for us to turn that second
15 building over in time for the 19-20 school year, and
16 so that is why we're coming before you today.

17 We have worked closely with our sister school in
18 Jacksonville. Currently we are still in school,
19 until tomorrow actually. So we worked with our
20 community leaders, our sister schools in
21 Jacksonville, as well as parents and students to
22 transfer our existing students to the Jacksonville
23 campus. We are wanting to do that again next year
24 with our 6th through 8th grades. But for those who
25 do not want to be transported to the Jacksonville

1 campus long-term we are working with the North Little
2 Rock School District and other surrounding districts
3 to accept those students. So we will continue to
4 work with our families and partner with our families
5 to assist them in getting to where they want to be.

6 Again, we're saddened to even have to come
7 before you with this request. We did explore all
8 viable options and this is where we landed.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And so there's -- this is a
10 permanent amendment?

11 MS. NOEL: This would be a permanent amendment,
12 the K-5 request. Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right.

14 MS. ZOOK: I wish you'd tell the Board all the
15 different people and organizations that worked with
16 y'all to get these buildings cleared out. That was
17 very impressive that you have a whole community,
18 regardless of where they go to school, that's
19 concerned about the children first.

20 MS. NOEL: Yes. So we were able to -- our staff
21 was amazing; they helped us get in there, get the
22 curriculum and all of the technology and things out.
23 But then our community came in full force. We had
24 organizations that we didn't even know about within
25 the community just to come in and assist us. And

1 then again North Little Rock School District really
2 came in, they helped us build a bridge, they helped
3 us do things that we weren't even thinking about
4 because we were in the moment. Then the City of
5 Jacksonville, of course, welcomed those students into
6 our sister schools. So it really has been a
7 community effort and we are very pleased and
8 appreciative of those who were able to stand in the
9 gap for us while we were getting through this
10 process.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Pfeffer.

12 DR. PFEFFER: Yes. And I wanted to mention Ms.
13 Coffman -- the other day when we had the Charter
14 Panel meeting she wanted everyone to know that from
15 the very beginning this school immediately came to us
16 and their first and only consideration were their
17 kids. And as they had to make some tough decisions,
18 it was made because they knew this was what was best
19 for students, and obviously reaching out to partners.

20 And I think we just really want to again echo
21 our appreciation for you taking that approach.

22 MS. NOEL: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Any --

24 Ms. Newton.

25 MS. NEWTON: I just want to commend you for

1 putting these kids first and for doing what's best
2 for kids.

3 Just a quick question: the kids that are
4 choosing to go to Jacksonville, are you going to
5 provide transportation for them next year also?

6 MS. NOEL: So we will provide transportation for
7 all of our students who would like to attend the
8 Jacksonville campus. We've come up with different
9 routes this year and hubs, to where we're picking
10 them up in certain what we call hub areas. And so we
11 will continue that process next year, as well as
12 door-to-door stops. So we will get them from Point A
13 to Point B. It's going to be a stretch, but we're
14 committed to doing that.

15 MS. NEWTON: Thank you for commitment to kids.
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Any additional
18 questions to my left?

19 Any more questions or comments?

20 All right. So you've heard this request. This
21 came from the Charter Authorizing Panel. So the
22 question would be to review or not review; correct?

23 MR. BALLARD: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So that's the -- those
25 are the appropriate motions.

1 MS. DEAN: I move to not review.

2 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Motion by Ms. Dean to
4 not review the Charter Authorizing Panel's decision;
5 Ms. Chambers, second.

6 All in favor say "aye."

7 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

9 All right. Now up to the previous question.

10 MR. BALLARD: Yeah, for Capital City. This item
11 is Consideration again for the Charter Authorizing
12 Panel's decision for Capital City Lighthouse Charter
13 School.

14 On October 15, 2014, the Charter Authorizing
15 Panel approved the application for Capital City
16 Lighthouse. The charter is approved to serve
17 students in K-12 with a maximum enrollment of 750.
18 We have the representatives still here today. This
19 is just approval of the Charter Authorizing Panel's
20 decision to approve two amendment requests made by
21 Capital City Lighthouse.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any questions?

23 Ms. Zook.

24 MS. ZOOK: I do. I know one of them is the
25 counseling service. And I don't want to have to vote

1 to review, but I do have concerns about a counselor
2 not being on campus every day. Am I misunderstanding
3 that?

4 MS. NOEL: From my understanding, I do believe
5 we already have a waiver for that.

6 MS. CROWDER: So we had a waiver for not having
7 a counselor -- I'm Amanda Crowder, Regional Academic
8 Director -- not a counselor on -- what we do is we
9 outsource our counseling services --

10 MS. ZOOK: Right.

11 MS. CROWDER: -- through the PAT Center.
12 They're housed at our building.

13 MS. ZOOK: Oh, okay.

14 MS. CROWDER: Yes, ma'am.

15 MS. ZOOK: That's the part that slipped by me.
16 Thank you.

17 MS. CROWDER: Yes, ma'am.

18 MS. NOEL: And I just want to say I do believe
19 that we put these waivers in just to make sure that
20 we were meeting the new standards, so --

21 MS. ZOOK: Right. Okay.

22 Then I move not to review.

23 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any further
25 conversation or questions?

1 All right. Motion by Ms. Zook, second by Ms.
2 Chambers not to review.

3 All in favor say "aye."

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

6 All right. Thank y'all and good luck with next
7 steps, although I guess -- I guess we're also going
8 to hear from you on Jacksonville as well. All right.

9 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Dr. Fisher is on the line
10 whenever you --

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Okay. Why don't we
12 finish with Capital City -- with Lighthouse, and then
13 we'll go to -- back to Dr. Moore's question.

14 b) JACKSONVILLE LIGHTHOUSE CHARTER SCHOOL

15 MR. BALLARD: Okay. All right. So item (b) is
16 for Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter School.

17 On November 3, 2008, the State Board of
18 Education approved the application for Jacksonville
19 Lighthouse Charter School. The charter is approved
20 to serve students in grades K-12 with a maximum
21 enrollment of 1,019. We have representatives here
22 from Lighthouse to speak to those amendment requests.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any questions to my
24 left? Any questions to my right?

25 Okay. Ready to move to a motion?

1 MS. NEWTON: I move not to review.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right.

3 DR. HILL: Second.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.

6 Newton, second by Dr. Hill.

7 All in favor say "aye."

8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

10 Okay.

11 c) PINE BLUFF LIGHTHOUSE CHARTER SCHOOL

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And the final Lighthouse issue
13 is the Pine Bluff Lighthouse request.

14 MR. BALLARD: And this is, as Dr. Barth said,
15 for Pine Bluff Lighthouse. On November 8, 2010, the
16 State Board approved the application for Pine Bluff
17 Lighthouse. The charter is approved to serve grades
18 K-8 with a maximum enrollment of 650. And this is
19 also a review of the amendment requests which were
20 approved by the Charter Authorizing Panel.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any questions to my
22 right? Any to my left?

23 All right.

24 MS. DEAN: I move to not review.

25 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Dean, second by
2 Ms. Chambers.

3 All in favor say "aye."

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

6 All right. Thank you. Thank y'all for being
7 here.

8 And so, Mr. Ballard, we'll take a little break
9 and let's go deal with the issue we have lingering
10 from the Consent Agenda.

11 (OFF THE RECORD)

12 (BACK ON THE RECORD)

13 d) SIATECH CHARTER SCHOOL

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And so I'm back to Mr. Ballard
15 and we are down to the SIATech request.

16 MR. BALLARD: Yes. So this is also
17 consideration for an action made by the Charter
18 Authorizing Panel decision.

19 On January 10, 2011, the State Board of
20 Education approved the application for the School for
21 Integrated Academies and Technologies (SIATech). The
22 charter is approved to serve students in grades 9-12
23 with a maximum enrollment of 275. We have the
24 principal from SIATech here -- is present to answer
25 any questions.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Great.

If you'll come on up just in case folks do have questions. Welcome. And if you'll just introduce yourself for the record?

MS. HATLEY: Okay. I'm Katie Hatley, superintendent now of the new school, formerly principal/director.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Thank you. Welcome.

I'll see if folks to my left have any questions? Anything? Anything to my --

Dr. Moore.

DR. MOORE: I did. I noted that the Charter Authorizing Panel is going to have you back in October to give an update. But some of their questions were about the new curriculum programs that will be used. Have those been solidified?

MS. HATLEY: They have. Yeah.

DR. MOORE: And is that change -- what will that change look like for your students going into the new program?

MS. HATLEY: The new curriculum, which the board approved, Ingenuity, just provides more offerings. We were able to get the World Languages, which we've not had before; the complete CTE library, along with

1 the core library; and the -- just the regular
2 electives. So that's an asset.

3 DR. MOORE: And as far as the changes, you've
4 communicated with your students and families?

5 MS. HATLEY: I didn't hear that.

6 DR. MOORE: The changes to name and other
7 things, have they communicated with your students and
8 families?

9 MS. HATLEY: Well, we're in full swing right now
10 to get that going and get it out there by June 29th,
11 sign changed -- web designer, you know, we've hired;
12 so colors, everything. You know, we're getting ready
13 to do massive outreach and recruitment events, so all
14 that is coming up.

15 DR. MOORE: Okay.

16 MS. HATLEY: Yeah, they will know.

17 DR. MOORE: That's good. Thank you.

18 MS. HATLEY: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook.

20 MS. ZOOK: Congratulations on the promotion.

21 MS. HATLEY: Thank you, Ms. Zook.

22 MS. ZOOK: The question I have is I suspect some
23 of these students dropped out for other than family
24 reasons, maybe because they were not reading on
25 level. So when you come back I'd be interested in

1 knowing what programs you're using to help them catch
2 up to their ability level. And also if you -- any
3 screening you're doing for your children that might
4 be -- or the students, young men and women, who might
5 have dyslexia as an issue.

6 MS. HATLEY: Yes. And you know we have a full-
7 time SPED director on campus, onsite. But I think
8 the State is going to be really impressed with the
9 program that we're rolling out for our students to
10 meet the need. We're also adding a social/emotional
11 piece -- trauma -- for our kids -- you know, their
12 background. But it's always about the students,
13 bringing them up to level. We want tax-payers, not
14 tax-takers. So I think it's going to be impressive
15 with the money that we're saving and to better put
16 back into the school and into our children.

17 MS. ZOOK: And you might double-check with
18 Learning Services or the advocates within the area to
19 be sure that -- before you spend the money to adopt
20 something that it in fact addresses the needs you're
21 trying to adopt in your area.

22 MS. HATLEY: Yes, ma'am, I will.

23 MS. ZOOK: Thank you.

24 MS. HATLEY: Yes, ma'am.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any other

1 questions?

2 Thank you very much for being here --

3 MS. HATLEY: Yes, sir.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- and good luck.

5 I'll entertain a motion to review or not to
6 review.

7 MS. ZOOK: Move not to review.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right.

9 MS. DEAN: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Zook,
11 second by Ms. Dean.

12 All in favor say "aye."

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

15 Okay. Thank you.

16 MS. HATLEY: Thank you all.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And we'll see you in --

18 MS. HATLEY: October.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: They'll see you in the fall.

20 MS. HATLEY: Well, yeah. Thank you.

21 e) HAAS HALL ACADEMY

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. We're now down to the
23 Haas Hall decision.

24 MR. BALLARD: Yes, sir. This item is also a
25 Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel

1 Decision for Haas Hall Academy.

2 On January 12, 2004, the State Board of
3 Education approved the application for Haas Hall
4 Academy. The charter is approved to serve students
5 in grades 12 -- excuse me -- grades 7-12 with a
6 maximum enrollment of 941. I believe we have Dr.
7 Schoppmeyer on the line -- conference line to speak.

8 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: That is correct. Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Welcome, Dr. Schoppmeyer.

10 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Good morning.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Do we have
12 questions to my right?

13 Ms. Zook.

14 MS. ZOOK: Yes. Good morning, Dr. Schoppmeyer.
15 This is Diane Zook.

16 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Good morning.

17 MS. ZOOK: The question I have on this principal
18 thing is my expectation is that your principal in any
19 school would be your instructional leader. And is
20 that something that you really drill down on when
21 you're doing your interviews and making your
22 selection?

23 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Yes, ma'am. That certainly
24 is. Yes, you are correct.

25 MS. ZOOK: Okay. That's all I needed. Thank

1 you.

2 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Thank you, Ma'am.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Anything else? Any
4 questions to my left?

5 Okay. All right. There's two amendment
6 requests from Haas Hall. I would entertain a motion
7 to review or not to review.

8 MS. NEWTON: Move not to review.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Newton, second by
11 Mr. Williamson.

12 All in favor say "aye."

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

15 All right. Thank you, Mr. Schoppmeyer.

16 DR. SCHOPPMAYER: Thank you, sir.

17 f) FUTURE SCHOOL OF FORT SMITH

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Next up, Future
19 School of Fort Smith.

20 MR. BALLARD: All right. Consideration of the
21 Charter Authorizing Panel Decision.

22 On October 14, 2015, the Charter Authorizing
23 Panel approved the application for Future School of
24 Fort -- Fort Smith -- excuse me. The charter is
25 approved to serve students in grades 10-12 with a

maximum enrollment of 450. We do have
representatives from Future School of Fort Smith on
the line as well.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any questions to my
right about this proposed request? Anything to my
left?

Okay. So a motion on the Future School of Fort
Smith issue?

MR. WILLIAMSON: I move to not review.

MS. NEWTON: Second.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Mr. Williamson,
second by Ms. Newton.

All in favor say "aye."

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

Okay. Thanks.

g) CABOT ACADEMIC CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

CHAIRMAN BARTH: And, finally -- no, not finally
-- Cabot Academic -- Cabot Academic request -- Cabot
Academic Center.

MR. BALLARD: Yes, sir. On March 8, 2004, the
Charter Authorizing Panel approved the application
for Charter [sic] Academy Center of Excellence. The
charter is approved to serve students in grades 7-12
with a maximum enrollment of 500. We have

representatives for Charter [sic] Academic Center of Excellence appearing before the State Board for questions on the amendment request.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Dr. Moore?

DR. MOORE: No questions.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Anything else to my right? Anyone to my left?

All right. Y'all know the drill.

MS. CHAMBERS: I move to not review.

MS. DEAN: Second.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Chambers, second by Ms. Dean.

All in favor say "aye."

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

h) LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. We are now down to the Lincoln High School request.

MR. BALLARD: All right. So, also a Consideration of the Charter Authorizing Panel Decision --

On January 12, 2012, the Charter Authorizing Panel approved the application for Lincoln High School. The charter is approved to serve students in grades 8-12 with a maximum enrollment of 850. We

1 have representatives from Lincoln High School on the
2 line as well for any questions.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Are there any questions
4 to my left?

5 Okay. Ms. McFetridge.

6 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'm just curious as to why they
7 were going to drop a grade. What was their reasoning
8 behind that?

9 MR. BALLARD: We have representatives from the
10 school on the line.

11 MS. JONES: Yes. Courtney Jones, the principal.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you, Ms. Jones. Did you
13 hear the question?

14 MS. JONES: Yes, I did. The -- we were -- we're
15 just reconfiguring the district to better serve our
16 students, and so we wanted to make sure we're
17 implementing different internships and things for the
18 high school students. And placing the 8th grade back
19 into the building at the middle school level allows
20 us to have more equitable numbers in each of the
21 buildings.

22 MS. McFETRIDGE: Did you work with your parents
23 on the changes in the district then?

24 MS. JONES: Yes, we did. We talked to our
25 parents. They're very supportive of the 8th graders

going back. And we have been working with our parents and our community, as well as with the middle school, to insure that the classes that the 8th graders were receiving at the high school level -- they'll still be able to receive those classes for high school credit for those advanced students.

MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any additional questions? Anything to my right?

Okay. I'll entertain a motion on the Lincoln High School request.

MS. McFETRIDGE: Move to not review.

MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. McFetridge, second by Ms. Chambers.

All in favor say "aye."

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

All right.

i) BADGER ACADEMY

CHAIRMAN BARTH: And, Mr. Ballard, Badger Academy.

MR. BALLARD: This is a Consideration made by the Charter Authorizing Panel for Badger Academy. At the most recent Beebe School District school board

1 meeting, the board voted to dissolve the district
2 conversion charter for Badger Academy. And the
3 Charter Authorizing Panel heard this request and
4 accepted their dissolution.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any questions about the
6 dissolution of this ALE?

7 MS. ZOOK: The question I had is when you give
8 up an ALE -- and I guess -- I mean LEA number, will
9 this ALE then make application for an LEA number or
10 will it just be a part of the high school's LEA?

11 DR. PFEFFER: It would just be part of the high
12 school's LEA number.

13 MS. ZOOK: Okay. So any waivers that they had
14 based on the old LEA, will they have to come back and
15 request those for either 1240 waivers or whatever
16 waivers they have?

17 Oops, here comes Mary Claire.

18 DR. PFEFFER: Yes. And maybe -- Ms. Coffman, as
19 a district conversion charter were they under a
20 separate LEA number?

21 MS. COFFMAN: They were.

22 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

23 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. Deborah Coffman, Department
24 of Ed.

25 Yes, they were under a separate LEA number. And

1 any waiver assigned to that district conversion --
2 when that district conversion charter is given up or
3 rescinded, then all of those waivers automatically go
4 away. That ALE will go back into the public
5 traditional school. And then if they need waivers
6 for that ALE, then they'll have to seek those under
7 that traditional school LEA number.

8 MS. ZOOK: And y'all will communicate that to
9 them?

10 MS. COFFMAN: We will.

11 MS. ZOOK: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

13 DR. MOORE: I do have a question. I guess --
14 and this is for the next two schools. I'm sure it's
15 my misunderstanding. So the Arch Ford Co-op -- and,
16 Dr. Pfeffer, you might be able to tell me -- they run
17 an ALE -- a virtual ALE program. Is that correct?

18 DR. PFEFFER: As part of the HUB, they offer
19 different types of alternatives that districts put
20 together sometimes within their ALE plan --

21 DR. MOORE: Okay.

22 DR. PFEFFER: -- so to become part of the
23 district's ALE.

24 DR. MOORE: Okay. So it sounds like Beebe and
25 the next one --

1 DR. PFEFFER: Yes.

2 DR. MOORE: -- are in a contract with that co-op
3 to provide those services?

4 DR. PFEFFER: And I think the two districts --
5 their plans may look a little bit different and they
6 may have different components.

7 DR. MOORE: Okay.

8 DR. PFEFFER: So because the Arch Ford HUB has
9 kind of different pathways, would probably be the
10 best way to describe it, in the way they structure
11 the opportunities for school districts to either
12 access content, maybe virtual content, or providing
13 job experiences or internship experiences through JAG
14 type programs; also providing some mental health
15 supports that will become part of wraparound services
16 that districts would include within their ALE
17 program.

18 DR. MOORE: Okay. That I guess -- and that's
19 just my misunderstanding for Clinton earlier.

20 Do we have any data from this or is it because
21 it's contracted out we don't -- like the State
22 doesn't have an understanding about who are all the
23 students using this program?

24 DR. PFEFFER: We would have to work with them to
25 get information as far as what -- it has grown; over

1 the last probably two, three years it's grown quite a
2 bit. And so we can get information for you as far as
3 which schools are contracting with them and see if we
4 can put together kind of a summary as far as, you
5 know, kind of what are some of the typical
6 experiences looking like, what's most -- what are
7 schools seeing as most valuable. Now in terms of
8 student outcomes, I don't know if we have that at
9 this time or not. So those can be things that we can
10 check into for you --

11 DR. MOORE: Okay.

12 DR. PFEFFER: -- and see if we can come back
13 with a report.

14 DR. MOORE: Okay. At some point I think that
15 would be helpful. Thank you.

16 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I have a question. In terms of
18 this kind of separate ALE model, it was one that was
19 tried in several places; we're seeing it obviously,
20 these dissolutions. Dr. Pfeffer maybe -- is this a
21 signal that this model just has fundamental problems
22 or was it more of a case-specific issue here?

23 DR. PFEFFER: Well, I think -- we've actually
24 started talking about this recently. You know, with
25 changes that have been made, part of it is more

1 flexibility with waivers for Flexible Scheduling,
2 different models of -- the way schools are
3 structuring -- you know, we're really becoming more
4 student-focused in all of our schools. And I think
5 as we start -- I think we're starting to realize our
6 goal that we're providing multiple opportunities for
7 students -- legislation that is part of what you-all
8 worked on with the discipline taskforce. You know,
9 students now will have opportunities to continue
10 their education, even through a suspension or
11 expulsion time period. So, you know, technology is
12 providing a lot of those opportunities. I think just
13 awareness about what kids' needs are has changed and
14 we're better -- we have more tools to meet
15 differentiated needs.

16 I think what the conversation maybe needs to
17 start looking at is what should ALE really look like
18 today and is it the same as it has been for the last
19 several years. And we may have some opportunities to
20 re-think how the ALE program works and what are those
21 supports that really are maybe more necessary today
22 to meet needs of students who aren't being
23 successful. I think the bottom-line is does every
24 school have a plan to help students who are not being
25 successful in a traditional model. And if that's the

1 case in ALE, a truly alternative learning environment
2 may take on a different look.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you very much.

4 Ms. McFetridge.

5 MS. MCFETRIDGE: I guess I'm a little naïve
6 about the co-ops, Dr. Pfeffer. And do they work real
7 closely with ADE then in bringing those supports
8 closer to the districts? How does the co-op work
9 versus ADE?

10 DR. PFEFFER: Yes. So each co-op has a unique
11 relationship with districts in their region and they
12 do offer a lot of support. A lot of times our team
13 works closely with co-ops to provide those general
14 supports for all school districts. But there are
15 also situations where -- for example, the Arch Ford
16 co-op in this HUB program, it has expanded to -- with
17 access for schools all across the state. So it's
18 just unique to this one co-op. So the relationship
19 really does vary depending on the co-op and the local
20 districts.

21 MS. MCFETRIDGE: But you have oversight over the
22 co-ops, the Department does?

23 DR. PFEFFER: The co-ops, yeah. And I may need
24 to get our legal team to help us with this. We don't
25 have oversight over the co-ops per se because a lot

1 of those co-ops -- they're governed by their board of
2 directors, which are typically the superintendents of
3 those school districts.

4 So did I -- do I need to add anything to that,
5 Lori?

6 MS. FREN0: (shaking head from side to side.)

7 DR. PFEFFER: We provide grant funding for some
8 of the specialists that work through co-ops or
9 through some of the regional specialists. But the
10 co-ops are each independent entities.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Does that answer your question?

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah. I think it --

14 MS. McFETRIDGE: It seems like Arch Ford is
15 taking on a lot with both of these districts
16 dissolving at the same time, and that was my concern.
17 And I wasn't quite sure where they get their training
18 from in order to make sure that everything is handled
19 the way we would like.

20 DR. PFEFFER: Well, in both of these cases the
21 change really becomes in the application of their ALE
22 program; so their ALE program will have to be
23 reviewed by the Department. So the ALE is overseen
24 by the Department because the school district's plan
25 will be provided and we'll review that.

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. That helps a lot.

2 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

3 MS. McFETRIDGE: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Okay.

5 Ms. Zook.

6 MS. ZOOK: Yes. I know when we got into the
7 issuing grades for schools and those kinds of things,
8 ALE was handled slightly differently. And I don't
9 know if legislation -- or if we just did that
10 administratively. But how will that ALE affect
11 these? And will those students be included in
12 Texarkana and will those students be included in
13 Beebe when they report their grades, the gap, the
14 growth, all of those kinds of things?

15 DR. PFEFFER: And I'll have Ms. Coffman address
16 anything that I don't get correct here. But the
17 rules and regs as far as the state letter grades --
18 if an LEA is just serving an ALE environment, then
19 the letter grade was not assigned for that LEA as
20 part of a school district. Those students -- those
21 students are still counted in terms of federal
22 accountability with the ESSA School Index data,
23 regardless. Since they don't have an LEA anymore,
24 then those students will just all be part of the
25 Beebe School District or the Texarkana School

1 District and however those letter grades go to the
2 traditional.

3 MS. ZOOK: So it would follow logically that
4 those superintendents and principals will be hands-on
5 with those students even though another entity is
6 actually doing the day-to-day --

7 DR. PFEFFER: Yes.

8 MS. ZOOK: -- because they are their kids?

9 DR. PFEFFER: They are their kids. Yes.

10 MS. ZOOK: But someone else is providing a lot
11 of the service?

12 DR. PFEFFER: It could be that the school
13 districts -- and, again, this will depend on what the
14 actual alternative learning education plan looks
15 like. Students -- you know, some students will be
16 coming on campus maybe for different times of the
17 day; so there will still be interaction with school
18 district officials. It just -- you know, it may look
19 different for different students.

20 MS. ZOOK: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great question.

22 Okay. Ms. Chambers.

23 MS. CHAMBERS: Just a clarifying question. I
24 think it's for Dr. Pfeffer.

25 So I'm not nearly as up-to-speed as I should be

1 on ALEs, if I have the right acronym. But it feels
2 like an ALE is less and less a place and it's more
3 and more a method or a mindset for addressing every
4 student's needs. And that may be a very naïve way to
5 put it, because maybe there are very specific things
6 -- standards that we have to observe. But I would
7 just be really interested as -- if it -- and I think
8 you've said this, but at some point in the future
9 really understanding what are all the different ways
10 we can satisfy or meet the needs of the state, of our
11 students. And for some of them it may be a place, it
12 may be through a co-op, it may be at home, it may be
13 online -- but knowing how many of those students are
14 there and how do we know that they're getting a
15 consistent experience in their educational exposure.

16 So could -- is that something that you'll be
17 able to speak to or that is in the plans?

18 DR. PFEFFER: I think probably one thing we
19 could do is kind of put together a report on ALE,
20 just kind of a summary report of, you know, what we
21 know; what's -- you know, kind of what are some of
22 the typical models and what have been the emerging
23 models over time; and then from there really continue
24 the conversation as far as student-focused education.
25 And we -- as part of our strategic plan that would be

1 something good for us to then really say, you know,
2 these are the changes that we've seen and we think
3 it's the result of a student-focused education system
4 really emerging, and so then where would we take that
5 next. And I think the way you put it the question
6 before us would be, you know, alternative learning
7 environment -- is that a place, is that a process, is
8 it, you know, more -- so those would be some of the
9 ways we would need to ask questions and really think
10 through, you know, what is best for kids in the
11 future.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. All right.

14 Mr. Ballard, after what I assume is going to be
15 the dissolution of these two, are there going to be
16 any more standalone ALEs?

17 MR. BALLARD: I'm not quite sure.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Are these the last two?

19 MR. BALLARD: Yeah, I'm going to get our
20 district conversion specialist to answer that
21 question.

22 MS. McLAUGHLIN: We do have several other ALEs
23 as district conversions, Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So there's still --
25 these are the two we've seen the most over the years

1 and I -- but Bauxite I think is still --

2 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Bauxite Miner Academy --

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah, that's right.

4 MS. McLAUGHLIN: -- Cabot ACE. That's all that
5 comes to mind at this time.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Fort Smith.

7 MS. ZOOK: Fort Smith.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah, Fort Smith is as well.
9 Yeah.

10 MS. McLAUGHLIN: They're not -- Fort Smith is
11 not a district conversion.

12 MS. ZOOK: Right. But I was just speaking about
13 ALEs.

14 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Okay.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah. Okay. All right.
16 Thanks.

17 All right. Then on Badger Academy a proper
18 motion is to review or not to review.

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: I move to not review.

20 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.
22 McFetridge, second by Ms. Chambers.

23 All in favor say "aye."

24 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Same -- opposed -- I apologize.

1 All right. I'm getting sleepy.

2 So, okay. So that school is dissolved as of
3 this moment; correct?

4 MR. BALLARD: As a district conversion.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

6 MR. BALLARD: Yes.

7 j) WASHINGTON ACADEMY

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Now same -- very
9 similar request from Washington Academy.

10 MR. BALLARD: Yes. So Washington County --
11 excuse me -- Texarkana School District, Washington
12 Academy also voted to dissolve their district
13 conversion charter school. And the Charter
14 Authorizing Panel accepted that dissolution.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. Very similar
16 case.

17 MS. NEWTON: Move not to review.

18 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Newton, second by
20 Ms. Chambers.

21 All in favor say "aye."

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Any opposed?

24 All right. Thank you, Mr. Ballard. Good work.

25 A-3: COVENANT KEEPERS CHARTER SCHOOL UPDATE

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Now I'm going to turn it over
2 to Ms. Hyatt who is going to provide us an update on
3 the Covenant Keepers situation.

4 MS. ZOOK: While she's making her way, I guess
5 it got taken off after I got past that point. I
6 still have the Eureka Springs 1240 request on our
7 original. Did that get pulled?

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I think --

9 MS. HYATT: I believe the school pulled their
10 request. Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah, I think I saw that at one
13 point. Is that correct?

14 MS. McLAUGHLIN: It was pulled.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah, it was pulled pretty
16 early.

17 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Thanks.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thanks, Ms. Hyatt.

19 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, attorney,
20 Arkansas Department of Education.

21 I wanted to give you guys an update on the quest
22 to get financial records from the previous charter
23 school, Covenant Keepers.

24 So you guys issued a subpoena to Valerie Tatum
25 to kind of compel production of those records. In

1 response to that we did receive four boxes of
2 documents. Our finance team went through, organized,
3 and kind of figured out what we had and what we were
4 still missing, and came to the conclusion that we're
5 still missing most, if not all, of the financial
6 records for the 17-18 fiscal year, the current fiscal
7 year. And, additionally, then found out when we were
8 trying to make sure that we had paid all of the
9 invoices and taxes related to the school that the IRS
10 log-in information necessary to check the status of
11 those payments had been changed and we don't have
12 access to that. So that needs to be produced as
13 well.

14 We did allow Dr. Tatum an extension on the
15 subpoena to fully comply and didn't receive any
16 additional documents. I have been in contact with
17 her attorney and we have had several conversations
18 kind of going back and forth, but we still haven't
19 received any documents. It is her position that she
20 does not have any of the documents we are requesting.
21 And any time that we have asked for some sort of
22 clarification as to where the records are or whether
23 there are still existing records we haven't received
24 a response to those questions.

25 Therefore, we were compelled then to use the

1 authority that is in your subpoena power kind of in
2 6-17-425 to go to circuit court to ask the judge to
3 enforce the subpoena that this board issued. And I
4 filed that in Pulaski County Circuit Court on Friday,
5 so you may have seen that in the paper -- and I can
6 make sure that you all get a copy of the petition so
7 that you can have it. There will be now a time for
8 Dr. Tatum and her attorney to respond to the
9 petition, and then it's my understanding that after
10 that time we can ask for a hearing to be set on the
11 matter and maybe get some of those records or at
12 least some answers as to where the records are.

13 Do you guys have any questions?

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. I do have one quick
15 question. Was the --

16 MS. HYATT: Sure.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Was our original -- our
18 original subpoena was targeted simply at her;
19 correct?

20 MS. HYATT: So it was issued to Valerie Tatum,
21 but Valerie is also the registered agent for City of
22 Fire Community Development as listed on the Secretary
23 of State's website. And since they are the
24 sponsoring entity I think we have probably done
25 enough to say that we have also made that request of

1 them.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. That was my question of
3 whether it was a broad enough subpoena to give us the
4 best shot at the information.

5 MS. HYATT: And the way that the subpoena was
6 worded did encompass any financial records that would
7 be related to the charter school. Obviously at some
8 point there were financial records related to these
9 past two years of operation. So right now we are
10 trying to figure out if Dr. Tatum or City of Fire
11 does have those records, we want them. And if they
12 don't, then we need to know where they are and if
13 they still exist. And we have Legislative Audit
14 ready to conduct an audit on the school and are
15 unable to do so because we don't have the necessary
16 records. And our finance team is working very
17 diligently to make sure that all of the vendors,
18 employees, and tax debts are paid, and we're not able
19 to do that without the IRS log-in information.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Are there additional
21 questions on this matter? Anything over here?

22 All right. Well, good. We thought it was
23 important because it has been in the news that
24 everybody be on the same page about what's going on.

25 So thank you, Ms. Hyatt, for that very good

1 overview.

2 Okay. What I'm going to suggest -- Ms. Salas-
3 Ford is available, but we have -- her first items, of
4 course, are student transfers. And so those families
5 know to come at 1:00. But we do have down on items
6 14 through 17 -- rule season has arrived with the
7 aftermath of the legislative session. And so we
8 could get through those before lunch, if that sounds
9 like a good use of our time.

10 So, Ms. Salas-Ford, I'll turn it over to you on
11 these four rules related to educator compensation.

12 B-14: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL: PROPOSED ADE EMERGENCY RULES
13 GOVERNING THE EDUCATOR COMPENSATION REFORM PROGRAM

14 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you, and good morning.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Good morning.

16 MS. SALAS-FORD: So number 13, the first of the
17 four rules -- and I'm going to kind of talk about
18 these together --

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Well, I have it as 14. Is it
20 --

21 MS. ZOOK: I have 14, 15, 16 --

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: 14 is Emergency Rules.

23 MS. SALAS-FORD: Okay. Sorry. I printed this
24 agenda last week, so --

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah.

1 MS. SALAS-FORD: Okay. Items 14, 15, 16 and 17

2 --

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Perfect.

4 MS. SALAS-FORD: -- have to do with four sets of
5 rules, but all dealing with the same two acts that
6 were passed in the 2019 legislative session.

7 So Act 170 was passed to increase the minimum
8 teacher salary schedules in law and require districts
9 to bring up their minimum for Bachelor's and zero
10 years of experience to \$36,000 over a four-year
11 period. The Legislature then went on to pass Act 877
12 to create the Educator Compensation Reform Program to
13 provide a certain amount of funding to districts in
14 order to meet that new minimum. Both of those acts
15 did have an emergency clause making them effective
16 July 1, 2019, and both of them required the ADE to
17 promulgate rules to implement these programs.

18 So we have for you an emergency set of rules and
19 then also the permanent set of rules -- the emergency
20 to be in place in July so that we can immediately
21 start implementation and then the permanent rules
22 that will go out for public comment and become
23 effective, of course, much later down the line. But
24 we need to have the emergency ones in place.

25 So the first two sets again are for the

1 emergency Educator Compensation Reform Program, which
2 is kind of what everyone refers to as the \$60,000,000
3 that has been allotted to assist those school
4 districts. And I'm happy to answer any questions, as
5 is Mr. Rogers.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any questions to my --
7 Ms. Newton.

8 MS. NEWTON: And this is just probably from my
9 lack of understanding of how it works, but I know
10 that districts are required to have steps for
11 teachers and I know this is looking at the initial
12 step zero experience and beginning teachers at
13 \$36,000. What about the ones that maybe have 15, 20
14 years experience -- is there going to be monies to be
15 able to increase those steps all the way up?

16 MS. SALAS-FORD: So districts are not required
17 to increase each step; they're only required to
18 increase the minimum. But our understanding is that
19 most districts are going to increase to keep that
20 differentiation the same. And then the rules will
21 allow them to use the \$60,000,000, whatever portion
22 they're allotted, to help them meet each of those
23 minimums. How they choose to use their money will be
24 up to them.

25 MS. NEWTON: So the money is for the minimum,

1 but there's not money for the steps; is that --

2 MR. ROGERS: Greg Rogers, Department of
3 Education.

4 Yes. The way we did the calculation of the
5 \$60,000,000 is we looked at each school district's
6 FTEs and we then multiplied the FTEs by the
7 difference between what their current salary schedule
8 minimum salary is and what the 36 -- what it would be
9 to get there, and we multiplied that by every FTE.
10 So although it might not be FTEs that have to move up
11 in that minimum, we know there were some in the top
12 end, so we applied it to all of them.

13 MS. NEWTON: So it does apply to the others?

14 MR. ROGERS: Yes.

15 MS. NEWTON: Okay. That was my question.

16 And then will the monies continue after this
17 initial phase or is this kind of a one-time help for
18 districts?

19 MR. ROGERS: The \$60,000,000 is a one-time --
20 it's one-time funding. And we broke it out over --
21 the initial way we broke it out is over four years
22 for those that are having an increase every year.
23 But in the rules and in the interactive spreadsheet
24 that we have we're allowing the school districts to
25 set how they want to implement it, and we will issue

1 that portion of the \$60,000,000 to them whenever they
2 feel like they need it. Then, after that, they will
3 have to make adjustments to how they use their state
4 and local resources to keep that raise ongoing. But
5 we are letting them use it however they need to get
6 it started.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay. This question may be for Dr.
8 Pfeffer. Do you think in the future there will be
9 increases in the foundation funding to maybe help to
10 continue this in the future for teachers?

11 DR. PFEFFER: I don't have an answer for that.
12 I can tell you that the legislators are -- we've
13 worked with them; they understand the issue and they
14 have committed to continuously look at school
15 district needs and looking at the impact of this with
16 school districts. We've talked to several school
17 districts and they're looking -- each one is kind of
18 planning differently in how they want to implement
19 the new salary schedule. Some are going to move
20 incrementally, some are going to go ahead and --
21 depending on where they are right now and how close
22 they are to the new minimums, they may move more
23 quickly to get there. But what our role will be is
24 to continue to help provide them with information, be
25 thought partners in terms of the things that they're

1 going to have to consider -- for example, are they
2 losing enrollment and are they making adjustments to
3 staff, are they taking advantage of changes that are
4 happening in their schools based on changes they've
5 made maybe with student scheduling, you know, as they
6 have more and more students maybe who are
7 participating in internships and college courses and
8 they're freeing up some of their FTEs, how are they
9 realizing those gains. And so, those are some things
10 that we'll continue to work with them so that they
11 may look at how they might want to restructure some
12 of their salary schedules. We would also hope they
13 would be thinking about this holistically with the
14 legislation that passed as far as being able to use
15 NSL money to promote teacher leadership and, you
16 know, what might that look like and how might that be
17 a different leverage for them to really look at their
18 teachers who can make the biggest contributions to
19 student achievement and recognize them for that. So
20 there will be a lot of things to be looking at and
21 thinking about.

22 MS. NEWTON: I just -- you know, we've talked in
23 the past about, you know, teacher recruitment and
24 retention being so vital to students and the future.
25 And so, you know, I just don't want to start

1 something and then not carry it on out as far as it
2 needs to go, so --

3 MS. ZOOK: And I was at Joint Ed. yesterday and
4 they -- during the -- what I call the off-season they
5 are studying adequacy; they are studying different
6 maybe adjustments to the funding matrix. But they
7 are also looking at there may be some areas in which
8 they choose to not only fund but then direct the
9 districts how they can spend that money -- because
10 right now it's a funding matrix, not a spending
11 matrix, so -- but yes, they are aware. And trust me,
12 all their superintendents have been talking to them
13 about the concerns that they have -- and not that
14 they don't want to do what the legislation says, but
15 they need help, like Dr. Pfeffer and Mr. Rogers and
16 Ms. Salas-Ford said, in thinking through everything,
17 so -- but yes, they talked about that quite a bit
18 yesterday.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

20 DR. MOORE: And I did talk to Mr. Rogers before
21 this. Thank you for answering my questions. But I
22 just want to say these are so important as we're
23 looking at the nationwide conversation about teachers
24 and how do we increase teacher pay, particularly in
25 parts of the state where it is very low.

1 I do think though there is some conversation to
2 be had about when districts are making hard decisions
3 and not -- not that they're not prioritizing
4 teachers, but they have priorities in many areas and
5 haven't been spending their money on those -- to
6 increase their salary when they have the ability to.
7 And I know we can't -- we're not -- maybe won't
8 totally be able to determine who has the ability or
9 choosing not to and whose fault is that and we can't
10 get into all that. But I think it is important as
11 we're talking about this that we continue to stress
12 to teachers and parents that it is a local school
13 board decision above that minimum and that
14 communities need to be active with their local school
15 boards and superintendents in those conversations in
16 the years to come as they increase.

17 All this to say, my question -- again, I didn't
18 ask you earlier -- was about the Excellence Trust
19 Fund. Are those funds that have to be spent on
20 teacher salary? And what's changing here with that?

21 MR. ROGERS: Yes. So the Educational Excellence
22 Trust Fund is part of the calculation that goes into
23 foundation funding. Right now it's based off the
24 state aid. So it was all different for all the
25 state; it's all different school districts. So if

1 you were requiring more state aid than one that
2 wasn't, your part of the Educational Trust Fund
3 would've been more and would've required you in the
4 last year -- it would've been the highest of the last
5 year that you would've had to increase salaries, if
6 it was over that -- over the proceeding year -- since
7 '92 I think is how far back it was. So what we've
8 done now is change the law to update it to where now
9 the Educational Excellence Trust Fund looks just in
10 the previous year. So if you received more this year
11 than you did last year, then you do have to apply
12 that toward teacher salaries.

13 DR. MOORE: Okay.

14 MR. ROGERS: And also instead of just using the
15 state aid part we're using the total foundation
16 funding amount. So it will now consider all the
17 resources that you're getting as part of foundation
18 funding. That same percentage for all school
19 districts will be considered in the Excellence Trust
20 Fund. And right now it won't be a big deal, it won't
21 be a big shock to the school districts because it's
22 not going to -- right now it's going up about seven,
23 seven-and-a-half percent of their total foundation
24 funding, which all your districts are spending more
25 of that on teacher salaries. But it is something

1 that as time passes that would start -- keep
2 increasing up to where eventually it would be -- it
3 could be a trigger for all school districts to have
4 to use that for teacher salaries.

5 DR. MOORE: Okay. Okay, that's helpful.

6 A few more questions, if you don't mind.

7 I think -- so, on the Educator Compensation
8 Reform Program, if a district has been giving bonuses
9 in lieu of pay increases that we don't -- do y'all
10 keep track of those bonuses at all or is that totally
11 local level?

12 MR. ROGERS: No, we don't. That's not what we
13 consider. The way we did it is that you have to get
14 up to the 36 --

15 DR. MOORE: Okay.

16 MR. ROGERS: -- and however you want to
17 implement that, this money would be used towards
18 that. But we didn't take those into factor.

19 DR. MOORE: Okay. And then, one last question.

20 So I understand that charter schools will not be
21 a part of this because they have a waiver for teacher
22 salary. Is that correct?

23 MR. ROGERS: Most of them do. Correct.

24 DR. MOORE: Okay. If they don't have a waiver
25 for teacher salary, will that mean --

1 MR. ROGERS: Then, if they don't have a waiver,
2 then there is potential that we could allow them to
3 participate in the teacher compensation act as well.

4 DR. MOORE: Okay. And I know we talked about
5 this a few months ago, but are there regular
6 districts -- any traditional school districts that
7 have a waiver from teacher salary?

8 MR. ROGERS: I think there's one or two. I
9 can't remember.

10 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah.

11 DR. MOORE: Okay. And they --

12 MR. ROGERS: There's a couple of them, I think.

13 DR. MOORE: So -- and if they have a waiver and
14 they are exercising that, they will not be a part of
15 this?

16 MR. ROGERS: Right.

17 DR. MOORE: Okay.

18 DR. PFEFFER: And I think when we looked at it
19 before -- they may have the waiver but, again, it
20 would be determining if they were actually exercising
21 that waiver.

22 DR. MOORE: Okay.

23 DR. PFEFFER: So --

24 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you. That's it, I
25 think.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I guess my question as it
2 relates to the last question -- and it's kind of a
3 side issue here -- but, you know, those waivers were
4 granted when -- without this program in place and
5 without, as Dr. Moore voiced, the very real focus on
6 teacher compensation that we have now. And I guess
7 it's a question of whether all of those waivers would
8 have been granted in this environment, with this kind
9 of dedication to teacher funding. And it does raise
10 some questions about whether -- while I think --
11 while literally those waivers certainly are
12 unaffected by this, is this -- has the context
13 changed in a way that those waivers need to be re-
14 examined? I'll just put that out there as a
15 question. I know legally it's fine but --

16 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Salas-Ford, is -- and this may
17 be -- could be part of the conversation. So
18 legislation that was passed does provide the
19 opportunity now for rule-making around 1240 waivers
20 --

21 MS. SALAS-FORD: Correct.

22 DR. PFEFFER: -- and that process; right?

23 MS. SALAS-FORD: Correct.

24 DR. PFEFFER: So is that something within the
25 rule process -- is that a potential for us to go back

1 and review some of the Act 1240 waivers that have
2 been granted? Is that --

3 MS. SALAS-FORD: I think that's a discussion we
4 can certainly have with the, you know, appropriate
5 staff internally in looking at as waivers in
6 particular that were for five years or two years come
7 up for renewal, you know, talking with the Charter
8 Panel and renewing those, talking with the
9 Commissioner and -- yeah, I think that's definitely
10 something we would take into consideration.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah. And that's a good point.
12 A lot of those Act 1240 waivers are going to be kind
13 of coming to their end --

14 MS. SALAS-FORD: Right.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- and have to come back for
16 renewal. But some of the charter waivers are --

17 MS. SALAS-FORD: Correct.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- much longer. Yeah.

19 MS. SALAS-FORD: And I think maybe the Charter
20 Panel, when they're getting, you know, updates from
21 the charters, can start asking those questions, "are
22 you utilizing this waiver." They couldn't just
23 revoke it, but a charter school might be willing to,
24 you know, surrender that waiver if they're not using
25 it. And in order to attract and retain teachers

1 they, of course, would want to be keeping up with the
2 school districts and meeting those minimums.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Okay. All right.

4 Ms. Coffman.

5 MS. COFFMAN: So our new SFA tool that Arijit's
6 team built for us is amazing; let me just say that
7 upfront and publicly. But it has caused us to ask a
8 lot of questions about our Act 1240 waivers. So we
9 have on our project list to go back through every
10 waiver and to look -- another set of eyes on them.
11 You know, we did the transition over from the
12 previous Standards for Accreditation to the new one.
13 So we're wanting to go back through them this summer
14 and make sure that we have a more comprehensive
15 document for you in the future that will look at the
16 school district. We already have inside My School
17 Info a list of the waivers. But we're going back to
18 attach the decision letters and those other documents
19 that help us to go back and verify, "Now what was
20 that waiver for? What were the words they had for
21 that?" So we're putting that all together in a
22 comprehensive document. It may take us a little
23 while. But I just wanted you to know that as we're
24 going back through, as we're writing these rules for
25 Act 1240 and as schools are coming back up for

1 renewal, we'll have a much more comprehensive tool to
2 help you make those decisions.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Thank you.

4 Ms. Chambers.

5 MS. CHAMBERS: I think this is an observation
6 rather than a question, but maybe it's both. When
7 I've seen entry-level salaries established, to what
8 Ms. Newton was speaking to, the compression factor,
9 then as you look at all the other pay levels to be
10 equitable and to create healthy ladders for movement,
11 it's complicated and it is very expensive. And to
12 something that Dr. Moore said about really -- I'm so
13 excited about this for our teachers. But it does
14 feel like there's still quite a bit to think through
15 to help local districts plan for how they're going to
16 pay for this once the money is not available from the
17 State and -- whether it's spending differently within
18 the budgets that they have or thinking differently
19 within a community about how they raise funds. And
20 with enough lead time that, when the money is no
21 longer available from the State, there's a means for
22 doing the right thing and having good continuity. Do
23 we see that with the work that the two of you are
24 doing? Is that one of the things that you're doing
25 to come alongside these local districts to help them

1 with that?

2 MS. SALAS-FORD: I won't speak for Mr. Rogers or
3 his staff, but I know that when we have discussed and
4 talked internally and in developing the sheet that
5 they will have to fill out in order to apply for the
6 funding it is all about kind of guiding them through
7 those discussions of where do we need to reallocate
8 resources, what do we need to look at. And I think
9 making them at least identify those tough decisions
10 that they're going to have to make in projecting --
11 are we going to have to cut back on staff, do we need
12 to look at student changes, are we losing students --
13 in projections and funding. But I'll let Mr. Rogers
14 speak to his --

15 DR. PFEFFER: Yes.

16 MS. SALAS-FORD: I don't want to commit his
17 staff to anything.

18 DR. PFEFFER: Well, and that's exactly what I
19 was going to point out. That last link there that
20 goes to that document, that's an interactive document
21 that each school district -- it automatically
22 populates what their amounts are and they can go in
23 and change amounts to say, okay, we want -- if we
24 want to do \$1500 this year -- it actually just does
25 everything for them so they can see it. They can

1 show it to their school boards. It gives them those
2 total amounts. So they do have this as a good tool
3 for the next four years.

4 And I think where our conversation wants to be
5 is just continuously talking to them about, okay, as
6 you're doing this and making those adjustments each
7 year --

8 MS. CHAMBERS: Right.

9 DR. PFEFFER: -- what does that look like
10 overall.

11 MS. CHAMBERS: Right.

12 DR. PFEFFER: So I think the planning tool has
13 put a lot of minds at ease now that they see it. And
14 they can come back -- and they may think right now
15 "we're going to implement this over four years." But
16 if they decided they wanted to move a little more
17 quickly and change to three years, we're certainly
18 open for them to make that decision to make a change.

19 MS. CHAMBERS: That sounds super.

20 Just to your point in thinking -- helping them
21 think past four years --

22 DR. PFEFFER: Yes.

23 MS. CHAMBERS: -- what's on the other side of
24 this with the size of the school and whether their
25 trends are up or down in terms of enrollment, things

1 like that. Thank you.

2 DR. MOORE: I guess --

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

4 DR. MOORE: Yeah. I guess along those lines
5 there is concern that a school district might
6 progress slower so that they receive those State
7 funds in the next four years. Is there any safeguard
8 in place for that?

9 MS. SALAS-FORD: The -- yeah. So when they fill
10 out the calculation they will put in, you know, what
11 they anticipate. But if they decide to go ahead and
12 implement it sooner -- they get the same amount of
13 funding, is the ultimate result. They'll get the
14 same amount of funding whether they implement it in
15 one year or four years.

16 DR. MOORE: Okay. I didn't understand that.

17 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes.

18 DR. MOORE: Okay. Okay. That's helpful. Thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook.

21 MS. ZOOK: I think sort of to give a compliment
22 to those districts that are already prioritizing
23 their teachers -- and I realize we do have some
24 districts that are doing the best they can with the
25 money they have to do with. But I also know there

1 are some districts who have as much as \$100,000,000
2 more than another, but the one with \$100,000,000 less
3 is already starting their teachers at \$40,000 and --
4 because they have prioritized their teachers over the
5 years. So to compliment them for doing that -- and
6 they won't get any of this money because they've
7 already been putting teachers as a priority all
8 along. And I do want to compliment them, and they
9 know who they are.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any other questions?

11 Okay. So, thank you, Mr. Rogers.

12 So first up are the emergency rules on the
13 Educator Compensation Reform Program.

14 MS. ZOOK: Move to approve emergency rules.

15 MS. NEWTON: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Zook, second by
17 Ms. Newton.

18 All in favor say "aye."

19 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

21 B-15: CONSIDERATION FOR RELEASE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: PROPOSED
22 ADE RULES GOVERNING THE EDUCATOR COMPENSATION REFORM PROGRAM

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Next up is Public -- Release
24 for Public Comment of those same rules.

25 MS. SALAS-FORD: That's correct.

1 MS. NEWTON: Move to release for public comment.

2 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Motion by Ms. Newton,
4 second by Ms. Chambers.

5 All in favor say "aye."

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

8 Okay.

9 B-16: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL: PROPOSED ADE EMERGENCY RULES
10 GOVERNING THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE TRUST FUND

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Now we're down to the
12 Educational Excellence Trust Fund.

13 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes. And Dr. Moore and Mr.
14 Rogers kind of already touched on this, but also
15 resulting from Act 170 was changes to the way that
16 the Educational Excellence Trust Fund is calculated.
17 So that is a portion of foundation funding that
18 districts have to spend towards teacher salaries.
19 And as Mr. Rogers stated, changing that, it is now
20 going to be based on all of the foundation funding,
21 not just state aid, and then able to be based on the
22 prior year.

23 Also because, again, Act 170 had an emergency
24 clause, effective July 1st, we have emergency rules
25 that will need to be put in place so that we can

begin this for the 19-20 school year. And then following the permanent promulgation of the same rules, well, that will go out for public comment.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any questions or comments on this issue?

Okay. So first up is the emergency rule approval on Educational Excellence Trust Fund revisions.

MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes.

MS. CHAMBERS: Move to approve the emergency rules.

MS. DEAN: Second.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Chambers, second by Ms. Dean.

All in favor say "aye."

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

All right.

B-17: CONSIDERATION FOR RELEASE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: PROPOSED ADE RULES GOVERNING THE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE TRUST FUND

CHAIRMAN BARTH: And then, finally, release for public comment of those same rules.

MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes.

MS. NEWTON: Move to release for public comment.

MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Newton, second by
2 Ms. Chambers.

3 All in favor say "aye."

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

6 Okay. All right.

7 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And we'll see you in the
9 afternoon, Ms. Salas-Ford, with a variety of issues.

10 I think that's probably all we can do this
11 morning, and so -- okay. So we're going to take a
12 break and -- because our agenda says 1:00, we'll
13 return at 1:00. So we'll get a little bit longer
14 lunch break.

15 (LUNCH BREAK: 11:52 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.)

16 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Dr. Hill left the
17 meeting during lunch.)

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We'll restart. I
19 know Dr. Hill is around; he'll be back in a second.

20 So just for folks who are tuning in, the -- we
21 were able to get a handful of action items taken care
22 of that were on the afternoon agenda -- taken care of
23 this morning because they didn't involve folks who
24 needed to come in from out-of-town. And so we got
25 through with items 14 through 17, the rules there,

1 this morning.

2 B-1: O'KELLEY FAMILY SCHOOL CHOICE APPEAL

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So this afternoon we have a
4 handful of requests, starting with the O'Kelley
5 family School Choice Appeal. And I'm going to turn
6 it over to Ms. Dedman who's going to walk us through
7 the procedure on this case.

8 MS. DEDMAN: Good afternoon. Jennifer Dedman,
9 attorney for the Department.

10 This is a unique school choice appeal. It is
11 between the Bryant School District and the Lakeside
12 School District. Lakeside School District is in
13 Garland County, and the Garland County School
14 Districts are all currently under an active
15 desegregation order in Davis versus Hot Springs,
16 which requires that the school choice transfers in
17 Garland County be conducted in accordance with the
18 Arkansas Public School Choice Act of 1989. The
19 Department remains a party to the Davis case.

20 The Arkansas Public School Choice Act of 1989
21 prohibits a student from transferring to a non-
22 resident district where the percentage of enrollment
23 for the student's race exceeds the percentage in the
24 student's resident district, with limited exceptions,
25 as follows:

1 - When the transfer is between two school
2 districts within the same county, and if the minority
3 percentages of school enrollment in both the resident
4 and non-resident districts remain within an
5 acceptable range, as calculated by the Department of
6 Education;

7 - Number 2, when neither district involved in
8 the transfer has a critical mass of minority
9 percentage in the student's race of more than 10% of
10 any single race;

11 - And, number 3, when the provisions of Arkansas
12 Code Annotated 6-18-206 would violate a desegregation
13 order or plan the terms of the Court order shall
14 govern.

15 In this matter the student has been denied the
16 requested school choice transfer because the
17 percentage of enrollment for the student's race in
18 the Lakeside School District exceeds the percentage
19 in the Bryant School District. The percentage of
20 White students in the petitioner's resident district,
21 Bryant, is approximately 65.84%; the percentage of
22 White students in the respondent Lakeside School
23 District is approximately 73.878%.

24 None of the exceptions listed above apply to
25 allow the student to transfer in this matter.

1 The State Board does have -- you have before you
2 some hearing procedures from the rules that apply to
3 the 1989 Act. You'll see that they're spare. For
4 that reason, you can go ahead and follow your general
5 hearing procedures in this matter. Everyone who's
6 going to testify will need to be sworn, and it's 5
7 minutes per side, 20 minutes for the main argument.
8 Usually, the non-resident district goes first.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Great.

10 Okay. So I would ask that individuals who plan
11 to participate in the hearing, who are not attorneys,
12 if you could please stand and raise your right hand.
13 Welcome. Yeah, so attorneys don't need to be sworn,
14 but everyone else does. Do you swear or affirm that
15 the testimony you're about to give shall be the
16 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

17 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Thank you.

19 So we begin with the non-resident district, 5
20 minutes. And I will let you return to your old
21 place. Welcome back.

22 MR. LASITER: Thank you, Dr. Barth, Dr. Pfeffer,
23 and Members of the Board. I'm Jeremy Lasiter; I
24 represent the Bryant School District.

25 I was sent with a message to inform you that we

1 don't take a position on this appeal. We will
2 certainly be happy to abide by whatever this board
3 decides; so I'm not going to argue either in favor or
4 against the family's appeal. I just wanted to stress
5 to the members of the Board and to the family that if
6 your decision is that the student should remain or
7 stay in the Bryant School District that we will
8 certainly do everything within our power to make sure
9 that this student is successful academically and
10 emotionally and socially.

11 And apart from that, I'm happy to answer any
12 questions if you have them.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. We may have questions
14 for you later.

15 MS. ZOOK: I do.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Do you -- you have a --

17 MS. ZOOK: Since you were an ADE attorney before
18 and you're familiar with these laws, so this applies
19 to someone who isn't coming into Garland as opposed
20 to just the schools within the Garland District?

21 MR. LASITER: Mr. Hickam, who's here with the
22 District, may be able to tell you a little bit better
23 than I can. But it's my understanding that it has to
24 do with any school choice that would impact Garland
25 County.

1 MS. ZOOK: Okay. So even though I read and get
2 reports that there are a lot of transfers going on in
3 Garland County, those must be legal or whatever?
4 Maybe Ms. Dedman would be better to answer that than
5 you.

6 MR. LASITER: Right. The transfers must -- with
7 whatever transfers that are going on, they must be in
8 accordance with that order from the Federal Court.

9 MS. ZOOK: Thank you, Jeremy.

10 MR. LASITER: Sure.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Thank you, Mr.
12 Lasiter.

13 Okay. I will turn it over to the resident --
14 excuse me -- the resident district. Did I get that
15 right?

16 MR. HICKAM: I'm Scott Hickam from Hot Springs
17 --

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Welcome.

19 MR. HICKAM: -- on behalf of the Lakeside School
20 District.

21 I got in this a little bit late. If you'll
22 permit me, I have two things I'd like to add to the
23 packet. And all they are is -- one is a letter from
24 the Department of Education basically affirming that
25 we are part of the federal desegregation order and

1 exempt from school choice. That's in January of this
2 year.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: If you could halt just a second
4 till we get these passed across that will -- it's
5 hard sometimes for us to listen and read
6 simultaneously. And we're not starting your clock
7 until --

8 MR. HICKAM: Okay.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- until you start.

10 MR. HICKAM: Well, and the other item is just
11 the actual raw data, the actual statistics --

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

13 MR. HICKAM: -- between the two districts.

14 (WHEREUPON, Lakeside School District's Exhibit
15 One (1) was marked for identification and entered
16 into the record.)

17 MR. HICKAM: From what I have seen --

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Well, five minutes.

19 MR. HICKAM: I'm sorry.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Proceed.

21 MR. HICKAM: From what I've seen, Lakeside does
22 not disagree with the parents of the student
23 pertaining to this student's needs, any disability
24 that the student has, or the -- any possible benefits
25 that he might receive from Lakeside School District.

1 The Lakeside School District would welcome this
2 student were it not for one thing: the school
3 district has -- and, I remind you, the Arkansas
4 Department of Education are parties to the federal
5 desegregation suit and order. We don't particularly
6 like it. We went through great lengths just a few
7 years ago trying to get out of it. But as it stands
8 now, we're bound by this order; we don't fit any of
9 the exemptions, and, quite frankly, we're stuck.
10 Otherwise, we would do it. But to do otherwise, we
11 would very easily find ourselves in contempt of court
12 from Federal Court, and that's certainly not a road
13 I'm going to tell my client to go down. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

15 All right. Mr. Lasiter, do you have anything
16 else?

17 MR. LASITER: No, sir, not unless the Board has
18 questions.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. And we may after
20 completion of the testimony.

21 Then we have up to 20 minutes, and so --

22 MS. DEDMAN: The O'Kelly family.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: The O'Kelley family, y'all have
24 up to 20 minutes to present your case, unless the
25 District needs to come back. Do you want to reserve

any time for the District?

MR. HICKAM: I'd reserve 5 minutes.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So we'll give you up to 15 to tell us about your situation.

MS. O'KELLEY: Okay. I'm going to start by handing you guys out -- a lot of our information is medical, so it was redacted from the packet. So we're just going to pass out some unredacted copies.

CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

(WHEREUPON, O'Kelley Exhibit One (1) was marked for identification and entered into the record.)

MS. O'KELLEY: Okay. We want to start by thanking y'all for allowing us to be here today and just giving us this opportunity to advocate for our son. He came into our lives about five years ago in a very unexpected, very quick adoption. He's a very intelligent, enthusiastic, and fun-loving little boy, but he has trouble with a lot of medical issues in his last five years. And because of these issues that's why we feel like he would be a better fit at the Lakeside School District.

In our original request for an appeal, which you guys have on the first page of that unredacted copy, we provided our reasons for that, for our belief on that. I'll cover that in just a minute since you

1 guys are seeing that for the first time. And then we
2 also have letters from his physicians, his
3 therapists, and his teachers that back-up some of
4 that.

5 We -- I'm sorry. We will also be asking for
6 clarity on the rules found in the Public School
7 Choice Act concerning race, especially because in his
8 situation we were wondering if there are any
9 protocols in place for adopted children with unknown
10 family background, and therefore unknown race.

11 So, first, I was going to start with our letter.
12 I apologize that I'll just be reading it -- and you
13 have it in front of it [sic], but you had a redacted
14 copy, so I wanted to make sure to clear that up.
15 Also, one thing that I need to clear up before I
16 started, when we submitted these his fetal alcohol
17 diagnosis was unofficial and it has been officially
18 made since then. So there word "suspected" fetal
19 alcohol syndrome can be -- the "suspected" is taken
20 out now. That is an official diagnosis.

21 Okay. So that top copy from us, Ross and Sally
22 O'Kelley, "On April 11, we received notification from
23 the Lakeside School District that our application to
24 transfer our school, Owen O'Kelley, was rejected.
25 While we understand and respect this decision, we

1 would like to take this opportunity to request a
2 hearing before the State Board of Education to
3 reconsider the transfer.

4 "Because of his medical conditions, we believe
5 that attending the Lakeside School District would be
6 in Owen's best interest. Lakeside is the only local
7 school district that offers a "flex" program for
8 elementary students. The flex program allows the
9 family of the student to choose which days the child
10 will and will not be present on school campus. The
11 school days are also shorter than a traditional
12 schedule. The program allows students the
13 opportunity to have face to face time with a teacher,
14 social interaction with peers, and special classes
15 such as art, music, and physical education on the
16 school campus. The majority of the educational
17 instruction is completed at home, following the
18 school's curriculum.

19 "We, along with Owen's medical and educational
20 providers, feel this option is best for Owen because
21 of complications of both TRAP Syndrome and Fetal
22 Alcohol Spectrum Disorder." TRAP Syndrome is a rare
23 auto-inflammatory disorder with a prevalence of only
24 1 in 1,000,000 people. It produces flare-ups of
25 inflammation which causes cycles of fever, headaches,

1 joint pain, and mouth sores. These flares could
2 prevent Owen from meeting attendance requirements of
3 a traditional school schedule, as flare-ups have
4 caused a large number of absences in the past. He
5 also needs additional rest periods when he is
6 affected by these symptoms, which increase in
7 frequency with fatigue and stress. We are concerned
8 that a drastic increase in school attendance, from
9 his current schedule of only nine hours a week to a
10 traditional schedule of 35 hours per week, would
11 increase his fatigue and stress, which would in turn
12 increase the frequency of those TRAP Syndrome flare-
13 ups and hindering his educational progress.
14 Therefore, we believe that the schedule offered by
15 Lakeside's Flex program would be ideal for keeping
16 Owen's flare-ups under control, thus promoting his
17 academic success.

18 "In addition to suffering from TRAP Syndrome, he
19 also experiences anxiety, Sensory Processing
20 Disorder, and other struggles associated with Fetal
21 Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. We believe that
22 Lakeside's Flex program with less seated classroom
23 time and the opportunity to complete education
24 instruction at home would minimize the effect of
25 these struggles, and thereby enable his success, more

1 so than a traditional school schedule. Additionally,
2 the more flexible schedule would also allow him to
3 continue receiving occupational therapy and
4 behavioral therapy services to help him progress and
5 improve in these areas of difficulty. Thus, we
6 believe the structure of Lakeside's Flex program
7 would provide an option for Owen that would allow him
8 to be successful, despite his struggles caused by the
9 suspected Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder" -- which
10 is addressed in here.

11 "With personal experience in both Bryant and
12 Lakeside School Districts" -- I was a student at
13 Bryant and an employee at Lakeside -- "we believe
14 that both districts are very capable and have the
15 best interests of their students in mind. However,
16 in Owen's particular situation, we do believe that
17 the opportunities offered by the Lakeside School
18 District would be in his best educational, social,
19 and psychological interests.

20 "Thank you so much for the opportunity to
21 advocate for him and seek the best opportunities for
22 him."

23 Then the next letters -- I believe that there
24 are six letters from healthcare providers and
25 educational providers. I'm not going to read all of

1 them for you, just in respect of the time. But we
2 did want to cover two of them just to kind of provide
3 some professional validity to what we were telling
4 you.

5 The first one is a rheumatologist, is the one
6 with the title UAMS at the top. I believe it's the
7 second or third behind our letter. This is from Dr.
8 Sukesh Sukumaran; he's the Section Chief of Pediatric
9 Rheumatology at Arkansas Children's Hospital. He
10 says, "To Whom It May Concern: Owen O'Kelley is
11 followed by Arkansas Children's Hospital in the
12 Rheumatology Department for TRAP Syndrome, or
13 Periodic Fever Syndrome, which can have an impact on
14 his ability to meet school attendance requirements.
15 When Owen has a flare-up of his disease process, he
16 will need to be at home recovering and this can
17 affect his attendance. Owen tires easily and will
18 need an adjusted schedule to help meet his needs.
19 The flare-ups of inflammation caused by TRAP Syndrome
20 cause cycles of fever, joint pain, mouth sores and
21 general malaise that could possibly prevent Owen from
22 meeting traditional attendance requirements. In
23 addition, Owen experiences anxiety, sensory
24 processing difficulties, and many other struggles
25 associated with both TRAP Syndrome and the Fetal

1 Alcohol Syndrome. I feel Owen would benefit from
2 shorter school days, less seated classroom time and
3 smaller class sizes to allow him to be more
4 successful in the school environment. A more
5 flexible schedule would also allow Owen to continue
6 receiving Occupational Therapy and Behavioral Therapy
7 services to help him progress in the areas of
8 difficulty. Please contact me with any questions or
9 concerns."

10 And then I promise the last letter I'm going to
11 cover is the next one; it's from Lorrie Bouchard. It
12 has a Pediatrics Plus watermark, I guess. "To the
13 Lakeside School District and to the Board of
14 Education: My name is Lorrie (Fleming) Bouchard. I
15 am a 2009 graduate of Lakeside. Much of my success
16 in my career has been because of my educational
17 foundation at Lakeside from kindergarten to high
18 school. After high school, I received higher
19 education at the University of Central Arkansas. I
20 graduated from Occupational Therapy school in August
21 2014. Since then I have been given the pleasure of
22 working with kids with disabilities as an
23 Occupational Therapist. Specifically, I have been
24 working with a possible candidate of the Lakeside
25 kindergarten class of 2019, Owen O'Kelley. I am

1 writing on his behalf to advocate for his education
2 and the enrollment into the Lakeside School District.

3 "From my understanding, Lakeside School District
4 is the only district that has the "flex" program for
5 elementary students. Due to the nature of Owen's
6 medical diagnosis of TRAP Syndrome, he has flare-ups
7 causing cycles of fever, joint pain, and mouth sores
8 that would possibly prevent him from meeting
9 attendance requirements of a traditional school
10 schedule. In addition, his body awareness is limited
11 in the fact that he does not identify pain, leading
12 to sensory processing deficits and behavioral
13 outbursts that are not usually part of Owen's
14 demeanor. Owen demonstrates cognitive potential to
15 learn how to cope with his diagnosis over time;
16 however, a typical school schedule will add extra
17 stress to him and his family. During the flare-ups,
18 Owen needs additional rest time in the afternoon.
19 Shortened school days will allow him to have down-
20 time his immune system needs to overcome his symptoms
21 of the flare-ups. His family has experienced that
22 with fatigue or stress the frequency of these flare-
23 ups increases. It is possible that increasing school
24 attendance from his current schedule of nine hours
25 per week to a traditional school schedule of 35 hours

1 per week could increase his fatigue and stress, in
2 turn increasing the frequency of TRAP Syndrome flare-
3 ups. Not only would a shortened school schedule give
4 him adequate rest time, a more flexible schedule
5 would also allow him to continue receiving
6 occupational therapy and behavioral therapy services
7 to help him progress and improve in these areas of
8 difficulty.

9 "In addition, Owen experiences anxiety, sensory
10 processing difficulties, decreased attendance span,
11 and many other struggles associated with Fetal
12 Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Owen's educational
13 success will be best supported by shorter school
14 days, less seated classroom time, and possibly
15 smaller class sizes.

16 "Thank you for your time and consideration to
17 enroll Owen O'Kelley in the upcoming kindergarten
18 class. It has been my joy working with this family.
19 Owen is a bright little boy who has a ton of
20 potential. Lakeside School District would benefit
21 from his attendance in the flex program."

22 Okay. I think that we've thoroughly
23 communicated the reasons that we believe Owen's
24 educational and personal needs would be best met at
25 this time by the Lakeside School District. But at

1 this point we would like to take the opportunity to
2 discuss the issue of the rules found in the Public
3 School Choice Act concerning race as it pertains to
4 Owen. We have read the Act, but we are seeking
5 clarification on how race is classified for adopted
6 children who have no family history and, therefore,
7 no racial or ethnic history available to them.
8 Owen's birth parents are unknown, so we have no
9 information to help us accurately determine his race.
10 On the application for school choice there is no
11 option for unknown race, so we selected White based
12 solely on his physical appearance. In addition to
13 the medical needs discussed, we ask that this also be
14 taken into consideration when making the final
15 decision concerning our appeal.

16 And, again, we thank you for our time.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Thank you very
18 much, Ms. O'Kelley. Are you all -- your family is
19 finished --

20 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- with your presentation for
22 now? I'm sure there will be questions --

23 MS. O'KELLEY: Okay. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- in just a minute, so stay
25 close.

1 I'll turn it back to the District for final
2 comments.

3 MR. HICKAM: Nothing that I've heard changes my
4 original statement. Lakeside School District and my-
5 self admire the assertiveness of this -- these
6 parents, and we wish we could join them in their
7 position. But the fact of the matter is that would
8 be illegal. We could po -- not potentially -- I
9 mean, the Department of Education and Lake Hamil --
10 or Lakeside School District could end up in a
11 contempt of court proceeding in federal court, which
12 I think is the last thing any of us want. I wish I
13 could sit here and ask you to overrule a federal
14 judge, but I can't do that. That's not the law. So
15 that's where we are. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you very much.

17 Okay. I'm going to -- Ms. Dedman, if we -- are
18 we -- can we move to questions at this point?

19 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, sir.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So I'll -- Ms. House, do
21 you have anything, questions or comments?

22 MS. HOUSE: No.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore?

24 DR. MOORE: Yes, I will. I think that this
25 might be for Jennifer.

1 I know there are different ways to choice into a
2 district, and sometimes there's the option of legal
3 transfer when two schools -- is that when the two
4 school boards agree to allow a student to transfer?

5 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, ma'am. It will not apply in
6 this case because any type of choice transfer -- any
7 type of transfer that impacts desegregation in
8 Garland County will be governed by the order.

9 DR. MOORE: Okay. So all transfers -- all --

10 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, ma'am.

11 DR. MOORE: -- all options, even if it was an
12 opportunity school or anything?

13 MS. DEDMAN: Opportunity school choice, public
14 school choice -- all transfers that are optional,
15 that are not people that are residents of the
16 district -- that live in that district will impact
17 the desegregation status of the Garland County School
18 District.

19 DR. MOORE: Okay. And then could you speak to
20 us a little bit about how the State is a party here
21 and what that -- what the ramifications of that with
22 the district is?

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, according to -- that's --
24 I'd love to know how contempt would affect this board
25 here.

1 MS. DEDMAN: Well, I couldn't speak to how
2 contempt might affect the Board here. But I will say
3 that we are a party to the 1989 order in Davis versus
4 Hot Springs because we are the monitoring body; we
5 regulate. So we monitor the districts to insure
6 compliance and that way we are tied into this order
7 as well. Our failure to comply with the order can be
8 treated as a failure to comply with the order.

9 DR. MOORE: Okay. I think those are my only
10 questions right now, but I might have some more in a
11 minute.

12 MS. DEDMAN: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Mr. Williamson, anything else?

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: I'm stewing still, so --

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Ms. Zook.

16 MS. ZOOK: Okay. So if our records show that
17 240 students are in the Lakeside District that are
18 White, that are not residents of that district, how
19 did that happen? And if those students were
20 subtracted, would the two numbers of the two
21 districts, the percentage of White students, level
22 off?

23 MS. DEDMAN: Okay. If I'm understanding you
24 correctly, I think you're probably referring to kind
25 of the matrix of student totals that the Districts

1 use. I probably need to refer you to the
2 Commissioner's Memo that governed Garland County
3 school choice. We put out a Commissioner's Memo
4 every year. You'll see kind of a reference to it in
5 the notice letter in the Board packet. And we
6 include the Garland County, you know, school choice
7 rules and statutes, but also we have a link called
8 School Choice Eligibility for the 2018-2019 school
9 year that's attached to the previous school year's
10 balances. The numbers that are contained therein are
11 the numbers that we use to calculate Garland Count,
12 the districts basically among themselves because
13 they're all in the county, to come up with these
14 totals so that they can monitor the exchanges between
15 the districts. You may recall during my summary I
16 mentioned that when the transfer is between two
17 districts in the same county, and if the minority
18 percentages of school enrollment in both the resident
19 and non-resident district remain in an acceptable
20 range, as calculated by us, that's what we're talking
21 about here. We're calculating the acceptable ranges
22 and the districts use kind of a document, a balancing
23 matrix. They discussed it at this year's consortium
24 meeting as well.

25 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And maybe he can answer. The

1 204 students that are reported -- sorry -- the 204
2 students in Lakeside that are White that are
3 reportedly not residents of your district -- and if
4 legal transfers have to go by this rule and the deseg
5 has to go by this rule, where did those students come
6 from? How did they wind up there? When did this
7 happen? Because 204, I guess what I'm saying is,
8 could effect -- your numbers of White students and
9 Bryant's numbers of White students could be closer to
10 the same percent.

11 MR. HICKAM: I'm not sure I know the answer to
12 that. Quite frankly, the --

13 MS. ZOOK: Someone is peeking around you. Maybe
14 they know.

15 MR. HICKAM: Can you help me with that?

16 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Sure.

17 MR. HICKAM: This is Mr. Rick McLaughlin.

18 MR. McLAUGHLIN: I'm Rick McLaughlin, assistant
19 superintendent at Lakeside Schools.

20 To answer your question, now you asked -- they
21 are counted in. Once they're accepted on school
22 choice they're part of Lakeside, just like they are
23 -- Bryant District may have some on school choice.

24 MS. ZOOK: So they may have come from districts
25 --

1 MR. McLAUGHLIN: They're from --

2 MS. ZOOK: -- that have higher White --

3 MR. McLAUGHLIN: -- Benton, Bryant, Mountain
4 Pine.

5 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

6 MR. McLAUGHLIN: They're -- we've got them --
7 and you said 200. We have about 400 kids on school
8 choice now K-12. Once they're accepted they can
9 remain there, not reapply unless they move from the
10 district they were accepted from, because the
11 percentages change --

12 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

13 MR. McLAUGHLIN: -- when they move to another
14 district.

15 MS. ZOOK: Okay. So your students that are
16 there that have transferred in were coming from
17 districts where their percentages allowed that?

18 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Correct.

19 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Good. Now that -- you know,
20 I'm --

21 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah.

22 MS. ZOOK: -- with you now.

23 MR. McLAUGHLIN: That is correct.

24 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Okay.

25 MR. McLAUGHLIN: And once they're ours, they're

1 ours till they move from that.

2 MS. ZOOK: Okay. That clarifies that.

3 Okay. Now then, I'd like to talk with the
4 parent just a minute.

5 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Sure.

6 MS. ZOOK: Ms. O'Kelley. Hi.

7 MS. O'KELLEY: Hi.

8 MS. ZOOK: Thank you for adopting.

9 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes.

10 MS. ZOOK: Thank you for being a great advocate.

11 As your student has an IEP --

12 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes, ma'am.

13 MS. ZOOK: And I think, if I'm -- unless the
14 rules have changed a lot since I was in charge of
15 special ed. a long time ago, if your student's IEP
16 tells what kind of program they need, how many hours
17 they need, what kind of adaptations and adjustments
18 they need, then it doesn't matter if Bryant has a
19 flex schedule 1240 waiver or not. That is what that
20 child can get, no matter where they are -- if they
21 come to Melbourne, where I am, you know. So does
22 your IEP call for these number of hours and these
23 accommodations and these services?

24 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes. We -- he is an incoming
25 kindergartener, so he doesn't yet have an IEP. That

1 is in the plan, if we do need to attend the Bryant
2 School District or consider somewhere else. But my
3 concern with that -- I'm also familiar with IEPs as
4 well as an occupational therapist in the schools --
5 is that he may not have the retributions of missing
6 those number of days. But even if we aren't held
7 accountable for those number of days, I feel like he
8 would still be missing that instruction. And with
9 the flex program that instruction is provided to the
10 parents to provide, whereas if a kindergarten teacher
11 -- if she needed to just provide that, and that's not
12 something she normally does, that might be a little
13 more difficult. It is definitely possible, and we
14 understand that, but --

15 MS. ZOOK: Right. Okay. Something you may not
16 be aware of -- because there are several districts in
17 the state, as well as a group that contracts with the
18 state where they can get specialized instruction,
19 virtual --

20 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes.

21 MS. ZOOK: -- which you could obviously -- if
22 he's got these needs, you as the parent could guide
23 that.

24 MS. O'KELLEY: Yeah.

25 MS. ZOOK: But that would also be an option so

1 that the kindergarten teacher at the building --

2 MS. O'KELLEY: Right.

3 MS. ZOOK: -- would not be totally responsible
4 --

5 MS. O'KELLEY: Okay.

6 MS. ZOOK: -- but they could get the virtual,
7 which you could guide, and go to the building and get
8 the OT and all of those kind of things. So I guess I
9 don't know how this vote will go.

10 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. ZOOK: But, regardless, I think there is
12 hope and that we will make sure that your child --

13 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes.

14 MS. ZOOK: -- gets the service they need in a
15 way they need it.

16 MS. O'KELLEY: Thank you.

17 MS. ZOOK: And I can assure you, because I know
18 Ms. Walters, I know --

19 MS. O'KELLEY: Yes.

20 MS. ZOOK: -- the attorney that's here today,
21 they are very child-oriented and we -- you've got a
22 lot of good people who will advocate for you and your
23 child.

24 MS. O'KELLEY: Okay. Yes. Thank you.

25 MS. ZOOK: Uh-huh.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And could I follow-up with Mr.
2 Lasiter? I'll just follow that up. And can I get
3 the -- can we get the commitment of the Bryant School
4 District to follow IEPs in a way that it -- that
5 supports the student's education, if the student ends
6 up at the Bryant District?

7 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Dr. Hill returned to
8 the meeting at 1:28 p.m.)

9 MR. LASITER: Yes, sir. We're always going to
10 follow IEPs. What we would do with this particular
11 situation would be like we would with any child
12 coming into kindergarten who may have special needs,
13 either requiring an IEP or accommodations through
14 504. We would look -- sit down with the parents, go
15 over all the diagnoses, go over all the records and
16 documents, and come up with a plan or modifications
17 that suit that particular student. It's a very
18 thorough process and we would be happy to do that.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

20 Ms. Newton? Ms. Chambers?

21 MS. CHAMBERS: I have a question for Jennifer.
22 And so for the non-legal, if we -- I mean, it's a
23 compelling case to consider on its merits. And so if
24 we were to grant this request what are the
25 implications? I know we talked a little bit about

1 contempt and otherwise, but -- I'm trying to remember
2 -- we have occasionally made -- in very unique
3 circumstances each time, but voted to allow an
4 individual transfer. And I don't know how we are
5 prevailing in terms of those decisions and the
6 outcomes, but curious if we were to approve this what
7 might play out. How might that happen?

8 MS. DEDMAN: The court order that we are a party
9 to, it prevents the districts from participating in
10 school choice. Were the court order to be modified
11 or changed, or if they were released from the court
12 order, they would be able to participate in public
13 school choice. But when you ask a court to modify
14 the order, what they want to see is that you complied
15 with it and that you remedied the effects of racial
16 segregation in the past. So what they are -- what
17 the court is likely to be looking for in a
18 modification of that order would be compliance with
19 the order.

20 MS. FRENO: Jennifer is doing a great job. I'm
21 not bothering her. She's correct. But because I've
22 been here for quite awhile -- the Board, as long as I
23 have been here, which is six years, has never granted
24 a school choice appeal in violation of the 1989 Act.
25 It cannot. I mean, there have been other situations

1 where it was a bit more "maybe," you know, like going
2 over the 3% or maybe -- but this one is -- like I
3 always call it, it's a lockbox. I mean, Garland
4 County, that order is clear. Now we had the four
5 ones recently, the four counties that now are in the
6 8th Circuit; you know, we don't think those orders
7 were clear at all. But this order is clear and this
8 order has been through much litiga -- I mean, it's
9 been through much litigation and it's very clear
10 that, you know, unless the student meets the racial
11 criteria they cannot transfer. Now that sounds
12 weird, you know, you're considering race in whether a
13 student can transfer or not. But the court --
14 federal court has specifically held in this case that
15 you can -- you can and you must consider race because
16 it was incorporated into that Decree.

17 So I didn't want to, you know, take Jennifer's
18 microphone, but I just wanted to point out since I've
19 been here there -- the State Board has never granted
20 a school choice in this situation -- a school choice
21 transfer.

22 MS. CHAMBERS: And I think that's very helpful.
23 There have been other court cases, I guess, that we
24 were trying to interpret different than this one.
25 And so it's helpful to hear you say how specific --

1 "lockbox" -- this one is compared to maybe other
2 things that we've considered.

3 MS. DEDMAN: Thank you.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: So, thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Hill, anything?

6 DR. HILL: No.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Ms. Newton.

8 MS. NEWTON: Ms. Dedman, if I'm understanding
9 this right -- and make sure I've gotten this clear --
10 because this is Garland County it's different than
11 the ones that we've considered in the past. If we
12 were to do anything here, this would potentially
13 endanger Garland County from getting out from under
14 it in the future. Is that correct?

15 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, ma'am, possibly. This is a
16 very different set of circumstances. This is a
17 different court order than the ones that you're
18 familiar with.

19 MS. NEWTON: Right. Okay. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. McFetridge?

21 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'm good. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. I'll start back around
23 here and see --

24 DR. MOORE: Yes, I do --

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

1 DR. MOORE: -- for Lakeside School District. Do
2 families reapply every year? Is -- I mean --

3 MR. HICKAM: I'm sorry, Ma'am?

4 DR. MOORE: If families get rejected, can they
5 reapply in future years into your district?

6 MR. HICKAM: I don't know of any reason they
7 can't reapply annually. There's a deadline.

8 DR. MOORE: Okay.

9 MR. HICKAM: But they can reapply annually.

10 DR. MOORE: It just depends on the percentage?

11 MR. HICKAM: I don't want to take a dead-set
12 position respectively. But unless there was some
13 relief from that order or the law changed somehow I
14 can't imagine them reaching a different determination
15 than what they're reaching now upon such an
16 application.

17 DR. MOORE: Okay. So it sounds like the
18 students who are -- but there has been precedent of
19 students from --

20 MR. HICKAM: I'm sorry?

21 DR. MOORE: There is precedent of students from
22 the Bryant School District choicing into Lakeside,
23 but that was under different race percentages. Is
24 that correct?

25 MR. HICKAM: Ma'am, I'm very sorry; I couldn't

1 --

2 DR. MOORE: Under -- so when a student has
3 choiced into the district it's because the percentage
4 of race has been different than it is currently?

5 MR. HICKAM: Correct. Correct.

6 DR. MOORE: Okay. And so the percentage might
7 -- if it changes next year, then --

8 MR. HICKAM: Yes. Yes. Obviously if the --

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: If you can come back to the --
10 if you can come back to the microphone.

11 MR. HICKAM: Oh.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Sorry.

13 MR. HICKAM: I'm sorry. Obviously if the race
14 percentages changed they're going to evaluate it
15 under that. They get these figures from the
16 Department of Education --

17 DR. MOORE: Okay.

18 MR. HICKAM: -- and that would guide them on
19 that decision.

20 DR. MOORE: Okay. And is it -- I guess this is
21 a procedural thing. But is it a close percentage in
22 which the first day of school might have different
23 outcomes or is it far enough away that it's --

24 MS. ZOOK: 74 to 66.

25 DR. MOORE: Okay.

1 MR. HICKAM: Without looking at it, I think the
2 deadline is July 1st of each year.

3 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Garland County is May 1st.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: If you could come to the
5 microphone, sir. Thank you.

6 MS. ZOOK: We're sorry. We're being live-
7 streamed, so --

8 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Okay. And I'm going to back-
9 track. They can reapply each year. You can. And
10 percentages -- you know, there's seven different
11 things you can mark on the application as far as
12 race. So some of those, except for Bryant, may be in
13 a race where the numbers were different. So keep
14 that in mind. Okay. So it's not necessary it's just
15 all White; so it could be a different one. There's
16 seven different things; you can mark only one. Okay?

17 DR. MOORE: Okay.

18 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Then your question was -- I'm
19 sorry.

20 DR. MOORE: That was it.

21 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Okay.

22 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Anything else?

24 DR. MOORE: No.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Diane.

1 MS. ZOOK: And to give Garland County districts
2 credit, they in fact would be more than willing with
3 the court's permission to participate in choice --
4 maybe not in '89, but now they would. And I think
5 it's just a matter of at some point the courts giving
6 approval for that. It's not like y'all are --

7 MR. McLAUGHLIN: It would be awesome because --

8 MS. ZOOK: Yes, it would.

9 MR. McLAUGHLIN: -- I take some beatings every
10 year on -- there's people that come to me with
11 similar circumstances --

12 MS. ZOOK: Yes.

13 MR. McLAUGHLIN: -- and they're denied. It says
14 "reject." I hate that. But they're denied --

15 MS. ZOOK: Right.

16 MR. McLAUGHLIN: -- on that form because of this
17 court order.

18 MS. ZOOK: Right.

19 MR. McLAUGHLIN: And we'd be glad to. We think
20 it's not fair.

21 MS. ZOOK: Right. You know --

22 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah. And I appreciate the
23 kind comments she made about Lakeside. I'm going to
24 sit down.

25 MS. ZOOK: Yes. Yes. And, you know, and I do

1 appreciate the fact that in this instance the
2 accommodations and the education this child needs can
3 be taken care of either place.

4 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Correct. Bryant is a good
5 school district.

6 MS. ZOOK: Yes, Bryant is a good school
7 district; Lakeside is a good school district.

8 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yes.

9 MS. ZOOK: And you all are very student-
10 oriented. But I do want to compliment the districts
11 in Garland County -- and Lakeside, in particular --
12 that you are willing to do whatever it takes for
13 kids, but you're not willing to go to court to do it
14 --

15 MR. McLAUGHLIN: No, ma'am.

16 MS. ZOOK: -- or break any laws. We don't want
17 to wind up in jail.

18 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Thank you.

19 MR. HICKAM: If I may add one thing I think kind
20 of underscores our attitude, it pains Lakeside School
21 District to even have to ask a parent what is the
22 race of your child. And that -- they have to do that
23 and they'd prefer not even to go there.

24 MS. ZOOK: Well, I don't think y'all can even
25 ask if it's a child with a special need or a

1 handicap. I think you can't ask that as well.

2 MR. HICKAM: Right. Right.

3 MS. ZOOK: Right.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. McFetridge?

5 MS. McFETRIDGE: I don't know if we really
6 answered the mother's question about what do you do
7 when you have an adopted a child and don't know the
8 race of the parents. Have we really answered that
9 for her?

10 MS. DEDMAN: The parents submitted an
11 application for transfer and you'll find it in the
12 board packet. The answer is we rely on the parents'
13 judgment where that's concerned, and the parents in
14 this case on their application indicated that their
15 student is White.

16 MS. McFETRIDGE: But she came back today and
17 said they really weren't sure. So --

18 MS. DEDMAN: They --

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: -- in that case, what happens?

20 MS. DEDMAN: Right. So the application has to
21 be put in by a certain time and the district is
22 entitled to rely on the application. So this is the
23 timely application that was submitted by the parents
24 which you'll find in your packet. And on this
25 application the District relied on the parents'

1 assertion that their student was White in making
2 their determination. That was the reason for the
3 denial.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Any other questions or comments
5 on this side?

6 DR. MOORE: Yeah, sure.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

8 DR. MOORE: I have another question, if you
9 don't mind.

10 Is there any plans for Garland County to move in
11 the future in a different direction any time soon?
12 Have y'all been in court recently or is this --

13 MR. HICKAM: There's none at this time. Our
14 campus is still, kind of recent history, just two or
15 three years old. I know it's an issue of discussion
16 among the superintendents. I think they're hopeful
17 that there will eventually be a consensus that
18 includes the school district that has been opposed to
19 it -- and I think when and if that occurs they're
20 going to move on it and move on it fast. As far as
21 further litigation, that's something that y'all
22 certainly look at from time to time. But we also
23 have to look at what has already happened and not
24 continue to butt our head into the wall.

25 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

1 MR. HICKAM: You're welcome.

2 MS. DEDMAN: I would add that we have been
3 working with the Garland County School Districts.
4 We've been working very hard on our monitoring and
5 making sure that our professional development is
6 relevant and up-to-date to assist other districts who
7 may be ready to address the court.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any additional
9 questions?

10 Thank you all. Thank you all so much for your
11 presentations and talking us through some complicated
12 issues.

13 A motion is in order.

14 Ms. Dedman, do we need --

15 MS. DEDMAN: Mr. O'Kelley wonders if he might
16 have a moment --

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah, sure, of course.

18 MR. O'KELLEY: I just want to echo my wife in
19 thanking you --

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: If you'll just state your name
21 for the record.

22 MR. O'KELLEY: I'm Ross O'Kelley. I'm the
23 father of Owen.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Hi, Mr. O'Kelley.

25 MR. O'KELLEY: So I just want to echo my wife in

1 thanking y'all for the opportunity. I also want to
2 echo the comments that we know Bryant and Lakeside
3 are both great school districts. But I do know that
4 the one point we're having a hurdle getting over is
5 the race that was checked on the application, and
6 there wasn't exactly a box for unknown race and as my
7 wife pointed out, we actually don't know his race.
8 We don't know the parents. We had one week to get
9 ready for Owen from the time we learned about the
10 adoption till the time we had him. So not having an
11 unknown race category, we just marked what he appears
12 to be. However, we've had geneticists make comments
13 that he might have Asian roots, he might have -- just
14 depending on characteristics he has. So, again, if
15 that's a point of contention I just want to be clear
16 that we actually don't know. We don't know whether
17 he does or doesn't meet these criteria just based on
18 -- with the information we've been given. So I just
19 wanted to highlight that fact.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

21 MR. O'KELLEY: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you, sir.

23 All right. So a motion would be in order.

24 Ms. Dedman, the proper motion would be to either
25 grant the waiver or to deny the waiver. Correct?

1 MS. DEDMAN: The proper motion would be to grant
2 the appeal of the O'Kelley family or deny it.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Grant the appeal or deny the
4 appeal.

5 Mr. Williamson.

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: I move to grant the appeal.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Is there a second?

8 (MOMENT OF SILENCE)

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: The motion fails for lack of a
10 second.

11 DR. MOORE: Can I ask a question then?

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Uh-huh.

13 DR. MOORE: Can the -- based on the information
14 that has been given to us, can the parents re-apply
15 with a new application or can they, as stated, alter
16 their application that they submitted to the
17 District? Or is that --

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I think we have a deadline
19 issue.

20 MS. DEDMAN: We do. The application is due by a
21 certain date. The parents can apply again for next
22 year.

23 DR. MOORE: Okay.

24 MS. DEDMAN: But the application deadline has
25 passed and the District responded based on the

1 application that was presented. The appeal is from
2 the denial that was reliant on the information.

3 DR. MOORE: Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. If there's not a
5 second, the motion fails.

6 DR. HILL: I have a question.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yes.

8 DR. HILL: So I know -- I'm sorry; my family is
9 going out of the country, that's why I was late. But
10 can you have restated what the law states, just
11 because I don't -- I walked in as she had asked that
12 question?

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Right.

14 DR. HILL: And I need -- I'd like to know are we
15 -- what you said -- and I'm sorry that I was not --

16 MS. DEDMAN: Absolutely. The Garland County
17 School Districts -- and Lakeside is one of them --
18 are subject to a desegregation order that is active
19 in the Davis versus Hot Springs case. The Arkansas
20 Public School Choice Act of 1989 applies to those
21 districts. So they are under the old 1989 act and
22 the rules that correspond to that act. That act
23 prohibits a student from transferring to a non-
24 resident district where the percentage of enrollment
25 for the student's race exceeds that percentage in the

1 student's resident district, with three very limited
2 exceptions. The first exception is when the transfer
3 is between two school districts in that same county,
4 which does not apply in this case. The second is
5 when neither district involved in the transfer has a
6 critical mass of minority percentage in the student's
7 race of more than 10% of any single race; that also
8 does not apply. When the provisions of Arkansas Code
9 Annotated 6-18-206 would violate a desegregation
10 order or plan the terms of the court order will
11 govern. In this case they're under a court order
12 that causes them to follow that act. In this matter
13 the student was denied the transfer because the
14 percentage of enrollment for the student's race in
15 the Lakeside School District exceeded the percentage
16 of the Bryant School District, and none of the
17 exceptions listed would apply.

18 DR. HILL: So two years ago, in El Dorado, when
19 we did something very similar where we voted to grant
20 it, but then we found out when we did it we violated
21 the law --

22 MS. ZOOK: And that was in 1915 -- not 1915 --

23 DR. HILL: But very similar circumstances.

24 MS. ZOOK: 2015. But this is the '89 law --

25 DR. HILL: Okay.

1 MS. ZOOK: -- when race was the consideration.

2 DR. HILL: Okay. All right.

3 MS. ZOOK: And race is no longer -- am I correct
4 -- in school choice race can no longer be considered?

5 MS. DEDMAN: Correct. Under the 2015 Public
6 School Choice Act race is not a consideration on its
7 own.

8 DR. HILL: Okay.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Pfeffer.

10 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Dedman, can we get you to
11 clarify dates again for these -- for the Garland
12 County cases? Are they the same as the school choice
13 deadlines? Are there --

14 MS. DEDMAN: The application deadlines?

15 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah, the application and then the
16 decision deadline.

17 MS. DEDMAN: One moment. I'll need to refresh
18 my memory.

19 Okay. The application deadline for this set of
20 rules is July 1st. However --

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: And we're in June.

22 MS. DEDMAN: Huh?

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: This is -- we're still in June.

24 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, sir, that's correct. However,
25 the appeal is from the denial, and the denial was

1 based on the application that was submitted. To
2 resubmit an application, technically we're still
3 before the July 1st deadline but we've already
4 reached the percentage numbers. A district could
5 still accept a school choice application, if they
6 were in Garland County and if they were under these
7 rules, until July 1st.

8 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. So there is the option --
9 there is still the option then for the parent to
10 resubmit.

11 Is there a choice on the application that the --
12 you know, based on the information shared today, of
13 not knowing the race of the child, s there a choice
14 on the application that could be marked differently
15 to be looked at with different consideration?

16 MS. DEDMAN: Yes, Dr. Pfeffer. There's a box
17 for two or more races.

18 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

19 MS. NEWTON: If that two or more races was
20 marked, would it meet the guidelines --

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: No.

22 MS. NEWTON: -- for the law?

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: No. He needs to identify as
24 Asian and he'd be in.

25 MS. DEDMAN: The Garland County school choice

1 order only contemplates two races. It would be up to
2 the District to consider the numbers of their
3 students and whether or not it would apply. The
4 District would make that decision, along with their
5 attorney.

6 DR. MOORE: So you're saying the order only
7 applies to --

8 MS. DEDMAN: The order --

9 DR. MOORE: -- American and White students?

10 MS. DEDMAN: It only contemplates White students
11 and African American students. Yes.

12 DR. MOORE: And it didn't touch anything about
13 mixed race or any other option?

14 MS. DEDMAN: No, it does not consider other
15 races. The order at the time was based on two races.

16 MS. ZOOK: Doesn't it say White or non-White as
17 opposed to White or African American?

18 MS. DEDMAN: No, I believe not. It specifies --

19 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So the previous motion
21 failed for lack of a second. The floor is empty for
22 a proper motion.

23 MS. ZOOK: So it's my understanding that if this
24 request should fail, which I'm presuming because the
25 other one didn't get a second, the parents can still

1 come back and reapply before July 1st. And we would
2 then have, what, a special meeting if they were
3 denied?

4 MR. HICKAM: I'm going to let the man that
5 handles that answer that. And by the way, I wish to
6 apologize; I wear hearing aids and they appear to be
7 --

8 MS. ZOOK: That's okay.

9 MR. HICKAM: -- turned into the same frequency
10 as your -- a noise emanating from your HVAC. I
11 apologize for that.

12 MS. ZOOK: I wonder if you sat over here if it
13 would help?

14 MR. HICKAM: It might.

15 MS. ZOOK: I don't know.

16 MR. McLAUGHLIN: We take applications till July
17 1st. We have since this has been going on, where the
18 rest -- like I said earlier, it was May 1st. And,
19 again, when I look at those I look at hundreds a
20 year. I look -- I don't even look at names; I look
21 at what they mark as far as their race and we're not
22 to question what they mark. We've been instructed
23 that years ago by the State Department, so we don't
24 question that. I look at that and then I go look at
25 my sheet from the State to see what percentage of the

1 different -- where they're coming from and compared
2 to ours, and then that's how I react; I mark as
3 accepted or denied.

4 MS. ZOOK: Right.

5 MR. McLAUGHLIN: So am I answering --

6 MS. ZOOK: Well, I guess my -- since it
7 specifically says White or African American --

8 MR. McLAUGHLIN: No, ma'am. That application
9 has seven choices. You mark one.

10 MS. ZOOK: No, I'm talking about the court
11 order.

12 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Oh, I'm sorry.

13 MS. ZOOK: Okay. If the court order says White
14 or African American, then it doesn't matter if you
15 are something other than African American; you're
16 still --

17 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yes.

18 MS. ZOOK: -- considered White.

19 MR. McLAUGHLIN: And I apologize. I didn't read
20 that part in the court order; I didn't take it like
21 that. We react to the school choice of '89, and that
22 form has seven different things you can pick one of.

23 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

24 MR. McLAUGHLIN: So we don't just look at
25 Black/White. We look -- there's seven different ones

1 there on there and they get to mark one.

2 MS. ZOOK: I was just trying to respond to Ms.
3 Dedman's answer to our question about --

4 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yes, ma'am.

5 MS. ZOOK: -- the two. So I -- you know, we're
6 just trying to --

7 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yes. So they have --

8 MS. ZOOK: -- help the kids.

9 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Anybody has seven options.
10 They can pick one of those seven.

11 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

12 MR. McLAUGHLIN: It goes to Native American,
13 Pacific Islander, two or more, White, Black,
14 Hispanic. They have a lot of choices.

15 MS. ZOOK: I saw the application.

16 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yes, ma'am.

17 MS. ZOOK: I knew you were one-hundred percent
18 right on that.

19 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Right.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Thank you.

21 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So I think things are clear,
23 but sure can't make a motion. We need a little help
24 here.

25 Ms. Dean.

1 MS. DEAN: Yes. Because of the order that we're
2 under and the opportunity until July 1st to reapply,
3 I will move that the appeal be denied.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Dean,
6 second by Ms. Chambers.

7 Any further discussion?

8 MS. ZOOK: And you're saying based on this
9 application and this hearing this day?

10 MS. DEAN: Based on this application, this
11 hearing this day.

12 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any further
14 discussion?

15 If not, let's -- can we do a roll-call? Do you
16 have a spot to do that?

17 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. Ms. Zook.

18 MS. ZOOK: Yes.

19 DR. PFEFFER: Dr. Hill.

20 DR. HILL: Yes.

21 DR. PFEFFER: Mr. Williamson.

22 MR. WILLIAMSON: No.

23 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Chambers.

24 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.

25 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. McPettridge.

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes.

2 DR. PFEFFER: Dr. Moore.

3 DR. MOORE: Yes.

4 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Newton.

5 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

6 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Dean.

7 MS. DEAN: Yes.

8 DR. PFEFFER: Dr. Barth.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I decline.

10 Okay. So by a vote of 7-to-1 the motion passes,
11 the denial -- that is a denial. You've heard the
12 conversation. And this board will, you know, take
13 actions in the future if they come before it. But
14 thank y'all for being very good advocates. Thank you
15 --

16 Yes, just a second.

17 Thank you to the attorneys also for your clarity
18 in a complicated case. So thank y'all very much.

19 Ms. Dean does have a final comment.

20 MS. DEAN: I just want to say to the O'Kelley's,
21 thank you for advocating for your child and going the
22 extra step and doing whatever is necessary to make
23 sure that he gets the best education. And as an
24 advocate of school choice, that pained me. So I just
25 want you to know that. But I wish that you all have

1 the best of luck and that things go well for you.
2 Thank you.

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: And you've got a few days to
4 reapply.

5 MR. O'KELLEY: Yes, sir.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. All right. Thank
7 y'all.

8 Y'all still good to continue?

9 We -- thank y'all.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: We next have a number of
11 Succeed Scholarship transfer requests. And so I'm
12 going to turn it over to Ms. Salas-Ford for this
13 process.

14 Everybody good? Everybody -- are y'all all
15 right?

16 Okay. Eyes in front.

17 Ms. Salas-Ford.

18 MS. SALAS-FORD: They're on their best behavior
19 for your last meeting.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah.

21 INTRO TO TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP REQUESTS

22 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you. Good afternoon.
23 Courtney Salas-Ford for the Department.

24 We do have seven families who are requesting
25 transfers of their Succeed Scholarship, which, if

1 you'll remember from previous months, is required by
2 rules that they do have approval to move from one
3 school district to another -- excuse me -- from one
4 private school to another. Each of these families is
5 available on phone if you have any questions.

6 B-2: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: WILLIAMS

7 MS. SALAS-FORD: The first family is the
8 Williams family who is requesting a transfer due to
9 the fact that the St. Edwards School is closed at the
10 end of the 2018-2019 school year.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. The proper motion in
12 this case -- first off, of course, if there are
13 questions -- the proper motion will ultimately be to
14 grant the request or to deny the request?

15 MS. SALAS-FORD: Correct.

16 MS. NEWTON: Move to grant the request.

17 MS. McFETRIDGE: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Newton, second by
19 Ms. McFetridge.

20 All in favor say "aye."

21 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

23 Okay. Thank you.

24 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you.

25 B-3: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: BERRY

1 MS. SALAS-FORD: The second family, the Berry
2 family, is requesting a transfer due to the fact that
3 the Pathfinder Academy also closed at the end of the
4 2018-2019 school year.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Thank you.

6 MS. ZOOK: The good thing about this transfer is
7 both of these facilities and both of these service
8 providers are in fact geared to children with special
9 needs. So we know for sure that they will be getting
10 the service they need at these schools.

11 I move to approve.

12 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Zook,
14 second by Ms. Chambers.

15 All in favor say "aye."

16 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

18 All right.

19 B-4: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: HORTON

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Next up, the Horton family.

21 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes. The Horton family is
22 requesting a transfer, again also due to the fact
23 that St. Edwards School closed at the end of the
24 2018-2019 school year.

25 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to approve the transfer.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.
3 Chambers, second by Mr. Williamson.

4 All in favor say "aye."

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

7 Okay.

8 B-5: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: HOFFMAN

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Now to the Hoffman family.

10 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes. The Hoffman family is
11 requesting a transfer from Access Academy to Christ
12 Lutheran. And again I believe they are on the phone
13 if you have any questions.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook.

15 MS. ZOOK: Yeah, I have a question. I know --
16 I'm very familiar with Access and the service that
17 your child probably got there. Have you checked with
18 Christ Lutheran to see if they will be able to
19 provide the same level and quality of service that
20 you're getting at Access?

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Is anyone from the Hoffman
22 family on the line?

23 MS. SALAS-FORD: I believe in the information
24 that they provided they stated that they -- Access
25 had -- they had discussed with Access the move, and

1 they felt that Christ Lutheran was the best suited to
2 meet their child's needs. But I have not spoken to
3 the parents directly.

4 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Do we ever get -- and I
5 noticed the lady is here from Reform Alliance. Do we
6 ever get specific information about the -- what I'm
7 going to call the non-special education provider
8 schools? Do we ever get information about exactly
9 how many teachers they have, how long they're there
10 each day, what kind of OT/PT, those kinds of
11 services? Do we have that information, or is it
12 purely just are they accredited as a school or not?

13 MS. SALAS-FORD: We only ask for what's required
14 under the law, which is the accreditation status,
15 that their teachers are Bachelor's or higher, and
16 that they contract or consult with at least one
17 special ed. certified teacher. I know you're
18 familiar with there was an act passed in which the
19 Bureau of Legislative Research will be conducting a
20 study of this program. I can't say whether that will
21 be something they look at or not. I don't know.

22 MS. ZOOK: Okay. So does Reform Alliance do
23 that kind of study or do y'all just pass the money
24 from the Department to the school?

25 MS. PRUITT: I'm Valerie Pruitt, the executive

1 director of the Reform Alliance.

2 That is part of the law that was just passed
3 that we will have to --

4 MS. HOFFMAN: This is Lisa Hoffman.

5 MS. PRUITT: -- have certain aspects of the
6 scholarship and the children who are on the
7 scholarship and the schools, that's going to be a
8 part of the reporting process.

9 MS. ZOOK: Terrific. I wasn't aware. Somehow
10 that got past me. Thank you.

11 MS. PRUITT: Okay. You're welcome.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yes. Do I have Ms. Hoffman on
13 the phone? Ms. Hoffman?

14 MS. HOFFMAN: I can't hear anything. Yes.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Ms. Zook -- Diane Zook
16 has a question for you and --

17 MS. HOFFMAN: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- I'll give her a chance to
19 ask that.

20 MS. ZOOK: Yes. I know you're coming --

21 MS. HOFFMAN: I'm currently here.

22 MS. ZOOK: I know you're coming from Access, and
23 I was wondering if you were -- had been assured or
24 know if the Christ Lutheran is going to have the same
25 quality and quantity of service and support for your

1 student that you were getting at Access?

2 MS. HOFFMAN: Access, they are the ones that
3 told me about -- he's at Access right now. And they
4 gave me two options for where Alex is at right now,
5 where they thought was a good fit for him, and Christ
6 Lutheran was one and Holy Souls was one. And we
7 looked at both, and Christ Lutheran has the school
8 size and the things that we will need for Alex.

9 Did I answer your question?

10 MS. ZOOK: Yes. I understand that you feel
11 comfortable. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any additional
13 questions?

14 All right. Then I will entertain a motion in
15 the Hoffman case.

16 MS. NEWTON: Move to grant the transfer.

17 MS. DEAN: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Newton, second by
19 Ms. Dean.

20 All in favor say "aye."

21 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

23 All right.

24 B-6: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: MCCAIN

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Then, McCain family.

1 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes. The McCain family is
2 requesting a transfer due to the fact that the
3 current school only serves till 8th grade, and so
4 they are requesting their son be transferred to
5 Catholic High School as he enters 9th grade.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

7 MS. ZOOK: Do you know where he was before?

8 MS. SALAS-FORD: I'm sorry, I --

9 MS. ZOOK: I notice it wasn't on here, and they
10 usually are.

11 MS. SALAS-FORD: I apologize; I don't have that
12 information.

13 MS. ZOOK: You don't have it?

14 MS. SALAS-FORD: Is the McCain family on the
15 phone?

16 MS. MCCAIN: Yes, ma'am.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yes. What school was your son
18 attending before?

19 MS. MCCAIN: Immaculate Conception.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Thank you.

21 MS. MCCAIN: You're welcome.

22 MS. CHAMBERS: I move to approve the transfer.

23 MS. DEAN: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Chambers, second
25 by Ms. Dean.

1 All in favor say "aye."

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

4 All right.

5 B-7: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: VENTURA

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ventura family.

7 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes. The Ventura family is
8 requesting a transfer due to St. Edwards closing.

9 MS. DEAN: I move to approve the transfer.

10 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Dean, second by
12 Ms. Chambers.

13 All in favor say "aye."

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 B-8: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: JOHNSON

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And then, finally, the Johnson
17 family.

18 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes. Johnson family is
19 requesting a transfer also due to St. Edwards closing
20 at the end of this school year.

21 MS. DEAN: Move to approve the transfer.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion --

23 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Dean,

1 second by Mr. Williamson.

2 All in favor say "aye."

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

5 All right.

6 A-2: REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP: WILLIAMS

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Hello? Hello?

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yes.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, my name is Tenecia [ps]
10 Williams. I'm calling for my son Braylon [ps]
11 Williams. I didn't hear his case come up. He
12 attended St. Edwards. He's in the 3rd grade and the
13 school is closing down. I didn't hear his case come
14 up or anything, so just checking to make sure.

15 MS. SALAS-FORD: I'm sorry. What was the name
16 again?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: His name is Braylon Williams.
18 I'm his mother, Tenecia Williams.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yes. We -- it was the first
20 one. We --

21 MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, okay. I didn't hear it.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: We must've taken care of it
23 before you got on the line.

24 MS. SALAS-FORD: Yes, it was approved.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah. So I apologize for your

1 not being able to be here, but it was approved; so
2 you're fine.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. All right. Thank you so
4 much.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Sure. Thank you.

6 Okay. Thank you, Ms. Salas-Ford.

7 MS. SALAS-FORD: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Why don't we take a -- maybe a
9 5- or 6-minute break?

10 (BREAK: 2:02 - 2:12 P.M.)

11 B-9: CONSIDERATION OF ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE 2019-2020

12 CONTRACTS

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Thanks, everyone.
14 So we are down to Item 9 on the afternoon action
15 agenda. And actually the next three items are all
16 Ms. Underwood. So, welcome.

17 MS. UNDERWOOD: Good afternoon. Susan Underwood
18 with the Division of Early Child Care and Education.

19 Actually, I think we have four items here.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: You do?

21 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, sir.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Indeed.

23 MS. UNDERWOOD: And I apologize, there is one
24 update that we passed out to you; it's not
25 electronically. But several things have happened in

1 the past several days, so we wanted to update that.

2 But the first thing on the agenda is the 2019-20
3 contracts for professional development grants which
4 provide professional development -- several different
5 services including professional development,
6 technical assistance, research for the 248 ABC
7 programs serving over 23,000 children who are in
8 center-based and home-visiting.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Are there questions?

10 DR. MOORE: I do.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

12 DR. MOORE: And thank you for answering my
13 questions that you just answered here, but I have a
14 couple more, if you don't mind.

15 So the ASU Childhood Services, it looks like
16 they get two pretty big grants; one is for the
17 environmental rating scales, almost a million, and
18 then almost another million for the ABC child
19 assessments. Could you speak to -- a little bit
20 about what those two things are and what that looks
21 like?

22 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am. The environmental
23 rating scale is a scale that our programs -- they do
24 a lot of training and assistance with our programs
25 just to see -- and it's not just the environment, but

1 it's child/teacher interaction, it's language
2 development, it's health and safety. It's a
3 combination. It's like seven different fields that
4 they look at and they work with the programs so they
5 can have that quality in the program. So it is not
6 only just training and technical assistance, but yet
7 they go out and do this training. We are working on
8 making sure that there is somebody in the programs,
9 such as the coordinator or director, who is also like
10 a coach and a mentor to the teachers and the
11 paraprofessionals.

12 DR. MOORE: Okay. So the scale -- ASU Childhood
13 Services have individuals. Do they go out to every
14 program every year to do the development and do the
15 scale?

16 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, they go out to the agencies
17 and the sites. Do they visit every classroom every
18 year? No.

19 DR. MOORE: Okay.

20 MS. UNDERWOOD: It would be way too many.

21 DR. MOORE: Yeah.

22 MS. UNDERWOOD: So they are on a rotation. We
23 have gone to a -- it was called the ECERS Revised
24 Version. We're now on the ECERS-3, which really -- I
25 see a head-shaking, you understand. It really

1 emphasizes that language and the development and the
2 teacher/child interaction more so than just counting
3 books and how many times do you wash your hands.

4 DR. MOORE: Yeah. Okay. Are these competitive
5 grants or are they given out -- how are they
6 determined?

7 MS. UNDERWOOD: There have been competitive
8 grants. These are grants that we have had for the
9 past couple of years, so it's a continuation; it's
10 building on each year.

11 DR. MOORE: Okay. So there's no -- there wasn't
12 a new RFP to go out for any of these?

13 MS. UNDERWOOD: No, ma'am.

14 DR. MOORE: Okay. And is there any -- for all
15 of these grants is there reporting mechanisms?

16 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, there is.

17 DR. MOORE: Okay. Let me think. I had one more
18 question.

19 Okay. And then the Arkansas Research Center, as
20 we just talked about their job is to produce a study.
21 What does that look like and how is that different
22 from what ASU is doing?

23 MS. UNDERWOOD: ASU reports out on the classroom
24 and the teachers. The Arkansas Research looks at the
25 children as they are assessed on the work sampling

1 and the (inaudible), and then also looking at several
2 different factors, not only the child absenteeism but
3 the behavior and this sort of thing. And what we're
4 trying to do now is to look at that in the pre-K
5 world and how do we see that they are benefitting and
6 excelling in the K-12 world.

7 DR. MOORE: Okay. Okay. And then also we
8 talked about there -- I know there have been problems
9 with that longitudinal study in the past. And so
10 this is -- I mean, giving -- granting these funds
11 will insure that that longitudinal study can be done?

12 MS. UNDERWOOD: Correct. Yes. Yes.

13 DR. MOORE: Okay.

14 MS. UNDERWOOD: And actually it is in our law,
15 in the --

16 DR. MOORE: Guidelines.

17 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, in the guidelines that we
18 have to have this longitudinal study.

19 DR. MOORE: But does the law determine who
20 does it or it's just a -- just the fact that you have
21 to do it and then y'all --

22 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

23 DR. MOORE: Okay. I think it's exciting that --
24 and I know there's a lot of transition that will be
25 going on between -- with the new reorganization of

1 government. But I think, as we just said, it would
2 be helpful in the future to have more context here as
3 the Secretary and the Department plays a little bit
4 different role over the ABC program.

5 MS. UNDERWOOD: Okay.

6 DR. MOORE: Thank you for answering all my
7 questions though.

8 MS. UNDERWOOD: Certainly.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And on that note, I know the
10 Commissioner will probably have some things to say
11 about reorganization tomorrow as it relates not just
12 to this program but also Career Ed. and some other
13 things.

14 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. So the --

16 Ms. Zook, yeah.

17 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Does any of this professional
18 development that you're funding have to do with early
19 literacy or literacy programs?

20 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. ZOOK: And do any of those awarded to ASU
22 contain that?

23 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am.

24 MS. ZOOK: And do you know that they're still on
25 balanced literacy, not structured literacy, which is

1 what -- the RISE program is based on structured, not
2 balanced?

3 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

4 MS. ZOOK: So you know they're giving PD on
5 something that we will not encourage in -- when they
6 get within the district in kindergarten?

7 MS. UNDERWOOD: Well, and actually our teachers
8 who are located in the school districts are also
9 participating in the RISE -- all the training.

10 MS. ZOOK: All the more reason why we should use
11 -- do PD with someone who is actually doing a
12 complimentary program as opposed to a non-
13 complimentary program. So I would ask that if you
14 haven't already given these grants that you put an
15 RPF -- RFP out for that in particular --

16 MS. UNDERWOOD: Okay.

17 MS. ZOOK: -- to a different provider.

18 MS. UNDERWOOD: And like we were talking
19 earlier, Ms. Sarah, that we will get a little bit
20 more details on the contracts.

21 DR. MOORE: Okay.

22 MS. UNDERWOOD: And, Ms. Zook, that may be part
23 of it as well, too.

24 MS. ZOOK: Okay. So, because you really do need
25 to -- because you're coming over to the new Secretary

1 of Education, as well as you want your ABC programs
2 to be lined up with the districts, you need to be
3 sure that your RFP calls for --

4 MS. UNDERWOOD: Certainly.

5 MS. ZOOK: -- specifically literacy, early
6 beginnings literacy that compliments what we're
7 trying to have here in the state.

8 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. ZOOK: That's all I have on that one.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any additional questions
11 or comments over here?

12 The request is to approve these professional
13 services grants that are before you.

14 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to approve.

15 MS. DEAN: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Motion by Ms. Chambers,
17 second by Ms. Dean.

18 All in favor say "aye."

19 (MAJORITY CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Any opposed?

21 MS. ZOOK: No.

22 DR. MOORE: No.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So let's get a -- I
24 guess we'll do a quick roll-call just to be sure.

25 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Was it just y'all two?
2 DR. MOORE: Yes.
3 MS. ZOOK: Yes.
4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So did --
5 MS. ZOOK: As far as I know. I don't know.
6 DR. PFEFFER: Did Mr. Williamson vote before he
7 left?
8 MS. ZOOK: He did not.
9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So let's do a quick
10 roll-call. Okay.
11 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Zook.
12 MS. ZOOK: No, for the reasons I stated.
13 DR. PFEFFER: Dr. Hill.
14 DR. HILL: Yes.
15 DR. PFEFFER: Mr. Williamson. Ms. Chambers.
16 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.
17 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. McPetridge.
18 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes.
19 DR. PFEFFER: Dr. Moore.
20 DR. MOORE: No, and -- but I'll do my better
21 homework in the future before I come to better
22 understand what's going on here.
23 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Newton.
24 MS. NEWTON: Yes.
25 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Dean.

1 MS. DEAN: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. The vote is 5-to-2 in
3 favor.

4 B-10: CONSIDERATION OF THE SECOND ROUND FOR ARKANSAS BETTER
5 CHANCE 2019-2020 GRANTS

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Item 10 are -- is the
7 second round of the ABC 2019-2020 grants.

8 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes. And this is -- we've had
9 some closure of programs and changes, and we're
10 requesting that we award the relinquished slots to
11 the following programs: Arkansas River Co-op, eight
12 slots; Crowley's Ridge Education Co-op, 20 slots;
13 Dawson Education Co-op, 20 slots; and West Memphis,
14 40 slots.

15 And then, in addition to that, when we are
16 setting up new classrooms it takes funds to make sure
17 that those classrooms have the materials and
18 supplies. So Arkansas State, one classroom at
19 \$10,000; Crowley's Ridge, one classroom, \$10,000;
20 Fort Smith, two classrooms at \$20,000; and West
21 Memphis, two classrooms at \$20,000.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any questions?

23 Okay. So I'd entertain a motion on the second
24 round of the ABC grants.

25 MS. NEWTON: Move to approve.

1 DR. HILL: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Motion by Ms. Newton,
3 second by Ms. -- Dr. Hill.

4 All in favor say "aye."

5 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Any opposed?

7 All right. Thanks.

8 MS. UNDERWOOD: Thanks.

9 B-11: PROVISION OF ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE (ABC) 2018-2019
10 FUNDING TARGETING FOSTER CARE

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And then next we have the
12 foster care funding.

13 MS. UNDERWOOD: Right. Last September, the
14 Board approved additional funding to serve children
15 in foster care for those ABC programs that were above
16 -- over and above the approved funding amounts for
17 the current year. So we're requesting that -- at the
18 end of the year when we looked at everything,
19 Bentonville, DeQueen/Mena Co-op, Siloam Springs, and
20 South Conway County in Morrilton were serving foster
21 children above their awarded slots. So we're asking
22 that you approve these.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any questions regarding
24 this item?

25 Dr. Moore.

1 DR. MOORE: Yes, I do. So do centers receive
2 additional funds per foster care student? How does
3 that work?

4 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am. What we've done,
5 we're working with foster care and also homeless
6 children and youth. As they are coming in -- of
7 course we -- AR Better Chance -- Arkansas Better
8 Chance -- with the three- and four-year olds, let's
9 say that they have a classroom of 20 children. There
10 are two teachers to 20 children, and we keep that
11 ratio. But when a foster child comes in we know that
12 a lot of times those foster children come in in the
13 middle of the night; so the foster parents -- we're
14 looking to make sure that they have quality programs
15 to come to. So we've asked our programs, "If you
16 have a classroom that is licensed above the 20 and
17 you can handle the number 21 that you go ahead and
18 take those foster children." And, of course, they
19 send us information; we double-check and make sure
20 they truly are foster children or homeless children.
21 Then if there is a slot, an ABC slot, when that opens
22 up we allow those children to go ahead and enroll.
23 But if there's not a slot they may stay the 21st
24 child, maybe for one month, maybe two months, maybe
25 three months. So that's what we've done, that we

1 make sure that we're helping to fund those children.

2 DR. MOORE: Okay. And do these funds need to be
3 spent on the children or they just roll it to the
4 general budget for the program?

5 MS. UNDERWOOD: They're for the services of the
6 children.

7 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

8 MS. UNDERWOOD: Uh-huh.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any additional
10 questions?

11 All right. I'd entertain a motion on this item.

12 MS. NEWTON: Move to approve.

13 MS. DEAN: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.
15 Newton, second by Ms. Dean.

16 All in favor say "aye."

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

19 Okay.

20 B-12: CONSIDERATION OF REMAINING ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE
21 FUNDING

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And then, finally, we have some
23 2018-2019 remaining funds.

24 MS. UNDERWOOD: Right. Each year we have
25 programs that have children on sliding fee scales or

1 they haven't filled their slots. We had a couple of
2 programs have to close in the middle of the year. So
3 we have funds remaining. So we put this together and
4 there are several areas that we would like to have
5 approved:

6 The continuation of AmeriCorps schools in the
7 Southeast Arkansas Education Co-op -- they provide
8 assistance to at-risk preschool children in reading
9 and math across eight different counties, and they
10 serve as a conduit for the introduction of teacher
11 education.

12 Then we also have several programs that serve
13 infants and toddlers. And as you know, last year our
14 rate for each child was \$4,860 a year. That's not a
15 lot for infants and toddlers when you're considering
16 diapers and formula and wipes and all of that. So we
17 looked at our programs that are serving infants and
18 toddlers and that do -- they don't receive any other
19 substantive funding, and we split these up. And it
20 came out to be about \$1,355 for those infants and
21 toddlers. So equating that with the \$4,860, then you
22 would have \$6,215 per infant/toddler to help with the
23 expenses.

24 And then the third was a payment reconciliation
25 to DeQueen/Mena and a one-time payment to Bryant

1 School District.

2 MS. ZOOK: Would you tell me again how much per
3 -- I'm sorry, I failed to get that.

4 MS. UNDERWOOD: Per child for center-based last
5 year was \$4,860.

6 MS. ZOOK: No, that I know.

7 MS. UNDERWOOD: Okay.

8 MS. ZOOK: On the infant and toddler what --

9 MS. UNDERWOOD: Oh, for the infant and toddler
10 -- combining that with our additional funds it was a
11 total of \$6,215.

12 MS. ZOOK: Okay. So it's an extra \$1200 say?

13 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am.

14 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

15 DR. MOORE: And I guess I'm misunderstanding or
16 I didn't do my homework; I'm sorry. But, so for
17 infant and toddler programs do they receive -- they
18 don't receive any state money from the ABC program,
19 if you're -- I think my understanding was the ABC
20 program just paid for three- and four-year olds. Is
21 that incorrect?

22 MS. UNDERWOOD: Well, okay. This goes way back
23 before we were -- the original money could serve --
24 according to the law, could serve infants, up to five
25 years of age.

1 DR. MOORE: Okay.

2 MS. UNDERWOOD: So those that have that original
3 money funding can serve infants and toddlers.

4 DR. MOORE: Okay. And I didn't realize that
5 many school districts are doing that --

6 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes, ma'am.

7 DR. MOORE: -- in those cases. And so do they
8 typically -- so they receive their per-pupil funding
9 for that no matter the age, and so this is just
10 filling in the gaps --

11 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

12 DR. MOORE: -- for those younger students?

13 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

14 DR. MOORE: Is there a cap on the number of
15 infant and toddler slots there are versus three- and
16 four-year or is it --

17 MS. UNDERWOOD: There is more three- and four-
18 year old dollars. When the new money came in, then
19 there was more funding for -- focused on serving
20 three- and four-year olds.

21 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. ZOOK: And if these are special children or
23 children with special needs do they also get the
24 Medicaid funding?

25 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

1 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Questions?

3 All right. I'll entertain a motion to approve
4 the, I guess, reallocation of these 2018-2019
5 dollars.

6 MS. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

7 MS. McFETRIDGE: So moved.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.
9 McFetridge. Is there a second?

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Second by Mr.
12 Williamson.

13 All in favor say "aye."

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

16 Thank you so much, Ms. Underwood.

17 MS. UNDERWOOD: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right.

19 MS. UNDERWOOD: Oh, and we were -- Dr. Moore, we
20 were talking about the research. If it's okay with
21 the Board, at a later time we'd like to bring our
22 researcher in that can share a little bit more
23 details of what we're doing.

24 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

25 MS. UNDERWOOD: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Fantastic. Great.

2 B-13: CONSIDERATION OF FINAL ACCREDITATION REPORT FISCAL YEAR
3 2018-2019: SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION FOR AKRNASAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
4 AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We are now down to
6 Item 7 -- let's see, I got lost --

7 MS. ZOOK: 13.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: 18 -- 18.

9 MS. ZOOK: 13.

10 MS. NEWTON: 13.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: 13. I'm sorry.

12 MS. ZOOK: I'm so glad, so next month when I do
13 this that I won't feel so bad.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So, Ms. Coffman, this is the
15 final accreditation report.

16 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. Annually, Public School
17 Accountability brings you the accreditation report,
18 and that's what you have attached for you today.

19 I would like to introduce Tracy Webb -- Tracy,
20 if you'll wave over there. Tracy is our new
21 coordinator of Standards Systems Support and
22 Monitoring. She will oversee Standards for
23 Accreditation, Standards and System Support Unit,
24 Charter Schools, and State and Federal Monitoring.
25 So from now on she'll be bringing you these reports.

1 The Standards team has worked very hard this
2 year. You know, we implemented a new set of
3 standards; we implemented a brand-new tool, the
4 Standards for Accreditation tool -- or otherwise
5 known in our office as the SFA tool. The tool is a
6 very transparent tool that looks at all of our data
7 systems and tells us if school districts are meeting
8 the Standards for Accreditation. So it looks at live
9 data every night, thanks to Arijit and his team, and
10 it not only lets us look at it point-in-time but it
11 lets the school district look at it point-in-time.
12 In addition to that, every month it takes a snapshot
13 to show where the school district and the schools are
14 in their efforts to stay accredited throughout the
15 school year. And so that snapshot is also emailed to
16 superintendents and principals just to remind them,
17 hey, you've got this great SFA tool that you can use
18 now.

19 So as a result of that work we -- our Standards
20 and Systems Support team has been on the phone or
21 emailing or sometimes been on-site with our school
22 districts. And I'm happy to report that as a result
23 of this work that we're going to have better data,
24 because we've found errors that caused things to flag
25 school districts. If they could, corrected those

1 immediately; if they were things that couldn't be
2 corrected immediately, they've put into place a plan
3 to get those corrected when the next window would
4 open for them to be able to do that.

5 I'm just really proud of our team, I'm really
6 proud of our school districts for working together to
7 try to meet the Standards for Accreditation.

8 So with that, I do present to you today the
9 final accreditation report for 2018-2019. As you
10 look through this, you'll see that every school
11 district is approved or accredited except for one,
12 which we've previously discussed was Lee County
13 School District and Lee County High School. They
14 remain under probation and will enter into the next
15 school year under probation. They will have to get
16 those policies, those procedures all corrected within
17 this next school year or face additional
18 ramifications of that, as according to our rules.

19 Once you review this today, and with your
20 approval, Arijit's team will once again run a final
21 report. That final report will be posted into our
22 system, archived onto our website. School districts
23 can go in and print their own accreditation reports
24 and file those for their records retention. So it's
25 become a very efficient system.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Coffman, can you talk
2 through the program approval --

3 MS. COFFMAN: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- the classification for the
5 -- and those are the Department of Youth Services
6 programs; correct?

7 MS. COFFMAN: Yes. So Department of Youth
8 Services does not use eSchool and eFinance. So our
9 system doesn't have all of -- our SFA tool doesn't
10 have the ability to run all of their systems. They
11 use the ASIS program. And so what we had to do with
12 them is sit down with them, we went through every
13 standard and documented how they serve students, and
14 through that program approval we were able to
15 accredit them. They are undergoing a change in their
16 leadership starting with the next school year; so we
17 will meet with them very shortly, after July, to make
18 sure that they're on the right track with their new
19 management system as well.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. And what about the
21 possibility of them moving into the system? Is that
22 -- was that discussed in terms of --

23 MS. COFFMAN: No, that was not discussed.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

25 MS. COFFMAN: That's a different agency totally

1 and not -- won't be a part of us under the
2 transformation.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Right, whole different agency.
4 But those are public school students; right?

5 MS. COFFMAN: That's correct.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And, you know, I think, you
7 know, when kids go into juvenile detention it becomes
8 even more vital that we get it right in terms of
9 education. And so the -- you know, whatever we can
10 do to normalize the education process within those
11 schools the better we're going to be as a state, so
12 --

13 MS. COFFMAN: DYS is very good about
14 communicating back with their school districts. They
15 do have students that graduate while housed there.
16 Students are not housed there for long periods of
17 time, so there is quite a bit of mobility back and
18 forth to the traditional schools --

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Right. I know we have rules --

20 MS. COFFMAN: -- or charter schools.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I know we have rules on how
22 that's counted --

23 MS. COFFMAN: That's correct.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- and all that, so --
25 Okay. Questions?

1 MS. ZOOK: Okay. I see on here -- you mentioned
2 Lee County. This says Probationary 2. Is that two
3 schools or two -- they're both in Region 5.

4 MS. COFFMAN: That's two --

5 MS. ZOOK: Schools in the district?

6 MS. COFFMAN: There are two, a school and a
7 district --

8 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

9 MS. COFFMAN: -- within that region. And if you
10 scroll on down in your page you'll see that it's Lee
11 County District and Lee County High School.

12 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Thank you.

13 MS. COFFMAN: This top page is just a quick
14 summary page.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. So this
16 comes as a recommendation from the Department. If
17 for some reason the final run did find some deviation
18 here that would --

19 MS. COFFMAN: No.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Not going to --

21 MS. COFFMAN: School is out.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

23 MS. COFFMAN: It's over.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: We're good. Okay.

25 MS. COFFMAN: We're done.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Just wanted to be sure
2 that we --

3 MS. COFFMAN: So we can get started with the
4 next one.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: That's what your life is about,
6 right?

7 MS. COFFMAN: That's right.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Okay. So it comes
9 from the Department to approve this final
10 accreditation report for this academic year.

11 MS. ZOOK: Move to approve --

12 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

13 MS. ZOOK: -- or accept, whatever.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Uh-huh. All right. Motion by
15 Ms. Zook, second by Mr. Williamson.

16 All in favor say "aye."

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed?

19 Thank you, Ms. Coffman.

20 MS. COFFMAN: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Now we can scoot down.

22 I apologize for missing that one before.

23 B-18: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT: DOLLARWAY SCHOOL
24 DISTRICT

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: We now have five different

1 legislative reports from the five districts that are
2 under state authority, and Dr. Hernandez is going to
3 walk us through what we're going to do here.

4 DR. HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon. Mike Hernandez,
5 State Superintendent for Office of Coordinated
6 Support and Service.

7 We've got five wonderful state-appointed
8 superintendents here. I told them a while ago that
9 we've got enough for a basketball team, so -- no, Dr.
10 Hill, we don't need a football team. So, we're good.

11 So we're going to start out today with Dollarway
12 School District. This is kind of our final report,
13 kind of finishing out the school year. So a lot of
14 the reports that you have -- if you remember, they're
15 historical, so they've got things that we started
16 with in the summer in terms of school level plans.
17 Those plans are in the process of being updated,
18 which they're supposed to be on the website by August
19 1st; so we're in the process of reviewing all the
20 school level plans, updating based on the work that
21 is going to be done for next year. We started some
22 of those meetings around what the district is going
23 to do to support these schools; in addition to that,
24 what is -- what the Department will do specifically
25 in each system to leverage the resources here to

1 support those in those various areas. That will come
2 to you in September as part of that report.
3 Hopefully we'll have some of the testing data in
4 between then to be able to update you on where we are
5 in terms of ACT Aspire and those types of things.
6 The ESSA School Index will be after that September
7 report, but you'll get an update on that as well.

8 So we're going to start out with Dollarway. Ms.
9 Warren and Ms. Davis are here. You know, they are
10 still continuing in the PLC work and they have
11 completed that first year of working closely with the
12 embedded coaching model with the school level
13 leadership person, the district level leadership
14 person, as well as the content specialist. Their
15 school is working to develop that. And so if you --
16 you know, you probably don't remember a lot of these
17 things, but at the very beginning there was a Needs
18 Assessment that was done that asked a lot of
19 questions regarding several areas within the PLC
20 process and how they were set up, and I know we got a
21 lot of zeros. Right? We weren't where we needed to
22 be. And so they've started to move the needle in
23 that -- you know, the staff, the district not fully
24 understanding what it meant to be involved in a PLC,
25 a lot of the questions and things that they were

1 asked; there was not a general understanding. And so
2 a recent survey that was done moved them further down
3 the needle -- not that they're at a sustainable
4 place, but the staff as a whole -- when you see that
5 79% is that the respondents are feeling that they're
6 implementing and developing through that process,
7 which is a good sign.

8 30-60-90 day plans in working with the Solution
9 Tree coaches are in the process of being updated.
10 What they're going to do next year -- the staff also
11 recently attended, along with the Department, a
12 School Improvement For All conference, which is led
13 by the people that are doing the embedded coaching,
14 to kind of grow their understanding of what the
15 expectations are as building level leaders. A big
16 step for them is getting the curriculum, continuing
17 to refine that and get it out where it's open to
18 everybody. So this is probably one of the best
19 districts that I've seen that has a very high ability
20 of using LiveBinders. So if you've ever been
21 familiar with LiveBinders, they're very good at that.
22 So a lot of things that come to us are via
23 LiveBinders. They're doing their student success
24 plans in that manner, and so they'll be starting to
25 migrate their curriculum documents over to that. And

1 so the really neat thing about that is -- something
2 we struggle with a lot is, you know, do we go in and
3 help these schools by providing the curriculum or do
4 they develop it and grow on their own with
5 partnership and support. And so they're in that
6 process. You know, they're having their
7 collaborative team meetings, they're reviewing their
8 data, they're making decisions, and they're starting
9 to build these things on their own, which we hope is
10 going to move them towards that sustainability.

11 They do have -- they've been going through PBIS
12 and have their behavior matrices in place. Although
13 they -- they started to show some good trends in
14 discipline data, but kind of in this fourth quarter,
15 you know, there were some upticks. If you've looked
16 at the data on the sheet, we see that there was
17 upticks in some discipline areas that they know they
18 have to correct.

19 The writing scores -- according to the district,
20 when you look at the interim assessments that have
21 been given have slightly shown some increases as well
22 there. They are signed up and ready to go for year-
23 two embedded coaching with PLC. We have it set-up as
24 kind of a three-year process. So they've gone
25 through that first initial getting started. We're

1 hoping to see a lot more sustainability and
2 development this year. They are also in the process
3 of getting some training related to RISE, additional
4 training related to that, and then starting to look
5 for more of that implementation. And so what we run
6 into a lot with these districts are that, you know,
7 they've been to the training, but we're trying to get
8 to where we're implementing -- and sometimes that
9 means more holistically, not only getting the
10 training implemented but making sure that the
11 resources are there. We hear time and again from not
12 just these -- the teachers in this school but
13 teachers across the state is that, you know, they may
14 be learning about these things but they don't have
15 the right texts in their classrooms. And so we're in
16 the process of helping align those things and get
17 those things ready for next year.

18 One thing that, you know, as you've looked at
19 these things, the data quality, I know Ms. Warren has
20 some updated documents for it. Something that we're
21 trying to be more cognizant of is that, as these
22 reports are coming out, to make sure that the data is
23 correct. There was some discrepancy around the
24 discipline data -- I don't know if you've had a
25 chance to look at that -- related to the five or more

1 cases. And so they do have an updated version of
2 that to share with you.

3 As we're revamping the District support plans
4 and school level plans, we are keeping in mind as
5 well the exit criteria. And what we really want to
6 happen there is that the school level plans -- as the
7 principals really fully understand what the exit
8 criteria is school level plans start to drive towards
9 those, especially the qualitative measures and the
10 characteristics that we want to see. The district
11 support plan also supports that work. And then we've
12 even extended it out to, you know, how we go about
13 working with the superintendents in terms of the
14 expectations that are set out as -- we're expecting
15 things to move towards these things, these
16 characteristics in terms of exit criteria. And so
17 that way we kind of -- as a whole team, including the
18 State Board, is we know how -- if we're -- how we're
19 making progress in these areas. And I know there's
20 lots of other things we can be, you know, discussing
21 and looking at, but it kind of gives us a more solid
22 approach in what we're looking at from every quarter
23 as far as updates.

24 The other part that the district mentioned
25 specifically to discipline is there's a lot of

1 numbers being put into the "other" category; so
2 trying to get in there and really decipher out, you
3 know, why is this "other" category being used and not
4 having more consistency around the district in terms
5 of how they're defining their discipline categories
6 within their district.

7 They did have a change this year. As they've
8 been working in the PLC process what they've noticed
9 is they're not getting the data to help make
10 decisions as well as they can with the ACT Aspire
11 interims. And so they did migrate over to STAR
12 testing and so this was that year where they were
13 doing both. And so next year they're intending to
14 use more of the STAR testing, is what we've talked
15 about, so that way we can kind of see how does this
16 last year compare with next year as we start to get
17 more into that testing information.

18 Related to the exit criteria, we did embed that
19 link within your report but we structured it the same
20 around qualitative measures. We want to make sure
21 that they have collaborative teams and they're
22 functioning. We feel like the District -- one of the
23 first steps we've got to do is we've got to make sure
24 we get with the principals and go through what these
25 exit criteria exactly mean; what are some of those

1 artifacts and evidences that we would expect to see
2 in terms of showing that these qualitative measures
3 are being met. So we're in the process of setting
4 that up. But the same things -- we want to see that
5 instructional practices are implemented. It's not
6 that these things aren't being done at the District;
7 as you'll see in other exit criteria, it's just that
8 we haven't had a process set up to gather these
9 things. And so as we start to update these exit
10 criteria plans with the evidence you'll start to see
11 these are the artifacts and things that we're showing
12 -- not that they're just getting trained in it, but
13 they're actually implementing these practices.

14 As far as the quantitative data, we did have a
15 lot of discussion with Ms. Warren and also Dr. Owoh
16 as we started to set up these things. And to kind of
17 address some of the questions Dr. Barth asked about
18 high school -- and so, you know, kind of two
19 different opinions. You know, Dr. Owoh, you know, he
20 really thought about the numbers being hard to -- as
21 far as the In Need of Support kids, that number
22 growing to be smaller than overall; when that number
23 especially in high school is so big how do we
24 overcome that in kind of a short amount of time. You
25 know, so there was that part of it as being a

1 question. I know Ms. Warren took the approach of,
2 hey, you know, we want to improve; we want to try to
3 meet those things -- and Dr. Owoh too. So we kind of
4 decided to leave it the same. But one of the aspects
5 of it is that criteria is only set up as a way for
6 you guys to gauge are we seeing progress. So if we
7 start to see that In Needs of Support number,
8 especially in the high school, starting to go down
9 and the other categories start to grow, well, that's
10 progress. And so it'll be at that point when you
11 guys would have to make the decision was that -- is
12 that enough progress. And one of kind of the side
13 notes of that, especially in high schools where those
14 cut scores are for the letter grades, if you start to
15 move kids out of that In Need of Support category,
16 even though that number may not be smaller, you're
17 going to probably see a -- because of growth you'll
18 probably see a letter grade change. And so if that
19 letter grade change would happen to move from an F to
20 a D that automatically is an opportunity for them to
21 be meeting that exit criteria. So it's kind of a
22 two-part thing, and so I think that kind of helps a
23 little bit with the high school conversation.

24 Fiscal distress plan -- you know, we're very
25 happy to report that most of the objectives on their

1 fiscal distress plan, that's also linked in your
2 report, have been met. We are waiting on kind of the
3 fiscal year -- end of this year's balances to
4 finalize, which will be around August 31st, and the
5 new budget that'll be due September 30th. And once
6 that is -- what our plan is now is under the new
7 legislation that was passed is we have the mechanism
8 where we don't just release you from fiscal distress;
9 we kind of move you back into a lower tier. And so
10 we've been doing that with the District quite a bit
11 this year where we started to give them bigger
12 thresholds in what they have to ask us for when -- or
13 submit that request when they're purchasing things.
14 And so we've been working on those things throughout
15 the year to try to get them ready for that gradual
16 release piece.

17 One additional thing that's not up here is that
18 we are getting ready to put out information for the
19 Dollarway community to let them know we're looking
20 for members for the Community Advisory Board. We're
21 hoping to bring those names to you in August, if we
22 get sufficient response and feedback to seat seven
23 members for that board. I know there is some
24 concerns about because of the way that the District
25 is broken up into sections, the seven different

1 zones, is that there's not usually some response from
2 some of those areas. And so there have been some
3 questions about potentially doing some at-large type
4 things. But the issue with changing those boundaries
5 or doing anything at this point would be that at the
6 time they might go back to local control with an
7 elected board the census data will be up and we'll
8 just have to go back and change it again. So we've
9 talked a little bit about that. And right now we're
10 going to see what we get with the seven-member board
11 with the current mapping configuration and then make
12 a decision from that.

13 So with that -- I tried to do three slides -- a
14 school district -- successful in most parts of it.
15 But with that, I do have Ms. Warren here if there are
16 other questions that you want to ask or information
17 -- they are prepared here to answer any questions you
18 might have.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Thank you, Dr.
20 Hernandez.

21 And so we're going to really move to Q&A. It
22 sounds like you do have an additional handout. But I
23 think we're just going to move to Q&A, if that's all
24 right, Ms. Warren.

25 MS. WARREN: Yes, sir.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. I'll see -- Ms.
2 House, anything, any questions related to --

3 MS. HOUSE: No.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

5 DR. MOORE: Sure. I did just -- in case anyone
6 else notices, I did notice on the updated budget
7 projections we got that I don't think it was all the
8 way filled out because it did show that there was a
9 negative balance coming in. But that's what you
10 addressed will be filled out by July?

11 DR. HERNANDEZ: So in the very top line is --
12 that's kind of a living budget. So when those
13 numbers get pulled what that -- all that's showing is
14 that -- they typically receipt the revenue at the end
15 of the month; so all it means is the revenue for that
16 month hasn't been receipted. So that's --

17 DR. MOORE: Okay, so nothing to be concerned
18 about. Okay.

19 How are you doing as far as building-wise
20 principals? Will they -- are you able to retain your
21 principals for next year, and staffing? How does
22 that look?

23 MS. WARREN: Okay. Hello, everybody. Very good
24 to see everyone.

25 Yes, we actually are having a change next year

1 within our middle school. We are -- our middle
2 school principal currently seated is going to become
3 our athletic director. And I'm very excited about
4 the candidate we have coming in. She's actually been
5 in a school district -- in the Dumas School District
6 and she has been involved in a turnaround. So, very
7 excited to have Ms. Thompson come aboard.

8 DR. MOORE: Oh, great.

9 MS. WARREN: But the other principals will be
10 there along with us next year.

11 DR. MOORE: Great.

12 MS. WARREN: Not much shift in our
13 administrative team this year.

14 DR. MOORE: That's good for continuity's sake.

15 MS. WARREN: Absolutely.

16 DR. MOORE: And then as far as teachers, do you
17 have a lot of vacancies or have you been able to fill
18 them going into the next school year?

19 MS. WARREN: We actually are about 95% staffed.
20 And I made a few little notes to share. We are still
21 in need of two General Ed. teachers at the middle
22 school level; we need two Special Education teachers
23 -- and we have served in that area in the emergency
24 teacher permit teachers who we've actually been
25 trying to groom and support. At the high school we

1 have one opening, but we have a recommendation for
2 the high school. And then at James Matthews, our
3 elementary campus, we have an opening for two
4 teachers.

5 So at this point in time for us -- Dr. Pfeffer
6 -- and she knows very, very clearly for us to be in
7 this place at this time is outstanding.

8 DR. MOORE: Good.

9 MS. WARREN: Yes, very excited.

10 DR. MOORE: Good. And I wish you luck as you
11 continue to find those other replacements.

12 MS. WARREN: Yes.

13 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

14 MS. WARREN: Thank you. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Mr. Williamson,
16 anything?

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: No.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook, anything?

19 MS. ZOOK: Yes. I noticed on the report
20 separate from yours that y'all had eight teachers
21 last year that were long-term subs all year. Do you
22 -- are you --

23 MS. WARREN: I'm sorry, say that again, Ms.
24 Zook.

25 MS. ZOOK: Eight positions that were long-term

1 subs for the whole year. Are those positions now
2 being filled? Are any of those long-term subs going
3 on to ALPs or what's the plan there?

4 MS. WARREN: So part of those would be the three
5 Emergency Teacher Permits. And we've actually
6 shifted in most of those cases away from long-term
7 subs, and we have engaged with a diverse group of
8 teachers who are coming in. Several of them are
9 already licensed and highly qualified. But we are
10 looking at especially a specialty area tied to ESL
11 support and ELA and ETP, but it's en route. So we
12 have reduced those numbers down to the few Special
13 Ed. teachers that we are needing to capture.

14 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And your teachers will be able
15 to participate in the Move Forward Pine Bluff
16 Promise, is that right, where they will get their
17 master's degree paid for?

18 MS. WARREN: Yes.

19 MS. ZOOK: Am I correct with that?

20 MS. WARREN: There is an application process and
21 -- absolutely, the -- we're really excited about
22 that. I think you all may have seen that Tweeted
23 out. Thanks for mentioning. But absolutely. It is
24 an application process, but we superintendents in the
25 city are the ones who vet those applications.

1 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And it's my understanding from
2 Dr. Hernandez that there will be a full audit of your
3 dyslexia and special ed. program in the fall --

4 MS. WARREN: That is correct.

5 MS. ZOOK: -- when you actually have students?

6 MS. WARREN: That is correct.

7 MS. ZOOK: You know, there isn't much point in
8 doing one this month, is there?

9 Do you believe at this point that your
10 principals are trained enough in the Science of
11 Reading to be instructional leaders once those
12 teachers have been trained, so that you will get
13 implementation as opposed to just training?

14 MS. WARREN: So secondary, of course, didn't go
15 through programming that supported reading like, of
16 course, elementary. Our elementary principal, who
17 was a literacy instructional facilitator, has gone
18 through RISE and has -- she's in a very -- she's in
19 an excellent place to provide great support. The
20 middle school principal who's coming in, she has been
21 exposed to Science of Reading. But I will say yes --
22 but we are all -- all of the administrators are not
23 only going through like the 18 hours of the awareness
24 but we're going through the like six days of RISE and
25 our pathway in Brains Read to better position all of

1 us to support. So I think we have a very good
2 understanding. I think we are probably even a little
3 beyond the awareness, but there's still some work to
4 do to position us to evaluate support and recommend
5 instructional practices to get us where we need to
6 go.

7 MS. ZOOK: And do they acknowledge and realize
8 that they're headed there but not there?

9 MS. WARREN: Oh, yes. And we're very
10 encouraged, of course, about how far we've come.

11 MS. ZOOK: Yes.

12 MS. WARREN: But I think we're very realistic
13 about how far we've got to go too; so absolutely.

14 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And do you know whether or not
15 your high school principal or those that work on your
16 master plan have built in -- are you on block or
17 regular?

18 MS. WARREN: No, we're on a regular schedule.
19 Yes.

20 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Do you know whether there has
21 been any talk or building in of specific reading
22 instruction for those students? Because I know you
23 and I have been concerned the whole time about --

24 MS. WARREN: Absolutely.

25 MS. ZOOK: -- the ones who did not make as much

1 progress as they're capable of in the elementary
2 grades. So do you -- have y'all thought through that
3 in any way?

4 MS. WARREN: Absolutely. We are having much --
5 we're having very pointed conversations, especially
6 secondary, related to it. Fifth and sixth grade is
7 going to have like a transition from elementary and
8 we're double-blocking math and double-blocking
9 literacy and we're embedding 5-12 the critical and
10 strategic reading courses. We are -- we have
11 increased the instructional time for literacy by --
12 we're not on block, but kind of double-blocking --

13 MS. ZOOK: Yeah.

14 MS. WARREN: -- for interventions that are going
15 to be very targeted, and targeted for reading. So we
16 understand the gaps there and we're trying to make
17 certain there's more instructional time. As a matter
18 of fact, when we're together weekly we talk about the
19 master schedule and those implications and we're
20 trying to make certain that we are providing time for
21 quality interventions. Yes, ma'am.

22 MS. ZOOK: Good. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Great.

24 Ms. Dean? Ms. Chambers? Dr. Hill, anything?
25 Ms. Newton?

1 MS. NEWTON: I just want to take time to
2 congratulate you and the team at your school and here
3 at the ADE for completing most of your objectives on
4 the fiscal distress plan. I know that was -- you
5 know, we don't want to gloss over that. That was a
6 lot of work and working together. And we know when
7 one system improves all systems start to improve.

8 MS. WARREN: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. NEWTON: So thank you for all that hard
10 work.

11 MS. WARREN: Thank you.

12 MS. NEWTON: And also thank you for the work to
13 get to an exit plan. I mean, if we even have a plan
14 then we're making progress. So it's always nice to
15 have goals and seeing some progress toward those
16 goals. Congratulations.

17 MS. WARREN: Thank you for that. Very proud of
18 the District. Very, very proud of the efforts and
19 our working together closely.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. McFetridge, anything?

21 MS. McFETRIDGE: No, I'm good.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Anything else over here?

23 Ms. Warren, I've enjoyed getting to know you a
24 bit in the last few years.

25 MS. WARREN: And I've enjoyed getting to know

1 you too, sir.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So thank you and I look forward
3 to watching the continued progress.

4 MS. WARREN: Excellent. I appreciate it.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So, Dr. Hernandez, anything in
6 conclusion?

7 DR. HERNANDEZ: No.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. So is there a
9 motion to accept this report?

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: So moved.

11 DR. HILL: Second.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Mr.
13 Williamson, second by Dr. Hill.

14 All in favor say "aye."

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

17 Okay. Thank you.

18 B-19: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT: EARLE SCHOOL
19 DISTRICT

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And now we move to Earle.

21 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So we'll move into Earle.
22 And I do want to -- I'll go through this, but I do
23 want to reserve a little bit of Q&A time for Dr.
24 Wilde. This is his last farewell time. So we did
25 get to enjoy his retirement party -- was it last

1 weekend? -- last weekend, and in Earle, so it was
2 very nice. But I do want to reserve a little bit of
3 time for him.

4 As you can see, kind of the focus that they've
5 taken within the Earle School District is trying to
6 get more voice around to teaching staff, to the
7 community, and also students. They've been very
8 active with their student government association;
9 most recently, have had conversations with them about
10 what have they seen within their instruction in
11 classes and what are their needs that they feel like
12 aren't being met, and kind of gathering that
13 information to make modifications in their plans.
14 They did have a contract recently with AdvancEd that
15 came out and used their new diagnostic tool to come
16 out and do kind of an assessment of where the
17 district was in several areas, and kind of gave them
18 some good points in addition to the things that we've
19 been doing to give them a little bit of guidance
20 about what they should be improving within their
21 various systems within the District.

22 A note on the high school, you know, our
23 original -- or Dr. Wilde's original idea of within
24 the 7-12 was bringing in the literacy and math
25 teachers as Emergency Teacher Permits, but also

1 pairing them by using Virtual Arkansas as kind of
2 that content support for the teacher that could learn
3 and kind of grow and hopefully develop within that.
4 Unfortunately, you know, they were only able to hang
5 on to one of those people so far -- and that's still
6 one, right, Dr. Wilde?

7 SUPT. WILDE: Yes.

8 DR. HERNANDEZ: They haven't left yet, so we've
9 still got one. But that does remain to be a concern.
10 One of the things that we are doing is we're -- Dr.
11 Wilde is working with Ms. Knowles on developing a
12 matrix of doing some alternative type compensation
13 plans for some of their hard-to-staff areas, and some
14 of that is trying to draw people not only to work at
15 the District but potentially to move in the District.
16 So we're awaiting that so we can review under the new
17 legislation that allows for those varying type of pay
18 scales and structures to help to recruit and retain
19 quality staff members.

20 The District also both in elementary and high
21 school purchased what are called critical concepts,
22 and those are essentially, just like in the PLC
23 world, essential standards or power standards to help
24 the District and to take those and to start to align
25 their resources in building curriculum. So they've

1 started down that road over the summer. Our hope is
2 to kind of start training and developing some year-
3 at-a-glances, some potential example units, and then
4 work with the District staff in consultation with our
5 co-op and curriculum staff there, content
6 specialists, to go throughout the year to start to
7 build and put together a curriculum for the District.
8 And so by starting out with these critical concepts
9 kind of helps them narrow their focus into what --
10 which standards that they're really going to focus on
11 and make sure that their instruction is guided around
12 those.

13 As you can see, what they did with their early
14 release date is where they were doing a lot of
15 professional development related to DOK, literacy,
16 and those types of things. They've also had -- APSRC
17 has been an active partner with them in doing some
18 training related to the curriculum work to help to
19 build those teachers. You know, one of the things
20 that we wrestle with is that teachers are coming in,
21 we spend a lot of time and energy training them, and
22 then they go. And somebody sent me a quote earlier
23 today that said, you know, training somebody and
24 having them leave is not as bad as not training them
25 and having them stay.

1 MS. ZOOK: I agree.

2 DR. HERNANDEZ: So that's pretty -- a good way
3 to look at it is, you know, at least it's going to
4 benefit some other kid at least somewhere down the
5 road if we're training people to be quality.

6 The big thing with what we're doing around
7 Science of Reading is we've actively had -- just like
8 we had in Little Rock, we've had somebody going in
9 weekly and providing updates and reports on how the
10 implementation of RISE has been going. And, you
11 know, just like with other districts, you know, it
12 started out we're not seeing -- we're not seeing
13 things that are happening. But over time and
14 involving the principals and getting that -- the
15 curriculum staff, we started to see progress where,
16 you know, teachers are starting to implement these
17 things within their classroom. And so that's kind of
18 the model we're planning to use with all the
19 districts. You know, it's not just going to be
20 check-ins; there's going to be teams of people within
21 these districts that are going in and insuring that
22 implementation is happening and support the work of
23 the school district and the district office to make
24 sure these things are being implemented.

25 What we're doing as far as continued work --

1 we're going to help them. One of their requests was
2 to help the district level folks develop a more
3 formal monitoring process so they can make sure that
4 they understand what they should be looking for and
5 make that clearly understandable to teachers, the
6 community, and staff. And then also I think that'll
7 be driven by -- if you remember, Earle asked for
8 Level 5 support, so we're going to be developing an
9 exit plan with them. And all those things will tie
10 together to make sure that implementation of these
11 things are happening.

12 Their instructional facilitators, along with
13 specialists from the co-op, will be working with the
14 teachers elbow-to-elbow to help them develop things
15 around formative assessment, and then also around
16 instructional practices. They are studying right now
17 and using a process with the teacher expectation and
18 student achievement, what they call the TESA model,
19 and that's really geared towards peer observation.
20 So that's getting the teachers that are in the
21 building in to teach others' classrooms so they can
22 have kind of a framework and a meaningful
23 conversation around those things. And so we've been
24 talking about that and then how that will --
25 ultimately how that aligns to the framework that we

1 use now for TESS and how we support those teachers in
2 the classroom.

3 I mentioned about the curriculum development and
4 then how we'll be doing that around the summertime in
5 trying to get them to a place where those curriculum
6 units are being development and is something that's
7 there to support any new teachers that are coming to
8 the District. That way, they don't come in with just
9 getting the textbook and the standards and say, you
10 know -- so that's just a process that we're having to
11 go through.

12 Exit criteria -- we actually met with the team
13 on June 6th and started the -- actually, it was
14 really impressive. The District did a really good
15 job of having each building present kind of all of
16 their data to us about how -- here's what we thought
17 about in terms of our school level plan at the
18 beginning of the year, here's where some things
19 didn't necessarily move the needle, here's how we're
20 thinking about addressing them. And at the same time
21 we had conversations about where do the supports come
22 in from the Department. So when you look at
23 academics we're going to have people like Rocky
24 Malone going in and supporting the principals around
25 TESS, the LEADS model. We'll also have them working

1 master schedules, all the things that principals
2 should be doing. In addition to that, we'll have
3 curriculum support. And so we started to plan out
4 all the different things that will need to happen
5 that will ultimately kind of help us craft what that
6 exit plan looks like for Level 5.

7 In terms of their fiscal distress plan, they
8 have met some objectives. We're going to review the
9 end-of-the-year budget and also get ready for next
10 year's budget. We do have that continued payment for
11 federal funds where they had misspent, when we first
12 did state takeover. Loss of enrollment -- and their
13 fund balance, you know, we finished last year with
14 around \$200,000. We're expecting that to be about
15 the same. But it's a struggle, I mean, you know,
16 when you're losing kids and still trying to provide
17 quality education for the students and you're
18 building a building at the same time. You know,
19 we're kind of at that last leg of building the
20 elementary school; so getting into that where the
21 elementary school will be ready to open. There will
22 still be some landscaping work to be done. But all
23 of is moving parts and we're just really, you know,
24 holding our breath to make sure we're very diligent
25 about how the monies are getting spent. And so we're

1 probably going to take a slow approach. As you heard
2 earlier today, some districts are jumping out there
3 and increasing that salary really quickly, and so
4 we're being more cautious with Earle about how we
5 raise that, but also potentially utilize some of our
6 NSL funds with the new law and adjusting salary
7 schedules to recruit and retain. So that's just a
8 dance we're going to have to do for a little while
9 with the District as we try to get them on the right
10 footing in terms of finances.

11 So with that, I will turn it over to Q&A for Dr.
12 Wilde.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Just a quick question for you
14 on the exit criteria in terms of this board, looking
15 at those. When do you anticipate that kind of coming
16 back?

17 DR. HERNANDEZ: So we will have that -- all of
18 it as part of September's packet.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Great. Thank you.
20 Dr. Wilde, great to see you.

21 SUPT. WILDE: Richard Wilde, Earle School
22 District.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great.

24 Ms. McPetridge, any --

25 Do you want -- anything you want to open with or

1 any response quickly before we entertain questions?

2 SUPT. WILDE: No. I think this was --

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

4 SUPT. WILDE: -- a great summary.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

6 SUPT. WILDE: Obviously, there's a lot more
7 detail behind all of it, but --

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Sure.

9 SUPT. WILDE: -- a great summary.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Thank you.

11 Ms. McFetridge, anything?

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: I don't have anything.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Newton?

14 MS. NEWTON: I just want to thank you, Dr.
15 Wilde, for your hard work. And Earle, the community,
16 was very blessed to have you working with them over
17 these past few months. And thank you for your hard
18 work on behalf of the students, because I know you've
19 made a difference in lives. So thank you for all
20 you've done and wish you a great retirement. Hope
21 you enjoy --

22 SUPT. WILDE: Well, thank you.

23 MS. NEWTON: -- every minute.

24 DR. HILL: I echo those same sentiments.

25 Appreciate all the hard work that you're doing in

1 Earle to make a difference in lives of students.

2 MS. CHAMBERS: It's hard to add to that, but
3 thank you.

4 As you think about your transition -- and I
5 think it was a couple of slides back -- I may have
6 read it wrong. But I was wondering if you could
7 speak a bit, Dr. Wilde, to the -- a lack of maybe
8 high expectations for tests. Did I read that right?

9 SUPT. WILDE: Well, I think for the most part
10 we've had a culture of presentation to students
11 rather than an expectation of learning. And so as
12 you take a look at -- well, one of the major things
13 we're working on is our culture, because our culture
14 has been accepting a very low achievement. And so
15 that's I think the piece that you're referring to.
16 But it is -- we're conscious of it and we're seeking
17 to address it, but we're seeking to address it by
18 student voice, teacher voice. And, interestingly,
19 just within the last week we had a meeting with our
20 student government, and the student government is now
21 getting into academics. So one of the things we
22 asked of them is if you have a teacher, instead of
23 just telling the principal and having the principal
24 address it, let's invite that teacher -- if they're
25 not providing you what you think you should get,

1 let's invite that teacher to meet with the principal
2 and the students so you can talk about, not in a
3 complaint mode but in an expectation mode, "Here's
4 what we would like to have from you as the teacher."
5 So we're engaging students in that direction now.

6 MS. CHAMBERS: And you feel comfortable in this
7 transition -- as you step back are we prepared to
8 step in and fill that void?

9 SUPT. WILDE: Well, I think that in truth this
10 is going to be a long-term process. Do I feel
11 comfortable? I really bonded with Earle. So, no, I
12 don't feel comfortable. But at the same time I think
13 by bringing Ms. Knowles on early, the capacity
14 building we've done -- Dr. Hernandez and his team
15 actually have matured into great support. So I would
16 say I feel comfortable that we're on the right path
17 and we're putting the pieces in place for people to
18 be successful.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Dean?

20 MS. DEAN: I just want to echo what everyone
21 else's sentiments. Thank you for your service to so
22 many students across the state of Arkansas --

23 SUPT. WILDE: Thank you.

24 MS. DEAN: -- and as of late the students of
25 Earle. And I hope that you thoroughly enjoy your

1 retirement.

2 SUPT. WILDE: I will.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook, anything?

4 MS. ZOOK: Well, I was at the retirement party,
5 so it was -- I think the thing that struck me most --
6 obviously I've been a fan and a mentee of Dr. Wilde
7 for several years now and -- but to see the City
8 Council, the CAB, the ministers, the mayor, the
9 Chamber of Commerce -- everyone coming in and talking
10 about how he has shown them how important it is that
11 the whole community work together because of
12 students. And that and all the wonderful things they
13 said about him just reinforced all the wonderful
14 things I knew about him. So I do compliment you that
15 and feel very comfortable with the transition. I
16 appreciate the fact that y'all brought on Ms. Knowles
17 ahead of time so y'all could work together and you
18 sort of helped the community be ready for that.

19 I know that there will be a special ed. and a
20 dyslexia audit in the fall for --

21 SUPT. WILDE: Correct.

22 MS. ZOOK: -- the Earle School District. At
23 this point what kinds of things in the process of
24 becoming a strong instructional leader do you think
25 -- where do you think your principals are,

1 individually or as a group, in that process? And,
2 you know, did they get the RISE training? Did they
3 understand, like you say, how to work to collaborate
4 as opposed to accuse and point fingers? You know, is
5 that something that you're working on as well?

6 SUPT. WILDE: Very much. And as we look at our
7 -- we only have two principals, so --

8 MS. ZOOK: Right.

9 SUPT. WILDE: And both of them have -- are
10 maturing into instructional leaders. We have a ways
11 to go, so we've not yet arrived. But the level of
12 our conversation over the last 18 months has
13 significantly improved and the in-depth knowledge
14 that they have. Under stress you regress, and so
15 we've had some times where as things have gotten
16 towards the end of the year -- and stress always at
17 the end of the year -- we probably have regressed a
18 little bit back to old ways. But we're always
19 looking and reflecting on why are we doing what we're
20 doing. And I would say that there has truly been a
21 focus on -- we're gaining on the culture that it's
22 about the students, not about us, and so that's a
23 positive. And they're leading that. We've had very
24 serious conversation that the superintendent and the
25 principals are the ones that are primarily

1 responsible for the culture and if it doesn't change,
2 it rests with us.

3 MS. ZOOK: Yes. And as far -- I'll ask you the
4 same question I asked in Dollarway. When you're
5 looking at your master schedule are you thinking in
6 terms of addressing the reading needs of the students
7 that have not benefitted from the instruction they
8 need leading up to that?

9 SUPT. WILDE: And I'm going to defer that
10 question to Tish --

11 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

12 SUPT. WILDE: -- to talk about what we're doing
13 with core, and then I'll talk a little bit about what
14 we're doing to support core.

15 MS. ZOOK: Okay. As she's coming, I do want to
16 compliment you once again -- and I saw that when I
17 read Pine Bluff's report the same is true -- your
18 report is written in such a way that parents and
19 community members can look at it and fully understand
20 what's going on. They don't need to have an
21 education degree, they don't need to go "oh, no, this
22 wasn't in this quarter, this was a different" -- I
23 mean this was so concisely done, but at the same time
24 written in a way to communicate, not to hide, and I
25 certainly appreciate that. And I will give Dr. Owoh

1 the same compliment when he comes up as well. They
2 were just exceptional.

3 SUPT. WILDE: Great.

4 MS. KNOWLES: Tish Knowles, Earle School
5 District.

6 So to address the question about the reading and
7 where we've been and where we're going, this year all
8 of our teachers have gone through RISE. They've
9 completed -- some started year-before and so they've
10 completed RISE. In addition to that, we sent 14
11 teachers and one para through Phonics First the first
12 week of June and so they've had a double-dose; so
13 they've had the Science of Reading in both areas. Of
14 course with Phonics First, you know, there are two
15 additional days for the Science of Reading, but our
16 teachers have already been through RISE.

17 The support that we have received from Crowley's
18 Ridge Co-op -- they have been boots-on-the-ground in
19 our classrooms co-planning, co-teaching with our
20 teachers to help insure that RISE is being
21 implemented to the extent that it needs to be.

22 We also are looking at a possibility of sending
23 two of our high school teachers -- one teacher, one
24 para -- through Structures, in July, which is the 6-
25 12 piece of Brainspring Phonics First -- the second

1 piece; and so all of our high school teachers have
2 gone through the awareness piece as well. We have --
3 our principals have begun the awareness pieces. In
4 our district office, some of us have begun the
5 pieces. So we do have a plan in place to continue to
6 finish that and get our elementary principal taken
7 care of with the Science of Reading assessor piece.
8 And so we are looking at that.

9 And so in addition to that we are looking at
10 adding strategic reading back in this year because
11 we've realized that our reading ability as far as
12 students are not where we need it to be for them to
13 be successful as they move forward.

14 MS. ZOOK: Thanks.

15 DR. PFEFFER: And I wanted to -- because the
16 question has come up from a couple of different
17 people regarding principals and teachers with the
18 RISE training -- so the next step for our
19 administrators, for the principals especially at the
20 elementary levels where teachers have to show the
21 proficiency by the beginning of the 2021-22 school
22 year, I believe, those principals will all be going
23 through what Ms. Knowles referred to as the RISE
24 assessor academy. And so not only will they have
25 had, you know, the RISE training to -- this training

1 is helping them to learn what to look for in a
2 classroom to make sure that the training is being
3 implemented. And so that's something we'll -- a
4 commitment we'll be needing to make, to make sure
5 that our principals and our schools are getting
6 access to that. So I know Ms. Smith is not able to
7 be here with us this afternoon, but that will be
8 something she can continue to update us on, and I
9 know you'll want to know more information about that.

10 But very glad to hear you've got your principals
11 started on that.

12 MS. KNOWLES: Thanks.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Thank you.

14 MS. KNOWLES: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Wilde, do you want to
16 finish that?

17 SUPT. WILDE: And, again, as you talk about
18 schedules, we have built in Tier 2 for next year into
19 our schedule so that students will get not just the
20 core, but they will be provided a second dose.

21 MS. ZOOK: Good idea.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great.

23 DR. MOORE: Along those lines, it sounded fairly
24 innovative in that last year you said you hired
25 teachers and used the Virtual Arkansas component for

1 the math and ELA; however, some of those teachers
2 left. What's the plan for this next year? Are y'all
3 going to do that again with the new crop of teachers
4 or what will that look like?

5 SUPT. WILDE: Actually, we are going to wait and
6 see. We're in the hiring process. And that goes
7 along with the idea of trying to strategize pay scale
8 that would incentivize for those high need positions.

9 DR. MOORE: That's good.

10 SUPT. WILDE: And so we anticipate not going
11 with Virtual Arkansas and going on our -- with our
12 teachers, but with the intent that we might have to
13 fall back and depend on them in certain areas for one
14 more year.

15 DR. MOORE: Okay.

16 SUPT. WILDE: Interesting, when -- in the fall
17 when you get the data -- we are working on a
18 comprehensive report in terms of student data and
19 teacher data. One of the things that we've analyzed
20 is what is the difference between the grades that
21 came from Virtual Arkansas and the previous grades,
22 and what's the difference between the grades for the
23 students that go to Mid-South and the students that
24 stay on campus. And what you're going to find is it
25 doesn't seem to matter where the students are at, the

1 grades seem to be the same. So now we're looking at,
2 well, then why are our test scores so low? Because
3 it looks like we have grade inflation across all the
4 systems. But they'll get into that in the fall.

5 DR. MOORE: Yeah. Well, those are really
6 important conversations to have. So thank you.

7 SUPT. WILDE: Yeah.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. House, anything?

9 MS. HOUSE: Just reiterating -- thank you so
10 much. You always have such an honest take on your
11 students and your teachers. And I've just really
12 enjoyed getting to hear you share their stories
13 throughout the year.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great.

15 DR. PFEFFER: And Ms. House was I think thinking
16 the same thing I am, that you've always had a gift of
17 being able to communicate honest, sometimes hard
18 truth and had -- and you have the ability to have
19 difficult conversations or share things in a way that
20 people can accept and understand and appreciate to
21 want to do better. And that's something that I've
22 always appreciated about you and I know you've taken
23 that to Earle, and really have appreciated everything
24 --

25 SUPT. WILDE: Thank you.

1 DR. PFEFFER: -- that you've done. So we will
2 miss you, and we're excited to get to work with Ms.
3 Knowles. And I just wanted to say thank you.

4 SUPT. WILDE: The last word I would have is it
5 was a pleasure working at the whim of the
6 Commissioner, and it has been an honor to work in the
7 Earle community as my final kind of professional act.
8 So I really, truly value all the experiences I've had
9 here in Arkansas, and with the Department. So thank
10 you.

11 [APPLAUSE]

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you so much. And, Ms.
13 Knowles, thank you for taking on this work and I know
14 the Board looks forward to working with you very
15 closely in the months and years ahead. So thank
16 y'all so much. Safe travels.

17 Oh, we need a motion to accept the Earle report.

18 MS. ZOOK: I so move.

19 MS. DEAN: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Motion by Ms. Zook, second by
21 Ms. Dean.

22 All in favor say "aye."

23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed?

25 All right. Thank you.

1 B-20: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT: LEE COUNTY SCHOOL
2 DISTRICT

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Lee County.

4 DR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So our next report is on
5 Lee County. This one is a little bit different than
6 our normal quarterly report just because -- if you
7 remember, we took over the Lee County School District
8 based on probationary violations. So this is kind of
9 our initial analysis, like we did with Pine Bluff, in
10 trying to get a lay of the land. The challenge with
11 this is any time -- any time of the year is a
12 challenge with State takeover. But the challenge of
13 trying to do a State takeover, you know, at the end
14 of March and not necessarily having the person -- we
15 do now, Dr. Bowles right here -- and so to do that,
16 but then also find out all the little things that go
17 along with State takeover and all the little findings
18 that you have as you're working through all the
19 different systems is kind of a challenge in terms of
20 having to deal with budget issues and at the same
21 time -- if you remember, you classified them on
22 fiscal distress last month, I believe. But in
23 addition to that, trying to deal with a lot of
24 personnel issues as you're running up against that
25 March -- May 1 deadline as well. So it's been quite

1 a challenge and we're very happy to have Dr. Bowles
2 to be there at Lee County School District and kind of
3 rolling up his sleeves and working and trying to do
4 what's best for kids in the community.

5 So this will just be a report of kind of our
6 things that we've seen, things that we've been
7 working on in partnership with the District in trying
8 to get them ready for next school year.

9 So we did finish all the transcript audits and
10 got them ready to make sure that as many kids as we
11 could are ready for graduation. If you remember, we
12 at first identified around 56 students that were part
13 of the cohort that we were looking at. As we've been
14 working through we found an additional 4 students
15 that weren't originally on that list. And so the
16 work of Dr. McIntosh and Christa Harrell and that
17 team in working with the District is trying to get
18 those folks either graduated or throughout the summer
19 finishing up on track to graduate. So we're -- right
20 now we're on that; 57 seniors is what we've
21 identified as the ones that were ready to go. Some
22 of them that had, you know, moved off or dropped out,
23 those were the ones that we still had issues with.
24 We've also started to go back and look at 11th grade
25 and are working towards 10th grade. There was a

1 meeting with 11th grade parents recently, before
2 graduation, making sure they had a clear
3 understanding of what they needed to do in order to
4 stay on track for graduation for next year. We've
5 been actively working in developing a course catalog,
6 working in Triand helping and assisting develop the
7 master schedule. Of course, as you're trying to save
8 costs and reduce positions there's always that
9 natural movement around with the master schedule. So
10 we're working towards it. We think we get close and
11 Dr. Bowles will have this great idea that he wants to
12 put out there, so we have to shape around the master
13 schedule a little bit more. But we're getting close
14 to being able to get to a place where we've got a
15 master schedule and we can start scheduling students
16 and things like that. They had completed all their
17 course requests and we've done kind of the simple
18 tallies and all those things to get ready for next
19 year.

20 One of the things to point out there related to
21 dyslexia is that when we did get on-site and start
22 asking questions around dyslexia, you know, we found
23 that students weren't being screened. And so we
24 worked really hard towards the end of the year with
25 the students that were there, trying to make sure we

1 got them screened, and are in the process of
2 developing plans of how we're going to work with
3 those. They didn't have a consistent literacy
4 program or phonics program in their elementary
5 schools, and so they're purchasing Wilson Foundations
6 and they'll be doing training. Kind of the challenge
7 with that is that they need RISE training, they need
8 the training in this new process, they don't really
9 have a solid curriculum. So trying to get all these
10 things in the number of days is somewhat challenging,
11 especially -- we're -- we were there and trying to
12 develop a professional development scheduling program
13 right here at the end of the year with people not
14 knowing -- not being available during the summer and
15 the master schedule -- or not master schedule -- the
16 calendar being set with some days that just aren't
17 ideal in terms of how those days should be utilized.
18 So we're kind of massaging that and working with that
19 to try to hopefully develop a good plan of action for
20 next year and throughout the summer.

21 The -- we are working -- there were some plans
22 in place -- and Dr. Bowles has worked to refine those
23 -- around summer school. They'll be using iReady and
24 then 9-11 will focus on credit recovery. The iReady
25 is in partnership with Phillips Community College.

1 They'd already had a grant there that's paying for a
2 large portion of that program.

3 One of the other areas that we found were there
4 weren't those student success plans. The team from
5 Accountability had worked really hard to help start
6 to get those student success plans in order to where
7 they're -- you know, they're nice electronic, they're
8 ready to go for students, and it gives them a
9 foundation to build on and also a process to keep
10 those updated.

11 We also learned that the District didn't have a
12 licensed RN. So a district doesn't necessarily have
13 to employ an RN, but they do have to have somebody
14 that has oversight with that. They didn't have that
15 in place, but they were able to hire an RN on-staff
16 for this upcoming year and so we're excited about
17 that.

18 We are going to have to have a focus on this
19 dyslexia piece and make sure that -- you know,
20 obviously if they're not screened, then they're not
21 going to be -- get the intervention that's required,
22 and so that's going to be a focus in making sure that
23 we're identifying. Ms. King has been on-site and
24 been working with Lynette Thrasher, who's kind of
25 been our point person, right now to help get things

1 going in terms of teaching and learning with the
2 District. And so they're working on plans and
3 helping identify resources within the District to
4 make sure those students are being served next year.

5 As I mentioned earlier, the District is under
6 fiscal distress. They are receiving a 10-03 grant.
7 As far as fiscal distress goes, we do have a fiscal
8 distress plan. We are starting to work on --
9 starting to work on objectives, but that -- we
10 haven't closed the door on saying these are all the
11 objectives that we still need to cover. We're in the
12 process of developing those, in addition adding to
13 those as needed. We are expecting the District to
14 end with about \$140,000. But there are so many items
15 that have been left needing things, like -- for
16 example, they had findings from Workforce Services --
17 is it Workforce Services? I think it's Workforce
18 Services -- about the bus garage that had insulation
19 that needed to be repaired, and so that had to be
20 taken out and there was a timeline associated with
21 that. There was also a septic tank that needed to be
22 done. There were school buildings that needed to be
23 addressed. So there were a lot of costs that are
24 associated with trying to get these things done. And
25 the District did do something that I guess now is

1 seen as a little bit of a benefit, but they started
2 to put a lot of money over into the building fund.
3 So instead of fixing things that they needed, they
4 were putting money over into the building fund. So
5 now we're using that to kind of get some of these
6 things addressed in a timely manner, in getting ready
7 for next school year.

8 The 10-03 application is pretty substantial.
9 Both elementary and high school are receiving that.
10 What we're doing with them is similar to Dollarway
11 and Pine Bluff, is that we do have Solution Tree --
12 the team is getting ready to go next week from
13 Dollarway to attend one of their conferences, as far
14 as the principal and leadership staff, to start to
15 learn about what the process is going to be like as
16 the embedded coaches show up to help them start to
17 develop curriculum. One of -- the unique thing about
18 -- unique things about Lee County is that most all
19 their teachers are certified. And so what we found
20 is that there are a lot of lifetime licenses that are
21 working in the District and a lot of people that have
22 kind of retired and come back to work -- and so
23 sometimes that's a good thing, sometimes it's a not-
24 so-good thing. And so we're trying to work with the
25 District to really get a good sense of staff. And

1 Dr. Bowles has made quick work of getting into the
2 classrooms and working with the staff to really see,
3 you know, who needed to be there and who didn't want
4 to be there, and started to make staffing adjustments
5 and things like that. So we're definitely confident
6 in his ability to work with his principals and make
7 necessary staffing changes, if they're not doing what
8 they need to do.

9 The new salary schedule is part of our
10 reduction, but we're also raising the salary schedule
11 to meet the state law -- but at the same time looking
12 at days and all these things to minimize some of the
13 costs. There were a lot of people that were not on
14 contract but they were working off the timesheet, so
15 they were kind of what we call hidden employees. So
16 we've worked on the salary schedule to address all
17 those needs. It's been kind of back-and-forth with
18 their personnel policy committee, but it's almost
19 ready to be approved by the Commissioner and we'll be
20 able to start issuing contracts for next year.

21 We are finalizing what's called the staffing
22 worksheets. So for the Finance Support Unit, what
23 they require is that when a school district is on
24 fiscal distress they provide a staffing worksheet to
25 let the office know who all is supposed to be staff

1 there and where they're being paid from so that can
2 go to generate the budget. And so that's almost
3 finalized. We're still missing a few positions that
4 we need to get hired for next year. We are working
5 on the preliminary budget. As I said, the budget was
6 -- previous year, they'd ended with about \$1,000,000
7 in unrestricted funds; on track this year for about
8 140-some-odd thousand. So we're trying to address
9 that. We have started the reduction-in-force and
10 have notified some of the employees. A lot of them
11 have -- there's -- we've seen a lot of turnover and
12 have dealt with that through attrition, and so some
13 of that will help in minimizing the amount of
14 reduction-in-force that we'll have to do. But we
15 have started that process.

16 As far as human capital, when you're trying to
17 develop a process for reduction-in-force and
18 staffing, it always helps to have human resource
19 files. You can appreciate that, I'm sure.

20 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.

21 DR. HERNANDEZ: And so one of the things that we
22 found is that as we started to go to verify years of
23 service, contract amounts, licensure, background
24 checks, all those things, we found quickly that over
25 half of the staff didn't have -- did not have an HR

1 file or contracts. Very similar thing we found in
2 Pine Bluff when we went, not having contracts and
3 those types of things. So we -- it was actually me
4 and Dr. Bowles elbow-to-elbow working on trying to
5 find where everything was and having to build some of
6 those files by hand. And so we've got a process in
7 place now to where we are -- have HR files and
8 they're trying to keep up with that.

9 I didn't mention this in the last part, but they
10 have -- currently do not have -- did not -- we do not
11 have the previous CFOs currently on staff for next
12 year. We have outsourced the financial accounting to
13 a firm that's going to work with the District and
14 start to grow and support, one of their employees, to
15 help build them into a certified business official in
16 the future, along with support from the State in
17 trying to make sure we just have clean records,
18 accounting, and all those types of things and help us
19 get good clear information on where they are
20 financially.

21 They have started as of now into the RISE
22 training and this summer the K-2 teachers will be
23 going through that and then also 3 -- or 3-6, but
24 last year K-2. What we found is kind of a reverse
25 order that -- you know, that the K-2 teachers really

1 didn't seem to have a lot of training related to
2 RISE; so they'll be going through that this summer.

3 We have hired new principals. So if you
4 remember when we did take over the high school
5 principal resigned; in addition to that, the
6 elementary principal resigned before that. So we had
7 two interims that came in. Dr. Bowles was very quick
8 to go out and start recruiting principals to come
9 work with him and he found two good ones -- one at
10 the elementary and one at the high school. The high
11 school was able to start right at May as kids were
12 starting to leave, help with graduation, start to
13 work on the master schedule and those things. We
14 have found us a little pipeline to Marion -- is that
15 right? So Marion is usually taking people from
16 smaller districts; we were able to reverse that and
17 start pulling people out of Marion. Dr. Bowles was a
18 graduate of Marion, so I know he has a lot of ties
19 there. And so that process is underway and we're
20 hoping that that's going to kind of start the cascade
21 of good things start happening within those schools.
22 The kids are -- what we've seen are very well-behaved
23 and want to learn. It's just that instance of when
24 you have the adults that aren't -- don't have the
25 focus and aren't really pushed to set those high

1 expectations for kids in the classroom the results of
2 it are having the poor student outcomes.

3 As far as stakeholder communication and family
4 and community engagement, we have had some meetings
5 with ForwARd Arkansas. They've been there working in
6 the community, trying to build collaboration. We
7 have also -- I know Dr. Pfeffer and myself and
8 Commissioner Key attended a -- it wasn't the Lions
9 Club -- was it the Lions Club?

10 DR. PFEFFER: Rotary.

11 DR. HERNANDEZ: Rotary Club. That's right.
12 Sorry. Attended that, and that group of people
13 seemed very eager to want to be involved and want to
14 see something good happen in that community and
15 school district. And so Dr. Bowles has continued to
16 reach out and build relationships with the community
17 in trying to educate them and let them know about
18 what their plan is to start moving forward.

19 The facilities and transportation -- for the
20 most part the transportation system is in pretty good
21 shape. We're working on some changes as far as
22 getting rid of old buses that aren't needed, and at
23 the same time working on our lease/purchase program
24 and converting those over to leases. At the same
25 time there's been a lot of movement in recent years

1 related to building configurations and where the
2 students are actually housed. And so when we got
3 there we realized that the students were housed for
4 elementary school in Whitten Elementary School, which
5 didn't have a gym, didn't have a classroom for art;
6 there were a lot of portables surrounding that. And
7 so where the Central Office was located was actually
8 the Anna Strong Middle School. And so, you know,
9 when you go in there you have Central Office that's
10 taking up very small space but this place has a huge
11 library, basketball gym -- everything is in really
12 good shape. And so what we've done is made some
13 modifications to the plumbing. Painting is
14 completed; I believe they're at the middle school
15 now. Some tile work, also tile work in upgrading
16 some of the restrooms, and getting it ready so that
17 will function as kind of the K-6 elementary school
18 next year. We work with our Facilities Department to
19 make sure everything is ready to go for next year,
20 getting the kitchen and all those things back up.
21 But there was a lot of movement even last year as the
22 students were in Anna Strong Middle School, but they
23 were moved over to Whitten Elementary. But then they
24 realized there wasn't enough space, so they moved the
25 6th grade over to the high school. And so the high

1 school principal wasn't over the 6th grade, and so
2 there was just a lot of lack of communication and
3 supervision with those students. Anna Strong Middle
4 School has more than enough room to house the K-6
5 students. And we've had conversations with the
6 community -- I think one of their biggest issues last
7 year was not having the communication and simply
8 their kids moving buildings like that. And so any
9 time you take 6th graders out of the elementary
10 school and put them up in the big high school that
11 always causes concern and problem for parents, and so
12 they welcomed the decision to move that configuration
13 back to having a K-6 elementary school.

14 So that is kind of our update as far as where
15 we're at. We are in the process of analyzing school
16 level plans and we just kind of have a really tight
17 timeline on how we're doing that. We do have kind of
18 a plan of how we are supporting the district in the
19 work that we're doing, but we'll start to migrate
20 that over to a plan. Even though in this case we
21 have fiscal distress, we do have that plan. We have
22 the standards violation; at some point we'll have
23 maybe a recommendation on a level, if we want to come
24 back and do something like that where we would have
25 to develop exit criteria. But we do plan to develop

1 those goals as if -- and kind of go through the same
2 process that we are with the other school districts,
3 even though we don't have a, quote, Level 5 finding.
4 So --

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Thank you so much.

6 Dr. Bowles, welcome.

7 So, and I'll just start with Ms. McFetridge.
8 Any questions for either -- for anyone related to the
9 Lee County District?

10 MS. MCFETRIDGE: I'm just curious about -- did
11 you find a guidance counselor? I know Dr. Hernandez
12 said you had a team helping the juniors kind of know
13 what they need for graduation. But have you been
14 able to find a counselor to help as well?

15 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes. We're actually in a process
16 of interviewing right now for a counselor.

17 MS. MCFETRIDGE: Okay.

18 SUPT. BOWLES: I feel pretty confident about one
19 that we've decided on. I won't tell you where she's
20 from. It seems as though you probably know who my
21 pool is. But, yes, we're -- we do feel like we're
22 close to finding one though.

23 MS. MCFETRIDGE: Good. And I know you're
24 working on placing teachers and all of that. Do you
25 feel pretty confident you're going to have enough

1 teachers --

2 SUPT. BOWLES: You know, we --

3 MS. McFETRIDGE: -- and enough staff for the
4 year?

5 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes. You know, one of the things
6 that I was able to do in my prior role as deputy
7 superintendent at Forrest City was part of my job was
8 around recruitment and retention of teachers. And so
9 reaching out to those programs, such as TFA, the
10 Arkansas Teacher Corp has been really great for us.
11 And then also the new initiative has come out of the
12 University of Arkansas; they've also been able to
13 supply us with teachers. So we're pretty confident
14 that we'll be fully staffed this upcoming school
15 year, with the exception of maybe the Spanish --
16 Spanish class. But other than that, we feel very
17 confident that we'll be fully staffed.

18 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Well, welcome. Thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Ms. Newton?

21 MS. NEWTON: Welcome, Dr. Bowles. I know y'all
22 are just getting in there and getting your -- getting
23 in there and figuring out what's going on and what
24 needs to be improved, and -- but I know it's going to
25 take time to find it all. But I think that we can

1 all take a lesson from Dr. Wilde. One of the first
2 things that he did whenever he went into Earle was he
3 not only looked at the systems but he also went to
4 the community and made sure that the community was
5 involved every step and they knew exactly what was
6 going on. So I hope -- I think -- I've got the
7 impression from Dr. Hernandez that you're doing that,
8 but I really encourage you to keep them involved and
9 let them not -- this not be something that's done to
10 them, but they're working with you --

11 SUPT. BOWLES: Right.

12 MS. NEWTON: -- as you go along.

13 SUPT. BOWLES: Absolutely. And, you know, it's
14 just a little easier to do in Marianna. You know,
15 typically you're going to eat Subway or, you know,
16 it's pizza, and so those are pretty much where all of
17 the locals gather. So we have a really good time
18 there, I'll just say that. So, yeah, but that's
19 definitely one of the main goals is to try to bring
20 as many community partners in. You know, Dr.
21 Hernandez mentioned earlier that we did attend the
22 Rotary Club. There's also a really active group
23 there called the Men of Action who have been more
24 than generous and more than willing to just come up,
25 provide a helping hand. And even in the process of

1 doing the renovations to the District they've also
2 been able to just come in and lend a helping hand.
3 And so it's really been a big community effort. The
4 community really wants change.

5 MS. NEWTON: Good.

6 SUPT. BOWLES: And so that's made the transition
7 a little easier for the District.

8 MS. NEWTON: Great. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Ms. Chambers?

10 MS. CHAMBERS: One observation to tie back to
11 Ms. Newton's reference to Dr. Wilde -- it will be
12 interesting to hear what you stated -- culture is --
13 it may be what it is, but what you want it to be; so
14 it'll be interesting to hear that in your future
15 report because that has so much to do with -- there's
16 a phrase, "Culture eats strategy."

17 SUPT. BOWLES: Absolutely.

18 MS. CHAMBERS: I think that's true. It will be
19 interesting to see what that develops to be.

20 On the reference to the 9th through 11th
21 graders, in your assessment in terms of where they're
22 at and where they need to be to be on schedule to
23 graduate, it sounds like you're using this summer
24 most definitely. But could you describe for us --
25 maybe add a little color commentary as to where

1 they're at and what you're going to need to do?

2 SUPT. BOWLES: Well, you know, that was one of
3 the things that the high school principal and I
4 tackled, the first one, the first day. You know, Dr.
5 Hernandez mentioned that we had the junior takeover
6 where we invited those underclassmen to come in and
7 start talking to them a little bit about their
8 transcripts or their plans, meeting with their
9 parents and talking to them a little bit about that.
10 And what we found is that a lot of the students just
11 did not know what they needed to do in order to
12 graduate. And so with the help of the team from ADE
13 -- Dr. McIntosh and Christi and their team, they've
14 really kind of served, as you will, as Mother Hens to
15 those students, wrapped their arms around those
16 students and really kind of helped them transition.
17 And then we also had Ms. Rocky Malone to come in and
18 so she actually kind of spear-headed, if you will,
19 the process of allowing students to choose what they
20 actually wanted to do which was something different
21 than the past where students were just placed where I
22 guess people felt like they should be; whereas,
23 students now have an option and a choice on where
24 they would like to go and those careers that they
25 would like to pursue. We took a different spin on

1 summer school. You know, generally summer school is
2 getting online, doing an APEX program. But we did
3 feel as though we had deficits; you know, we
4 understood that -- some of our reading levels of some
5 of our students, and we knew that academically we
6 needed to bridge more of a gap. So we actually asked
7 those teachers to actually come in; we brought those
8 students in and we're actually providing instruction
9 this year as opposed to getting online and going
10 through that again. We're literally providing
11 regular fulltime instruction for two hours a day, and
12 I think that the students really appreciate it. You
13 know, we did a lot of work on the front-end to make
14 sure that we insured the rigor in those classrooms as
15 well.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Dean?

17 MS. DEAN: Welcome. I want to build off of what
18 Ms. Newton and -- excuse me -- my neighbor talked
19 about as far as making sure that you engage the
20 community, and especially when it comes to building
21 the culture of the school district. Please insure
22 that you include those family members, parents and
23 extended family members to help them -- to help you
24 -- to have them help you build that culture --

25 SUPT. BOWLES: Right.

1 MS. DEAN: -- because they're an integral -- an
2 important part of making sure that that child is
3 educated from a holistic point of view. So it sounds
4 like you're doing great things; you're already in the
5 community and doing great things. So I look forward
6 to seeing more of what you're doing.

7 SUPT. BOWLES: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Ms. Zook, anything?

9 MS. ZOOK: Yes. Three things. One, your RIF
10 policy, is it last-in first-out? Is it -- if a
11 vacancy comes, you don't fill it? What is the RIF
12 policy?

13 SUPT. BOWLES: It's generally you have -- if --
14 the last one in -- last one out, first one in type
15 policy.

16 MS. ZOOK: Right. Okay. And, secondly, I
17 appreciate the fact that you listed all the different
18 supports you're getting from the State --

19 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes.

20 MS. ZOOK: -- because it's nice for us to know
21 where you're getting help and where you might not be
22 and where you might -- and you can bring to us, you
23 know, maybe "I need more help here." And one of the
24 things Dr. Wilde at his retirement party they said is
25 the first thing he said to the community and his

1 staff is, "I don't deal in rumors; I have data in
2 front of me." So for what it's worth, you know, I
3 thought that was helpful and the community really
4 seemed to appreciate that.

5 SUPT. BOWLES: Right.

6 MS. ZOOK: But I look forward to seeing you
7 again in September and hope -- wish you good luck
8 over the summer.

9 SUPT. BOWLES: Thank you. You know, this might
10 actually be a good time to mention just kind of my
11 relationship with Dr. Wilde. So when I first began
12 in the Department working in the School Improvement
13 Unit, of course Dr. Wilde was over the unit. He and
14 Dr. Elbert Harvey was over that unit. And so we
15 actually worked with them. I was actually, you know,
16 being mentored by him through that transition. And
17 then I thought I got away from him until -- he
18 actually served on my committee for my doctoral
19 degree, and so he was really instrumental in, you
20 know, kind of guiding me through that process. And
21 so he's really been a big mentor for me as I, you
22 know, kind of run through the process though.

23 MS. ZOOK: That's great.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. All right. Dr. Moore?

25 DR. MOORE: Yeah, I think we all know you have a

1 lot of work to do, but it's great to hear all of the
2 promising things you're doing. I'm glad -- summer
3 school, that seems to be a great start within the
4 District.

5 I did hear one of the things you said that the
6 8th grade students didn't have student success plans,
7 and that kind of couples with your idea of meeting
8 with the 11th grade students and 12th grade students.
9 Do you envision -- were you saying -- is there a new
10 high school counselor that will be hired to --

11 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes.

12 DR. MOORE: -- implement that?

13 SUPT. BOWLES: Yes. Yes. And one of the things
14 we also we're working together now to try to bring
15 about was -- is an open house. You know, I think the
16 District has really done that before. But we want to
17 have an open house where we can invite all of our
18 stakeholders in, all of our parents, and just kind of
19 talk with them about what we're doing. I typically
20 try to do a state -- I call it a State of the
21 District type of email where I send it to the staff;
22 I also try to send it to parents so that we can make
23 sure we're very transparent with parents. And then
24 also kind of express how we feel like they can -- how
25 they fit in this puzzle that we're trying to put

1 together. We also talked about doing student
2 registration prior to the start of school, you know,
3 having those separate days prior to school starting
4 where kids can actually come in, review their
5 schedules again; give that to them, talk to their
6 parents about those schedules, make any modifications
7 that we would need to, and then be able to hit the
8 ground running the first -- the very first day of
9 school.

10 DR. MOORE: That's great. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Anything?

12 MS. HOUSE: No.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any concluding
14 questions?

15 I wish you the best of luck and thanks for a
16 great report on a game-plan --

17 SUPT. BOWLES: Thanks.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- which I think is, you know,
19 what I -- I've experienced in now a number of
20 takeovers is, you know, that oftentimes there's not a
21 game-plan in that initial stage and this is very
22 helpful in terms of beginning the vision for a
23 different kind of Lee County School District. So
24 thank you.

25 Okay. All right.

1 SUPT. BOWLES: Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: We need a motion to approve the
3 Lee County.

4 MS. McFETRIDGE: So moved.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Ms. McFetridge
6 moves the approval of the report.

7 MS. DEAN: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Second by Ms. Dean.

9 All in favor say "aye."

10 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

12 Okay.

13 Do we need a break?

14 Yeah, I think there is consensus we need a
15 break. So we'll pick up with Pine Bluff when we get
16 back. Let's come back at 4:00.

17 (BREAK: 3:54 - 4:03 P.M.)

18 B-21: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT: PINE BLUFF SCHOOL
19 DISTRICT

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Welcome back from
21 the stretch run. And Pine Bluff is up.

22 DR. HERNANDEZ: I messed up here; he told me I
23 wasn't speaking into the microphone close enough, so
24 I'm going to try better if I have a voice left.

25 So we're now to the Pine Bluff School District.

1 We're going to start out with a little bit about what
2 their district work has been doing. So they did ask
3 for their implementation grant related to 10-03 early
4 and then they started the work of working on their
5 PLC process in concert with developing a contract for
6 Solution Tree. Their principals and superintendent
7 recently attended, along with us, the School
8 Improvement For All conference to start to get the
9 understanding of their principals -- you know, Dr.
10 Owoh being from the State had kind of a background as
11 we were moving more toward this PLC process. But in
12 addition to that, the principals really didn't have a
13 good grasp of the understanding of what this work
14 would look like. So having them at the conference,
15 along with Dr. Kramer who's their lead district level
16 coach being able to help walk the team through what
17 the process would look like, I think was advantageous
18 for them. They did have their kickoff meeting
19 recently; I was able to attend one of those days
20 where Dr. Anthony Mohammad did day-one of their
21 training, kind of getting them ready and some of the
22 understanding related to what the PLC work might look
23 like. And then Dr. Kramer did the second day to kind
24 of end the year. So it was a good start to the end
25 of the year to get people geared up and ready for the

1 work that's going to be done with the embedded
2 coaching, content specialist coaching, and things
3 that will happen next year with the district.

4 We have worked on master schedules with them to
5 make sure there's time for intervention, teacher
6 collaboration time, and those types of things. We
7 have nearly completed all of the reduction in staff.
8 We're kind of finalizing what that budget is. And
9 one of the good things that Dr. Owoh has done,
10 alongside Mr. Harris, is they've really started to
11 ask a lot of questions. So inherently when you look
12 at beginning of the year budgets in school districts
13 that tend to not be doing well financially you start
14 by asking questions about why do we spend money on
15 this, why do we spend money on this. And by doing
16 some of those things and really getting a handle on
17 the expenditures in the district they've really
18 started to turn what we were expecting to be a very
19 big shortfall -- started to eat away at that to where
20 we're hoping it's not going to be as much of a
21 deficit as we were expecting early on when we took
22 over. And so in addition to that, starting to build
23 the budgets for next year, we feel confident that
24 that finance turnaround will be fairly quick in
25 trying to get them in the right direction. But that

1 still leaves a lot of facility needs and things like
2 that that we're going to have to address in the
3 future.

4 The reorganization of central staff -- so they
5 -- Dr. Owoh has worked really hard in trying to get
6 in there and identify who he needs in his
7 organization as far as structurally to kind of move
8 the work forward. He's been able to shift, and
9 through attrition, through reduction-in-force -- he's
10 kind of taken a lot of the jobs that were outsourced
11 to various people within the District and kind of
12 streamlined the process of the reporting structure
13 and all that. So next year his configuration will be
14 the superintendent, Mr. Harris that will be the
15 CFO/HR type role -- I believe we call him the Chief
16 Operation Officer; is that right?

17 SUPT. OWOH: Yes.

18 DR. HERNANDEZ: In addition to that, we have two
19 assistant superintendents, Mr. Crossley that will be
20 there -- he's been consulting with the District a lot
21 through my office this year. In addition to that,
22 Ms. Wanda Van Dyke is coming to work with him as
23 another assistant superintendent.

24 So he really has developed a good strong team
25 that we're very confident in working with the

1 Solution Tree coaches next year that they're going to
2 be ready to go in terms of starting to make some
3 quick changes, quick turnarounds in terms of student
4 achievement.

5 We have -- they've done lots of different events
6 and some that are scheduled to increase awareness and
7 things around what the plans are. Dr. Owoh has been
8 in constant communication with members of like Go
9 Forward Pine Bluff and all that. And I know it was
10 mentioned earlier, but they're assisting with the
11 recruitment and retention, Go Forward Pine Bluff,
12 which you've seen the article that was in the
13 newspaper, which I think is going to be a tremendous
14 benefit to the District in helping recruit and retain
15 teachers in that area, which is a struggle for them.
16 But when you contrast that with Earle and Lee County,
17 you know, he's blessed to have a lot of the resources
18 he does have; so it's one of those that it's all
19 relative to where you're at in the state.

20 They did -- have started to -- they have
21 finalized what the configurations are, but started
22 making those communications and have submitted to us
23 the reconfiguration of all the schools to where we'll
24 have some K-6 elementaries feeding up into the --
25 sorry -- K-5 elementaries feeding up into the middle

1 school and then also then going to the high school.
2 The District has partnered with the UA-Monticello
3 ERZ; he's been working with them on work related to
4 identifying data and working through issues related
5 to chronic absenteeism and what to do with those
6 things. And then also around their Level 1 HRS --
7 High Reliability School Survey data to start to work
8 on some of those culture pieces that will also tie
9 into their Solution Tree work within their district.

10 The things that we're really focused on next
11 year is the year-one work with the PLCs and embedded
12 coaching, and then also we'll be providing some
13 principal support directly related to TESS and
14 insuring that, you know, as they're doing the work
15 related to PLCs that there's also that compliment of
16 principals and staff getting in the classrooms and
17 sharing what's being expected and talked about in
18 these meetings is actually happening in the
19 classroom; the education is being delivered, the
20 instructional strategies are being put in place.

21 We do -- we have identified based on their
22 reporting so far related to dyslexia that that's
23 going to be another focus for them next year is to
24 make sure that they are properly screening students.
25 We know, as we mentioned earlier with the audits, we

1 will be doing a review and providing support related
2 to that to insure that the District has those things
3 in place.

4 We also have identified some things that are not
5 so positive sometimes related to discipline. And as
6 you look at an increase in discipline, what we've
7 seen is kind of an uptick in the expulsion rate
8 within the District. And so we've been working with
9 Dr. Owoh. We will also be providing kind of a
10 behavior specialist, that will be there on a regular
11 basis to help support, that has kind of a background
12 potentially in psychology type things that can really
13 help with student behaviors, mental health type
14 issues, and help them develop a plan related to how
15 they can address some of these behavior issues within
16 their school. So we'll be providing that as well.

17 We are continuing to slowly but surely resolve
18 all the pending past personnel issues. And, of
19 course, as you make changes, you make reduction-in-
20 staff, you start holding people accountable,
21 personnel issues tend to crop up as well. And so
22 we're still actively, you know, working on some of
23 those things to make sure that we are developing that
24 culture of, hey, you're expected to come to work
25 every day, you're expected to do the role that's set

1 out for you and serve kids, and everything else is
2 just extra that doesn't need to happen within the
3 school district.

4 Campus safety is a big concern -- somewhat for
5 the middle school in terms of discipline issues, but
6 especially for the physical nature of the high
7 school. We've talked about this a little bit before
8 related to all the buildings and how they're very
9 much not under one roof and so students have to
10 travel across campus, which is in a neighborhood that
11 is open to a lot of people that are just passing by.
12 So Andrew Tolbert has been working with the District
13 in helping to identify some safety changes. Mr.
14 Bradbury that's also at the ADE that does work
15 related to the safety committee has also been in
16 consultation with them about some of the ways that
17 they can do that. They've purchased some things for
18 the doors at the high school. Instead of having just
19 doors open or avoiding chaining doors, we've got the
20 lock -- or magnetic strips and cameras that are being
21 installed to help that. But we're also looking at
22 some potential ways to envelope the district with
23 maybe fencing or something that kind of helps keep
24 the students as they're transitioning somewhat safe.
25 But in addition to that, we're looking at our master

1 plan and the partnership program coming up to
2 potentially do something related to the high school
3 in terms of redesign/renovation type work to make
4 that a better facility for high school students. So
5 all those things are on the table and we'll have that
6 included in our master plan that's due February 1st
7 to the State.

8 We have identified all of the unused and
9 underutilized buildings within the District, and Dr.
10 Owoh has worked to have those appraised and has
11 worked with a realtor to start putting those up for
12 sale. We've gotten some preliminary offers,
13 obviously not what we want. And so we're trying to
14 make some decisions on some of those of how we can
15 start to move some of those properties out from the
16 District -- insurance and cost of trying to keep up
17 and those types of things.

18 In terms of exit criteria, as I mentioned
19 earlier with Dollarway, we have identified those
20 similar criteria that we're trying to work through
21 with the District. And as they start to engage into
22 the work around PLCs next year, a lot of these things
23 will start to fill out in terms of artifacts and
24 evidence that these things are happening within the
25 District. The quantitative data again is the same.

1 As it relates to fiscal distress plans, there
2 are a few things that had been met but we're still a
3 ways from meeting those. We also have increased the
4 salary schedule to be more competitive -- but in
5 addition to that increase we've got to think about
6 the long-term sustainability of how we're going to
7 pay for that. Kind of the benefit with this is as
8 we've increased the salary we've also decreased the
9 amount of staff members; so that kind of helps give
10 us a springboard into next year and having to pay for
11 that following fiscal year '20 into fiscal year '21.

12 But overall, that's pretty much the update for
13 Pine Bluff. So Dr. Owoh is here if you have any
14 questions.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Thank you so much.
16 Thanks, Dr. Owoh. Any quick comments before we
17 move to questions?

18 SUPT. OWOH: No, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Great.

20 Ms. House?

21 MS. HOUSE: No questions.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Dr. Moore,
23 anything?

24 DR. MOORE: No.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Ms. Zook?

1 MS. ZOOK: I will emphasize again --

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Microphone.

3 MS. ZOOK: -- how easily --

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Microphone.

5 MS. ZOOK: Oops -- how easily read your report
6 was. I do appreciate that.

7 I know you're getting your special ed. and
8 dyslexia audits in the fall.

9 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, ma'am.

10 MS. ZOOK: Your reduction-in-force, is that the
11 same way -- last-in, first-out -- or have you
12 implemented one that might be more beneficial to
13 children?

14 SUPT. OWOH: Well, the last part of your
15 question, if it's beneficial -- unfortunately, part
16 of the reduction-in-force policy in our district, it
17 does take into account the number of years in the
18 district but it also takes into account the number of
19 certifications, the number of grade level
20 certifications, as well as the number of
21 certifications in shortage areas -- and so about five
22 components to the criteria, so not -- the most
23 effective teacher is not always the one that is
24 benefitted from the reduction-in-force. The District
25 does not benefit, the students are not benefitted

1 from that process, and so we're definitely looking at
2 that. We're looking at the ASBA model policies and
3 will work with our license PPC in the fall to address
4 that particular personnel policy in the board
5 policies as well as some others.

6 MS. ZOOK: So the waiver that you were given
7 should you need it will be able to help you with
8 that, and so it could be not truly RIF?

9 SUPT. OWOH: It will. It will definitely assist
10 moving forward.

11 MS. ZOOK: Okay. The student attendance chart,
12 I complimented you on how well read it was, but there
13 was no legend to reading the student -- not student
14 -- the teacher attendance report. For example, it
15 says Pine Bluff High School, total teachers 65, total
16 attendance 309. Well, there's 50 days and that's an
17 average of four days each; so I'm obviously not
18 knowing how to read this chart. Can you help me with
19 that?

20 SUPT. OWOH: We can do a better job in
21 presenting that information in the future. The only
22 way that we were able to assess teacher attendance
23 was through the number of substitute requests that
24 we've had with our -- the company that we contracted
25 with. And so -- and then, of course, the number of

1 professional development, leave forms, and things of
2 that nature.

3 MS. ZOOK: Right.

4 SUPT. OWOH: And so it's a combina -- a
5 cumulative number that's presented on there; so the
6 number of teachers and then the number of teacher
7 absences, not specifically the per-teacher as
8 indicated with the previous number on there.

9 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

10 SUPT. OWOH: So it's just the number of teacher
11 absences --

12 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

13 SUPT. OWOH: -- from that campus.

14 MS. ZOOK: It says total attendance, not total
15 absences, so that's where my confusion came in, so --

16 SUPT. OWOH: So we'll clean that up.

17 MS. ZOOK: Yeah, you'll clean that up, I'm sure.

18 And the curriculum audit that was done was very
19 helpful I think to me as someone who was reading it,
20 but I could imagine that would be invaluable to those
21 of you who are actually having to deal with those
22 things. It wasn't very complimentary but
23 nonetheless, it was helpful.

24 SUPT. OWOH: It was definitely helpful. But it
25 also gave our teachers and our district instructional

1 staff the opportunity to sit down and have those
2 professional conversations and look at what's needed
3 to make sure that we have the very best, most
4 effective curriculum for our students and that the
5 teachers were informed, they knew what the resources
6 are, they -- the standards were aligned. And so we
7 had several meetings, and plan to have ongoing
8 meetings with Stacy Smith and her staff, as well as
9 our co-op in the area, Arkansas River, moving
10 forward.

11 MS. ZOOK: And are you going to have your
12 principals up and ready to be RISE assessors by the
13 time your teachers are finished with their RISE
14 training?

15 SUPT. OWOH: That's definitely the plan. We've
16 had about two of our elementary -- two out of the
17 three elementary principals already start the
18 training, but they're also participating in the
19 training with our teachers. And as we move forward
20 looking at our curriculum adoptions, those principals
21 have been involved in the conversation with our
22 teachers as they review possible curriculum textbooks
23 and resources; so they're engaged. We also have
24 worked with Stacy Smith -- Mrs. Smith in Learning
25 Services on insuring that we had a viable RISE plan

1 prior to the beginning of school. And so we have
2 some additional training this summer and then some
3 throughout the school year where principals are --
4 will be mandated to attend as well.

5 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And have y'all made an
6 adoption for your use with your dyslexic children?

7 SUPT. OWOH: We are -- we have not made an
8 adoption; we're actually in the process. And so we
9 -- Jonathan Crossley -- Mr. Crossley is working with
10 Learning Services to make sure that the proposed
11 adoptions -- curriculum adoptions are in line with
12 both RISE and dyslexia needs.

13 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And I know that you can't
14 purely use another district's standards, you know, to
15 go by. But I wonder if it would be helpful if some
16 of those teachers in the district helped your
17 teachers learn things learned when we were adapting
18 our curriculum to the standards. Is that clear?

19 SUPT. OWOH: It does -- it is very clear. We
20 started that conversation with our partner districts
21 within our cooperative area, and so we've had ongoing
22 conversations with both Dollarway, Watson Chapel,
23 White Hall, Sheridan, and we've also had initial
24 conversations with some of the charter schools in
25 Pine Bluff. In fact, we had a reading program in

1 partnership with Lighthouse this summer for rising
2 6th graders to make sure -- to insure that they're on
3 grade level when the school year starts in August.
4 So we'll continue to partner with area educational
5 entities.

6 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Thank you.

7 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

8 MS. ZOOK: That's all.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I would just say I was telling
10 Dr. Pfeffer during break that, you know, of the
11 takeovers that have happened since I've been here I
12 feel more hopeful in many ways about Pine Bluff, and
13 it's a variety of reasons. I think there is -- and
14 not to disparage any other leadership, but the leader
15 is good for sure. But it's also the fact that, you
16 know, there's a plan from the get-go. There's extra
17 criteria going to be established really from near the
18 beginning of this so that there is a goal to shoot
19 for in a way that there has not been in other
20 districts. And then you have, I think, community
21 buy-in in a way that -- and some resources, local
22 resources which are obviously not present in some
23 other communities. And some things are things you
24 couldn't control; other things are things that can be
25 controlled. So I am, you know, really hopeful.

1 There's lots of obstacles, of course, along the way.
2 And, you know, I think we probably could've made a
3 case for takeover a little bit earlier because we, I
4 think, as a state let things go too far south.

5 One plea I would make to my fellow board members
6 over the next few years is to be really thoughtful
7 about not making things more complicated by expansion
8 of charters and other things that would create --
9 really make a difficult situation more difficult.
10 And so I think that is something that is the
11 responsibility of this board looking forward. It
12 looks like that's not going to happen this year, but
13 in the next few years, you know, I just urge folks to
14 be thoughtful about that so that we give what I think
15 is a good shot the best shot for really transforming
16 this district that is so important to that part of
17 the state.

18 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Dean? Ms. Chambers?

20 MS. CHAMBERS: I just really want to applaud
21 this process. Dr. Hernandez, I really appreciate the
22 rigor that's brought to these reports that we're
23 getting. And it's an interesting -- it's interesting
24 and artful; there's a consistency in the methods that
25 you're talking about in terms of what each one of

1 these districts is doing. But I love the
2 personalities that are coming through that reflect
3 very different circumstances. And so just would ask
4 as you continue to lean into these plans,
5 particularly under qualitative. Quantitative is -- I
6 think we'll be able to assess those pretty readily.
7 The qualitative I think is more challenging and maybe
8 at the heart of what we really want to make sure
9 we're supportive of the districts in getting -- the
10 way they need to get them to go back under local
11 control. So just really look forward to your reports
12 as we go forward so that we really get a sense of
13 where you're at relative to where you feel you need
14 to be -- to be where you need to be to exit.

15 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Hill?

17 DR. HILL: I just want to echo that we applaud
18 all the efforts and -- because oftentimes in dealing
19 with the day-to-day classrooms and understanding
20 environments you're dealing with -- often we talk
21 about many of the challenges start when they go home.
22 And what you were -- you know, to make that
23 connection for the full transformation of the
24 individual is critical so we can get that academic
25 progress that we want; so many supporting the kids,

1 support their needs. You know, we get them during
2 the day, but then you go home and you go backwards.
3 And so, you know, finding very complimentary ways,
4 through faith-based, which -- you know --
5 organizations and other type of things that can help
6 complete the wraparound services for those at-risk
7 individuals from those areas, from, you know, stress
8 situations, you know. You know, we definitely -- any
9 way -- anything that we can do in that environment --
10 I know we're scheduled to be here soon --

11 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, sir.

12 DR. HILL: But some people who want to do that
13 and look forward to doing that. Okay.

14 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, sir. Thank you, Dr. Hill.
15 And if I can echo -- provide some commentary to that,
16 I definitely know and see the importance of the
17 partnerships with our community as well, especially
18 our faith-based. And we're fortunate -- I'm
19 fortunate to have that community support constantly
20 reaching out and seeing what they can do to help our
21 students, both academically and behaviorally. And so
22 we're looking forward to continuing those
23 partnerships, strengthening some existing
24 partnerships that we have. In fact, we -- after
25 streamlining the number of positions at the Central

1 Office we've hired a Director of Communication/
2 Community Outreach. That person will focus on those
3 partnerships, community partnerships, and also
4 sharing the message so that we're in charge of our
5 narrative and not someone else. And so people in the
6 community will know the great things that our
7 students are doing, as well as our staff members.

8 DR. HILL: All right. And you know as well as I
9 do -- and I appreciate that because I've had some
10 people reach out to me wanting to connect with you
11 from that. But sometimes what we take for granted,
12 you know, that third meal, you know --

13 SUPT. OWOH: Right.

14 DR. HILL: -- that's not being fed, you know, in
15 the evening-time. And so just any way that we can
16 help bridge that because, you know, it's hard to
17 learn when you're hungry.

18 SUPT. OWOH: Right. And if I can put this
19 message out there, we are providing the three meals
20 this summer -- two meals this summer, breakfast and
21 lunch, and three meals during the school year. So if
22 you can share the message -- our numbers are low, so
23 we want to make sure our students are coming -- any
24 school age child in the city can come. And we have
25 those posted. So breakfast and lunch are being

1 provided.

2 DR. HILL: Thank you for all you're doing.

3 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Ms. Newton.

5 MS. NEWTON: I just want to echo some things
6 that have been said. Your report was so easy to
7 read, and the only place I got lost was what Ms. Zook
8 has already brought up on the attendance. So thank
9 you for going to address that for us.

10 And I've been keeping up with you through social
11 media, all your travels and what you're doing in the
12 community. And I again say that that has to be part
13 of the partnership and you're doing a good job with
14 that and I appreciate that. And I appreciate Dr.
15 Hernandez's team getting the exit criteria up there
16 so everybody knows exactly what's got to happen. And
17 so I think we're on the right road, you know, and
18 that's a big step right there is to have that plan
19 and be headed in the right direction. So thank you
20 for your work.

21 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you. I definitely agree
22 having the exit criteria plan on the front-end not
23 only helps us stay focused at the district level and
24 at the school level, it provides the community with
25 the plan of what needs to happen. And so there is

1 more buy-in --

2 MS. NEWTON: Right.

3 SUPT. OWOH: -- on the changes that need to take
4 place, such as the facility changes, the academic
5 changes, the reduction-in-force with personnel. And
6 so they have a better understanding --

7 MS. NEWTON: Right.

8 SUPT. OWOH: -- of the need and then the plan.
9 So I definitely --

10 MS. NEWTON: Because I think, you know,
11 everybody wants what's best for kids. But if we
12 don't understand why --

13 SUPT. OWOH: Right.

14 MS. NEWTON: -- decisions are being made we
15 can't follow that it's the best for kids. So thank
16 you for that.

17 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Fantastic.

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: I think you've already answered
20 my question. But as you begin to close a facility --
21 are you having to re-district all of your elementary
22 schools? How are you handling that?

23 SUPT. OWOH: We -- yes, ma'am, we did. We had
24 to rezone.

25 MS. McFETRIDGE: Rezone.

1 SUPT. OWOH: And in fact the closing of our
2 school -- we closed W.T. Cheney -- helped in a number
3 of ways: one, it helped us -- we're going to operate
4 more efficiently because our numbers were low but we
5 were serving -- we were operating four schools. So
6 now we're operating three elementary schools. But in
7 the past, historically, it was just open enrollment;
8 so wherever I wanted my child to attend I can take
9 them over there. So we had transportation going all
10 over the city. So now by zoning, placing our
11 elementary schools in specific zones we're able to
12 streamline the resources that we have but also cut or
13 decrease the number of transportation routes. And so
14 we will have cost savings with that as well.

15 So we -- so it's been challenging with the
16 zoning because, you know --

17 MS. McFETRIDGE: It's always tough.

18 SUPT. OWOH: But we do have an intra-district
19 opportunity school choice, and so the parents are
20 able to apply for another elementary based on certain
21 criteria that's outlined in our board policy. So we
22 do have choice within our board policy, within the
23 school district. But the schools are zoned so that
24 we can operate more efficiently.

25 MS. McFETRIDGE: And the community obviously

1 understands that, so --

2 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, ma'am.

3 MS. McFETRIDGE: Wonderful. Thank you.

4 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Anything else? Any
6 more questions, comments?

7 Thank you, Dr. Owoh.

8 SUPT. OWOH: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: It's been great working with
10 you.

11 SUPT. OWOH: Yes, sir. Likewise. I appreciate
12 it.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

14 All right. The question is whether to accept
15 this report on the Pine Bluff School District.

16 MS. ZOOK: I move to support -- I mean I move to
17 -- I move to support. I move to accept.

18 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Zook,
20 second by Ms. Chambers.

21 All in favor say "aye."

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

24 All right.

25 Thank you.

1 B-22: CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORT: LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL
2 DISTRICT

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And finally, Little Rock.

4 DR. HERNANDEZ: Right, so we're moving on. So,
5 some of this is just informational from the report
6 that we pulled out related to Little Rock. Some of
7 the things that we're, you know, asking in working
8 with the District is on an electronic focus walk
9 tool. And part of that that we're trying to align
10 with district staff is as they're going into
11 buildings -- you know, the things that they're
12 looking for, the things that they're identifying, the
13 data that's being gathered to help kind of inform.
14 And this process will mature as we now have
15 established exit criteria. We started to have the
16 conversations with principals around what these
17 things are and what those -- the expectations are.
18 That will help to insure and provide evidence that
19 these things are happening and supported on the
20 district level and funneling down into the school
21 level as being clear expectations for staff of what
22 they're trying to do.

23 The District has also been working on their MTSS
24 manual. This will give guidance and expectations
25 related to their RTI process in school.

1 Another thing that we -- if you've seen the
2 press release that was out, Mabelvale Elementary
3 School is going to be part of the PLC pilot program
4 for Cohort 3. We're excited about that. So it is
5 always somewhat difficult in a school district that
6 has two schools to get them, you know, aligned in
7 some of their thinking and language and work; you
8 know, it's very challenging in a district of this
9 size to get that forward momentum. But we're
10 starting to see a lot of the conversations as they've
11 had their PLCs and been working in them; but starting
12 to really adopt and coalesce around the PLC process
13 that aligns with what the State is doing, at the same
14 time the work that's kind of being led by Hall around
15 HRS, the high school starting to migrate towards
16 that. So we'll be sharing -- the Department will be
17 sharing a lot of the upcoming trainings related to
18 PLCs with -- not sharing -- sharing in attendance
19 alongside with Little Rock staff, and then also later
20 on this summer as we all attend the High Reliability
21 School Summit to kind of sit side-by-side, learn
22 together and talk about further plans and how we're
23 going to see these things start to change in terms of
24 practices within the District.

25 We did -- across the state we made available

1 some of our Department or state level 10-03 grants
2 set aside and sent invitations to all districts that
3 were receiving that to pay for what's called a PLC
4 Leadership Academy. And that's kind of a yearlong
5 process that allows the leadership team of each
6 school to go and work with -- work through the PLC
7 process with consultants and kind of have homework.
8 So they go and learn some things; they have homework
9 and expectations; they come back to the next session,
10 kind of debrief about those things. And that will
11 kind of help -- not necessarily do the same exact
12 model that we're doing with Pine Bluff, Dollarway,
13 and Lee County where the full embedded coaching,
14 content specialist and all those will be there. But
15 it will start to give them the support, especially as
16 a principal and a leadership team, as you're trying
17 to visualize what should happen and have that kind of
18 critical friend that tells you, "Hey, you know, you
19 might try this," or "you're off-track here; you need
20 to be working on this." They'll start to engage in
21 that work. So we do have 18 of the schools that have
22 accepted that work to be able to start that this
23 fall.

24 The -- as part of the District Support Plan,
25 they have their collaborative team type meetings that

1 goes on with the District -- district leadership
2 staff; they've had those where they're analyzing
3 data, they're updating. In the process of updating
4 school level plans -- I do want to take the
5 opportunity to say this is that -- if you remember,
6 again in our document that we provide that part of
7 our report is historical. So the items that are in
8 there related to the school level plans, keep in mind
9 those were plans that were developed in the
10 summertime. And so with that, those things are
11 always in flux and process of being updated, along
12 with updates related to the district support plan.
13 And so as the District starts -- and now as they're
14 in the process of refining those and looking, say,
15 "Hey, what do we have in our school level plan, what
16 do we need to change based on data and get ready for
17 next year as these school level plans happen." I
18 think that if you look at some of those it's kind of
19 -- it's clear and evident that some of the things we
20 started out with last summer may not be the same
21 ideas, as we've kind of grown and matured in this
22 process. We've set the exit criteria. We've been
23 helping provide more guidance related to reading --
24 literacy programs, dyslexia programs, and have
25 started to try to take what were not necessarily

1 wrong thoughts or -- but just maybe disjointed in
2 terms of one school is doing this program, another
3 school is doing this program. And so from a district
4 level it's hard to support that when everybody is
5 doing different things. And so what we've seen
6 through this partnership is that we're starting to
7 align better; we're starting to have the same
8 language related to dyslexia; we're starting to have
9 the same language related to literacy programs, and
10 moving to that work. And I hope that's evident as
11 you look through the reports and say, hey, this is
12 where we started; this is where we're at now. So,
13 you know, we're all talking about PLCs; we're all
14 talking about these characteristics around the exit
15 criteria. So we are moving in that direction, albeit
16 it is a lot harder with a larger district like this.

17 So those plans will continue to be updated and
18 reviewed and we'll see the new school level plans in
19 September. Actually, they'll be -- should be ready
20 for public view on their website by August 1st, so
21 you'll be able to see what those updates are.

22 Related to their reading program, dyslexia, they
23 have adopted the Wilson Reading System and have been
24 working through the collaborative plan with ADE on
25 their dyslexia, the way they're going to operate and

1 those types of things. Of course, I said this with
2 one of our other districts, is that timeline related
3 to -- we've got new programs coming in, new
4 curriculum, a different way of doing things; we've
5 got the PLC type training that's going on, at the
6 same time doing -- kind of fortifying some of that
7 RISE training. It does become a challenge, and so
8 we've had some conversations around professional
9 development schedules, which are being
10 collaboratively worked on. At the same time looking
11 at their academic calendar and trying to find ways to
12 be more strategic in terms of how can we leverage the
13 staff during the summer to get training and also have
14 good quality days within the school year to allow
15 training. And so we're having those kinds of
16 conversations to hopefully make some modifications to
17 the usage of the time in this year's calendar, but
18 also going forward how can we better design an
19 academic calendar that allows more time for
20 flexibility and trainings and not necessarily have a
21 whole group scenario or have to bring a lot of people
22 in during the summer at an additional expense. So
23 that's something that we're looking into.

24 We've been encouraging the District and having
25 conversations around a decision-making matrix, and

1 that's kind of a newer concept, I guess. I know it's
2 probably been out there a lot. But how -- for staff
3 -- and this is kind of related to the High
4 Reliability Schools work -- is that if teachers and
5 principals and districts have kind of a clear
6 understanding about what decisions get made
7 collaboratively, what decisions do teachers or
8 principals have the autonomy to make, and then what
9 decisions are maybe made at the district level, that
10 kind of helps to know how the decision-making things
11 get made and how it relates to things like how the
12 observations are done, how curriculum decisions are
13 made, and all of those things. And so we're kind of
14 working towards that, not only with Little Rock but a
15 lot of our other districts to help in that decision-
16 making process.

17 We have done a revision to the TESS handbook
18 that has kind of a clear timeline related to how --
19 the teachers that might be receiving intense
20 intervention or intense support in terms of, you
21 know, how they're doing in the classroom and things
22 like that. We're hoping to have that ready before
23 school starts.

24 And then also related to the chronic
25 absenteeism, we are getting those reports and, you

1 know, feel like they're equitably doing the work. I
2 think one of the things that seems to be evident, in
3 some schools we're not seeing the movement or the
4 decrease in chronic absenteeism that we want. And so
5 that's one of those things we've tried some things;
6 we're going to go back and revise and try to see how
7 we can make some key differences in getting kids to
8 come to school.

9 And so this next part is kind of the update
10 where we started to put a little bit of evidence
11 related to the exit criteria. And so, you know, to
12 be fair we've identified the exit criteria for you
13 guys; we've identified it at the district level;
14 we've presented it to the Community Advisory Board.
15 We have started meeting with the principals; the
16 District has shared with the principals around exit
17 criteria. But we've actually started having more
18 small group meetings and tried to identify here are
19 the different kinds of evidence that you could show.
20 What we're having a little bit of struggle with right
21 now is kind of identifying as -- if I'm a building
22 level principal, I need to know who I need to send my
23 evidence to to make sure it's getting aggregated and
24 reviewed before it gets put on the document. So
25 ultimately we want to review it before we put things

1 on the document, but we're identifying who that
2 point-person is. And so when we say that we're
3 awaiting evidence, it doesn't mean that these things
4 aren't happening; they may be happening in certain
5 buildings, but we're trying to get it to where we
6 want it happening in all of these schools. And so as
7 we work through this process of getting a clear
8 understanding of what the evidence looks like -- and
9 I think there was a question earlier about the
10 qualitative part -- and so we want to make sure that
11 you guys have an understanding of what you should be
12 looking for and they have a clear understanding of
13 what they should be providing. And so we've actually
14 developed kind of a listing of things that kind of
15 will match what we give to the superintendent as
16 expectations that we'll be looking for; in addition
17 to that, giving it to the principals so they can
18 share it with the teachers. And as they're working
19 through the work, they can start to pull these things
20 together from their -- and if they're not doing it,
21 that's good questions to ask themselves and start to
22 develop those processes to get that.

23 So related to the qualitative, the collaborative
24 teams -- we've got some that are kind of starting
25 that. They have been -- and, you know, everybody

1 says they're doing PLCs at a training. Last week
2 where I asked, "How many of you are doing PLCs,"
3 everybody raised their hand. When you start asking
4 for evidence they start to hide about, you know,
5 being able to have that evidence. And so we know
6 they're having PLC structures and there are some
7 evidences, and what we always refer to as PLC-light.
8 But we're wanting them to get good quality training
9 related to PLCs so they start to get some of those
10 practices in place and able to provide the evidence.
11 So we do have some kind of starting and doing that
12 training. We've had -- actually had some schools
13 that have gone out and worked with coaches and
14 bringing them in to do training and embedded coaching
15 on-site. So we have some of those schools that are
16 doing that, but we're starting to see as a whole
17 they're starting to migrate towards that.

18 The master schedules have been developed to
19 include that collaborative team time and are working
20 on insuring that there's intervention time in that.
21 But in relation to the objectives 1.2 and 1.4, we're
22 still waiting on evidence in those areas.

23 Instructional practices being identified and
24 implemented, that's kind of, again, where we're
25 talking about as a whole what is the expectation

1 about what the actual instruction looks like in the
2 school. And so it's not that there might not be in
3 each school a differentiation of what that looks
4 like, but we're wanting to get to where we've got
5 evidence of what it looks like for all of these
6 schools and that it's consistent in being implemented
7 and communicated and in training and supports
8 provided related to that. Also, within evaluation
9 we've been providing a lot of support related to
10 evaluation. And we're starting to see some really
11 good progress in terms of administrators getting in
12 the classroom, providing support and feedback. We've
13 got a lot of schools where last year there weren't a
14 lot -- and some of the career summatives that weren't
15 done to migrate over to this year, well, we're
16 getting almost every -- quite a few of those are
17 being completed to where we're down to a very few
18 that have not been able to complete some of those.
19 So we're starting to see a tremendous increase in the
20 amount of work that's being done related to -- and
21 when I say "work," not that evaluation wasn't being
22 done, but we're starting to see that evidence; we're
23 starting to see that, you know, the tool is being
24 used; we're seeing the feedback that's happening.
25 And that's starting to move in a good direction. We

1 are awaiting evidence in some of the other areas,
2 objectives related to that.

3 The curriculum development and implementation --
4 you can see that, you know, we're having discussion
5 about trainings and starting to buy programs. But
6 when it comes to the holistic -- do we have good
7 quality curriculum with instructional strategies
8 thought about, assessments tied to it, and all those,
9 we still have a ways to go in that area to get that
10 evidence. Not that it's not happening, but just when
11 we talk about consistency and something that we can
12 put our hands on and be able to see -- and if I'm a
13 teacher going in I know exactly what I should be
14 doing, we've got work to do in that area. And we
15 know that we're going to start to see some movement
16 in that area, especially the schools that are going
17 to be involved in that PLC process and that work
18 because that's some of the expectation that's going
19 to be put on those leaders to do that.

20 The qualitative -- as it comes -- and some of
21 those, if you remember, were related to the teachers
22 have all their resources and things like that. So
23 we're starting to get some -- we know the literacy
24 adoptions have been completed and they're starting to
25 get some of those materials. As far as some of the

1 other ones, we're waiting to gather evidence in some
2 of those areas as well. We know that throughout the
3 summer we'll start to kind of put together some more
4 evidence. But then going into next year is where we
5 feel like we'll start to fill in a lot more of these
6 gaps related to evidence with these things.

7 In terms of the fiscal piece, we know that the
8 -- where at the beginning of the year we're
9 anticipating there being a decline in unrestricted
10 fund balance. You know, we're happy to say the work
11 that Mr. Poore and Mr. Bailey has been doing within
12 the district, that decline has really shrunk to where
13 we're anticipating with the cuts that have been
14 outlined, in addition to that, that restriction in
15 current year spending, that we anticipate getting a
16 balanced budget next year, meaning that those
17 revenues and expenditures should match. Of course,
18 that's aside from the money to build Southwest that's
19 in the building fund. But we're going to have to
20 watch that enrollment. We do know that based on the
21 recent increase in the salary schedule then that's
22 another component that the District will have to take
23 into consideration as they make decisions related to
24 expenditures during next year for FY21.

25 And so, overall, I think that might be my --

1 yeah, I think that was my last slide related to them.

2 We do have -- I know we had some questions maybe
3 related to special ed. and we do have some people
4 here to talk about that, that can give you an update
5 on -- we know we had the monitoring visit that went
6 out and the letter that's gone out with corrective
7 action plans and those kinds of things. So we do
8 have that. I'll let them share but -- and then Mr.
9 Poore is here with his team to answer any questions.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Great.

11 MS. ZOOK: Lisa and Matt are here.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: What's that? So Lisa --

13 MS. ZOOK: Lisa and Matt are here.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yeah, I understand. So, yeah,
15 go ahead and we'll get the special ed. report. And
16 then we'll let Mr. Poore -- and we'll take everybody
17 else from LRSD who is here today as well.

18 MR. SEWELL: Matt Sewell, Special Education
19 Unit, Arkansas Department of Ed.

20 As you guys recall, a few months ago we were
21 asked to do an in-depth monitoring of the Little Rock
22 School District's special education program. Thanks
23 to Ms. Green, as well as Ms. Steele and her team, for
24 their responsiveness and diligence to provide the
25 information that we needed to complete this project.

1 Through this monitoring we reviewed a grand
2 total of 181 student files, which is a record and
3 atypical for any monitoring that we've ever
4 performed. And at the conclusion of their 90-day
5 correction window we issued a Letter of Finding which
6 included the areas of noncompliance for which LRSD
7 will be required to develop a compliance action plan
8 to address each issue of noncompliance. It is
9 notable that these areas of noncompliance came from
10 approximately six (6) student folders out of the 181
11 files reviewed and they were typical of findings that
12 we would see in other monitorings.

13 Moving forward, our plan with LRSD -- they'll
14 have one year from the date of the Letter of Finding,
15 which was June 10, 2019, to provide evidence that the
16 correct steps have been taken in order to fulfill
17 their cap. The Special Ed. Unit will continue to
18 provide support and monitor their progress and will
19 also be working directly with Dr. Hernandez's unit to
20 hire a special ed. specialist to work with our Level
21 5 schools, including LRSD. And we'll also continue
22 to do school site visits and make recommendations
23 regarding those visits. And I think Ms. Tyler is
24 going to speak a little more on that piece.

25 MS. TYLER: Lisa Tyler, Learning Services.

1 Do y'all have any questions about the monitoring
2 piece before we move forward? I might be able to
3 just take care of that.

4 MS. ZOOK: Yeah, I --

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook.

6 MS. ZOOK: I'm sorry.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: You're good.

8 MS. ZOOK: I was wondering will those six
9 students be able to get the compensatory education
10 starting day-one in 1920 [sic]?

11 MR. SEWELL: There wasn't any -- there just
12 wasn't a complaint investigation or a due process
13 hearing; there wasn't any type of compensatory
14 education sought or provided for any students in the
15 monitoring.

16 MS. ZOOK: And are those parents aware?

17 MR. SEWELL: They would've been made aware if
18 the District made them aware. That's not something
19 that we would do. That may be a question to ask --

20 MS. ZOOK: I can ask Ms. Steele. That's all.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Anything else? Anything
22 else over here?

23 Okay. Ms. Tyler.

24 MS. TYLER: Okay. Lisa Tyler, Learning
25 Services.

1 I think you all are aware that we also
2 contracted with a special education consultant; it's
3 a highly respected special ed. supervisor from this
4 area who's retired. Went into Little Rock School
5 District to provide support to the District -- the
6 special education team, as well as the principals and
7 teachers, identify some areas of need and strengths,
8 and made some preliminary recommendations. So she
9 spent about two days in the highest need schools in
10 the Little Rock School District and she talked with
11 teachers, she talked with principals, she talked with
12 the District's special education staff, and she made
13 some notes about what she observed. And overall -- I
14 looked across her reports and I visited with her
15 today on the phone in terms of what her reflections
16 were about what she saw.

17 One of the things that I was surprised about was
18 many of the principals have a background in special
19 education in these buildings, and we view that as a
20 strength for sure.

21 The CBI program across those buildings overall
22 was a strength -- and if you don't know what CBI is,
23 it's kind of laymen's term for community-based
24 instruction. And so it's a classroom and a set of
25 services and supports for students with the most

1 significant disabilities, usually the most
2 significant cognitive disabilities. And our
3 consultant told me she could tell there's been a lot
4 of work done in that area. There were notes like
5 these students are out in the community more, they're
6 working on academic skills, as well as functional
7 skills, and -- as well as in her notes and my
8 conversation with her she felt like that that was a
9 high point. Also, in every set of notes that I
10 reviewed I either saw mental health services or
11 they'd employed a social worker or there was a
12 licensed counselor. So there was -- that was a
13 consistent theme across the schools.

14 Some of the areas of need that I saw across her
15 report, as well as in talking with her, were student
16 attendance and teacher attendance -- one or both, or
17 one or the other -- or tardies, consistent tardies.
18 That was at one of the buildings. She identified the
19 need for a positive behavior intervention and
20 support, Tier 1, right now that needed to be put in
21 place. And if you know what positive behavior
22 intervention support is -- you've heard that term,
23 PBIS -- so basically it's like core instruction for
24 behavior. So you know it's really hard to provide
25 interventions for students when your core is not tied

1 in academics, and it's the same for behavior. So
2 lots of things that you've seen in the GUIDE for Life
3 materials, those are things that need to be
4 reinforced and taught in those classrooms, with
5 common expectations for behavior across the building
6 that are also reinforced and taught.

7 Some of the recommendations that she had
8 initially were the special education teachers working
9 on -- and principals -- formative assessments for
10 those classrooms. She didn't see a lot of that going
11 on in terms of those ongoing assessments, guiding
12 instruction in those particular buildings. Now,
13 again, she was there for two days, might've been in
14 one classroom, you know, for 30 minutes or so, but
15 that's what she observed. She observed some
16 professional development -- or recommended some
17 professional development and those things range from
18 co-teaching to classroom management to RISE training;
19 you know, there was just kind of a variety of things.
20 And she also talked about the need for principals
21 having high expectations for those classrooms, those
22 who are tasked with evaluating those teachers. And
23 that's not something uncommon that we recommend in
24 lots of our districts in special education classes,
25 principals evaluating special education teachers

1 unfortunately.

2 So as Matt said, we are going to employ a
3 special education consultant to be part of Dr.
4 Hernandez's group to work not only with Little Rock,
5 but other -- the other districts who are in need of
6 Level 5 support. And that person will be able to
7 devote a lot more time to Little Rock and the other
8 districts and work with Mike's team to support the
9 special education programs and the principals in
10 those buildings.

11 So the other thing is the behavior side of that.
12 I think Matt and Dr. Hernandez have an interview
13 tomorrow to employ a behavior specialist to be
14 specific to Little Rock and the other districts that
15 are in need of this type of support.

16 And these needs that I've talked about with
17 Little Rock, I'm sure we could probably say the same
18 for many of the other districts that we're working
19 with.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great.

21 MS. TYLER: Do y'all have any questions?

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook.

23 MS. ZOOK: Yes. One of the findings was Child
24 Find. And can you address the progress that was made
25 there?

1 MR. SEWELL: Can I address the progress that was
2 made there or address --

3 MS. ZOOK: Well, that was one of the findings
4 they were given the 90 days to correct.

5 MR. SEWELL: Okay. So in Child Find -- okay.
6 So they were not cited on Child Find. They were
7 trained on it and they corrected it, but it was not a
8 finding against the District.

9 MS. ZOOK: That's my understanding that that was
10 the primary finding and they were given the 90 days
11 to come up with a corrective plan.

12 MR. SEWELL: During the 90-day corrective window
13 --

14 MS. ZOOK: Right.

15 MR. SEWELL: -- is when they have the
16 opportunity to correct --

17 MS. ZOOK: Right.

18 MR. SEWELL: -- those original findings.

19 MS. ZOOK: Right.

20 MR. SEWELL: The finding report that I'm sharing
21 with you today is at the end of that 90-day
22 correction window.

23 MS. ZOOK: Okay.

24 MR. SEWELL: So during the 90 days they did
25 training in their district to correct that.

1 MS. ZOOK: Okay. That's my question.

2 MR. SEWELL: Yes, ma'am.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Any additional
4 questions?

5 Okay. Thank y'all. And other questions may
6 arise during the conversation. Thank y'all for
7 presenting.

8 Mr. Poore, do you have any really brief remarks
9 before we turn to questions for you and your team?

10 SUPT. POORE: I think I'd rather do some closing
11 remarks at the end, if I could --

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

13 SUPT. POORE: -- and answer any questions.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Perfect. Great.

15 Ms. McFetridge?

16 MS. MCFETRIDGE: Not right now. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Newton?

18 MS. NEWTON: Dr. Hernandez answered most of my
19 questions today. The only question that I wasn't --
20 the literacy adoption, has that been -- that's been
21 finalized?

22 SUPT. POORE: Yes, ma'am. And we can answer
23 specific questions as you want. The adoption is in
24 place. We have teams working right now on curriculum
25 mapping, and we also have a training schedule that's

1 set up for those teachers prior to school and then
2 also -- we also realize there's some ongoing training
3 that's going to be necessary during the course of the
4 year. That's the only thing that we probably don't
5 have as detailed of a map yet of what that ongoing
6 training looks like during the course of the year.

7 MS. NEWTON: And is that K-5, K --

8 SUPT. POORE: That's K-5 training for the new
9 resources specific to literacy instruction for all
10 elementary. But we also have training that's
11 necessary for the support materials that we bought
12 for our dyslexic learner support. So that's a
13 different set of training --

14 MS. NEWTON: Right.

15 SUPT. POORE: -- and I probably would need to
16 get Ms. Carpenter up to address that. But we also
17 have that mapped out.

18 MS. NEWTON: Okay. What thought has been given
19 to after 5th grade, I guess is my question?

20 SUPT. POORE: After 5th grade, we did buy --
21 first we have RISE training that's taking place. So
22 the first element is that we started that last year
23 with some of our secondary group; primarily all 6th
24 grade English teachers received that. And now we're
25 trying to roll that out into the other secondary

1 levels. And I could have Dr. Perkins share that. We
2 also are -- knowing that we're going to need to be
3 very intentional with them to tie the curriculum that
4 we've purchased the year before with the RISE
5 training and do work with that, and that's going to
6 fall on the shoulders of our new literacy director.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay. So you're thinking about
8 tying curriculum to RISE 6th grade and up that would
9 --

10 SUPT. POORE: Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. NEWTON: -- hopefully catch some kids up?

12 SUPT. POORE: Yes. And we also -- and I know
13 this came up with other district reports is that
14 we've also prepared master schedules to help out with
15 any of the struggling learners that are -- have
16 fallen behind, and have classes prepared to be able
17 to -- you know, because we did massive work as a part
18 of the dyslexia audit to screen our students, and so
19 we're ready now and know basically -- at least we
20 have it all framed out of the sections that kids can
21 go into to receive kind of a Tier 2 or Tier 3
22 support.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Hill, anything?

25 DR. HILL: No.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Chambers?

2 MS. CHAMBERS: Is there -- we received an email
3 that expressed some concern for a need for more
4 integration. It's not unlike the question Ms. Newton
5 just asked about RISE. And are we committed to RISE
6 and are we consistent in how that's being supported
7 and expected? Is there anything else you could say
8 or would say? Do you have any concerns about that?
9 Is that something you're addressing?

10 SUPT. POORE: Well, you know, first off, you
11 know, with RISE training right now -- I think this
12 district was real aggressive in terms of getting
13 people trained. We're down now to I believe -- was
14 it less than 300 -- about 300 of our elementary
15 teachers that still need to receive that RISE
16 training. But we have some schools that have all
17 their K-5 trained. We have principals trained; we
18 have special educators that have been a part of the
19 RISE training. So that element of having the final
20 group of teachers get the RISE training that will
21 take place. Anybody that's new to the district will
22 also receive the RISE training. But the other key
23 part of it -- and you brought it up -- is, you know,
24 do we have our principals ready to support that in
25 the classroom. We have that training lined up I

1 believe for the end of the month of July, the first
2 of August for the principals to receive that so they
3 can become the assessors for the RISE. And then we
4 also know that in a part of some of the reports, if
5 you go dive into those, that -- you know, especially
6 with the schools where -- the four elementary F
7 schools, we've had a lot of support from the
8 Department where their literacy folks are going on
9 walks with our team. Now that could be with the
10 principal; that can be with Dr. Perkins as the Chief
11 Academic Officer; it could be with other folks within
12 our curriculum team. But they're going on those
13 walks into the classrooms and trying to monitor. We
14 need to escalate that out into some of our other
15 areas to be able to monitor that, but there's been
16 some good progress on that over the course of the
17 spring -- and I really give the Department of
18 Education a lot of credit for how they've helped us
19 with that.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Pfeffer.

21 DR. PFEFFER: And to piggyback on what he's
22 saying -- I think it'll help answer your question --
23 we have someone who's been dedicated to really
24 supporting that work in the Little Rock School
25 District, Kiffany Pride, and we're very encouraged by

1 her reports with the progress that the instructional
2 facilitators are making. And when, you know, areas
3 are identified that's being communicated very quickly
4 to the principals and to Central Office so that --
5 whether it's training, whether it's some other type
6 of intervention -- those things are starting to
7 occur. So we've been encouraged by that.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Dean?

9 MS. DEAN: Mr. Poore, thank you for the report.
10 I was glad to see so many opportunities for parents
11 to be engaged and involved in the school level plans,
12 from Title 1 meetings to really getting parents
13 involved in the career and college plans for their
14 children as well. I love seeing -- I think it was
15 Forest Heights that had plans for a parent
16 newsletter, parent conferences, and a parent
17 leadership workshop, which was really interesting.
18 So I'm glad to see that there's so much effort being
19 put into making sure that our parents and family
20 members have opportunities to engage on different
21 levels, so --

22 SUPT. POORE: Ms. Dean, can I take advantage of
23 one of the things that you didn't mention that fits
24 into this that I'm proud of, is that our title
25 programs have done a parent training. And it is the

1 -- we've now had our third graduating class of
2 parents. And it brings parents from all over the
3 district -- which I was kind of thinking that, you
4 know, will that actually bring a diverse group of
5 parents. It has. We have wives of bankers to
6 parents that really are making just ends meet coming
7 together. There are grandparents that are in the
8 class. They take great pride in their attendance,
9 which is an area where we have to work on in some
10 other areas. But with these parents they're showing
11 up; they have perfect attendance; they're graduating,
12 we actually have them in a gown. And it's -- it is
13 an amazing thing that's happening. Our last class
14 had 80 people that were involved in that, and so, you
15 know, that is a positive impact.

16 I also will share in a public way that we have a
17 retreat set up this weekend for a literacy retreat.
18 And, you know, if I've had a constant over the course
19 of this week it's like folks saying, you know,
20 "Where's the dyslexia part of this?" Well, it's
21 going to be embedded in all of the discussions that
22 take place and we have Ms. Stacy Smith that's going
23 to help with helping guide some of that discussion
24 and talk. But we really want to treat this weekend
25 as almost like a professional learning community --

1 what is it that we're after, what is it that we are
2 aiming towards, what do we do if we don't get there,
3 how are we going to address that if we're not getting
4 there. So we're going to treat it much like a PLC
5 environment of what's the target and how do we know
6 and what do we do if we don't get there, and fuse
7 those conversations so that people will have a chance
8 to say, "Have you thought about this? What about
9 that?" And, you know, just even with that -- I'll
10 take advantage again -- that we've had some folks
11 come in. And as an example, right now there's a
12 pilot being worked on at Hall High School that I
13 think could be very promising -- a new way to support
14 learners that are behind on their literacy at the
15 high school level done in the context of a block
16 instruction hub. That needs to be worked on between
17 the Hall team and some of the folks that are -- have
18 been helping try to support that support. But, you
19 know, people are jumping in. We met with ARKids Read
20 this week and they certainly want to do some things
21 differently with the training that they have behind.
22 Ms. Dionne Jackson is coming in and she wants to do
23 some additional training of what can they do even
24 with their one-on-one time with struggling readers --
25 what can they do to support and -- which they do a

1 little bit different in terms of supporting learners
2 that are struggling as readers that tie into the
3 Science of Reading.

4 MS. DEAN: Great work.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Ms. Zook.

6 MS. ZOOK: Yes. I'll start out by complimenting
7 Ms. Carpenter because she's made a lot of progress in
8 a short period of time. I also appreciate the fact
9 that when I asked Dr. Hernandez for more up-to-date
10 -- are they sharing with you the -- each month, or
11 you just find out at the end of each quarter what
12 we're seeing at the end of each quarter?

13 SUPT. POORE: When you say "they" are you
14 talking about the staff or --

15 MS. ZOOK: The people that are providing -- that
16 are preparing the reports and the people that provide
17 the data that go with it.

18 SUPT. POORE: I seem to get a lot of input from
19 multiple directions, so it -- first off, the
20 Department -- you know, most of you realize that I
21 meet with the Commissioner and his team, Dr. Pfeffer
22 and Mike. And we meet at least every-other-week --
23 or every -- yeah, every-other-week, and that provides
24 input that comes in from that team. But also Sheila
25 Whitlow is a key person that works directly for Mike.

1 And so that's kind of that element of me sharing some
2 things that I need to bring out and talk, but then
3 the Department brings in information.

4 And then on the other side, within the
5 community, our own Little Rock community, I think
6 that the information elevates in a couple of
7 different ways. You know, some of it comes directly
8 from my deputies in terms of sharing, you know, where
9 they stand with evaluations, where the building
10 evaluations are in terms of working with teachers,
11 where we're having hotspots. Veronica Perkins comes
12 in and shares information directly related to, you
13 know, the walks with Dr. Pride that takes place. So
14 I get those things.

15 I don't know if I could say that it's like, boy,
16 on this date I get a report; it's just it's kind of
17 open-ended in terms of information always flowing in.

18 MS. ZOOK: So this isn't necessarily a surprise
19 to you the kinds of things that we're being told that
20 are not close?

21 SUPT. POORE: Yeah. The one that maybe
22 surprised me the most was the attendance one. You
23 know, with the schools that we had been real
24 intentional about through the grade level reading
25 campaign --

1 MS. ZOOK: And the Feet to the Seat, I know
2 you've got to be disappointed in that because that
3 was like a big deal for you --

4 SUPT. POORE: Yeah.

5 MS. ZOOK: -- and they were supposed -- but as
6 you saw the results were abysmal.

7 SUPT. POORE: Yeah, it was less than -- it
8 wasn't anything that -- what you'd want to brag
9 about. So just so that I can provide a data-set to
10 that for the listeners out there and give you the
11 numbers -- I've got it right here -- there were
12 initially 20 schools that were a part of the grade
13 level reading campaign. And out of those 20 schools
14 with the grade level reading campaign actually half
15 of the schools had a decline in terms of their
16 student attendance. We had four schools that were
17 flat on their data, and then six improved, so -- and
18 we also have identified an additional five schools
19 that we think also have challenges in terms of their
20 attendance data that we will work with next year.
21 We're going to continue to work with the grade level
22 reading campaign with Mr. Rand and Ms. Glasgow.

23 I was heartened a little bit because like I --
24 one of the schools that had a drop, that typically
25 has got a pretty positive school culture and actually

1 has had some pretty good academic environment -- I
2 said, "That was really discouraging from you." And
3 she goes, "Mike, they're doing everything right. You
4 just have to be patient." Now I wouldn't say that I
5 could say that across the board, but there are some
6 of those schools that are doing all the right
7 elements but they haven't yet found the momentum to
8 move forward. But I also believe that there are some
9 schools that we're going to have to give a greater
10 level of intensity. Dr. McCarroll, I guarantee you,
11 will work hard on this to address it. But you're
12 right, it's -- you know, for as much investment as we
13 had -- and we really had some great community
14 partners help us with this as well -- we did not get
15 the results that we wanted.

16 MS. ZOOK: I wonder -- a next step that we
17 always did is visits to the homes so you actually are
18 visiting with the parents. Because they obviously
19 care about their child; they may or may not be aware,
20 particularly those at the high school level where you
21 have 20 percent plus that are chronically absent. So
22 I don't know what -- who you have or what you have or
23 who would be willing or how much you can require, but
24 I think visits in the home would be a step that maybe
25 is missing here or conversations when you have those

1 parents that all come together to work on that.

2 Also --

3 SUPT. POORE: Can I bring one more thing up --

4 MS. ZOOK: Sure.

5 SUPT. POORE: -- I think you'll like to hear too
6 is I still think that the other thing that's a part
7 of it is, you know, what that classroom feels like.
8 So, you know, there's nothing more that gets a kid
9 motivated, whether it be a kindergartner or a 10th
10 grader, if they're -- if they feel like their hair is
11 on fire because the instructor cares about them and
12 the environment for learning; it's like, whoa, I'm
13 very -- being very engaged as a learner. So that is
14 the biggest factor that we can have to impact this.
15 And, of course, we're working very hard on that part
16 of it too.

17 MS. ZOOK: And I always said to teachers -- new
18 teachers, returning teachers -- you know, if you'll
19 send home a couple of "boy, he did great today in
20 this" at the very beginning of the year, then if you
21 have something you need to talk with them about
22 later, you know, like he was doing great when he was
23 there, but that kind of thing.

24 But I had also asked for staff attendance and
25 what I got back was "well, we're not going to do that

1 until September." So I was disappointed in that and
2 I wondered if you were aware that the HR just ignored
3 the request?

4 SUPT. POORE: Well, I hope -- I don't feel like
5 we ignored it intentionally. We just are -- we're
6 trying to make sure that we provide -- this has not
7 been the easiest thing to put together, as you know,
8 because I know you've asked for this continually.
9 And we do feel like we're getting better at being
10 able to understand and package this data. And so,
11 you know, I can understand your disappointment in now
12 having a more complete report, and we will try to do
13 better on that in the future. And so I do think that
14 was a gap in one of our deliveries for this.

15 MS. ZOOK: I think one of the things that we
16 also need to look at -- because obviously the student
17 attendance, it -- the missing piece is the staff --
18 is in all of your higher letter grade schools it says
19 that they are at no risk for chronic absenteeism and
20 all of your C, D and F schools they are at high risk
21 for chronic absenteeism based on this thing that the
22 grade level reading did. So we do know that piece of
23 it is an indicator. And if the staff piece plays
24 into it, you know, I think that's where my concern
25 is. But anyway --

1 Is the new K-12 literacy person RISE trained and
2 are you confident they're an instructional leader?

3 SUPT. POORE: Yeah. And so for the audience's
4 sake in terms of the individual -- and I made sure
5 that I had some of her credentials -- Ms. Sherry
6 Chambers is the person that we've selected for the
7 Director of Literacy. She is coming out of Chicot
8 Elementary. And one of the things about that school
9 is, if you look at it in terms of last year, was one
10 of the schools that had very positive growth and has
11 also done a tremendous job of changing the culture
12 around in that school. They adopted The Leader in Me
13 program. She has 25 years in education. She has had
14 six years as a classroom teacher; ten years as a
15 literacy coach, six of those were with -- as a
16 literacy coach when the District was doing Reading
17 First as a part of its delivery; she's had three
18 years as an assistant principal; and then the last
19 six years as a principal. She's nationally board
20 certified in literacy, language arts, reading
21 specialist certification, and a master's in reading.
22 She, along with the principals, in terms of the RISE
23 training that our principals have taken place,
24 participated in that. I don't know her exact -- how
25 many trainings she participated in offhand; I can

1 find that out for you. But she's been a part of
2 those trainings. I think the key reason that we
3 selected her over the other candidates was she brings
4 an instant ability for us to collaborate with -- she
5 -- that's who she is in her leadership style. And,
6 you know, when we went to a K-12 literacy person --
7 I've had some say, "Well, we've got -- whoever we
8 hire, if it's secondary -- more of a secondary person
9 or more of an elementary person, then we need to hire
10 somebody else to backfill to do the other parts."
11 And my belief is we need a person that can actually
12 bring lots of people into the table. And Ms.
13 Chambers obviously has more of an elementary. She
14 needs to bring in secondary people in teams so that
15 they work together, and I think she provides us the
16 best opportunity for that because she has real
17 respect at the secondary levels and obviously with
18 her own peers at the elementary.

19 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Newton left the
20 meeting at approx. 5:15 p.m.)

21 MS. ZOOK: And you know that she's willing to
22 switch from the balanced to the structured literacy
23 and the things that compliment RISE?

24 SUPT. POORE: I believe all of our principals
25 are on that train and moving towards that. And I

1 know we have some -- a lot of work to do to make sure
2 that we implement RISE and the Science of Reading
3 with fidelity and that we move forward in terms of
4 support of dyslexia -- dyslexic learners. But I
5 believe -- in any setting that I've been in there's
6 been real intense efforts being made by staff
7 throughout the spring and even the start of this
8 summer in that regard.

9 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Also, in the information that
10 I requested I got information from four -- the four
11 schools specifically that ADE has been working
12 through. And one of the concerns was that the MAP
13 reports were not being used to do intervention in
14 core. And so I wanted to be sure you were aware of
15 that.

16 And that -- and the statement here under
17 implementation analysis, "There is little evidence
18 that the majority of teachers embrace Science of
19 Reading and consistently apply these new learnings in
20 their classroom" -- I know in 2010, before we
21 intervened PLCs was trained, and you know that it's
22 not where you want it to be. Now that we've done
23 RISE we don't want to see that same -- those same
24 kinds of things happen to this. And when I read that
25 from the people that are in your buildings -- these

1 are people who have observed the teachers, that --
2 you know, and I won't go into the specifics, but it's
3 not pretty. But we have to be sure that they
4 implement this. We just have to. And when you're
5 looking at the positions that you're eliminating, to
6 think in terms not so much of last-in/first-out, but
7 who in fact is willing to implement, who in fact is
8 willing to put kids first every day, every period.
9 And with the people that special ed. is bringing on
10 with Dr. Hernandez and with your dyslexia audit done
11 and your special ed. well on its way, and then -- but
12 we have all those other children that, you know,
13 we've just got to make the principals aware if any of
14 those teachers who are not from day-one that that
15 principal works with them as their instructional
16 leader, saying, "Let's start work today. Let's grow
17 together." And --

18 SUPT. POORE: So let me make one comment. Ms.
19 Zook is correct in her statement that many of the
20 initial reports that were going into the schools that
21 had the F ranking, they were very mixed. And I was
22 getting those reports back, to your earlier question,
23 both from the Department, as well as my own folks, to
24 say "we just came back from X school and it was not
25 good; this school was pretty good, this school was

1 not." But I think that also if you were to check
2 with Dr. Pride that she would back up and say that
3 some of our greatest gains have been made within
4 those same schools over the course of the semester as
5 the work was being done and there was a level of
6 support coming in to the principal and to those
7 teachers. Which I think is your main point is that
8 that type of effort has to continue, and I feel like
9 -- you know, I know that this Department of Ed. gets
10 beat up in Little Rock for not being supportive.
11 That is not the fact. That is not the fact. This
12 Department has been very supportive and our people
13 have been very receptive. And I think that the
14 Department would come back to say that Little Rock
15 employees have never tried to fight or battle or say
16 "that's not right, that's not true;" what we've said
17 is "okay, we understand what you're saying, help us"
18 or "how do we get better" or "what are your
19 suggestions." So I'm proud of kind of both
20 organizations' efforts. And I really do think that
21 we had some things that happened in the latter part
22 of this semester that were very positive at those
23 four schools where this extra support was coming in.

24 MS. ZOOK: Great. Because, you know, you and I
25 can't want it more for them than they want it for

1 themselves.

2 SUPT. POORE: That's absolutely correct.

3 MS. ZOOK: They have to do it in the classroom
4 where they get to be and get -- I think it's a reward
5 to get to be with children every single day.

6 SUPT. POORE: Yeah.

7 MS. ZOOK: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Dr. Moore.

9 DR. MOORE: I think you've covered a lot of
10 bases here. As far as staffing goes for next school
11 year, for your building principals, do you have much
12 turnover there?

13 SUPT. POORE: Well, we're kind of having a
14 little bit of a domino effect at this point.

15 DR. MOORE: Yeah.

16 SUPT. POORE: So we have -- we had one principal
17 that retired at Washington Elementary. We've already
18 picked a person to be in that spot who has been at
19 Bale Elementary and was a part of that team that
20 really is starting to make Bale come together. So
21 she was the assistant principal; she'll move over.

22 We have a spot at Romine Elementary where a
23 principal left us to go to a different district. And
24 we've moved one of our own principals from that spot
25 to Romine. Romine is a part of the blueprint that

1 eventually will become a pre-K center, and so we've
2 got a leader that can help us not only make that
3 culture still have real good things happen this year,
4 but can also help us transition within the community.

5 We have a principal opening at Chicot Elementary
6 where Ms. Chambers came from.

7 We also have principal openings at Western
8 Hills. We just found out about that. That also has
9 been a pretty strong school in terms of growth in the
10 past two years. She just took a job at Cabot.

11 And then we have the job at Brady Elementary
12 where we moved Mr. Harris to Romine.

13 So we have three opening there. And so, you
14 know, on average -- and Dr. Mitchell can correct me
15 -- we're probably right on kind of the average thing
16 right now in terms of how many turnover we have.
17 Remember, we have 30 -- 28 elementaries, excuse me,
18 sites.

19 DR. MOORE: And then for -- and I think you've
20 probably answered this question before. But for
21 teachers, how much do principals have autonomy over
22 hiring new staff? What does that look like as y'all
23 are doing that?

24 SUPT. POORE: Well, we've really -- one of the
25 things -- a system thing is that we've adopted a new

1 system with an HR; we're working with the State
2 Department again on human capital, and so we've had a
3 pretty dynamic thing. That human capital thing is
4 actually throughout all of Pulaski County, where all
5 the county school districts are working on that.

6 The bottom-line question for you, Ms. Moore,
7 though is that our principals have a great deal of
8 autonomy on who they get to hire. We have gone
9 through the reduction -- I want to kind of make sure
10 I'm being real.

11 DR. MOORE: Right.

12 SUPT. POORE: So when you reduce teaching staff,
13 we have not had to -- we have not had to do a RIF
14 within that reduction. We reduced 75 spots in terms
15 of in the teacher grouping; we did not have to reduce
16 anybody -- and that's based on retirements, that's
17 based on people leaving, and then we've had to move
18 folks. Right now we're down -- I think the latest
19 number is that we have four individuals that are
20 still left to be placed out of all the folks that got
21 slips that said that they need to be moved for next
22 year.

23 DR. MOORE: Thank you. My last question -- and
24 maybe you have answered this. But have y'all gotten
25 back the MAP results from the end of the year?

1 SUPT. POORE: We did, and we provided that to
2 you in the last quarterly report. And that happened
3 because we delayed --

4 DR. MOORE: No, because that was -- okay.

5 SUPT. POORE: -- Little Rock's report because of
6 you guys being -- having the meeting in Northwest.

7 DR. MOORE: Right.

8 SUPT. MOORE: So that came to you in April.

9 DR. MOORE: Yeah. We did get those later.
10 Okay. So that --

11 SUPT. MOORE: So we did give you the spring
12 results. And remember, the winter-to-spring looks
13 pretty good; the fall-to --

14 DR. MOORE: Yeah.

15 SUPT. MOORE: -- fall-to-spring is a little bit
16 all over in terms -- it looks a little more flat.

17 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Mr. Williamson, anything --

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: I'm good.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- any questions? Okay. Ms.
21 House? Okay.

22 Ms. Zook.

23 MS. ZOOK: I was going to wish you well in your
24 retirement, Dr. Mitchell. And I request that you and
25 Dr. Perkins do a favor and go into all of those

1 buildings, and if there's anything left that has to
2 do with reading recovery please take it and we'll
3 have a big bonfire and roast wienies. But that would
4 be a big advantage to those teachers and staff and
5 mainly for the students. But I wish you both well in
6 your next endeavors.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I'll just say a few things.
8 It's my -- probably my last chance to say anything
9 from this seat on Little Rock School District, and
10 obviously I've spent a lot of energy on it the last
11 five years. And I want to thank you for your
12 leadership and your friendship. And thanks everybody
13 else in the District who has put a lot of work and
14 effort as -- and of course everybody from the
15 Department.

16 And I think we have heard a lot of clear
17 evidence of the effort and I think we have heard, in
18 my eyes, some clear evidence of progress, but also
19 some areas where things are not where exactly they
20 need to be.

21 I look at the exit criteria, which of course
22 came fairly late in the game to this process for
23 reasons that -- that's just the way it happened. You
24 know, I have some confidence that, you know, the
25 qualitative -- on the qualitative front there is good

1 progress and things can be met in the coming months.
2 You know, I think we have to be realistic about the
3 quantitative side, especially when it comes to high
4 schools, because of how far behind things are.

5 And my plea would be to the Board -- you know,
6 we are now probably seven months away from the five-
7 year mark. And I would really ask the Board to begin
8 to, you know, prepare for a thoughtful contingency
9 plan so that at the end of the day the Board doesn't
10 simply react to something that is brought to them by
11 the Department, but takes real ownership of this
12 decision about how to move forward in a way that is
13 best for the community, best for the District, best
14 for the kids. And we know that there are real
15 constraints on what actions can be taken because of a
16 variety of reasons. But I really do think it would
17 make good sense for this body to create a small
18 taskforce to think about coming up with a plan that
19 makes good sense, that does get community buy-in so
20 that it is not -- we're not at a point where -- or
21 the Board is not at a point where it's scrambling at
22 the end to try to figure out what to do that will do
23 the least amount of damage; rather, be more
24 thoughtful and proactive about what can be in the
25 best interest of the district, assuming that -- and

1 we, of course, hope that, you know, test results
2 change the game in terms of the quantitative data.
3 But I think we have to be realistic and it's
4 important to prepare for that.

5 And so, that would be my plea -- kind of my
6 closing plea to the Board to move in that direction,
7 sooner rather than later.

8 MS. ZOOK: I've already talked with the -- Ms.
9 Windle and we will have a work session for the full
10 board on Act 930 and all that that implies. Because
11 we as a board will now be -- we're always separate
12 from ADE, but we in this regard will be totally
13 separate from them and work with everybody and
14 everything. But that process for this board will
15 start after the new person is appointed and comes on.
16 We want to give them a little breathing room, because
17 charters come up and school choice. But we will have
18 a work session more than likely in September, and
19 then move from there and the process that has to be
20 done.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Did you have some
22 closing remarks?

23 SUPT. POORE: I do want to just make a couple of
24 closing remarks. I appreciate what both of you just
25 said in terms of further discussions on Little Rock

1 School District.

2 I do think it's important to note that the
3 graduation rate in Little Rock School District
4 exceeded 82%. I wanted it to be 82.6%; I lost that
5 fight with Deb Coffman who said it's 82.3%, I think,
6 and so we got rounded to 82%. But we were at 74% the
7 year that I came in, and we're at 82%.

8 We have -- when I arrived in this district we
9 had 19 million dollars of volunteer hours that were
10 coming into the district; this year we exceeded 27.5
11 million dollars of volunteer hours. That's faith-
12 based communities, that's business leaders, that's
13 parents that are -- and our own staff and our own
14 kids that are coming in to support the District. I'm
15 excited about the things that we are doing with
16 people working together collaboratively. The phrase
17 that we still are going to use that's been here since
18 the beginning of it is "The Power of Us." You know,
19 we can all work together to make a difference, and
20 that's happening. It's happening to change around
21 the thing of wanting kids to come to school. It
22 happens with 6th in football or 6th and volleyball --
23 6th in spike, we call it. It's happening with
24 groups, like Sherman Tate who is coming in and he's
25 working with Mount Zion Baptist Church, with Calvary

1 Baptist Church to come in and mentor males at
2 Henderson; that will start this year. The Rotary
3 Club. Club 99 has adopted Dunbar and have a
4 leadership program for those students of 100 kids.

5 So the community has bought in in so many
6 different ways to impact, you know, what's happening
7 in our schools. They're impacting it, not only what
8 happens in the instructional day but what happens
9 with our extracurricular program. Yesterday we had a
10 fine arts think-tank, just like we did an athletic
11 think-tank. You should've seen the environment.
12 Every arts organization that was -- is a part of
13 Central Arkansas, they were there. And we found --
14 we're finding ways to go connect.

15 Project-based learning and getting kids ready
16 for careers -- and I appreciate you bringing that up
17 -- we're working with the Chamber and the county
18 school districts to do Ford NGL. That's really
19 positive.

20 And the last thing I want to do, to just share
21 with you is that we've worked with folks like Kathy
22 Smith, with the Commissioner, with Ford -- excuse me
23 -- with the Chamber to have -- and really my fellow
24 superintendents in Pulaski County. We do not have a
25 co-op. But I'm telling you, those things are

1 happening right now with things that can support
2 everyone, things that we can do together, whether
3 it's a Cows tech card to allow kids to have data-
4 based things to go do, deep research, or whether it's
5 coming together to develop online support for
6 learners to -- coming up with trainings that are
7 taking place. So the county superintendents are
8 working together in ways that I don't think has ever
9 been done. And I want to compliment all three of
10 those gentlemen for the work that they're doing, and
11 really the support we get from so many different
12 people within the community and from our Commissioner
13 and his staff. So I hope you will give them a big,
14 you know, pat on the back.

15 Finally, Mr. Barth, I will just share that it's
16 funny that you started off that you said, "I
17 appreciate your leadership and friendship;" that's
18 exactly what I put on your note, the same phrase, at
19 the beginning of this. And I appreciate your passion
20 for kids. And the other thing that you've done that
21 exemplifies you is you're passionate for governance,
22 appropriate governance, and how to make sure that all
23 voices get heard and run a meeting that sometimes can
24 be a little bit contentious, especially when Little
25 Rock is in the house. So I thank you so much for

1 your leadership and your friendship. And I shared
2 with him -- most of you already know, he's already
3 into something else. So, you know, he'll go right
4 into the next thing -- and that's just who you are
5 and I appreciate it.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you. I appreciate it.

7 MS. ZOOK: One last thing. I know that CAB has
8 recommended the support that you hopefully will
9 provide for Ms. Carpenter so she can get the
10 intervention for these students that are being
11 identified. Where are you in that process?

12 SUPT. POORE: You know, one of the things --
13 this is kind of a weird thing. But we had an issue
14 with some funding that we thought we might lose
15 because of grant funding with the pre-K program where
16 we were losing a federal grant. And we got
17 tremendous support from the Department of Human
18 Services so that we could go into a block grant
19 funding, and we've regained all those spots.

20 MS. ZOOK: Right.

21 SUPT. POORE: So that gave a little bit of a
22 cushion in terms of doing some support that we need.
23 But we've also staffed -- and I want to give Mr.
24 Burton and Ms. Carpenter credit -- that we've already
25 provided the staffing even as we did these

1 reductions. And that was a little bit of a fight, as
2 you can imagine, trying to, you know, reduce the 75
3 positions but then also say we're going to find a way
4 to support. And are we perfect at that right now? I
5 can't say that. But I know we have a plan of having
6 support for Tier 2 and Tier 3 and actually having
7 those academic classes arranged within the schedules
8 right now. So that is in place.

9 MS. ZOOK: So -- and they'll be up and going by
10 the August start-date?

11 SUPT. POORE: Yes, ma'am.

12 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Great. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Thank you.

14 Before we vote we do have one request for public
15 comment. And so --

16 UNKNOWN LADY IN THE AUDIENCE: I'm good, I'm
17 good.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: You sure? You've been so
19 patient. You've been so patient. You've gotten all
20 kinds of --

21 UNKNOWN LADY IN THE AUDIENCE: I can be very
22 patient.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Well, we appreciate
24 it. Thank you for being here today and for your
25 dedication.

1 All right. We do need a motion to accept this
2 report from -- on Little Rock School District.

3 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to accept.

4 MS. DEAN: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.
6 Chambers, second by Ms. Dean.

7 All in favor say "aye."

8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed?

10 Okay.

11 ADJOURNMENT

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And now we need a motion to
13 adjourn.

14 MS. DEAN: So moved.

15 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Dean,
17 second by Ms. Chambers.

18 All in favor say "aye."

19 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We will return
21 tomorrow with reports, and see you then.

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24 (The meeting was concluded at 5:36 p.m.)
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A-1: CHRYSTAL VEGA
EDUCATOR'S EXHIBITS 1-5

Sharon K. Hill, CCR

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B-1: O'KELLEY FAMILY
LAKESIDE EXHIBITS 1-2
O'KELLEY EXHIBIT 1

Sharon K. Hill, CCR

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B-10: ABC 2019-2020 ROUND 2 CONTRACTS
EXHIBIT 1

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B-18: DOLLARWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
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 State Department of Education, State Board of Education, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on June 13, 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: June 24, 2019.

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