

In The Matter Of:

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

January 14, 2021

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ARKANSAS DIVISION OF
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
JANUARY 14, 2021
10:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

MS. CHARISSE COOKSEY, Chairman
MS. OUIDA NEWTON, Vice Chairman
DR. FITZGERALD HILL
MS. KATHY McFETRIDGE
DR. SARAH MOORE
MS. SUSAN CHAMBERS
MS. ADRIENNE WOODS
MR. STEVE SUTTON

NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

MR. JOHNNY KEY, Secretary of Education
MR. JOEL LOOKADOO, Arkansas Teacher of the Year

DESE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. LORI FRENO	ADE General Counsel
MS. AMY DOUGLAS	PLSB Attorney

LOCATION:

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

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VI.1: ARKANSAS COMPUTER SCIENCE

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

- Graph for Number of Students Using CS Flex
- Future Ready: Get to Know Computer Science
- Monthly Newsletter: Computer Science in Arkansas

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P R O C E E D I N G S

V.1: CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF NOMINATED MEMBERS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE STANDARDS BOARD TO REPLACE MEMBERS WHOSE TERMS ARE VACANT OR EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2021

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: We'll get into our action agenda. First, we have Ms. Saracini with the Consideration of Request for Approval of Nominated Members for the Professional Licensure Standards Board to Replace Members Whose Terms are Vacant and Expiring June 30th.

Welcome, Ms. Saracini. Happy New Year.

MS. SARACINI: Karli Saracini, Educator Effectiveness and Licensure. Good morning, Chair, Board Members, Secretary Key.

This morning for your consideration please, on behalf of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Professors of Educational Leadership, they are recommending to nominate Dr. Nita Bohannon. She was here with Educator Prep, in my division, for about a year, so we're really excited. She took a position at University of Pine Bluff, and so this is wonderful that she's going to come back and serve. So we're really excited.

So, Madam Chair, our nomination for you to

1 accept is Dr. Nita Bohannon for the PLSB board.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

3 Do we have any questions or comments?

4 Seeing none, I'll look for a motion.

5 DR. MOORE: I'll move to approve.

6 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: A motion to approve by Dr.
7 Moore.

8 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

9 MR. SUTTON: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Ms. Chambers.

11 All in favor say "aye."

12 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

13 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

14 Seeing none, motion passes.

15 Thank you, Ms. Saracini.

16 MS. SARACINI: Thank you.

17 V.2: STATE BOARD REVIEW OF PLSB 20-121 ETHICS HEARING

18 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION - TIFFANY GANT

19 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Good morning. Go
20 ahead.

21 MS. DOUGLAS: Good morning. Today we're here
22 for a State Board review of an ethics hearing
23 recommendation on educator Tiffany Gant. Her
24 attorney is present via Zoom and is requesting a
25 continuance until next month. The PLSB has no

1 objection.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Do we have any
3 questions or comments, discussion?

4 DR. MOORE: Just to clarify, a continuance until
5 next month means that we will have a full -- a
6 hearing at our board meeting next month or will they
7 go back to PLSB?

8 MS. DOUGLAS: That they will have a hearing in
9 front of you-all next month --

10 DR. MOORE: Okay.

11 MS. DOUGLAS: -- at the full board meeting.

12 DR. MOORE: Okay.

13 MS. DOUGLAS: Mr. Valley is on, if you have
14 questions for him as well.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Welcome, Mr. Valley.

16 Go ahead, Ms. Chambers.

17 MS. CHAMBERS: I just --

18 MR. VALLEY: Thank you.

19 MS. CHAMBERS: -- have a process question. So
20 there was quite a bit of material. And will there be
21 additional material that will be generated between
22 now and then for us to consider?

23 MS. DOUGLAS: Yes. Mr. Valley has sent over a
24 brief and then I will be responding. That material
25 will be available next week.

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Thank you, Ms.
2 Douglas.

3 So if we have no further questions or
4 discussion, I'll look for a motion.

5 MS. CHAMBERS: I move to approve the request to
6 move it to next month for a hearing.

7 MS. WOODS: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. I have a motion by Ms.
9 Chambers, seconded by Ms. Woods.
10 All in favor say "aye."

11 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

13 I'm sorry. Any opposed?

14 Seeing none, motion passes. Thank you.

15 MS. DOUGLAS: Thank you. See you all next
16 month.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

18 MR. VALLEY: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Mr. Valley. Have
20 a good day.

21 MR. VALLEY: You too.

22 V.3: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
23 RENEWAL OF DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER LICENSE FOR CAVE CITY
24 HIGH SCHOOL CAREER AND COLLEGIATE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. We have Ms. Webb --

1 Ms. Tracy Webb coming before us for the Consideration
2 of Charter Authorizing Panel Decision for Cave City
3 High School Career and Collegiate Preparatory School.

4 Good morning, Ms. Webb.

5 MS. WEBB: Good morning.

6 In December, the Charter Authorizing Panel voted
7 to renew the district conversion charter license for
8 Cave City High School Career and Collegiate
9 Preparatory School for a period of five years. The
10 school serves students in grades 9-12 with an
11 enrollment cap of 1200. The charter was initially
12 awarded in November 2015.

13 And we do have district representatives on Zoom,
14 if you have any questions.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. I'll start with Mr.
16 Sutton.

17 Do you have any -- oh.

18 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Cooksey turns
19 on her microphone.)

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: So, Mr. Sutton, do you have
21 any questions?

22 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.

23 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Moore?

24 DR. MOORE: No.

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Chambers?

1 MS. CHAMBERS: No.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Woods?

3 MS. WOODS: No.

4 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Ms. McFetridge?

5 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes. I'm just wondering if
6 they have a prep course for their ACCUPLACER exams
7 like they do for the ACT?

8 MR. WALLING: Not specifically for the
9 ACCUPLACER. No, ma'am, we don't.

10 I'm Mark Walling; I'm the high school principal.
11 My name is listed there as Ms. Green, our high school
12 counselor. Sorry about that.

13 We do not have a prep course for the ACCUPLACER
14 exam like we do for the ACT exam.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

16 Any further questions, Ms. McFetridge?

17 MS. McFETRIDGE: No, thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay.

19 Mr. Lookadoo?

20 MR. LOOKADOO: No, ma'am.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Newton?

22 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

23 First, I want to say, Ms. Webb, thank you for
24 adding the list of waivers. That was very, very
25 helpful this time to have that information there. So

1 I really appreciate that.

2 My question is: where you're talking about your
3 school counselor ratio, you were getting that waiver,
4 and the reason you wanted it is to allow that teacher
5 to teach one class. Is it going to be limited to
6 just one class?

7 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am. We don't anticipate
8 being -- I have six fulltime -- I'm sorry -- I have
9 three fulltime science teachers currently. We would
10 like to expand our offerings. We're in a unique
11 situation here at Cave City where my teacher that
12 teaches biology for us has a master's degree from
13 Mississippi State and she's able to teach some
14 concurrent credit classes through the college for us
15 here. That's the reason for our specific request.

16 We certainly would like to keep it to one, if we
17 could, and that is our plan. We'd like to be able to
18 offer A-and-P in college biology and things like that
19 for our students, and Ms. Green, our high school
20 counselor, happens to be a certified science teacher
21 and she could help out there if we needed her to.

22 Thank you for the question.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay. So your plans are to limit
24 it at just one class then?

25 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am.

1 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.

2 MS. McFETRIDGE: Ms. Dean, I'm sorry, I do have
3 another question.

4 It was disappointing to read that Covid really
5 interrupted the students that were in your
6 certification programs. Was there any way to help
7 those students go ahead and get that certification?

8 MR. WALLING: Yes, ma'am. Fortunately, a lot of
9 our seniors were able to finish last year, in March.
10 They were able to go down on their own, and UACCB,
11 who we work with mainly, allowed those students to
12 come down and do some of the skills in the summer.
13 So we're very pleased to report that a lot of my
14 seniors who were able to finish their programs,
15 particularly the welding program, were able to go
16 down there in the summer, and a lot of those kids did
17 that on their own time; so good for them.

18 But what had affected us was being able to reach
19 out to the kids in the spring, like we normally
20 would, and get those kids signed up for the fall.
21 Often, you know, the way -- you know, the way we do
22 it is in springtime we start getting those kids out,
23 sending out surveys, things like that. Those kids
24 were just harder for us to reach in the spring with
25 them being gone and things like that. Frankly, we

1 weren't able to identify all we would have liked to,
2 but it just -- it was a communication thing, where if
3 they were here in my building I'd be able to, you
4 know, get them organized and get them ready to go.
5 But then as they came back in August we made a strong
6 push, you know, to try to get some kids registered.
7 But it did affect our numbers, frankly, being able to
8 get kids enrolled in some of the technical programs
9 in the fall and the spring. But live and learn. We
10 have better protocols in place to try to reach those
11 kids, and, frankly, reach them even at a younger age,
12 to try to identify those kids maybe as freshmen and
13 sophomores even that might go over junior and senior
14 year to the program.

15 So it has affected our numbers, but we have some
16 better protocols in place hopefully that in the event
17 of another unforeseen shutdown in the spring we would
18 be able to better identify those kids. So, luckily,
19 some of our kids were able to finish, but they did so
20 on their own time. But it has affected our numbers a
21 little bit at our technical programs at UACCB and
22 (inaudible) as well.

23 MS. McFETRIDGE: Well, thank you. I think you
24 did great work with your seniors in getting them
25 their certifications and making that happen. Thank

1 you for your work on that.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

3 Any further questions or discussion or comments?

4 Okay. If we have none, then I'll look for a
5 motion.

6 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll move to not review.

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: I have a motion by Ms.
8 McFetridge to not review.

9 DR. MOORE: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Dr. Moore.

11 All in favor say "aye."

12 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

13 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

14 Seeing none, motion passes.

15 Thank you.

16 V.4: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
17 RENEWAL OF DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER LICENSE FOR FAYETTEVILLE
18 VIRTUAL ACADEMY

19 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Then we move on to
20 Fayetteville Virtual Academy. Ms. Webb.

21 MS. WEBB: Yes, ma'am.

22 In December, the Charter Authorizing Panel voted
23 to renew the district conversion charter license for
24 Fayetteville Virtual Academy for a period of five
25 years. The school serves students in grades K-12,

1 with an enrollment cap of 5,000. The charter was
2 initially awarded in November 2015.

3 And we do have district representatives Kim
4 Cook, the principal, and Dr. Megan Duncan, the
5 assistant superintendent, on Zoom, if you have any
6 questions.

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Welcome, Dr. Duncan and Ms.
8 Cook. Thank you --

9 DR. SLOCUM: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: -- for being here today.

11 Okay. Do we have any questions? We'll start
12 with Dr. Hill.

13 DR. HILL: No.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: None. Ms. Newton?

15 MS. NEWTON: Yes, I did have a few questions.

16 Just out of curiosity -- and I know that y'all
17 have probably done some research and put some thought
18 into this -- what are you using for guidance for your
19 maximum class size and teacher load for your virtual
20 teachers?

21 (MOMENT OF SILENCE)

22 MS. NEWTON: Oh, I didn't have on my --

23 DR. SLOCUM: I'm so sorry, Madam Chair.

24 MS. NEWTON: -- microphone.

25 DR. SLOCUM: On this end we're having a little

1 difficulty hearing the question.

2 MS. NEWTON: It was me. I forgot to turn my
3 microphone on. I'm sorry.

4 DR. SLOCUM: I also can't hear very well, so it
5 could be me.

6 MS. NEWTON: Okay. I'll ask again.

7 DR. SLOCUM: Yes, ma'am.

8 MS. NEWTON: I know that y'all have put some
9 research into what is a good ratio for teachers.
10 What are y'all using as a maximum teacher load and
11 class size for your virtual teachers?

12 MS. COOK: I'll answer that. My name is Kim
13 Cook and I'm the principal.

14 We are just following the guidelines set forth
15 by the State. So with our high school teachers the
16 ratio is 1-to-150, and then as the lower grades go
17 it's the same as the teachers in our regular
18 classroom or regular school building.

19 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Okay, thank you.

20 Another question that I had was on your guidance
21 counselor. I saw that you asked for the waiver of
22 90% of their duties being direct or indirect services
23 for students. What are your counselors doing if
24 they're not serving, directly or indirectly,
25 students?

1 MS. COOK: Our counselor is serving directly and
2 indirectly. We did, I believe, discuss that at the
3 Charter Authorizing Panel and it was my understanding
4 there was some miscommunication. She has an extended
5 contract, so during that time she's not working
6 directly with students and so I was under the
7 impression that it was 90% direct instruction. So we
8 had rescinded that, I believe.

9 MS. NEWTON: Okay. I may not have caught that.
10 Okay.

11 DR. SLOCUM: Yes, ma'am. That was a change.
12 And one of the differing factors between a virtual
13 school and a face-to-face public school is that we
14 have students who often come and go. We have a lot
15 of mobility that happens within that space, so
16 sometimes it's just the administration of scheduling
17 the student and then rescheduling a student and then
18 changing that schedule based on what those needs are
19 for each family.

20 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right.

21 And my last question was under the Hearing and
22 Vision waiver are you making your students and their
23 parents aware of when the opportunity would be
24 available for them to come in for a hearing and
25 vision screening?

1 DR. SLOCUM: Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. COOK: We do share that information with the
3 families and we -- they are able to access our
4 wellness clinic in the district to have those vision
5 and hearing screenings done, should they choose to.

6 MS. NEWTON: Okay. So I just wanted to make
7 sure they were aware. Because I've seen when maybe a
8 teacher or a nurse or someone would catch a student
9 that has a problem it's life-changing for that
10 student. And so I wanted to make sure that they were
11 aware that that opportunity was available to them.

12 DR. SLOCUM: Yes, ma'am.

13 MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Ms. Newton.

15 Mr. Lookadoo?

16 MR. LOOKADOO: Ms. Newton kind of asked my
17 question. But on the Class Size and Teaching Load I
18 do find that really interesting that y'all are
19 sticking to the 1-to-150. Because we know just as we
20 look to the future of digital learning and some of
21 those -- just that teaching load/class size, I think
22 it's really interesting. Is that for all courses?
23 Do you stay to that or have you found some courses
24 that you feel that you can expand that a little bit?

25 MS. COOK: We have not had to expand at this

1 point, based on our enrollment. Some courses are
2 more heavy, such as math requires the teacher to
3 support students in a one-on-one setting more so than
4 say P.E. or health; so there are some subject areas
5 that are more heavy, that they need student contact
6 more. But we haven't had to -- we haven't crossed
7 that bridge with our enrollment where we've had to
8 increase those numbers.

9 MR. LOOKADOO: Okay.

10 DR. SLOCUM: Mr. Lookadoo, I think another
11 component is there's sometimes a misunderstanding or
12 misinterpretation. But if you're conducting it
13 online versus face-to-face maybe it's easier -- and
14 that's not always the case; sometimes it's actually
15 the opposite which is more difficult, more cumbersome
16 for the teachers, sometimes for the parents,
17 sometimes for the students. So we really try to take
18 all of those components into account as we are
19 scheduling the student. And I think that has been
20 one of the reasons that the school has been
21 successful is we don't try to overload those classes.
22 We really try to think through and where we know a
23 student needs RTI support, whether that's in math or
24 in English Language Arts or whatever the area is that
25 they need some additional support, we want to make

1 sure that we are providing that, whether it's
2 virtually or whether they need tutoring face-to-face.

3 MR. LOOKADOO: Thank you. And I appreciate that
4 and I know your teachers and families do too.

5 DR. SLOCUM: Thank you.

6 MS. COOK: I'd just like to say one thing that
7 is a little different with our program is every
8 student is required to have a one-to-one conversation
9 with the teacher prior to taking an exam so that the
10 teacher can check for understanding and help clarify
11 maybe some misunderstanding and give the student some
12 re-teaching as needed. So before every test we are
13 having a one-to-one conversation with each student.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Mr. Lookadoo.

15 Ms. McFetridge.

16 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes, ma'am. I wanted to have
17 you talk to us a little bit about your reading
18 scores, and then do you identify a student with
19 dyslexia when they're a virtual student?

20 MS. COOK: Sure. So our reading scores, do you
21 have the -- our data in front of you? Just to touch
22 base, just to clarify, so if you look over the course
23 of our 2017 to 2019, we have consistently scored
24 above the state average in reading. With regard to
25 dyslexia, we have a dyslexia specialist within our

1 district, and should a student need dyslexia services
2 -- determined to need dyslexia services, we provide
3 that in a virtual setting.

4 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Thank you. That's
5 helpful.

6 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Ms. Woods? Ms.
7 Chambers? Dr. Moore?

8 DR. MOORE: Yes. Thank y'all for being here
9 today. My questions, some of them have already been
10 answered, but a few more just as we are as a board
11 and as a state thinking more about virtual learning,
12 and know y'all have been doing this for a few years.

13 Are teachers who are employed in the virtual,
14 are they only teaching virtual for your -- how does
15 that work within your district?

16 DR. SLOCUM: We have a combination; one -- and
17 this year I would say is a little different.

18 DR. MOORE: Yeah.

19 DR. SLOCUM: Typically, we have -- you know, we
20 have dedicated staff members who are part of
21 Fayetteville Virtual Academy. One of the things that
22 is different this year, because of the pandemic, is
23 we tried to offer several additional learning options
24 for parents and their families to answer the call of
25 "hey, we need to go to school like this" or "could

1 the school look like that." So one of the things
2 that our superintendent, Dr. John L. Colbert, did at
3 the very beginning of the process is he listened to
4 the community to try to find out what are those needs
5 and what would best meet those. So we have -- in our
6 traditional public schools we have five different
7 offerings that students can choose from, which is a
8 2-by-3 (meaning I'm coming two days and I'm virtual
9 three); also a 3-by-2 (which is the opposite of
10 that); a 4-by-1; and then they can also do some type
11 of virtual in their zoned school; or they can also
12 access FVA. So teachers have been amazing this year
13 -- not that they're not amazing every year, but most
14 certainly through a pandemic -- providing that
15 consistency and that support for students. That has
16 been big.

17 I will say that for a teacher trying to live in
18 a duplicit manner and teaching in a dual way is
19 difficult, it is not easy, and so we really try to
20 protect that staff to have that virtual experience.

21 And then one of the things we've seen at
22 Fayetteville High School that has been very
23 successful is that 4-by-1 block. Allowing teachers
24 the day to work through those RTI needs and those
25 specific things with students when they're on virtual

1 learning for the one day a week has been very
2 helpful.

3 DR. MOORE: When I'm looking at the elementary
4 levels, are students doing synchronous learning at
5 that point or is it by-and-large -- what does that
6 look like in K-6?

7 DR. SLOCUM: For K-6 for traditional schools?

8 DR. MOORE: At Fayetteville Virtual.

9 DR. SLOCUM: At Fayetteville Virtual, most of
10 those students are still accessing virtual with the
11 touch-points that we talked about. One of the things
12 that you'll notice on our data that was particularly
13 something that we've highlighted and tried to really
14 address is we came back to the Charter Authorizing
15 Panel and also the State Board of Education to ask to
16 extend the grade levels that we serve at a lower
17 level. And that was, one, from parent -- requests of
18 parents who were interested in having that at an
19 earlier age, but we also want to make sure that we're
20 not creating those gaps or overlaps in education
21 which sometimes happens. And we felt like if we give
22 the onset of access happening earlier and then we
23 provide that consistent experience through 12th grade
24 that that will help to alleviate that in future data
25 results.

1 DR. MOORE: Okay. And then, lastly, just out of
2 curiosity, are y'all -- do y'all recruit students
3 from outside the district or are they by-and-large
4 within your boundaries?

5 DR. SLOCUM: We have both: we have students who
6 are within our district and we have students that are
7 outside of our district. I would say the lion's
8 share are students that are already within our zone.
9 One of the things that is more difficult in a virtual
10 school when you have a virtual school within a public
11 school is that you do see that mobility happening.
12 But that mobility is not happening between another
13 district and our district, it's happening within our-
14 selves; so parents think that this semester this is
15 the best option and maybe next year virtual is the
16 best option. So we see more of that transition
17 happening from a public school in Fayetteville to the
18 virtual school in Fayetteville.

19 DR. MOORE: That makes sense. Thank you.

20 DR. SLOCUM: Thank you.

21 MS. COOK: I would just add that this year by-
22 and-large our new students who came to us were
23 students who had been home-schooled and joined FVA to
24 be a partner in learning.

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: That's interesting. Thank

1 you, Ms. Cook. Thank you, Dr. Moore.

2 Mr. Sutton, do you have any questions?

3 MR. SUTTON: No.

4 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. If we have no further
5 questions or discussion --

6 Ms. Chambers.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes. Yeah, thank you. Just one
8 and it's specific to Fayetteville but it also I think
9 applies to --

10 MR. DAN DAVIS: Microphone.

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Microphone.

12 MS. CHAMBERS: Can you not hear me? I'll try
13 this.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay.

15 MS. CHAMBERS: The question is about -- we have
16 waivers relative to healthcare services and other
17 things that students would maybe seek out and would
18 be provided through other means. Given the
19 circumstances of today, but what might be prevailing
20 circumstances, where kids are going to be seeking
21 virtual -- a virtual education, has our philosophy
22 changed at all in terms of delivery of services and
23 the way we go about providing -- I'll call them
24 wraparound -- I don't know if that's the right term
25 -- but services for students that are pursuing

1 virtual education? Are there any things that
2 Fayetteville is seeing or doing differently to serve
3 those students and their families?

4 DR. SLOCUM: Yes, ma'am. I believe the question
5 -- the audio was a little separated on this end, but
6 I believe the question was are we doing anything
7 different for virtual students to try to provide a
8 better wraparound service, and I think that answer is
9 yes. One of the things that we feel has been very
10 successful are the field experiences that are built
11 in. And I know that I'm saying that in the middle of
12 the -- of a pandemic, and so sometimes those field
13 experiences aren't the face-to-face experience that
14 we would prefer. Some of those experiences are being
15 done virtually simply because businesses are not
16 wanting as many visitors as they normally would allow
17 in their space. We anticipate that changing and
18 going back to that process that we had established
19 before. So I think that's one of the components that
20 really sets it apart.

21 I think the other thing is we have some really
22 extraordinary students who do some amazing things and
23 some of those things aren't in Arkansas; some of
24 those things are -- maybe their Zip Code of where
25 they reside is in Arkansas, but maybe they're doing

1 those things in California, maybe they're doing those
2 in Colorado.

3 And so I think the other unique piece for the
4 wraparound service is making sure that we have the
5 parents engaged in the process and that they have a
6 clear understanding of what those expectations are on
7 the front-end because it is -- it is an added layer;
8 it is a different experience.

9 And then one of the things that we thought was
10 important initially and has turned out to be more
11 important than ever is that equity inclusion piece,
12 along with the components for social and emotional
13 well-being. Students, even virtually, still need to
14 feel like they have a champion, like they have a
15 teammate, like they have somebody that's on their
16 side, and that can be through sports, it can be
17 through basketball, it can be through a lot of
18 avenues that we try to connect students to other
19 groups. So finding ways to connect students with
20 other students is also really important and I think
21 that is reflected in the amount of interest we've had
22 from our home-school population of parents who --
23 they do want the virtual environment, but they also
24 want those opportunity for -- opportunities for their
25 child to engage with other children.

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

2 Any other questions or comments?

3 All right. Well, with that I will look for a
4 motion.

5 MS. MCFETRIDGE: I'll make a motion not to
6 review.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: I'm sorry; who said second?

9 MS. CHAMBERS: (lifted a hand)

10 Okay. Thank you.

11 Motion by Ms. McFetridge and seconded by Ms.
12 Chambers.

13 All in favor say "aye."

14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

16 Seeing none, motion passes.

17 Thank you, Ms. Cook and Ms. Slocum. Y'all have
18 a great day.

19 DR. SLOCUM: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank
20 you, Board Members, for your time. We appreciate
21 your support.

22 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome.

23 V.5: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
24 RENEWAL OF DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER LICENSE FOR CROSS COUNTY
25 HIGH SCHOOL: A NEW TECH SCHOOL

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right, Ms. Webb.

2 MS. WEBB: In December, the Charter Authorizing
3 Panel voted to renew the district conversion charter
4 license for Cross County High School for a period of
5 five years. The school serves students in grades 7-
6 12, with an enrollment cap of 500. The charter was
7 initially awarded in January 2011.

8 We have Dr. Nathan Morris, superintendent, who
9 is on Zoom, as well as the high school principal,
10 Stephen Prince.

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Welcome.

12 Do we have any questions? We'll start with Mr.
13 Sutton this time.

14 MR. SUTTON: No questions.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Moore? Ms. Chambers?
16 No. Ms. Woods? Ms. McFetridge?

17 MS. MCFETRIDGE: I just wanted to, you know,
18 give them a congratulations on raising their science
19 and math scores. Their growth was very, very
20 impressive this year, so appreciate the work.

21 SUPT. MORRIS: Thank you so much. We put a lot
22 of time and effort into student growth and value-add
23 scores of our teachers and their value-add scores as
24 instructors. So it takes a really fine team to get
25 there, so thank you. And a lot of student effort --

1 a lot of student effort. It takes everyone.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Mr. Lookadoo? Ms. Newton?
3 Dr. Hill?

4 Okay. If there's no further questions or
5 comments or discussion, I'll look for a motion.

6 MS. NEWTON: Move not to review.

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: I have a motion to not review
8 by Ms. Newton.

9 DR. HILL: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Dr. Hill.

11 All in favor say "aye."

12 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

13 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

14 Seeing none, motion passes.

15 Thank you, Mr. Prince and Mr. Morris, for
16 joining us today. Y'all have a great day.

17 SUPT. MORRIS: Thank you all so much. You all
18 as well. And thank you for the work that you do for
19 our state and our students.

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome. Thank you.

21 V.6: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
22 RENEWAL OF DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER LICENSE FOR DON TYSON
23 SCHOOL OF INNOVATION (SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT)

24 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Webb.

25 MS. WEBB: In December, the Charter Authorizing

1 Panel voted to renew the district conversion charter
2 license for Don Tyson School of Innovation in
3 Springdale School District for a period of five
4 years. The school serves students in grades K-12,
5 with an enrollment cap of 8,000. The charter was
6 initially awarded in November 2015.

7 And today we have Ms. Kelly Boortz, the
8 principal, and Ms. Kendra Clay, district counsel, on
9 Zoom, if you have any questions.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Good morning, Ms. Boortz and
11 Ms. Clay. Welcome.

12 MS. BOORTZ: Good morning, Madam Chair and
13 Board.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Well, we'll start with
15 Dr. Hill.

16 DR. HILL: No questions.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Newton?

18 MS. NEWTON: I have a similar question to what I
19 asked before. I'm assuming you're doing -- are you
20 doing virtual with your students this year?

21 MS. BOORTZ: Yes, ma'am. We currently have a
22 virtual enrollment of 2,421 students and that is
23 grades K-12.

24 MS. NEWTON: Okay. And so, my question is:
25 based on your research and what you have found that

1 works best, what are you using for a maximum teacher
2 load for teachers and a maximum class size for
3 teachers?

4 MS. BOORTZ: Our teaching size is about an
5 average of 200 students, so that is a little bit
6 higher than the ratio of 150. And then for our
7 younger students we are honoring the class size that
8 would be in a face-to-face setting, so that 200 is
9 for 6-12. But we do have an advisory program
10 implemented for our 6-12, and so we've been able to
11 manage that number with having a successful advisory
12 program where that student -- the overall picture is
13 monitored by a student advisor.

14 MS. NEWTON: Okay. What kind of feedback are
15 you getting from students, teachers, and parents on
16 the 200?

17 MS. BOORTZ: You know, so far, I mean I think
18 that families, you know, don't know that a teacher,
19 you know, is over like that 150 that they would
20 normally have face-to-face; so I feel like that the
21 feedback has been, you know, positive. Students have
22 been successful. Parents feel like that, you know,
23 they're being taken care of, communicated with. They
24 get communication from a classroom teacher, but they
25 also get that communication from the advisor.

1 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right. And just to make
2 sure I'm clear on this, on the immunization waiver it
3 was marked Rescind but then it sounded like in the
4 narrative that you were asking for it. Is that one
5 that you have rescinded?

6 MS. BOORTZ: We're rescinding that one.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

8 MS. BOORTZ: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right. That was all the
10 questions I had.

11 MS. BOORTZ: Okay.

12 MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

14 Mr. Lookadoo?

15 MR. LOOKADOO: I don't have any questions, but I
16 was just going to say hello to Ms. Boortz, my
17 principal.

18 MS. BOORTZ: Hello, Mr. Lookadoo. Look at you.

19 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Ms. McFetridge?

20 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes. I'm just -- I'm curious;
21 you've added some additional grade levels and just
22 wanted to know how that was going.

23 MS. BOORTZ: It really has been amazing.

24 You know, we have had that virtual piece for 6-
25 12 for five years. And then this year, with the

1 situation with Covid and the number of families that
2 we anticipated would need that virtual option the
3 district came together. We already had the
4 structures and the pieces in place for a virtual
5 program and so we did add that K-5 component.

6 But it's been such, you know, an amazing journey
7 for the team here at Springdale, from district
8 administration to our building administration and the
9 teachers who, you know, rose to the challenge and
10 left what was comfortable for them in their schools
11 to come start a K-5 comprehensive virtual program.
12 And so we have learned a lot but it has been a great
13 journey.

14 And I think that our families, you know, have
15 experienced success and have settled into what a
16 successful virtual experience can be for a K-5
17 learner.

18 And it's really amazing to see, you know,
19 teachers Zooming one-on-one with kids, small groups.

20 This semester we really feel like now, you know,
21 our RTI program is really going into place to support
22 students who may have, you know, some deficits in
23 reading or math, and we're really stepping up that
24 targeted support piece this semester to support our
25 students.

1 So it has been a learning journey, but I do feel
2 like that we, you know, responded to community needs
3 and we were able to quickly start that program. And,
4 you know, we experienced success first semester, and
5 it's just been refreshing to start second semester
6 and see how far we've come and, you know, see
7 students learning and hearing from parents, you know,
8 things that are happening at home with these
9 students.

10 So, you know, it's been a challenge but it's
11 also just amazing that we're able to provide this to
12 families who have a need to be at home right now with
13 the current situation.

14 MS. McFETRIDGE: Thank you for that. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

16 Ms. Woods? Ms. Chambers? Dr. Moore? Mr.
17 Sutton?

18 Okay. If we have no further questions, comments
19 or discussion, I'll look for a motion.

20 MS. McFETRIDGE: I make the motion not to
21 review.

22 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: We have a motion by Ms.
23 McFetridge to not review.

24 MR. SUTTON: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Mr. Sutton.

1 All in favor say "aye."

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

4 Seeing none, motion passes.

5 Thank you.

6 Ms. Webb.

7 MS. WEBB: In December, the Charter Authorizing

8 --

9 MS. BOORTZ: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: I'm sorry. Thank you, Ms.

11 Clay and Dr. -- Ms. Boortz. Thank you for joining

12 us. Y'all have a great day.

13 MS. CLAY: Thank you, Board.

14 V.7: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
15 RENEWAL OF DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER LICENSE FOR HOT SPRINGS
16 WORLD CLASS HIGH SCHOOL

17 MS. WEBB: In December, the Charter Authorizing
18 Panel voted to renew the district conversion charter
19 license for Hot Springs World Class High School for a
20 period of five years. The school serves students in
21 grades 10-12, with an enrollment cap of 1200. The
22 charter was initially awarded in November 2015.

23 Today we have Dr. Taryn Echols, assistant
24 superintendent, and Ms. Kylie Simms, principal, on
25 Zoom, should you have any questions.

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Echols and Ms. Simms,
2 welcome. Thank y'all for joining us this morning.

3 Okay. We'll start with questions from Mr.
4 Sutton.

5 MR. SUTTON: No.

6 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: No. Dr. Moore? Ms.
7 Chambers?

8 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes. The performance --

9 MR. DAN DAVIS: Microphone.

10 MS. CHAMBERS: It says it's on.

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Yeah.

12 MS. CHAMBERS: Get a little closer?

13 MR. DAN DAVIS: There you go.

14 MS. CHAMBERS: Sorry. Okay.

15 I just -- I would love to hear from -- there was
16 reference to new leadership, kind of a new plan that
17 certainly was influential to the Charter Panel as
18 they were listening to and then ultimately decided to
19 renew -- or to recommend renewal. I'd like to hear
20 just a little bit from leadership about thoughts that
21 will help move the school to a better level of
22 performance.

23 MS. ECHOLS: Absolutely. In the presentation
24 that we did with the Charter Panel --

25 I guess I need to tell you who I am. I'm Taryn

1 Echols. I'm sorry; I'm on another Zoom, so I muted
2 it and I got on right when it was time for us to talk
3 here.

4 But one of the things that we talked about, if
5 you have access to the presentation, we put a
6 timeline in there. Upon the initial review of the
7 charter that was started in 2016, there was a prior
8 principal there. And so I took over that building
9 2016-2017, as well as Ms. Simms came on as my
10 assistant principal, and so we did a lot of reviewing
11 of the original charter application to insure that we
12 were doing the things that we said we were going to
13 do when we asked for the conversion charter at the
14 high school. Obviously, there was some work to be
15 done.

16 But one of the things that we highlighted in our
17 presentation, in December, is that although the
18 school has been recognized in our ESSA School Index
19 earning a D, there was consistent growth in various
20 areas in the ESSA School Index and so we highlighted
21 that. Just because the school has earned a letter
22 grade of a D doesn't mean that the school is not
23 working towards academic achievement, increasing
24 that, as well as increasing the overall social and
25 emotional growth of the students at Hot Springs World

1 Class High School.

2 So right now we have Ms. Simms as the current
3 high school principal and she has a team of two
4 assistant principals, as well as instructional
5 facilitators that work with her on the Professional
6 Learning Community process. That was very integral.
7 With my leadership there over the two years that I
8 was there, we really set forth in implementing the
9 Professional Learning Community process, and, you
10 know, the school has made great strides in the
11 academic overall success of students just from
12 implementing that Professional Learning Community
13 process. In my role now as assistant principal at
14 the district level we are really making progress with
15 all of our campuses.

16 But speaking primarily towards the high school
17 with the scores that we get from NWEA, we give those
18 assessments now to all of our 9th and 10th grade
19 students. Ms. Simms has pointed out growth in areas
20 for those students in 9th and 10th grade. But we
21 also are looking at things that we've added into the
22 building. You know, one of the biggest focuses on
23 the conversion charter is to make sure that our
24 students are college and career ready. And so we do
25 a lot of work with community partnerships here in the

1 Hot Springs community in preparing our students to
2 not necessarily just do well on our academic tests,
3 but we -- but be well-rounded students that can go
4 out into the workforce from college.

5 So I hope that answers your question. I can
6 tell you that the leadership now is very well
7 committed, as we have been over the last four years
8 that I have been in a leadership role at the high
9 school level and now the last two years at the
10 district level, in insuring that our students are not
11 just necessarily academically ready to move on beyond
12 high school but ready to have a post-secondary
13 career. Because what we're learning is that a lot of
14 our students are not attending college post-
15 secondary; they want to go right to work. And so it
16 is our great desire that our students are one-hundred
17 percent college and career ready. But we do know and
18 we do recognize that we have components that we have
19 to do as public schools to educate our students, and
20 so our students are growing.

21 Like I said, I don't know if you have access to
22 that presentation that we did, but we highlighted
23 that information in that presentation just to make
24 sure that everybody knows that we recognize what our
25 letter grades are, but the letter grades don't define

1 what we do for our students in the building.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Dr. Echols.

3 MS. ECHOLS: You're welcome.

4 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Woods? Dr. -- Ms.
5 McFetridge?

6 MS. McFETRIDGE: No questions. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Mr. Lookadoo? Ms.
8 Newton? Dr. Hill?

9 No, okay. With that, then I will look for a
10 motion to review or not to review.

11 MS. NEWTON: I move not to review.

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: I have a motion by Ms. Newton
13 to not review.

14 MS. WOODS: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Ms. Woods.

16 All in favor say "aye."

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

19 Seeing none, motion passes.

20 Thank you, Dr. Echols, Ms. Simms. Thank y'all
21 for having -- for joining us.

22 DR. ECHOLS: Thank you so much.

23 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: And y'all have a great day.

24 DR. ECHOLS: You too.

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

1 V.8: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
2 RENEWAL OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER LICENSE FOR FUTURE SCHOOL OF
3 FORT SMITH

4 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Webb.

5 MS. WEBB: In December, the Charter Authorizing
6 Panel approved to renew the open-enrollment charter
7 license for Future School of Fort Smith for a period
8 of five years, with a review in two years. The
9 school serves students in grades 10-12, with an
10 enrollment cap of 450. The charter was initially
11 awarded in October 2015.

12 Today we have Superintendent Boyd Logan on Zoom,
13 if you have any questions.

14 SUPT. LOGAN: And good morning.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Good morning, Mr. Logan. How
16 are you doing?

17 SUPT. LOGAN: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Good.

19 SUPT. LOGAN: I'm doing well. Thank you all for
20 having us today.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome.

22 Okay. We'll start with Dr. Hill for questions.

23 DR. HILL: No questions.

24 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Newton?

25 MS. NEWTON: I know in the Charter Authorizing

1 Panel you discussed your academics. Could you just
2 give us a synopsis of what you're trying to do to
3 improve your academics, especially in the area of
4 math?

5 SUPT. LOGAN: Yeah. So we're -- you know, we're
6 really grappling with this, you know, knowing the --
7 in our materials that we submitted we covered this
8 ground as far as sort of the narrative around what we
9 sort of saw happening within our academic
10 performance, you know, starting off super high and
11 then going down in year-two and then now starting to
12 climb back up in year-three. And, of course, year-
13 four we didn't have -- we don't have the data on
14 because we didn't do the Aspire. But regardless of,
15 you know, any of that, we've really -- what we're
16 doing is a pretty intensive RTI program where we're
17 -- as soon as we get students where they're
18 enrolling, you know, mid-year or enrolling first of
19 the year we pull their data, we Triand, and then also
20 we do -- then the first day of school we're doing
21 STAR assessments now. We've used the [inaudible]
22 diagnostic tools over the last couple of years, but
23 we settled on STAR math and STAR reading. So we're
24 using those as our diagnostics to start, you know,
25 seeing where kids are coming to us, at what level

1 they're at, and then we're using our ITR program --
2 RTI program for those kids that are significantly
3 below grade level. We're doing some -- we have an
4 A&N, which we call Academics Enrichment Hour, where
5 we use the -- to work with those kids in pull-out
6 settings with one-on-one tutoring, things of that
7 nature. We also are doing pretty extensive -- we've
8 contracted with APSRC. We applied for a math grant
9 to improve Tier 1 math instruction with Algebra I,
10 geometry, and Algebra II specifically. And so we're
11 going through a pretty intensive -- our math
12 department is going through a pretty intensive
13 training with APSRC where they're coming -- their
14 math specialist is coming twice a month to campus and
15 working with our math department to improve that Tier
16 1 instruction. We know that's absolutely vital to
17 what's happening. It's great to do pull-outs and do
18 supplemental, but it's really -- you know, that
19 academic performance, a lot of it hinges on what's
20 happening in that classroom with your -- you know,
21 the initial instruction. So we're making a lot of
22 efforts to improve that.

23 And then -- and we're using -- also, even last
24 year we had had -- we enrolled in Math Quest, our
25 math department did. So we're working this year with

1 APSRC with the math grant. Last year, we'd enrolled
2 our teachers in the Math Quest program; it was
3 through the DESE. And in addition to that, working
4 with Illustrative Math to make math more relevant and
5 engaging for our students.

6 So we're happy -- or proud of the work that
7 we're doing with these kids that are coming to us on
8 all different levels. And, you know, differentiation
9 is a real -- you know, everybody is grappling with
10 that at all times. And so we're doing everything we
11 can to make sure that we're seeing some student
12 growth and student achievement increase.

13 MS. NEWTON: Sounds like you're working hard, so
14 I appreciate that. Thank you.

15 SUPT. LOGAN: The teachers are working hard.

16 MS. NEWTON: Yeah, but teachers --

17 SUPT. LOGAN: They're doing the hard -- they're
18 doing the hard work, so --

19 MS. NEWTON: Yeah. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Ms. Newton.

21 Mr. Lookadoo? Ms. McFetridge?

22 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes, ma'am.

23 I would want -- I wanted to congratulate you on
24 your growth in year-three.

25 One thing I didn't notice, are your teachers

1 working in PLCs?

2 SUPT. LOGAN: They are; they do work in PLCs.
3 Ours is a little bit interesting because we're small
4 enough that we don't have multiple, you know, Algebra
5 I teachers, we don't have multiple Algebra II
6 teachers, so that makes that PLC grouping a little
7 bit different. It's more difficult because, you
8 know, you don't have multiple teachers working with
9 English 10. We have one English 10 teacher, one
10 English 11 teacher, one English 12 teacher. So we do
11 approach PLCs a little bit different and we are doing
12 vertical alignment with those PLCs. And so our
13 English team does meet in PLCs and works through that
14 process and with -- and they do work with creating
15 common formative assessments even though they're a
16 vertically -- it's a vertical group, not a horizontal
17 group, but they're still working on those common
18 formative assessments. So they're looking at each
19 other; so the 11th grade teacher is still looking at
20 the 10th grade teacher's assessments. And then, so
21 that's one piece of it.

22 We also -- I know [Zoom audio distortion] really
23 strong advisory program. That's really the core of
24 our school is that we have advisors and our kids are
25 in their advisories every single day. You know,

1 that's who manages their internships, that's who
2 manages their sort of -- their entire support network
3 is that group of advisory. And so we also have grade
4 level teams with those advisories. So all the 10th
5 grade advisory team, they meet as well, even though
6 one of them may be an English teacher, one of them
7 may be an algebra teacher, one of them may -- another
8 one may be an English teacher as well. They're
9 meeting as well because those are the people that are
10 really wrapping around that group of kids of 10th
11 graders. So we do have -- we have PLCs, but we have
12 both subject level as well as grade level PLCs.

13 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Woods? Ms. Chambers?

14 MS. CHAMBERS: I think my question is a process
15 question and it has to do a little bit with what the
16 Charter Panel maybe was thinking or wanting to see.
17 This particular recommendation I think includes
18 coming back with a review in two years. And I
19 wondered what -- if it's explicit what we're looking
20 to see in two years and is that just to make sure
21 that we're on path, or is that a strong word of
22 caution in terms of renewal? Could you help me
23 understand?

24 MS. WEBB: Yes, ma'am. I think because both of
25 the schools that are identified today had at least

1 two consecutive D's or F's on their letter grades,
2 and so the Charter Panel was really looking at their
3 academics and wanted to make sure that they were on
4 the right track and had growth. Instead of just
5 going five years they wanted to just have a check-in
6 at two years.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: And district conversion is
8 different?

9 MS. WEBB: A little bit different because they
10 have supports in place, whereas sometimes open-
11 enrollment charters are a little bit different and
12 operate differently than regular school districts in
13 those district conversion charters. And I think that
14 was the desire, to kind of check-in with them to make
15 sure they had the right supports in place and they're
16 moving forward.

17 MS. CHAMBERS: Okay. And to the school itself,
18 do you feel comfortable in terms of what the charter
19 and what this board will be looking for in a couple
20 of years then as you come back for that review?

21 SUPT. LOGAN: We do. I mean we're -- and I
22 don't think this was within the presentation. We're
23 also right now -- we received a CSP grant, which is
24 \$1.5 million for high-performing charters, and I know
25 that that's -- you know, with two D's it's like are

1 we a high-performing charter. And so whenever we
2 received that grant we did -- we made a lot of
3 assurances as well with that, and that's quarterly
4 that we're checking in there. So this two years down
5 the road is like we anticipate being -- having quite
6 a bit of growth to show because we're working with
7 the CSP grant. And we also -- because we're adding
8 on to our facilities, we work with [inaudible] who
9 specializes in charter facility loans for that, and
10 they also had a really heavy accounting process and
11 sort of accountability process built into that where
12 we're checking with them yearly as well. And so
13 whenever we come back to the charter board, you know,
14 we feel like we'll have -- we're not -- not that
15 we're not concerned about our growth, because we
16 absolutely want -- you know, we -- that's, you know,
17 a primary concern for us. But we just know that we
18 have -- we're doing a lot of that work already, so it
19 will almost feel redundant whenever we come back to
20 the charter board because we're doing that same work
21 already.

22 MS. CHAMBERS: Excellent. Thank you.

23 SUPT. LOGAN: You're welcome.

24 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Moore?

25 DR. MOORE: Point of clarification, are you

1 grades 10 through 12 or do you include 9th grade?

2 SUPT. LOGAN: So we are -- right now, we're 10
3 through 12. We did come before the Authorizing Panel
4 last spring to get 9th grade approved, and so this
5 coming school year, the 21-22 school year, we'll be
6 adding 9th grade.

7 DR. MOORE: And does that -- the local area high
8 schools, are they 9 through 12 or --

9 SUPT. LOGAN: They are also making the same --

10 DR. MOORE: Okay.

11 SUPT. LOGAN: -- conversion next year as well.

12 DR. MOORE: Because I was concerned about
13 students moving buildings too many times, so I'm glad
14 to hear that. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Mr. Sutton?

16 MR. SUTTON: No.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. There being no more
18 questions or comments or discussion, I'm ready for a
19 motion.

20 MS. CHAMBERS: I move to not approve -- excuse
21 me -- move to not review.

22 MS. NEWTON: Make their heart beat a little bit
23 faster.

24 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: We have a motion to not
25 review by Ms. Chambers.

1 MR. SUTTON: Second.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Mr. Sutton.

3 All in favor say "aye."

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

6 Seeing none, motion passes.

7 Thank you, Mr. Logan --

8 SUPT. LOGAN: Thank you, Madam Chair --

9 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: -- and you have a great day.

10 SUPT. LOGAN: -- and thank you, Board. I
11 appreciate your time today and thank you for all you
12 do for our students and our state.

13 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome.

14 Ms. Webb, I think we're going to take a 15-
15 minute break and we will come back at 11:15.

16 (BREAK: 11:00 - 11:15 A.M.)

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. It's 11:15. I hope
18 y'all had a good break. We're going to get right
19 back to it.

20 V-9: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
21 RENEWAL OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER LICENSE FOR IMBODEN AREA
22 CHARTER SCHOOL

23 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Webb.

24 MS. WEBB: In December, the Charter Authorizing
25 Panel voted to renew the open-enrollment charter

1 license for the Imboden Area Charter School for a
2 period of five years, with a review in two years.
3 The school serves students in grades K-8, with an
4 enrollment cap of 150. The charter was initially
5 awarded in March of 2002.

6 And Superintendent Matthew Wells is on Zoom, if
7 you have any questions.

8 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Mr. Wells, good morning.
9 Welcome.

10 SUPT. WELLS: Good morning. Thank you for
11 having me.

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome. Thank you
13 for being here.

14 Okay. We'll start with Dr. Hill. Any
15 questions?

16 DR. HILL: No.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Newton?

18 MS. NEWTON: Just a similar question that I
19 asked before, just with the concern of academics.
20 Could you give me just a short synopsis of what
21 you're doing to try to improve your academics over
22 these next few years?

23 SUPT. WELLS: Certainly. We vetted some extra
24 diagnostic tools to try and assess and jump in at a
25 very early stage on students who are having

1 difficulties. We've used the STAR assessments for
2 many years; we're also using I-station now as well to
3 get some additional diagnostics on what's going on.
4 We've been using an afterschool tutoring program that
5 has been very beneficial to some of our kids. We're
6 running two bus routes a day to keep as many kids as
7 possible for the tutoring sessions. So, you know, I
8 think we're really trying to go out of our way to get
9 that improved.

10 MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. McFetridge?

12 MS. MCFETRIDGE: No, I don't have any questions.
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Ms. Woods?

15 MS. WOODS: I just want to confirm that you're
16 coming back in two years because of the academics?

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Yes.

18 Okay. Dr. Moore?

19 DR. MOORE: Yes, just getting a better
20 understanding of your school -- are students
21 primarily starting in kindergarten and sticking with
22 it, or are they -- do you have a lot of moving in and
23 out at different grade levels?

24 SUPT. LOGAN: Traditionally, we've had a very
25 highly mobile population. A lot of our students in

1 past have been here for, you know, a year or two.
2 They come in at varying grade levels. A lot of times
3 I'm getting them 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th grade, and, you
4 know, they tend to come here [Zoom audio distortion]
5 and they come significantly behind [Zoom audio
6 distortion]. And we [Zoom audio distortion] --

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Mr. Wells --

8 SUPT. WELLS: -- has started to for a lengthier
9 period of time.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. We were --

11 SUPT. WELLS: Our kindergarten enrollment has
12 been very -- very consistent the last couple of
13 years.

14 DR. MOORE: And with that, with class sizes, are
15 teachers teaching multiple grade spans?

16 SUPT. WELLS: Yes, ma'am. I have four certified
17 teachers on staff. One does kindergarten/1st grade
18 combined; one does 2nd and 3rd; one does 4th and 5th;
19 and then the older kids are all in one.

20 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right. Mr. Sutton?

22 MR. SUTTON: No.

23 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: No questions. Okay.

24 If there aren't any further questions, comments
25 or discussion, I will look for a motion to review or

1 not to review.

2 MR. SUTTON: Motion not to review.

3 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: I have a motion by Mr. Sutton
4 to not review.

5 DR. HILL: Second.

6 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Dr. Hill.

7 All in favor say "aye."

8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

10 Seeing none, motion passes.

11 Congratulations, Mr. Wells. Thank you for
12 joining us today.

13 SUPT. WELLS: Thank you so much.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Have a great day.

15 SUPT. WELLS: You too.

16 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thanks.

17 V.10: CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL DECISION -
18 RENEWAL OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER LICENSE FOR ARKANSAS
19 CONNECTIONS ACADEMY

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right, Ms. Webb.

21 MS. WEBB: In December, the Charter Authorizing
22 Panel voted to renew the district conversion charter
23 license for Arkansas Connections Academy for -- I'm
24 sorry -- that's open-enrollment public charter for
25 Arkansas Connections Academy for a period of five

1 years. The charter is 100% virtual and serves
2 students in grades K-12, with an enrollment cap of
3 3,000. The charter was initially awarded in November
4 2015.

5 And today we have Superintendent Darla Gardner,
6 as well as Bryce Adams to answer any questions.

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Welcome. I don't see y'all.
8 Hold on.

9 Okay, there we go. All right.

10 Good morning and welcome. Thank y'all for being
11 here today.

12 SUPT. GARDNER: Good morning. Thank you for
13 having us.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome.

15 Okay. Let's start with Mr. Sutton.

16 MR. SUTTON: No questions.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Moore?

18 DR. MOORE: Yes. And I'm assuming Ms. Newton
19 might ask as a teacher Class Load/Size later, but I
20 do want to hear just a little bit of an update on how
21 things are going this year with that large increase
22 in students, how many -- did y'all have to add a lot
23 of -- a large number of teachers this year, how
24 that's been going?

25 SUPT. GARDNER: Well, we did increase our staff

1 this year because we did have an influx of students
2 based on the current situation. We're really in a
3 nice position to be able to hire teachers throughout
4 the state, so we didn't really have a staffing issue.
5 We had strong processes and procedures in place to
6 handle the student enrollment and the training for
7 virtual staff. So ultimately, everything has gone
8 relatively smooth.

9 DR. MOORE: That's great. Particularly as we're
10 looking at grades K-5, can you talk to me about any
11 intervention services for dyslexia or other special
12 ed. services and how those are -- how you're reaching
13 kids in that way?

14 SUPT. GARDNER: Sure. Our elementary K-5 -- our
15 K-2 students take the Istation test. We also do
16 Debold assessments virtually to identify any students
17 with all the past in phonics, all of those components
18 with that. We have a pretty strong RTI procedure and
19 robust processes there that are in place. This year
20 we hired intervention, anticipating the needs of
21 student academic interventions based on the previous
22 school year situation. We identify -- we also are
23 using the MAP -- we started the MAP NWEA testing this
24 year to be able to identify any weaknesses, areas of
25 needs quickly, and get students placed in

1 interventions with our interventionist, as well as
2 there are small groups and small group live lessons
3 in our elementary grade levels that's targeting
4 specific skills.

5 So those are some of the pieces that we've got
6 into place.

7 DR. MOORE: So students do receive interventions
8 aside from --

9 SUPT. GARDNER: Yes.

10 DR. MOORE: Okay.

11 SUPT. GARDNER: Yes. And we have a dyslexia
12 specialist also on staff.

13 DR. MOORE: Do you -- have your teachers done
14 the RISE training?

15 SUPT. GARDNER: We are completing all of the
16 professional development for the Science of Reaching.
17 We're on track to have all those in place and
18 complete by the next school year.

19 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

20 SUPT. GARDNER: You're welcome.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Chambers? Ms. Woods?
22 Ms. McFetridge?

23 [BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE]

24 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Do you have any questions,
25 Ms. McFetridge?

1 MS. NEWTON: Is your microphone on?

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Microphone. Sorry.

3 Ms. McFetridge, do you have questions?

4 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes. How are your PLCs
5 working? How do you do that? How do you manage that
6 virtually?

7 SUPT. GARDNER: Okay. We're very proud of our
8 PLCs at Arkansas Connections Academy. We implemented
9 them year-one, when we opened in 2016. We use
10 Arkansas Special Development funds every year to send
11 a group of staff to Solution Tree's Professional
12 Learning Communities at Work conferences. So now the
13 majority of our staff is trained. We have PLCs
14 weekly. We have them horizontally and vertically,
15 also as well as subject area PLCs. The focus is
16 student data; notes are taken, there's a clear
17 agenda, everybody has their role. It's really
18 amazing to see -- and I'm not able to attend all of
19 those PLCs but I do jump in often and take a peak at
20 the notes and look at the data and hear the amazing
21 things that are happening for our students virtually.

22 In addition to that, we have also looked at --
23 we've partnered with some other virtual schools in
24 the past to have them join our PLCs just to get extra
25 ideas and just to have that moment of collaboration

1 to help students in a virtual environment.

2 MS. McFETRIDGE: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Mr. Lookadoo?

4 MR. LOOKADOO: No. I'll let you ask.

5 MS. NEWTON: I think we're all on the same
6 wavelength here.

7 We are curious today about what your research
8 and what you are doing as far as teacher maximum load
9 and teacher maximum class size. So what are you
10 doing there?

11 SUPT. GARDNER: We have -- and that varies; it
12 depends on the course. I think someone earlier spoke
13 to that. Some of our classes are very different.
14 Our math and a language load is going to look very
15 different. We do exceed the 150. We have many
16 teachers that have right between 150 and 200. We
17 have some courses that go over the 200. It really
18 just depends on the course and we take into account
19 the grading, the live lessons, the individual teacher
20 response, the individual teacher commitment time.
21 All of that is factored in to create a course load
22 for our students and our teachers.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

24 SUPT. GARDNER: P.E. is going to be higher, math
25 is going to be lower. I think most of our math

1 teachers have right between 150 and 200. It really
2 just depends on the course.

3 MS. NEWTON: Okay. What about at the K-5/K-6
4 level?

5 SUPT. GARDNER: K-5 level is going to be 50, 1
6 to 50.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay. And what supports are you
8 giving teachers that are having that 200 class size
9 or even above 200 class load?

10 SUPT. GARDNER: There's -- I also want to talk a
11 little bit about our advisory. We have an advisory
12 model for that 6-12. So in addition to teachers
13 having those students they also -- each student has
14 an advisory teacher that is monitoring the whole
15 student progress. For our secondary teachers that
16 caseload is not unreasonable. They are doing a great
17 job with responsiveness. We do a parent satisfaction
18 survey every spring, and we also have two staff
19 surveys a year where we specifically inquire and ask
20 questions regarding their caseloads, anything they
21 need, what supports, what training. And everybody is
22 being successful with their current load.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Hill?

25 DR. HILL: No.

1 DR. MOORE: May I ask one more question?

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Sure.

3 DR. MOORE: Looking -- just thinking about this
4 class size, especially at the elementary levels, are
5 these by-and-large asynchronous classes or are
6 teachers doing a lot of face-to-face with students?

7 SUPT. GARDNER: Mostly it really depends on the
8 student and student needs. If a student is
9 struggling, then they may be in live classes every
10 day of the week -- or if a student is in small group
11 targeted instruction or if they're having dyslexia
12 interventions or if they're meeting with the
13 interventionist. If it's a student that doesn't need
14 the extra support, then their -- the majority of
15 their time may be asynchronous.

16 DR. MOORE: Is that a choice by the school or by
17 parents, or how do y'all work that out?

18 SUPT. GARDNER: It really just depends on the
19 student progress. Our teachers are meeting with our
20 parents regularly and they're having those
21 conversations; they're working together as a team to
22 do what is best for each student.

23 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

24 SUPT. GARDNER: You're welcome.

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any further questions?

1 Okay. Then I'll look for a motion to review or
2 not to review.

3 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll make the motion not to
4 review.

5 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: We have a motion by Ms.
6 McFetridge to not review.

7 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Ms. Chambers.
9 All in favor say "aye."

10 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

12 Seeing none, the motion passes.

13 Thank you, Arkansas Connections Academy. Thank
14 y'all for joining us today. Congratulations. And
15 y'all have a great day.

16 SUPT. GARDNER: Thank you so much.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome. Thank you.

18 V.11: CONSIDERATION OF ACT 1240 WAIVER EXTENSION REQUEST -
19 CAMDEN FAIRVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right, Ms. Webb.

21 MS. WEBB: The next item on the agenda is the
22 consideration of an Act 1240 waiver extension for the
23 Camden Fairview School District for Teacher
24 Licensure. That is the only waiver that they have.
25 And we have Assistant Superintendent Javana McCall on

1 Zoom to present their request.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Good morning, Ms. McCall.

3 Welcome.

4 MS. McCALL: Good morning. Good morning.

5 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Glad to have you this
6 morning.

7 Okay. We'll start with questions, with Dr.
8 Hill.

9 DR. HILL: I don't have any.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Newton?

11 MS. NEWTON: Ms. McCall, I have some questions
12 about just understanding what's happening with your
13 teachers. I saw that you have hired seven new
14 teachers under the waiver and then ten of these have
15 either got a license or are in progress. Are the
16 other seven still employed with the district?

17 MS. McCALL: Yes, ma'am. They are all there,
18 testing, trying to get -- they're working with the
19 co-op; they're trying to get testing, to get in a
20 program.

21 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right. So they, you
22 think, would eventually get into a program?

23 MS. McCALL: Yes, ma'am.

24 MS. NEWTON: Okay. And I don't know if -- this
25 question may be for Ms. Saracini or someone else from

1 the Department. Just curious, if a teacher is hired
2 under a waiver is there a limit on how long they can
3 keep teaching under that waiver? Let's say a
4 district got their waiver for five years and they
5 renewed it for another five years and just kept
6 renewing it. How long could that teacher teach under
7 that waiver without seeking licensure or entering
8 into a program?

9 MS. WEBB: I don't think that there are any
10 limits as long as the district has a 1240 waiver. A
11 teacher could teach indefinitely for the length of
12 the waiver without really being enrolled in a program
13 or licensure pathway. But most schools do encourage
14 --

15 MS. NEWTON: Right.

16 MS. WEBB: -- teachers to get in one of those
17 pathways.

18 MS. NEWTON: Yeah, I know that we have seen
19 school districts encouraging that. But there is
20 really not a limit on how long a teacher could teach
21 under a waiver?

22 MS. WEBB: There is not.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.

24 And I'm not saying that's a bad thing; I was
25 just wondering. Okay.

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Mr. Lookadoo?

2 MR. LOOKADOO: I'm just curious, with those 10
3 who have enrolled in that other pathway to licensure,
4 does the district -- are you guys able to provide any
5 help or support for those teachers? Like what does
6 that look like for your end? I know you're
7 encouraging them to do that. Is there any support or
8 anything additionally to that?

9 MS. McCALL: Yes. We have a strong support
10 system in place where they are required to attend the
11 New Teacher Institute at the co-op, and in the co-op
12 they do study sessions and they work through the TESS
13 evaluation model, and they have buddy teachers and
14 mentors. And we progress monitor along the way.

15 MR. LOOKADOO: Okay. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Ms. McFetridge?

17 MS. McFETRIDGE: No questions.

18 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Woods?

19 MS. WOODS: No.

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Moore?

21 DR. MOORE: Yes. Do you -- of these that have
22 recently been hired or any future hires, what -- are
23 they mainly elementary, middle school, high school,
24 or is it mixed?

25 MS. McCALL: Mainly elementary. We have -- the

1 '17 -- the '18-19 school year we found our-self, in
2 August, needing three elementary teachers. And our
3 superintendent at the time, Mr. Keith, he approached
4 three of our paraprofessionals that had been working
5 as instructional facilitators -- they had a
6 relationship with everyone in the building -- and
7 asked if they would be interested in pursuing a
8 license. And so that's -- you know, we utilized a
9 lot of our instructional facilitators, you know, to
10 put them on a pathway for licensure. So they're
11 mainly elementary.

12 DR. MOORE: That's great. Are they receiving --
13 I know, I guess, as a former nontraditional
14 elementary teacher, there are a lot of challenges,
15 particularly in the areas of reading. How are they
16 receiving -- have they received the Science of
17 Reading training, and what kind of supports are they
18 receiving there?

19 MS. McCALL: Yes, they receive the same training
20 as our -- a licensed teacher. They've gone through
21 the Science of Reading program through our co-op.
22 And we're -- we follow the PLC model, so they work
23 collaboratively with the other teachers in the
24 building. They work in grade level teams, content
25 level teams, and they follow the same path as our

1 licensed teachers.

2 DR. MOORE: As far as mentoring goes, what does
3 that look like for your 1240 waiver teachers?

4 MS. McCALL: They have Angie Gilbert; she's the
5 new teacher director at the co-op. She's their
6 mentor. But then they're also paired with an
7 experienced teacher on their campus; that's their
8 buddy teacher.

9 DR. MOORE: That's good to hear. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Mr. Sutton?

11 MR. SUTTON: I don't really have a question
12 regarding this application. My question is really
13 just for my benefit as a newbie on the Board. I want
14 to direct it to Secretary Key.

15 Is the State of Arkansas' licensing test, exam,
16 whatever you want to call it -- is it a national
17 produced exam? And, secondly, is it typical -- is it
18 the same one that the majority of the states in the
19 United States are using?

20 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Sutton, we have a resident
21 expert on those topics. And if Ms. Saracini is not
22 here, Dr. Pfeffer can certainly answer that.

23 DR. PFEFFER: So to answer your question, I
24 don't know that you'd say it's a national assessment,
25 but it is from -- it's -- they're Praxis assessments,

1 for the most part. Now for the Science of Reading we
2 have a different vendor for that test, but it is a
3 test that multiple states use. It's used in states
4 all throughout the country. The scores that are set
5 are set by committees. We constantly go back and
6 review Arkansas' cutoff scores in light of, you know,
7 where we are in terms of other states, what is the
8 recommended score for a candidate who should be ready
9 for first-year teaching. So different -- you know,
10 the different subject area exams might look a little
11 bit different. And we have implemented now a system
12 where if a candidate scores within -- I think it's
13 two standards areas of measurement then they can --
14 and this is where I'm going to forget all the details
15 -- and Ms. Saracini is there, so she can back me up
16 -- we've set up a process where they can work over
17 three years to have an alternate type of assessment.
18 So if they're that close to the cutoff score, then
19 they've got a lot of the knowledge and skills they
20 need, it may have just not been evenly applied
21 throughout the exam. And we have had some candidates
22 now be able to be licensed in that way. So it's
23 really recognizing that sometimes a certain type of
24 exam doesn't fit everyone, so we want to take those
25 candidates who are just almost there and then give

1 them a different way over -- while they're actually
2 demonstrating their practice to be able then to be
3 licensed. So it really takes away any excuse that a
4 district would have for not getting their teachers
5 license over a period of time.

6 MR. SUTTON: Would you say, Ivy, that Arkansas'
7 pass/fail ratio for first-time takers of that test is
8 comparable to other states?

9 DR. PFEFFER: Ms. Saracini, would you answer
10 that please? Do you have that?

11 MS. SARACINI: I did not hear him. He is -- it
12 was very low, so I'm trying to -- if you could repeat
13 what he asked so I can make sure I heard it
14 correctly?

15 DR. PFEFFER: The pass rate for Arkansas
16 candidates, the first-time pass rate on exams, is
17 that comparable to other states?

18 MS. SARACINI: Well, I would have to look and
19 make sure, but we are pretty comparable. We have
20 some areas that we are lower than others, such as
21 secondary math, you know, but we're pretty
22 comparable. We're usually in the 70s and 80s. And
23 we do have a report that actually breaks it down by
24 subject area, licensure area, and also by the
25 different educator prep programs, which are your

1 higher ed., our APPEL program, and such. If you
2 would like for me to get that and share that, that
3 would be -- I can do that.

4 MR. SUTTON: I really didn't need to get into --
5 real deep into this. This is a whole new subject and
6 discussion that just -- I have just heard from other
7 superintendents, et cetera -- and, again, this might
8 not be the forum to bring this up about the
9 difficulty. And maybe this is a reflection perhaps
10 on our universities and colleges. I don't know. But
11 it seems like there's -- the feedback that I'm
12 getting is that there is a high failure -- a higher
13 failure rate than one would expect. And I have
14 nothing to back that up.

15 DR. PFEFFER: Well --

16 MR. SUTTON: But I just --

17 DR. PFEFFER: -- I will tell you that the pass
18 rate for individuals that are in -- that go through
19 an educator preparation program are significantly
20 higher than those that we're talking about that are
21 under an Act 1240 waiver that are going at it on
22 their own. So the preparation program, those pass
23 rates are substantially higher and I think that's
24 just to be expected. To be honest, waivers first
25 started with your secondary area -- content area

1 experts and, you know -- and typically those
2 candidates did score high enough on the exams because
3 they understood the math or the English Language Arts
4 or the history. You know, it's -- waivers have been
5 expanded and we have educators now in elementary,
6 like she's talking about, who have had no
7 preparation. And that elementary exam is not easy;
8 it shouldn't be easy.

9 MR. SUTTON: Right.

10 DR. PFEFFER: And there are areas where, you
11 know, you have students who, if they don't get a
12 strong foundation all the way through elementary
13 school into college, and if they're struggling
14 readers, then they're going to continue to struggle
15 in college. They may have a four-year degree but
16 when it's time to come back out and be able to show
17 the kind of mastery you need to be able to teach kids
18 well, they're not doing as well on the exam. But,
19 again, when you don't have that preparation there is
20 a difference. And there are a lot of people working
21 really hard, the help sessions are very helpful, but
22 there is something to be said about getting
23 preparation whether it's through a nontraditional
24 route or through a traditional route.

25 MR. SUTTON: Right.

1 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Sutton, I want to add to
2 that, to say that we've heard the feedback and, you
3 know, of course our team has worked with those
4 teacher candidates who have called us, very
5 frustrated and said, "I've taken this three times,"
6 or "I have taken study -- you know, I've looked at
7 study guides, I've gone to study sessions." You
8 know, they've worked with their institutions that --
9 for their teacher program and they have done
10 everything they physically and mentally and
11 emotionally can do. And that's one thing I want to
12 brag on my -- the team here is because they
13 understand that -- you know, the fact that you miss
14 by a point or a few points, so you can't make that
15 test score, that doesn't mean you're not going to be
16 a good teacher; you need additional support. So
17 working it back, backing up to find out, okay, where
18 is that support that's needed to get you into that --
19 you know, that next phase. What we had in the past
20 was if you don't pass it, you're done. You know, it
21 was a road -- it's a very solid roadblock and it's
22 very discouraging, and it has been a -- we probably
23 through the years have lost some potentially
24 excellent teachers because we didn't have the right
25 support system for them.

1 And so I just -- to Dr. Pfeffer, because this
2 work started when she was in Educator Effectiveness,
3 and the work that Karli and her team continues to do,
4 it is -- it's a way to make it in the future where
5 these -- all these waivers won't be as necessary, you
6 know, and we won't be as dependent on them -- or
7 schools won't be as dependent on them as they have
8 been over the last several years.

9 MS. NEWTON: Can I add just a little bit to
10 that?

11 Ms. Saracini did an excellent job presenting to
12 us yesterday at our ESSA meeting about the alternate
13 assessment plan, and instead of that being -- that
14 test was being the roadblock. And what she told us
15 yesterday was of the ones that are going through this
16 only two of them came from the traditional program;
17 the others were coming from the nontraditional route.
18 And I think that's traditionally where the people who
19 have gotten -- wanted to go into teaching but
20 couldn't pass the test have been. And so this is
21 that alternate performance where they are showing
22 through their actions over -- and, Ms. Saracini, you
23 jump in when I'm saying this incorrectly -- but
24 showing through their actions that they are going to
25 be a good teacher. It's more like are you familiar

1 with portfolios, showing evidence that -- of what
2 you're doing and evidence of your knowledge, rather
3 than sitting down and taking a test. So this is
4 recognizing that not every person is a good test-
5 taker, and it also -- and this was the part that I
6 really liked yesterday when Ms. Saracini presented to
7 us was that it's a partnership between the district
8 who hires the teacher and the teacher who is trying
9 to get that license. And so that -- I was very
10 impressed with that, because I think the more
11 partnerships that we can form the more supports these
12 teachers will have and the better our outcomes will
13 be. And so I was very impressed by this alternate
14 assessment.

15 And I wanted to give thanks to the Department,
16 and all of your department, Ms. Saracini, for
17 recognizing that this was a difficulty and then
18 working out a plan that we could make sure that we
19 were having well-prepared teachers, but also making
20 an alternative route for that. So, and I think just
21 getting the word out more and more to more districts
22 that this is available I think will be a positive.

23 MS. WOODS: I have a follow-up question on that.

24 MR. SUTTON: Thank you, Ms. Newton.

25 MS. WOODS: And I don't mean to derail us from

1 this, but is there a mechanism that we can -- that we
2 are catching these teachers that have unfortunately
3 failed the test multiple times, that are operating
4 under these waivers? Or can they continue to teach
5 without a license into perpetuity under the waiver?

6 SECRETARY KEY: Karli or Ivy?

7 MS. WOODS: Ms. Saracini.

8 MS. SARACINI: I can barely hear. Some of you I
9 can hear really well, like Ms. Newton, but I cannot
10 hear you, Ms. Woods, very well.

11 MS. WOODS: I'm sorry.

12 Dr. Pfeffer, can you --

13 MS. SARACINI: So you were asking can they -- do
14 they -- can they continue as many times and take the
15 test and not pass, but they can continue to teach?

16 MS. WOODS: Yes. Is there any way that we are
17 able -- that we catch them through this waiver? Or
18 are we just continually renewing the waiver without
19 an understanding of how many times they've taken the
20 test and how long they've gone?

21 MS. SARACINI: Well, not indefinitely can they
22 continue to take the test and not pass. Eventually,
23 you know, that would become an issue because tests
24 are updated and changed; so the information on the
25 test may change. But also we're really trying to do

1 some of these human capital audits, to go in and
2 really try to catch this and work with the districts,
3 and even with our higher ed. and our nontraditional
4 prep programs so that we can get them on a path and
5 give them the support they need in order, if they
6 can't pass the test, to then go this alternate route
7 of performance-based, if it's possible, and to get
8 them eventually with a license. We do have
9 conversations with our ed. prep programs, trying to
10 catch them up. And there was about 405 that was
11 within those two SEMs that it affected with this
12 alternate route. Right now we have 29 in the program
13 getting licensed through this alternate route. And
14 as we capture more data I can probably give you
15 better data and more -- pinpoint how many it's
16 affecting and how many success stories we have.

17 MS. WOODS: Okay.

18 MS. SARACINI: But right now, this only -- the
19 alternate route came about on July 1st. It started
20 July 1st, so we still do not have a lot of data that
21 I can share.

22 DR. PFEFFER: And so I think what that is, it's
23 -- that's really maybe a solution to what's the root
24 cause of a lot of the issues. But to answer your
25 question, that would have to be part of the condition

1 for the waiver as far as how long you want to approve
2 that part of the waiver and how expansive you want to
3 make it. If -- so like in the review of the waiver,
4 coming back, that's where a district could be asked
5 to -- okay, how many teachers you have on a waiver,
6 how many of them are in a program, how many of them
7 have successfully completed a program and became
8 licensed. So, and that gets tricky with that 1240
9 waiver, depending on how expansively they're
10 approved, because we come back and sometimes have
11 questions and don't always have the data about it;
12 but in fairness to the district, there weren't
13 conditions or limitations maybe at the front-end.
14 And so I think where we want to be, and where I feel
15 good about what we're doing, is that as we're working
16 with districts and -- as they are going through
17 processes of trying to find really good candidates,
18 but helping them to get to the point where they have
19 the -- they have the license. Because I believe most
20 people who want to stay in education do see the value
21 in having a technical permit or a license. But the
22 efforts that Ms. Saracini's team has put into place
23 are ways to help capture more people with that, and
24 that plus the many different routes in order to get
25 prepared -- all of that, plus the mentoring supports

1 are very helpful.

2 So I think in terms of -- and you all are asking
3 questions that I'm really excited about because I've
4 had concerns for awhile at how far we've kind of
5 expanded with our waivers, especially around
6 licensure. I think that if we can work with
7 districts to think about what is it you're really
8 trying to do and how do we help you put into place
9 ways for us to measure if you're making progress and
10 if you're seeing success.

11 MS. NEWTON: Can I ask a question about that
12 while you're there?

13 So as we're thinking about renewing this waiver,
14 would we need to think about maybe some limitations
15 or some guardrails or something along that line to
16 make sure that we have --

17 DR. PFEFFER: I think that's certainly an
18 option. You know, that may be where the district
19 could -- you know, as far as articulating what is the
20 true need, is the true need a waiver from licensure
21 for K-12, is it a true need for -- or is there, you
22 know, a way to say within three years anybody who is
23 hired under a waiver will be either, you know,
24 licensed or enrolled in a program. I don't -- you
25 know, so I think there are some things you could do.

1 Yes, certainly.

2 DR. HILL: Before you go -- so, first of all, I
3 want to commend you on teacher development. I mean I
4 think as a former coach, you know, you look at a
5 skill-set and it may not fit. And so we're working
6 with teachers to develop a certain skill-set, and I
7 want to applaud the leadership for doing that.

8 Secondly, what would be the option if you don't
9 develop? Do we have an over-abundance of teachers
10 out there that we can put into these slots if they're
11 not there? I mean I've been on the Board four or
12 five years now and I continue to hear us worrying
13 about waivers. And so my deal is, okay, what's the
14 contingency plan if we don't use waivers? So who do
15 you get to go in there?

16 And, third, I want to say that probably -- and I
17 have no data, you know, whatsoever, but I'm going to
18 speak hypothetically, based on experience in
19 underserved rural areas where test scores are low --
20 that if you have a person in the community that's
21 coming in to work with a student who probably will
22 achieve lower on the test score, that we know the
23 data shows that the number one predictor for academic
24 success is not literacy or test scores; it's
25 relationship with the teacher. With that being said,

1 having these people come in to support the efforts to
2 work with these challenging environments -- you all
3 are giving the support -- I support those efforts
4 because we don't have people on the sideline waiting
5 to get in the game, do we?

6 DR. PFEFFER: So I think one thing that -- and
7 Secretary Key will go into more detail about this
8 tomorrow -- we would like to update legislation
9 around minority recruitment plans. So that is a more
10 comprehensive teacher recruitment and retention plan
11 that keeps in mind the importance of diversity in the
12 workforce and really getting to what is the root
13 cause of a particular district not having the faculty
14 that they need, the teachers that they need to put in
15 front of those children. And --

16 DR. HILL: And I think you're exactly right, you
17 have to be intentional. Because when I look at the
18 data throughout the United States of America and when
19 I see that 48% of dropouts are African American
20 males, I'm looking back at the relationship with the
21 individual to keep that person engaged in school.
22 Just because you have a teacher that can pass the
23 test, but can't have a relationship, you'll still get
24 the same outcome. And I think those things are very
25 important that we assess that. And don't get me

1 wrong, I can tell you my teachers right now: you
2 know, Ms. Duke was my first grade teacher; you know,
3 Ms. Terry was my second grade teacher; Ms. Jones was
4 my third grade teacher; Ms. Jackson was my fourth
5 grade teacher. You know, all those teachers were
6 fabulous to me and they cared about me, but I had --
7 the reason I remember them is because I had a
8 relationship because they're from the community. And
9 I think that's so important, Secretary Key, that we
10 look at that as an aspect of development with that
11 teacher -- to put that teacher in a position to be
12 successful; because if she can go home with that kid,
13 then all of our communities become safer; because
14 these kids who kill each other right now, it's
15 because they're not in school. And I think we have
16 to look beyond a test score -- and I appreciate what
17 you're doing to do that. And as we advocate
18 intentional inclusion, not only diversity --
19 inclusion to make sure we're involved in our
20 communities, to make sure that if a kid is not there
21 that that person knows where to go to find him -- not
22 a test score to say they're qualified.

23 So thank you for what you're doing. And as a
24 board member I support a very diverse area to make
25 sure that we have inclusion rather than find ways for

1 data to be exclusionary.

2 DR. PFEFFER: And you are so right, because
3 those relationships are what make kids want to come
4 to school and the classroom teacher does have the
5 greatest impact on student achievement, so hands-
6 down.

7 And one of the things that I thought about while
8 you were talking, and like Ms. Newton said, we've
9 removed the test as being the barrier. There also is
10 the option to obtain a license through -- it used to
11 be called PPTL, Provisional Professional Teaching
12 License, and I don't remember if we've modified the
13 wording of that event -- but after three years of
14 teaching, and there are a few other criteria -- but
15 the on-the-job work, plus showing the proficiency in
16 the subject area that you're teaching. So it would
17 be either through the assessment or through the
18 alternate assessment pathway route now you can earn
19 your license as that professional who has been there.

20 So the way I think -- if we -- and I don't know
21 if this would help you, but it helps me a little bit:
22 sometimes the waivers, the Act 1240 waivers are
23 necessary so that a school district can bring the
24 people in and employ them. So the waiver is there to
25 get that right person in the door. But we I think --

1 and I think our superintendent would agree -- we
2 don't want that to be the way we keep people forever.
3 So if that's the way we can look at this -- we
4 realize you need the flexibility to get them there,
5 but maybe some guardrails, like you said, or
6 something to clarify about keeping them long-term.

7 DR. HILL: But one other question -- and, you
8 know, and this just really -- sometimes I just --
9 I've never received an answer. So if you can't,
10 what's Plan B? I mean if you don't have --

11 DR. PFEFFER: If you can't get somebody there?

12 DR. HILL: Yeah, if you don't have them. And so
13 -- and so when you say, hey, you know, you've been
14 here three years or four years, five years, you
15 couldn't pass the test -- okay, so do you start over
16 with somebody else for five years?

17 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah, but I think that's where now
18 that we've created the alternate pathway to assess,
19 so it's --

20 DR. HILL: I mean we'll keep -- we'll be able to
21 keep them in there. Because in my mind that --

22 DR. PFEFFER: Yes.

23 DR. HILL: -- that you will continue developing
24 six -- year-six, year-seven, rather --

25 DR. PFEFFER: You could.

1 DR. HILL: -- than going back to year-one to
2 start over with --

3 DR. PFEFFER: Right.

4 DR. HILL: -- somebody else.

5 DR. PFEFFER: And that's where the district
6 needs the flexibility to say this is the right
7 person. And, you know, so if it doesn't happen
8 completely in three years, but there's progress being
9 made, then, yes, they could continue that.

10 DR. HILL: One thing -- and that's great. Thank
11 you. One thing I want to share is that, you know,
12 when I went to see the movie Hidden Figures I thought
13 about this and I realized that not one of those
14 teachers had been certified to teach people, to send
15 people to the moon, but they were gifted in teaching.
16 So, and they didn't take a test. I just think -- you
17 know, I think it's always good to keep information
18 like that in the back of our minds for effective
19 teachers, because effectiveness is what we're trying
20 to do so kids can read, comprehend, and write
21 effectively, think critically so they can make good
22 decisions outside the classroom as well.

23 So I appreciate your flexibility and everything
24 you're doing to keep quality people in the classroom.

25 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. Dr. Pfeffer, remind us,

1 how many different pathways are there to achieve
2 teacher licensure now?

3 DR. PFEFFER: Twenty-two is in my head. I think
4 I'm close there. And if I had my phone I bet Joan
5 Luneau would be texting.

6 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. So I mean I was thinking
7 23, so we were close. But I guess the point to --
8 and, Dr. Hill, to your point -- Mr. Sutton, to your
9 point and conversations you've had -- I think a lot
10 of folks that have these conversations with y'all,
11 they're thinking in terms of how they remember it
12 being a few years ago and maybe they're not as
13 knowledgeable about all of the pathways. And we
14 continue to work through our co-ops to educate our
15 educators, especially our administrators, on what
16 those pathways are. The -- you know, the important
17 thing is we have to balance because there are other
18 voices out there that demand to have a quality
19 teaching staff; they have set these bars that center
20 around a test. When you talk about the state-by-
21 state comparisons, that's one of the things we face
22 all the time. There are organizations out there that
23 want to compare states and they want to compare our
24 cut scores with the cut scores of other states on
25 these tests. And, you know, what we have to

1 understand is there are multiple pathways. There are
2 people out there who can teach, that need to be in a
3 classroom, that we have to help get them there.
4 We're doing a better job of that now.

5 But, Ms. Newton, you know, what's the biggest
6 reason why some of the candidates don't pass that
7 math Praxis?

8 MS. NEWTON: Because it's hard.

9 SECRETARY KEY: Because it's hard and because
10 maybe they didn't have a Ms. Newton in math when they
11 were in school. You know, maybe -- so it's a cycle
12 that is generational in the making and -- because if
13 we don't have the strong foundations for 4th, 5th,
14 6th grade, that follows those students all the way
15 through college. And then if they become math
16 teachers, you know, we want them to have those strong
17 foundational principles. That's -- and then I've
18 jumped over to Ms. Smith and her team and the math
19 team where they are looking at what are those things
20 that we need to get more solid on in math in
21 elementary middle grades so that -- so that cycle is
22 interrupted at some point in the generation and we
23 don't have those areas of math -- and not just math,
24 but that's the one we kind of talked about earlier --
25 that creates that barrier for being able to pass that

1 test, because we're going to be in the testing mode.
2 I mean I don't -- we'll never go back to that time
3 that -- in the 50s and 60s where there wasn't a test.
4 But, again, our team is doing a fantastic job of
5 trying to manage all of those and recognize those
6 challenges that -- Dr. Hill, that you face or that
7 you've voiced to make sure that five and ten years
8 from now we're not having these same conversations.

9 DR. PFEFFER: And may I add one more thing? And
10 tomorrow we'll do an update for you-all on the Teach
11 Arkansas Campaign and Grow Your Own programs. But
12 when Secretary Key started talking a little bit about
13 that, I think the Grow Your Own, that is so
14 important. If we can grow students within our
15 schools so they go from classroom to classroom, just
16 in a different role, and keep them involved from the
17 time they're in high school, in education all the way
18 through college, getting their hands-on experience
19 every day with all types of learners so they know
20 really where they're going to be the best teacher,
21 that is -- that is really the key to all of this.
22 And if we get that going really well -- I don't want
23 to steal Karli and Angela's thunder for tomorrow,
24 what they're going to share -- but if we get that
25 right, 10 years from now we're not going to have to

1 be worrying about these same issues. But just like
2 Secretary Key talked about with math, it may be that
3 a student didn't have a Ms. Newton to teach them. We
4 also have to think about what the educational
5 experience looks like in high school, because
6 sometimes some of our top students, they accelerate
7 through things so quickly that maybe their 11th and
8 12th grade year they're not taking a math course
9 because they've taken all of them early on and
10 they're doing other things in 11th and 12th grade.
11 They go to college, they're not taking very many math
12 courses, and you hit that elementary exam that does
13 have a math component on there; if it's been four or
14 five years since you've really had a math class
15 because you had a concurrent credit for your college
16 algebra, you know, you run into a roadblock there.
17 And those are the kinds of things we have to think
18 about all the way through the education system so
19 that we really do have our kids prepared all the way
20 through the system.

21 So there are a lot of factors that make it very,
22 very complicated, but I think it's good that we're
23 digging in and investigating and figuring out
24 solutions, so --

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Dr. Pfeffer.

1 MS. McCALL: Madam Chairman, may I -- may I add?
2 Our teachers, the teachers that we hire under
3 the 1240 waiver, they're required to complete a
4 teacher licensure exception plan. It has a timeline
5 of when they're going to take a test. And those
6 students -- those employees that we -- that are in a
7 program, they've already met the requirements to get
8 into the program. Some of them, we're still working
9 on getting a test in order for them to get into the
10 math program. But they are on a -- they're on a
11 timeline for license.

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Ms. McCall.

13 MS. WEBB: I would also add that all teachers
14 that are working under a 1240 waiver have to meet the
15 AQT, Arkansas Qualified Teacher qualifications. And
16 so that includes they all do have a degree in some
17 area, as well as 18 college credit hours in the
18 content they're teaching. And the district did
19 provide those forms that we requested regarding those
20 teachers that have been working on a 12 -- under a
21 1240 waiver for several years.

22 MS. NEWTON: That was very helpful on the
23 timeline.

24 Can you tell me about the -- a little bit more
25 description of the timeline, how long they have and

1 --

2 MS. McCALL: Yes. The first year they are
3 required to test. The first year they are required
4 to test. That will either get them into the program,
5 into a program, you know, or just continue to work
6 with the co-op.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

8 MS. McCALL: They have -- this year we've had to
9 give letters to three of our employees, you know,
10 that by May 2021 if they're not licensed we're going
11 to have to non-renew. You know, they have three --
12 this year they got four because of Covid, where they
13 couldn't test, you know, but it's usually three
14 years.

15 MS. NEWTON: Okay. That was very helpful.
16 Thank you for sharing that.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any further questions or --

18 SECRETARY KEY: Just one bit of information.

19 It's 26 -- 26 pathways. So --

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Wow, quite a few pathways.

21 I just want to comment on the Grow Your Own. I
22 think that is going to be -- as Dr. Pfeffer said,
23 that's going to be revolutionary for Arkansas, as far
24 as cultivating the culture of education in students'
25 hearts from the time that they are a child and

1 growing that love of teaching as they grow up and as
2 they learn and go through school and have
3 experiences. So I'm excited to see the fruit of that
4 pursuit, so --

5 Well, with that --

6 DR. HILL: I want to say one thing before we go
7 on because I don't want to be interpreted as wanting
8 unqualified teachers. That was never my point and I
9 didn't want to say that. But, you know, if you have
10 a principal, like Ms. Newton, who -- yes -- if you
11 have a principal, like Ms. Newton, who's helping
12 develop a teacher or with a relationship, I know
13 that's what we're talking about. But here's probably
14 from my experiences that I've seen that I want to
15 share -- I've seen going into alternative learning
16 schools that kids didn't want to go back to the
17 classroom because they didn't have a relationship
18 with the teacher. So they wanted to stay over in an
19 alternative classroom with somebody who was not
20 qualified but they had a relationship with; then
21 after they did their expulsion time they were going
22 to send them back to the classroom and they dropped
23 out of school because they had no relationship with
24 the teacher. Those are things that I'm talking about
25 that we must assess in the educational development of

1 the holistic child, not just the test score because
2 the teacher couldn't pass the test, and put them in a
3 classroom and there's no relationship. That's all I
4 wanted to be on record for, to say how important
5 relationship is with the teacher. And if Ms. Newton
6 has somebody -- and then that's why I can't sit here
7 and evaluate what the learning outcome -- that's why
8 she's our expert. That's why out of the people --
9 that's why I defer to her on those type of things;
10 that's not my area. But I know when I walk around
11 here and I see a 14-, 15-, 16-year old kid walking
12 around the street and the first thing I ask is who
13 their teacher is, and they say "I don't know," that's
14 a problem.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Uh-huh.

16 DR. HILL: That's a problem. And I think we
17 have to look at it holistically like that, rather
18 than they have a teacher in there who aced the test
19 score but she don't know where they are or whatever.
20 So I just wanted to be on record as a State Board
21 member advocating the relationship aspect, along with
22 the testing score aspect. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Absolutely.

24 MS. McFETRIDGE: Ms. Dean, I have another
25 question --

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Sure, go ahead.

2 MS. McFETRIDGE: -- for Ms. Coy -- Ms. McCall;
3 I'm sorry.

4 You mentioned the co-op several times. Are they
5 able to really work with these teacher candidates and
6 really personalize the needs that they have as
7 they're going through the program?

8 MS. McCALL: Yes, ma'am. Angie Gilbert, she's
9 the teacher -- the New Teacher Institute director,
10 she meets with them as a group and then she visits
11 them in their classroom; she meets with them
12 individually as well.

13 MS. McFETRIDGE: That's good to hear. Thank
14 you.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Newton?

16 MS. NEWTON: Ms. Webb, how long is this waiver
17 for?

18 MS. WEBB: They've requested it for a period of
19 five years.

20 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any further questions or
22 discussion?

23 Okay. Well, with that, I'm looking for a motion
24 to approve or not to approve the waiver.

25 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll make the motion to approve

1 the waiver.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. I have a motion to
3 approve by Ms. McFetridge.

4 MR. SUTTON: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Mr. Sutton.

6 All in favor say "aye."

7 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

8 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

9 Seeing none, the motion passes.

10 Congratulations, Ms. McCall. Thank you for
11 joining us today.

12 MS. McCALL: Thank you all. Thank you for your
13 time and thank you for the work that you do for our
14 students.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: You're welcome. Have a great
16 day.

17 MS. McCALL: Thank you. You too.

18 And with that, that concludes the first half of
19 our agenda. Lunch is ready on the third floor. We
20 will reconvene back here at 1:00 for part two. Thank
21 y'all.

22 (LUNCH BREAK: 12:09 - 1:02 p.m.)

23 VI.1: CONSIDERATION OF THE ADOPTION OF THE ARKANSAS COMPUTER
24 SCIENCE AND COMPUTING HIGH SCHOOL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND
25 MACHINE LEARNING STANDARDS AND COURSE FOR HIGH SCHOOL

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All rightee, we're going to
2 get started back. We'll do -- get back to Action
3 Agenda B. And we'll have Mr. Anthony Owen, our State
4 Director of Computer Sciences as the presenter.

5 MR. OWEN: Good afternoon, State Board. Thank
6 y'all. Thank you, Chairwoman. Before y'all today is
7 -- I promised y'all during the December meeting that
8 I would come back and bring y'all the Artificial
9 Intelligence Machine Learning set of standards and
10 pathway of courses. That was placed within your
11 packet. That was a growth opportunity for myself, I
12 will say it that way, because I had to take a lot of
13 that work of initial writing on that myself. But we
14 did have four additional special contributors that
15 are listed on the last page that actually came in,
16 experts from that field, and helped validate the work
17 that had been done and helped us make some
18 adjustments. So we're very confident in the set of
19 courses and pathways. And this came about from --
20 the reason it wasn't provided with the other ones,
21 besides the fact that I had to grow in my knowledge,
22 was also because this had come from Dr. Kremers from
23 Division of Career and Technical Education after we'd
24 already started the standards writing process as a
25 possible additional pathway for us to add. So I do

1 apologize for splitting those, but I think this is
2 another great option for our students and something
3 that our state desperately needs.

4 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Thank you.

5 All right. We'll see if there are any
6 questions.

7 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Chairman Cooksey turns
8 on her microphone.)

9 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Oops. We'll see if there are
10 any questions. We'll start with Mr. Sutton.

11 MR. SUTTON: No.

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Moore?

13 DR. MOORE: Thank you for being here and for
14 your work. So is this an entirely new course?

15 MR. OWEN: This is one of our -- we will
16 actually have three sets of three pathways that are
17 entirely new for the 21-22 school year. This is one
18 of the three, along with the Data Science pathway
19 that y'all adopted in December in the Computer
20 Engineering. So this year we're adding additional
21 new courses in other areas, other disciplines of
22 Computer Science, but there's already been a couple
23 of courses and we added that third year. But, yes,
24 this is one of three brand-new pathways.

25 DR. MOORE: Do you know of any districts

1 prepared to teach it and/or businesses that work in
2 this field prepared to support districts?

3 MR. OWEN: So there are some businesses that
4 work in this field. When you start looking at cyber
5 security concepts, you know, you really have to look
6 at a combination of not just cyber security in the
7 way that most people think about it. But when you
8 start developing cyber security algorithms, things of
9 that nature, it really gets into that machine
10 learning, because humans can't respond to the events
11 that happen on the internet quick enough to catch
12 everything that might happen. So the machines have
13 to adapt, they have to learn from patterns and be
14 able to adjust their algorithms based on patterns
15 that are not in the norm. So, yes, there are quite a
16 few industries in Arkansas that can support. As far
17 as a school that is ready to teach this, it's like
18 anything else in Computer Science: we've got to get
19 the personnel trained -- and this was a stretch for
20 myself and my team. So I don't want to say there are
21 no teachers out there that do not have this content
22 knowledge, but I would say that they would be few and
23 far between. But our team stands ready to support
24 those teachers, and continue growing in our knowledge
25 also.

1 DR. MOORE: Is there specific professional
2 development for this?

3 MR. OWEN: We do not have that in place yet.
4 Right now, our professional development is still
5 focused on getting those teachers prepared to teach
6 that first-year course and certified. We are -- we
7 do have advanced options for other disciplines within
8 Computer Science. I expect that we will develop an
9 advanced option for this that will look at moving the
10 teacher knowledge base to that second year and third
11 year course. It has not been developed yet, but that
12 is definitely something that we're going to look at.
13 But that's also something I'm going to have to
14 probably lean on outside support to come in and help
15 us develop, train us, get our staff up-to-date on it
16 where we can support the teachers better. But it may
17 be, honestly, that for the first year we bring
18 someone in from the outside to provide that training
19 and we go through that training ourselves as we grow
20 in our knowledge.

21 DR. MOORE: That's great. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Chambers?

23 MS. CHAMBERS: I think I've answered one of my
24 questions from the material in here. So this would
25 be part of or associated with the credential that the

1 Governor spoke to I think in his speech, so that
2 every student -- every student would take --

3 I'm sorry; not close enough. Bite on this
4 thing.

5 So is that correct?

6 MR. OWEN: So, yes, ma'am. This is actually --
7 and I'm glad you referenced the materials. If the
8 Chairwoman doesn't mind, I will go ahead and
9 reference those materials while we have that. In
10 front of you, you have a few different items. One,
11 you have this, which is an info-graphic about the
12 additional pathways that we have developed, and
13 hopefully this will be accurate after this meeting,
14 that we'll have the Machine Learning and Artificial
15 Intelligence pathway adopted. So it does list the
16 nine pathways that we have developed as a state and
17 put out there. That represents 27 courses that are
18 state-developed courses that will have been
19 developed. In addition to that, there are over 30
20 other options that we recognize as meeting that
21 graduation requirement. So there are over 60 options
22 for students to take right now in Arkansas. And
23 actually with the ability of schools to write and
24 submit approval requests and the concurrent options
25 out there that are post-secondaries looking at, you

1 know, agreements with our schools, there's really
2 unlimited options. But we have 60 options that we've
3 clearly identified for students.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: And I love this pathway. I think
5 it's just so important, not just having excellence in
6 a course but there's a path that you can take. So to
7 that point -- and I'm just checking my terminology,
8 is a flex credit equivalent to college credit or is
9 it a stackable credential or how does it get measured
10 and correct, quote, credit given?

11 MR. OWEN: So in 2016, whenever the flex credit
12 was brought before the State Board and was adopted,
13 the issue that Arkansas was facing, like many other
14 states around the nation who are still facing this
15 issue, we -- quite a few of them have taken our flex
16 credit model as their model and followed our lead on
17 that. What we were facing was this issue of is
18 Computer Science career and technical or is Computer
19 Science academic and should it be math or science.
20 So when the flex credit option was developed -- or
21 the flex credit for Computer Science, we just said
22 we're going to forget this idea of is it CTE or is it
23 academic; it is a Computer Science credit. And we're
24 going to say that this credit -- whenever a student
25 gains a credit in this area, it can flex to replace

1 their fourth year math requirement, their third year
2 science, or their career focus. And by doing that,
3 we were able to unify licensure so we no longer have
4 to worry about is the teacher licensed on the ADE
5 DESE side or the DCTE side; they have a Computer
6 Science licensure or endorsement to teach this
7 particular course. So the flex credit is really a
8 graduation credit for the student at a high school
9 level that can be their fourth year math or third
10 year science or one of their required career focus.

11 MS. CHAMBERS: So I think we've talked about
12 this a little bit before, so if you can just remind
13 me -- so there are credits that go -- and I love the
14 way you distinguished it -- and if we were thinking
15 about this from an "and" perspective, where it could
16 be a college credit and it could be a stackable
17 credential that means something in terms of if you
18 went straight into a career, will it have at some
19 point that same equivalency?

20 MR. OWEN: So what we've worked toward --
21 because all of these pathways are adopted under the
22 Division of Career and Technical Education are all
23 going to be as pathways for students to take, we have
24 to identify certifications, industry-based
25 certifications that these pathways lead students

1 toward as part of that program of study. So, yes,
2 when we build out these pathways, we built it out
3 with the idea of not only could it be for a student
4 that's looking at furthering their career at a
5 college level, getting those concurrent credit
6 courses or that college credit through an AP advanced
7 option or some other nature, but also we -- in my
8 office we hear resoundingly from CEOs and hiring
9 managers across the state that while a bachelor's
10 degree is great in Computer Science, it's not
11 necessary for those entry-level jobs; they need
12 people that have the skills, as I've been told, that
13 will get out of bed and do the work. They don't even
14 care if they come into the office, but they just want
15 them out of bed and doing the work. And then that
16 they have the skills to conduct this work. What
17 we're hearing more -- more and more, and part of what
18 I expressed last time about the -- you know, the Data
19 Science piece that we're putting into every one that
20 -- the story -- the story telling, the data that
21 we're putting everyone -- we're hearing that the
22 technical skills are often there, that they can find
23 students with technical skills but they can't find
24 students with those soft skills. So that's why these
25 pathways were all written with that industry feedback

1 in mind.

2 MS. CHAMBERS: Just last thing to think about,
3 there are such great employers here in the state that
4 have such a need for what Arkansas schools are going
5 to produce that the more you can clarify, whether you
6 call them stackable credentials or you call them
7 certifications, that helps connect the student very
8 directly to graduate -- very directly into great job
9 opportunities. And it's hard work, it's like a
10 standard body setting, but it's just so important to
11 continue this -- the opportunity that this education
12 is going to provide. So, well done.

13 MR. OWEN: Thank you.

14 Just for your knowledge, I do have recurring
15 meetings with quite a few of the CEOs of especially
16 our startups that are based here in Arkansas, to get
17 feedback on what their needs are, what trends,
18 because we look at languages, we look at, you know,
19 what are the needs out there. Because while we don't
20 adopt standards that say teachers must teach Java or
21 Python, we can adjust our training that's provided by
22 our team to help teachers meet the -- what is the
23 trend within the environment out there.

24 But that said, I would like to also point out
25 within your stack of papers that I gave you, you had

1 one that had a graph on the front of it. And this
2 was response to a question that was provided by Mr.
3 Lookadoo in December. He asked if we had any data on
4 how the students were using the Computer Science flex
5 credit, and that's the reason I pivoted to this,
6 because of that flex credit conversation. You'll see
7 on the first page students using that credit for any
8 reason whatsoever -- and these are numbers of
9 students for each of those years; on the second page,
10 the top graph breaks that down to whether they used
11 it for a math, a science, or career focus. And,
12 actually, students who gained multiple CS credits can
13 offset multiple needs within that flex credit system.
14 So if a student has three credits in Computer
15 Science, they could offset that fourth math with one
16 of them, that third science with another one, and
17 then one of their six career focus. Below that,
18 number of students who have used it for any reason
19 within a career focus, that is our largest category,
20 which is understandable. But then, on the last page
21 I broke down the career focus usage. And this was
22 very interesting to me that you look going out to
23 2019-2020, even in 18-19, we had -- in 18-19, we had
24 two students that graduated with all six of their
25 career focus credits being met through Computer

1 Science. So that means that student somewhere --
2 those two students somewhere took six Computer
3 Science credits within their high school career.
4 Last year was 13 students. So we are seeing -- you
5 know, while those are small numbers, that's really an
6 example of -- you know, you consider those students
7 that took one credit, and those are our largest
8 groups, but you look at what is that really leading
9 toward. What you were mentioning that we want to
10 increase the number of students that are really
11 looking at this as trying to get coursework out of
12 the way that they might have to do it at the
13 secondary level or step directly into a job, and
14 those students are preparing to do that.

15 I want to mention our UpSkill program because it
16 didn't really make it into the one-pager that y'all
17 have, I don't believe. But the UpSkill program
18 through A-State, those credits, which are concurrent
19 credits that our office is actually paying for
20 students to take at this point, they are actually
21 gained in nine weeks. So that is a semester-and-a-
22 half program that there are three college level
23 courses that they take and the student gains three CS
24 courses and college credit for those three courses.
25 So, plus they're ready for an industry level

1 certification at the end of them.

2 And then the last document in there is our
3 January newsletter hot off the presses. And I was
4 actually texted a little while ago by Morgan Aldredge
5 -- Warbington -- sorry, used to be Aldredge -- Morgan
6 Warbington, who asked me if the State Board members
7 might be interested on an individual basis going
8 through months being a feature within our newsletter.
9 So I recommend that she contact Dr. Moore first -- no
10 offense to anyone else, but Dr. Moore started as an
11 educational liaison for the CS Initiative. So, Dr.
12 Moore, please expect an email from my office. And
13 the rest of y'all are welcome as we contact you to
14 participate or decline.

15 And with that, I will -- any other questions --
16 and there are two motions that we would like to have
17 before the Board. The first one is about the
18 standards, the second one I can talk to more when
19 you're ready.

20 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Do we have any more
21 questions? I'll just start with Mr. Sutton.

22 MR. SUTTON: No questions.

23 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Dr. Moore? Ms. Chambers?

24 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.

25 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay.

1 MS. CHAMBERS: I was looking through really
2 quick -- on the soft skills does it include critical
3 thinking?

4 MR. OWEN: Yes, ma'am. So that -- the basis of
5 a lot of our Computer Science standards is that
6 critical thinking concept content. In fact,
7 Code.org, when they look nationally at whether -- how
8 many schools within the state are teaching Computer
9 Science courses, that's one of the key components
10 that has to be there before they'll recognize it as a
11 Computer Science course. I'm going to brag a little
12 bit on our state. This past school year we overtook
13 the number one position in the number -- the
14 percentage of schools teaching what they consider a
15 high-quality Computer Science course at -- I think it
16 was 94%.

17 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right. Ms. Woods?

18 MS. WOODS: My question more has to do with the
19 graph on your second page.

20 MR. OWEN: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. WOODS: I just notice the drastic difference
22 between the 2018-2019 school year where children were
23 choosing science or Computer Science for their actual
24 science course. And then it dropped by more than 500
25 the next year, but math increased exponentially. Can

1 you just speak to that? Do you have any --

2 MR. OWEN: So --

3 MS. WOODS: I'm just interested in your facts on
4 that.

5 MR. OWEN: I actually noted that with Dr.
6 Pfeffer as an interesting change and swing in that
7 year. And, you know, I don't have any information
8 other than what I can guesstimate happened. That --
9 when you look at that initial year and -- the initial
10 year of the Computer Science credit and the first two
11 years, really that was a completely new concept. And
12 probably most students at that point had already been
13 on a pathway to get that four math -- that fourth
14 math very easily. And sometimes that third science
15 is pushed off to that last year, there's not a clear
16 pathway to it, sometimes even an afterthought of what
17 am I going to take to get this third credit out of
18 the way. So I think initially some of those students
19 just were easier to utilize that and that science
20 around. And I will say also it's not a selection
21 process necessarily for the student to make, so
22 they're not -- they can say beforehand, you know, I'm
23 going to take Computer Science instead of this third
24 science. But what really happens is the triand
25 system, what it does through its business rules, it

1 goes out there and looks for these different
2 requirements and when it gets -- once it gets down to
3 I think it's rule 11, which is the fourth math
4 option, it says does the student have one of the
5 course codes that meets this fourth math option. If
6 they do not, then it says do they have an unused 4-6-
7 5 or 5-6-5 course code, which is Computer Science.
8 And it says okay, they do have that, so we're going
9 to let that meet that requirement; then it goes to
10 science and it says does the student have biology,
11 because you can't replace biology with Computer
12 Science; and then, does the student have a second
13 math -- science credit and does the student have a
14 third. If the student does not have that third
15 science credit, it says does the student have an
16 unused 4-6-5 or 5-6-5; then it goes down to career
17 focus.

18 So I don't have any proof in why that changed.
19 That's just me thinking of it from a school
20 perspective and a student perspective.

21 MS. WOODS: Okay.

22 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. All right. Ms.
23 McFetridge?

24 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes. I just wanted you to
25 clarify something for me. Of the 27 courses, then do

1 we -- are we able to have our students earn those CTE
2 certifications yet or not? I need some clarification
3 on that.

4 MR. OWEN: So, Dr. McFetridge, do you mean are
5 they able to become a completer under DCTE?

6 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes, in the K-12 school system.

7 MR. OWEN: Yes, ma'am. So as a completer, right
8 now -- of course, these courses -- the courses that
9 we're considering or y'all are considering today do
10 not take effect till 21-22 school year. But DCTE and
11 my office works very closely to identify pathways.
12 In fact, about a year-and-a-half ago we went in and
13 really clarified for schools here is pathways of
14 courses that we had at that point. The plan -- and
15 Dr. Kremers has expressed that she will support this
16 plan -- is that each of these nine pathways with
17 three credits within them will become an approved
18 DCTE pathway for completers.

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: That helps a lot. Thank you.

20 MR. OWEN: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Mr. Lookadoo?

22 MR. LOOKADOO: Yes. So my question -- I don't
23 have any questions on the course or the standards,
24 but so with the drafted legislation for this to be,
25 you know, used as a requirement -- or a credit would

1 be required. Is that going to be in addition to the
2 number of credits that they're currently getting or
3 will the number of credits not change because they
4 could use the Computer Science as one of those flex
5 credits, so it wouldn't necessarily end up changing
6 the total?

7 MR. OWEN: So thank you for the question, and
8 this is actually a question that Dr. Pfeffer and I
9 were actually even discussing a little bit earlier.
10 It is completely our intention that the course would
11 not be in addition to the 22 and would not replace
12 necessarily one of the credits on the 22. It would
13 be like the digital act marker within Triand that
14 whenever the school has a student take one of these
15 courses that's 4-6-5 or 5-6-5 prefixed within the
16 course code system that would put a marker on that
17 student's record that says the student has met this
18 requirement. The course then could remain as a flex
19 credit as it has been since 2016. So it still allows
20 ultimate flexibility in the student saying, "I'm
21 going to use this for math, I'm going to use this for
22 science, I'm going to use this for career focus."

23 Dr. Pfeffer, do you have any clarification that
24 you want to provide on that?

25 DR. PFEFFER: It's still 22 units of credit.

1 MR. LOOKADOO: Yeah. Okay. So with that, you
2 know, I would assume we're going to see a large
3 increase, if that passes, in the number of flex
4 credits being used just because, again, we're
5 probably not going to increase the number of -- total
6 number of credits. So with that, do you -- is there
7 any concern about, you know, so many students not
8 taking that fourth math or not taking that third
9 science? Do we feel comfortable enough saying, you
10 know, this does still provide that rigor in those
11 content areas for students who are going to go on and
12 say like "I want to be -- I'm going to college, I
13 still want this?" Is that going to set them back if
14 they don't have some of those upper-level math -- or
15 is there any concern on that?

16 MR. OWEN: So I will first answer that by giving
17 a little bit of my background, if you're not aware.
18 I was a math teacher; my undergraduate was in math
19 work. I obviously value the importance of
20 mathematics and especially upper-level mathematics
21 for individuals that go into fields that need that.

22 The flex credit -- the beauty of the flex credit
23 is that it doesn't have to replace that fourth year
24 math or that third year science. It can replace one
25 of the six required career focus also, and it

1 automatically does that.

2 So just like we've done since 2016, when we're
3 talking to counselors or parents even or students
4 about this -- about the flex credit, they need to
5 evaluate what that student's plans are post-high
6 school and then make a determination of whether that
7 student needs to use this. I think the courses --
8 we've designed the courses -- let me say it that way:
9 it's less about what I think, and what the State has
10 done. We have designed the courses in a manner that
11 the analytical thinking behind them, the
12 computational thinking, those different concepts
13 build the student's knowledge within those areas,
14 those other areas and their ability to express their
15 knowledge in those areas. Will it be the same as a
16 calc level -- a calculus level course or statistics
17 level course in the hard mathematics that they get?
18 No, but it will be a different level of mathematics;
19 it will be a different thought process; it will be a
20 different approach to that. I'm confident that the
21 abilities of our students will be grown through these
22 courses, whether they replace that fourth year math
23 or third year science. But like I tell counselors
24 and students all the time, if you're planning on
25 going to MIT to be an engineering major you need to

1 take that fourth year math; go ahead and take the
2 Computer Science, but let it be one of your career
3 focus.

4 MR. LOOKADOO: Yeah, thank you. That makes
5 sense. I guess it's just that communication piece
6 with counselors and teachers; like we've got to know
7 our students, know their plans so they can get that.
8 So, thank you.

9 SECRETARY KEY: Anthony, you nailed it.

10 I was -- I just wanted to remind everyone this
11 is the reason we passed in AESAA the student success
12 planning process, because students shouldn't have to
13 make these decisions on their own. It should be part
14 of when they hit 8th grade, you know, they -- they're
15 not -- we're not saying they have to follow a certain
16 track, but they have to be thinking in terms of what
17 do I need to be successful in a wide range of areas,
18 and this is one of those.

19 So I think including this in the discussion of
20 the student success planning process, they will be
21 able to have that determination and it won't be just
22 a random "well, I don't want to take science or I
23 don't want to take math; so I want to take Computer
24 Science instead." So I think it's a part of the
25 overall strategy that we're trying to help throughout

1 -- create throughout the state of making sure that
2 our students have -- they're not just aimlessly
3 headed towards graduation; they're headed towards
4 graduation with a purpose.

5 MR. OWEN: Thank you, Secretary Key.

6 And Dr. Pfeffer asked me to provide a little
7 information that we also pulled as part of the
8 question that Mr. Lookadoo asked. We did not include
9 it with this report; it may be coming in a different
10 report from either Stacy or Ivy at a later date. But
11 we looked at how many students were graduating with
12 the bare minimum of 22 graduation credits or beyond
13 that. And I can say the vast -- I won't say the vast
14 -- the majority of our students are graduating with
15 in excess of 25 state recognized credits when they
16 leave high school, so students are already taking a
17 lot of courses. They have the flexibility within
18 their schedules to -- especially with what the flex
19 credit allows -- to allow for this credit to meet
20 them where they are. And these skills are so
21 critical, as I mentioned last time, you know, the
22 fact that we built in cyber security, the
23 storytelling with data piece. Regardless if that
24 student enters in a Computer Science field, those are
25 skills that everyone needs if they're ever going to

1 touch a computer. You need to know not to click that
2 link on the fishing email, like I got two of through
3 my AB email address yesterday. You need to know not
4 to pick up a data key off the side of the street and
5 plug it into your computer. You need to know how to
6 understand graphs as people present information to
7 you -- and while they may not understand the
8 terminology, but what happens when you truncate the Y
9 axis. You know, you -- data can be presented in a
10 multitude of different ways that doesn't tell the
11 accurate story.

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right. Thank you.

13 Ms. Newton?

14 MS. NEWTON: Thank you. Thank you for all your
15 hard work on all these pathways and courses. I know
16 that a tremendous amount of time and thought and
17 effort has gone into that. And through Dr. Moore's
18 questions I realize that you were thinking about
19 professional development for teachers and how
20 important that is to be able to get these off the
21 ground. But I think something else that -- and Mr.
22 Lookadoo touched on this a little bit -- is that
23 we're going to have to think about counselors,
24 administrators and different ones that are looking at
25 these pathways. And, you know, if they don't have

1 any kind of background, which most of them are not,
2 they're going to look at this and say, "Well, I don't
3 know. I'll pick this one," and it may or may not fit
4 their student. And so I think that, you know, the
5 communication as these courses are rolled out, you
6 know, not just do you have the teacher that can teach
7 this, but does it fit the needs of our students and
8 is this what's going to be best for our community.
9 And so I think there's a big -- I don't know if you
10 would call it professional development or
11 communication, but there's -- you know, I think the
12 work that's been done was tremendous, but I really
13 think there's a tremendous amount of work ahead of
14 you also in that area of getting not only teachers
15 qualified, but administrators and counselors ready to
16 make these big decisions for students. Because, you
17 know, you talked about student success plans; well,
18 if the counselor and the administrator that are
19 working with the students don't know enough about it
20 how are they going to guide them into what they need.
21 And so there has to be communication and development
22 there also, I think.

23 MR. OWEN: Thank you, Ms. Newton. And we
24 completely agree. Mr. Gossage, who was the champion
25 of the 2015 legislation that put all this in motion,

1 he has -- I've sat in his office numerous times and
2 every time -- almost every time he has said,
3 "Anthony, counselors are the gatekeepers --

4 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

5 MR. OWEN: " -- to the success here."

6 MS. NEWTON: Right.

7 MR. OWEN: And so we do try to focus on them.
8 Sometimes we wish our messaging could be -- we wish
9 we could amplify that message in a more impactful
10 manner. I will say that we have started working more
11 -- we've given updates to AEA throughout the years,
12 but Dr. Hernandez has really started amplifying our
13 work with him, especially in light of this
14 legislation, meeting with educational leaders around
15 the state via Zoom and getting feedback, thoughts,
16 and just communicating what the truth is, because
17 there's so misunderstanding [sic] about what Computer
18 Science was -- Science is. I received a letter from
19 a teacher today, that I was reading this morning,
20 that the teacher referred to Computer Science as
21 coding zeroes and ones. Well, I mean if you look at
22 just one particular area of it and you looked at 30
23 years ago, yes, that's accurate. But Computer
24 Science and computing is so much broader than just
25 coding, and that's the messaging that my office has

1 to do a better job of getting out to counselors,
2 educational leaders, and the public.

3 MS. NEWTON: Yes. Thank you.

4 MR. OWEN: And by the way, thank you; love the
5 mask.

6 MS. NEWTON: All right.

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

8 Dr. Hill?

9 DR. HILL: No. Good job.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Well --

11 MR. OWEN: Thank you, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right. If there's --
13 All right, Ms. Chambers.

14 MS. CHAMBERS: Sorry, just one more question.
15 This is, Anthony, more a test of my -- again, my
16 lexicon.

17 So a few months ago we -- I think we talked
18 about in Kansas City, it's specifically business and
19 it's public, private, and it's education and business
20 coming together to try to establish standards around
21 what they're calling market-value assets. And so as
22 students graduate they'll have -- they may have AP
23 course credits, they will have -- they hopefully will
24 have these market-value asset credentials or
25 certifications. And so is that what -- when we talk

1 about these pathways and what students will come out
2 or graduate with, is there something similar that
3 means something to them that translates directly to
4 job opportunities in business?

5 MR. OWEN: So, Ms. Chambers, one, I'm going to
6 have to confess my ignorance; I'm not familiar with
7 the exact process that you're speaking to. I
8 understand the concept behind it of -- that are there
9 industries out there that recognize if a student
10 completes this pathway, that they are then deemed
11 ready to enter a particular job within our industry
12 is what I'm kind of inferring from what you're
13 talking about. We do not have any agreements that
14 I'm aware of in the CS office from all pathways that
15 directly lead to that. Probably the closest thing
16 that we've done out of our office in that sense is
17 when we worked with the Arkansas Coding Academy out
18 of UCA and put -- we allowed for some sponsorships
19 for individuals to go through that program, and that
20 program had a 95% placement rate with industries that
21 had already communicated with them what their needs
22 were.

23 That's something I'm happy to explore. I think
24 that's something that probably Division of --
25 something that I would need to work with Division of

1 Career and Technical Education to look into or even
2 the new group that Cody Wades is heading up. I don't
3 know.

4 Secretary Key or Dr. Pfeffer, do y'all have any
5 additional feedback that I'm aware of on that from a
6 larger agency perspective?

7 SECRETARY KEY: We'll look at it. I don't right
8 at the moment.

9 MR. OWEN: Okay.

10 So please forgive my ignorance on that. I will
11 look into that as an option and see if that's
12 something that we as a state could potentially grow.
13 And you said that was Kansas?

14 MS. CHAMBERS: It's Kansas City. Some
15 foundations are working on it with business. And,
16 you know, the reason I bring it up is because this is
17 I think a wonderful program to deliver graduates into
18 jobs -- and it's not just in technology; they're
19 looking at different functional areas. It just looks
20 like this would be a big advantage for Arkansas.

21 MR. OWEN: It sounds like it.

22 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right. Any more
23 questions or discussion?

24 Okay. Well, with that, I'm ready for a motion
25 to approve or not approve the standards and courses.

1 MS. NEWTON: I move to approve.

2 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. We have a motion by
3 Ms. Newton to approve.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Seconded by Ms. Chambers.

6 All in favor say "aye."

7 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

8 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

9 Seeing none, motion passes for the standards and
10 courses.

11 MR. OWEN: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

13 MR. OWEN: The second motion for you is a clean-
14 up motion. After the December meeting we had some
15 communications that there was some concerns about how
16 -- the motion I put before y'all about allowing for
17 changes within -- technical changes within the
18 standards might lead to frustration amongst the
19 schools or just unknowing of the schools of what set
20 of standards they should be teaching. So I'm
21 actually coming to y'all today to ask y'all to
22 rescind that portion of that motion; that way, we can
23 restore the confidence to the schools in those
24 standards. They are on a two-year revision cycle.
25 Upon reflection, we think that that's more than

1 ample. But if there were any issues we need to --
2 micro-revision cycle -- that if there were any issues
3 that we need to address we could do it within the two
4 years.

5 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay.

6 Do you have a question?

7 Okay. Any questions? Let's start with Mr.
8 Sutton. Dr. Moore. Okay. Ms. Chambers. Ms. Woods.
9 Ms. McFetridge. Mr. Lookadoo. Ms. -- Dr. Hill.

10 Okay. No.

11 All right. So then we're looking for a motion
12 to rescind the portion --

13 MR. OWEN: The allowance for our office to make
14 technical changes to the standards and courses.

15 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Allowance for their
16 office to make technical changes to the standards and
17 courses; so just looking for a motion to rescind that
18 portion.

19 MS. CHAMBERS: Move to approve the request to
20 rescind.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. We have a --

22 MR. SUTTON: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: We have a motion by Ms.
24 Chambers, seconded by Mr. Sutton.

25 All in favor say "aye."

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(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

Seeing none, motion passes.

MR. OWEN: Thank y'all so much for your time --

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you, Mr. Owen.

MR. OWEN: -- and you guys' work.

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you for the work that
you've been doing.

MR. OWEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. All right. And with
that, we are down to new business.

MS. NEWTON: No, we've got the --

SECRETARY KEY: No.

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Oh, wait --

SECRETARY KEY: We have one more.

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Oh, I'm sorry.

SECRETARY KEY: Rather big one.

VI.2: CONSIDERATION OF STREAMLINED APPLICATION PROCESS FOR
DIGITAL LEARNING WAIVERS FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Consideration of Streamlined
Application Process. Okay. Sorry, Dr. Pfeffer.

SECRETARY KEY: While she's coming, I will --
let me intro this and just again brag on the team and
the hard work that they have done on this. You know,
it's amazing how far we've come in such a short

1 period of time, less than a year ago when the
2 decision was made to shut down onsite instruction
3 throughout Arkansas and shift to virtual or AMI and
4 the partnership with Arkansas PBS, all the things
5 that took place to make sure learning could continue
6 was really amazing work. And then we shifted -- even
7 before that was over we shifted to the process of,
8 okay, how do we make sure we're planning and helping
9 districts plan for the next school year in case they
10 have to shift again so that there is a better and a
11 more seamless and a stronger system for virtual,
12 blended, you know, whatever we needed to do to make
13 sure that we could safely educate kids with the
14 primary focus being, as much as we could, to have
15 onsite instruction. And again, while we're still
16 doing that we're in the process of planning for what
17 the next phase needs to look like and that's what
18 we're asking you to look like -- or to look at here.
19 We asked you to look at waivers, a certain set of
20 waivers for schools to have going into this school
21 year to facilitate the delivery, and we're asking you
22 here to consider this process again for streamlining
23 an application process for waivers so that schools
24 can have this option available -- and it is an option
25 Dr. Pfeffer will go much more into depth on this.

1 But again Dr. Pfeffer, everyone -- I mean
2 there's not anyone in the Agency, not any division
3 that hasn't had some type of input in this process.
4 So I appreciate Dr. Pfeffer's leadership on it and
5 we'll just let her take it from there.

6 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. All right. Thank you,
7 Secretary Key. And I think what I'll do is just walk
8 through the presentation. So if Dan will pull that
9 up -- yes. And --

10 MR. DAN DAVIS: Give me one second. I've got to
11 do a screen-share so everyone on Zoom can see it.

12 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

13 And we will -- after today, we have a web page
14 that we've set up that will have -- I think it'll
15 have everything that anybody would need to go to look
16 at this; so it'll have all the resources, it'll have
17 a link to an online application, and it'll have the
18 guidebook that we'll talk about. So, all of this
19 will be very easy for everyone to access. So --

20 MR. DAN DAVIS: (inaudible)

21 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. Thank you. All right.

22 So as Secretary Key said, you know, throughout
23 the last year we've all had a lot of uncertainties,
24 and, you know, whenever we can help to provide
25 certainty to school districts we definitely want to

1 do that. And this is the time of year, you know,
2 districts are planning for the next year; you know,
3 we don't wait until May when school is getting out to
4 then start thinking about the following school year.
5 So much of that work is done well in advance. And so
6 we visited yesterday with superintendents at the
7 Superintendents Symposium. We've been communicating
8 -- we probably started this work back in October
9 actually, having small focus groups, bringing in
10 different partners to really help shape what this
11 would look like, but -- so we're going to kind of go
12 back though and really start at the beginning and
13 really start at the foundation. Because one thing
14 that Arkansas has done different from most states
15 during the entire pandemic is that we have provided
16 the assurance to parents, to students, to communities
17 that school would be open and that students could
18 have access to onsite instruction. So we want to
19 make sure that going forward that from the very
20 beginning -- although there have been a lot of
21 flexibilities this year and there have been a lot of
22 interruptions, we still want to make sure that it's
23 very clear that that foundational piece will stay in
24 place.

25 And so, in Arkansas, we have 178 days; a school

1 day is a six-hour instructional day. There are some
2 allowances in law for, you know, a variation of a
3 school week. There could be legislative changes that
4 further modify some things. But we expect going into
5 the next school year that we'll have 178 days of
6 teacher/student interaction and all schools will have
7 onsite instruction. Also just to note the school
8 start-date, I think it is -- August 16th will be the
9 start of school, and that's also outlined in statute.

10 So thinking about the days when we can't be in
11 school -- okay, yesterday -- it's something I've
12 thought a lot about; you know, when I was a principal
13 in a school district snow days and cell phones were
14 our biggest distraction to onsite learning, and, you
15 know, if we could only go back to that, you know, how
16 much would we not complain about things that used to
17 seem like such a big deal. But, you know, what I've
18 learned is that I've had to really change my mind on
19 a few things. Probably a year ago I would've, you
20 know, looked for ways to get rid of AMI days. I've
21 changed my mind though because now I look at AMI and
22 I realize that, you know, what school districts have
23 been able to do is they've been able to design what
24 AMI really was all about from the beginning. And AMI
25 was always about an alternative method of instruction

1 on days when you couldn't be at school because of
2 weather, because of utility outages or some other
3 type of event that prevented you from being there --
4 infectious disease. So we want districts to still
5 continue to have AMI options in addition to onsite
6 instruction, because there are days when they're not
7 going to be able to be there and they can keep
8 learning going; so they will continue to be able to
9 do that. We would expect that a lot of the things
10 that districts are doing when they have to pivot to
11 virtual learning right now because of quarantines or
12 numbers of people out, we would expect AMI days to
13 look a lot like that next year.

14 In statute, there's still the consideration
15 though for just some plain ol' makeup days and those
16 makeup days should still be included in the school's
17 calendar. And I talked to them yesterday, and said,
18 "You know, it's really okay every once in awhile just
19 to have a snow day and say we're going to come back
20 and make this one up." And so while we know
21 districts are going to make different decisions, we
22 know that depending on the time of year or the number
23 of days that have already been disrupted that snow
24 days may be a consideration that they want to have.
25 So we feel like this kind of information is what

1 school districts need to hear right now so they can
2 start planning, start talking to their staff, start
3 talking to their communities, and really be thinking
4 about what is next year going to look like. However,
5 because of the experiences that we've had this year
6 with virtual learning, with hybrid types of
7 situations, just with the expansion -- you know, I'm
8 thinking back to that teacher survey that we did and
9 shared with you all when we asked the question about
10 what are some of the things that they -- was it that
11 they've learned, Joel. You know, they've really
12 learned a lot about the opportunities for
13 collaboration with virtual learning; they've learned
14 a lot about being able to, you know, personalize
15 things with students and to communicate differently.
16 So we have had a lot of districts asking whether or
17 not they're going to be able to continue some type of
18 virtual options. What we want though is that -- if
19 districts are going to provide a virtual option or
20 some kind of digital programming option, we want to
21 make sure that they really understand and are very
22 intentional about what they're doing. Having a
23 virtual day here and there just to not have kids on
24 campus, that's not the kind of quality virtual option
25 that kids need to have. Now that might fit within

1 the AMI; you may need to have a virtual day because
2 of a flu outbreak in a school or you may have to have
3 it because -- I saw while ago there was a gas leak in
4 a school and it's taking longer to fix it than they
5 thought, so they couldn't be on campus today. But
6 that's where AMI comes in and you want to have an AMI
7 day that still affords learning opportunities,
8 teaching and learning connections. But as far as
9 what digital learning or digital programming really
10 should be, it should be very intentional, it should
11 be very well thought-out, and to do that we realized
12 that we had to get everybody on the same page. When
13 we're talking about digital learning, digital
14 options, we have to really be able to make sure we're
15 all on -- we're all talking the same language and
16 thinking about things the way we should. So what we
17 want to do is allow districts to have an option to
18 have some type of digital programming as part of
19 their LEA. Up until now, districts that are doing
20 this have done it as a district conversion charter or
21 created an open-enrollment charter, primarily because
22 that was a new design and they needed waivers. We've
23 learned a lot though since virtual charters started
24 and we've learned a lot about what does the
25 interaction look like between teachers and students,

1 what is the delivery method, what does that
2 programming look like. And so we would like to have
3 an opportunity for districts to want to do something
4 like this, but we also don't want to have 234
5 districts coming in with 234 different plans to, you
6 know, walk through.

7 So we feel like if we can create a streamlined
8 process -- and the streamlined process is everything
9 through the support that we're giving all the way
10 through the approval of their application, and then
11 also making sure that we're monitoring and supporting
12 after the fact -- we want to be able to do that.

13 So when we look at what we're talking about,
14 when we're saying digital programming, we're talking
15 about virtual, which virtual and online are terms
16 that are used interchangeably; or virtual remote,
17 which means, you know, at distance; so this is where
18 teachers and students are not at the same place. And
19 if you're talking about virtual or remote options,
20 the instruction can occur either synchronously, so
21 where instruction is going on at the time that
22 students are interacting with the teachers, or
23 asynchronously, where the content is available but
24 the student chooses when and how to complete the work
25 and the interaction may just be done at specified

1 times. Or if -- the other option we really want
2 districts to look at is that blended or that hybrid
3 option where at least part of the time the student
4 learns virtually. But there are also times when that
5 student is in the classroom, in a supervised
6 environment, and, you know, that could be a school or
7 that could be a learning center.

8 So did you all get a chance to look at these
9 videos that were sent to you at all?

10 Dan, could we play that? Will that play if you
11 click on that?

12 MR. DAN DAVIS: Yes.

13 DR. PFEFFER: If we could get -- I want to just
14 show you --

15 MR. DAN DAVIS: One second. I've got to make a
16 switch over to a different share here.

17 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. And I won't play all the
18 videos that are part of this presentation, and you'll
19 be able to look at those. But I wanted you to kind
20 of see this introductory video and it's an example of
21 what districts will have access to.

22 VIDEO TRANSCRIPT, AS FOLLOWS:

23 With digital learning it is important to know
24 your intent; do you want to provide blended learning?
25 Are you looking to start a virtual school? Are you

1 accommodating your remote students? This video will
2 help you explore your options so you can select the
3 path that best serves your school and your students.

4 We wish to create a common language about what
5 digital learning really means and how it is
6 delivered. To put it simply, it is teaching and
7 learning that relies on digital methods and digital
8 tools to provide the students some element of control
9 over time, place, path, and/or pace.

10 There are three guiding questions to ask
11 yourself:

12 Question Number 1, How will teachers and
13 students interact with the content and each other?
14 There are two ways teachers and students can
15 interact. Those are known as asynchronous and
16 synchronous. Asynchronous is when teachers and
17 students are engaged in teaching and learning at
18 different times and different locations (any time,
19 anywhere). Synchronous is when teachers and students
20 are engaged in teaching and learning at the same
21 time.

22 Question Number 2, What type of digital approach
23 is being used to engage teachers and students with
24 the content and each other? There are many different
25 terms floating around to describe digital learning.

1 When looking closely at these terms -- remote
2 learning, virtual learning, distance learning, online
3 learning -- each mean essentially the same thing and
4 they are then used interchangeably. In these
5 educational environments teachers and students are
6 not in the same place; however, the instruction and
7 learning may take place asynchronously,
8 synchronously, or a combination of both. Blended
9 learning is often used interchangeably with the other
10 terms, but it has a distinctly different meaning.
11 Blended learning is when students learn at least in
12 part for virtual (online) learning with some element
13 of control over time, place, path, and pace; and at
14 least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar
15 location away from home, such as a school or learning
16 center. It provides a combination of both
17 traditional and online learning.

18 Question Number 3, What platforms will be used
19 to communicate and deliver content and instruction?
20 The platforms are basically the software teachers are
21 using to communicate and deliver content and
22 instruction. There are two main platforms to deliver
23 content and provide communication. These are known
24 as a Learning Management System and a Content
25 Management System. A Learning Management System is a

1 software application that helps the online teacher
2 deliver content to students, administer and analyze
3 assessments, track student progress, and manage
4 records. There are many LMS options available, some
5 free and some for purchase. Research the
6 functionality to find the system that best serves
7 your needs. It's important to know that your content
8 provider is not the same as your Learning Management
9 System. Content providers provide the curriculum
10 content to be used inside the Learning Management
11 System. For example, ABC virtual curriculum could be
12 the content provider using XYZ as the Learning
13 Management System to deliver the content. A Content
14 Management System, on the other hand, is a simple
15 computer framework application that allows methods
16 for managing content from a central location. Once
17 again, be sure to research what Learning Management
18 System or Content Management System will best meet
19 your needs. The last platform principle is video
20 communication software. This is online software to
21 facilitate live conferences between two or more
22 participants at different sites to transmit audio,
23 video, and text data. Sometimes these tools are
24 available within the LMS or CMS, and some are used
25 outside the system for communication and

1 collaboration.

2 Now that you know more about digital learning,
3 hopefully you will be able to better understand the
4 ways in which it impacts students' voice and choice
5 by providing them some control over time, place,
6 path, and the pace of their learning.

7 [END OF VIDEO TRANSCRIPT]

8 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. And so you can see just
9 from looking at that that -- the three questions.
10 Right? But how much a district is going to really
11 need to unpack and really think through as they're
12 getting ready to say, you know, this is the type of
13 learning experience that we would like to provide for
14 students. Also, as you, you know, really stop and
15 you think through that, some districts may find it
16 difficult in order to offer a digital option for
17 their entire district, because what might work really
18 well with secondary students may not be what is going
19 to be best for elementary students. And so those are
20 the kinds of things we want to really support
21 districts in looking at as they're making decisions.

22 And I'm having trouble advancing the slide.

23 MR. DAN DAVIS: All right. Now.

24 DR. PFEFFER: Okay, very good.

25 Okay. So we're -- we want to help districts

1 focus on, first of all, how will our teachers and
2 students interact. And I believe that districts
3 really have learned from the experience that they've
4 had so far; some have been very successful, some have
5 experienced difficulties. And so we think even
6 through this next semester a district going through
7 this process is even going to be able to improve on
8 what they're doing right now. But we'll walk
9 districts through these questions in just even -- you
10 know, that thought partner in trying to get at what
11 it is that they want to do, thinking about the type
12 of instructional delivery that they want to have.
13 And is it that a blended learning environment is
14 going to be best where students are at least part of
15 the time engaged onsite and then have options to
16 learn at home? Or are they going to look at offering
17 a fully virtual remote option? What type of Learning
18 Management System and Content Management System are
19 they going to use or continue to use? I think there
20 were some districts that started out the year
21 thinking that they would be able to do one thing and
22 then they realized that maybe they weren't fully
23 prepared to deliver all of their own content just due
24 to different ways that that content -- or the time it
25 would take to get all that content uploaded; and

1 maybe once uploaded it didn't always translate well
2 to students, depending on the type of video or type
3 of software that students had to use as a learning
4 tool. So there will be a lot of things to think
5 through on that end.

6 Okay. So this just puts all of those different
7 things that they're going to have to think about, and
8 all of this is put together in a digital learning
9 guidebook. And this guidebook, when we launch the
10 webpage, will be developed -- it was be available
11 online. And the guidebook will actually get updated
12 periodically as districts that have very well-
13 established programs want to share resources or want
14 to share examples so that District A can learn from
15 District B. So we would really encourage that.

16 One benefit that we have now that we didn't have
17 back in the summer -- you know, some people have
18 said, you know, "Well, if we had only known in June
19 or July we probably would have structured things
20 differently." And so we've had time now and we're
21 able to put non-negotiables out there so as districts
22 are deciding how they're going to approach this, if
23 they're going to submit an application to do this,
24 they know upfront that these are things that their
25 digital -- that the digital programs must do and

1 these will be the things that we will monitor during
2 this school year, next year, to insure that every
3 option that's available is of high-quality, that it's
4 been well communicated, that there are clear goals
5 and expectations, and that there are policies there
6 for when decisions have to be made. I think one of
7 the things that probably was the most surprising were
8 some of the discipline things that occurred when
9 students were learning remotely and districts weren't
10 always equipped to deal with. And so they had to go
11 back and search to determine whether their discipline
12 policies for onsite students really were the right
13 discipline policies for how to respond when things
14 happened if a student was at home.

15 So on the website they'll -- and in the
16 guidebook we have created some examples of what it
17 might look like if a district decided they wanted to
18 have a virtual option that was done synchronously.
19 Because the way they assign teachers to that type of
20 a model is going to look very different than if you
21 have a virtual option where the instruction is done
22 asynchronously. One, you're going to have a whole
23 lot more interaction on a more regular basis; you're
24 going to have a different expectation for students
25 because, if it's done synchronously, you're going to

1 have to be there at a certain time, you're going to
2 have to stay engaged. So, you know, like right now
3 if during our board meeting Ms. McFetridge had to be
4 there at a certain time and if she leaves and doesn't
5 log back on after lunch, we'll know. If this meeting
6 was just being recorded and she was just going to
7 watch later on, then there would be a whole different
8 level of responsibility for Ms. McFetridge as the
9 board member or for any of you who were here
10 interacting. So just thinking through those really
11 does make a difference in how are you planning for
12 next year with staffing; how are you planning next
13 year in terms of scheduling students. So, all of
14 those are going to be very important.

15 Obviously, in a blended situation if you have
16 dedicated class periods where students are learning
17 remotely and some are onsite, what that interaction
18 is going to look like, it's going to look very
19 different. And in terms of what is the teaching
20 load, overall teaching load going to look like for a
21 teacher who may actually be teaching both online
22 students and students in a classroom, to me that's
23 going to be very different whether it's happening at
24 the same time, whether it's happening at separate
25 times, or whether I'm dedicating a teacher fulltime

1 to virtual instruction.

2 So those are all things that districts have time
3 to think out, they're going to have time to talk
4 about while they are -- while they're preparing their
5 applications. Because we're going to --

6 Let me go to this slide first. I should put
7 this first.

8 So for support our team and Team Digital, which
9 has been a longstanding partner with us, focusing on
10 all aspects of digital learning, we're going to
11 partner together with co-ops to have sessions for
12 districts to help develop the application. So we're
13 very hopeful -- and those sessions may be done
14 remotely; you know, we don't expect to have, you
15 know, crowds of people crowd in. But there will be
16 an opportunity for districts to talk to each other.
17 There may be instances where a small district or two
18 small districts may say, you know, "we really don't
19 have staff to dedicate to virtual teachers, but I
20 could use one teacher, if you could use one teacher,
21 and both of those teachers teach kids from both of
22 our schools; we keep our students for -- you know,
23 for our schools." But, you know, they partner
24 together to provide staffing for a virtual option,
25 that could happen. I don't know exactly what all

1 those applications would look like. You may have a
2 large district and a smaller district that decide to
3 partner together, and maybe it's for a certain type
4 of course; maybe it's for a certain grade level. But
5 there really are options that could be explored.
6 Because I think all of us would have concerns about
7 every single district trying to do both, you know,
8 this virtual or this digital option and still do
9 onsite learning and trying to do everything really
10 well if they're stretching their resources. So we
11 really want them to think about their resources and
12 that capacity.

13 You know, I remember last summer when we were
14 asking you all to approve waivers for this year and
15 approve, you know, kind of a blanket approach to
16 approving a lot of waivers, and you all had some
17 hesitation to that. And we appreciate the fact that
18 you trusted that we would continue to work with
19 schools, continue to try to make sure students were
20 getting a quality education.

21 So we're coming to you to ask for a streamlined
22 approval process, but this is going to be different
23 because every district that's going to have an option
24 will do an application. So there will be more
25 information; there will be more oversight as far as

1 the quality experience that students are going to
2 get. And so the flexibility and types of waivers are
3 going to be based on what they put in their
4 application, and those will be reviewed. We are
5 optimistic that the support and the peer review of
6 co-ops is going to be so thorough that when they get
7 to us it's going to be really easy for us to review.
8 Hopefully, we'll be able then to bring you several at
9 a time to say, you know, "we feel really good about
10 these;" you'll have an opportunity to go in and look
11 at those online applications to kind of get a sense
12 of what different districts are doing. But if we get
13 applications that we have concerns about or questions
14 about, or if there are things that you ask us to
15 really mark and highlight, then we would go back and
16 just say, "We can't approve it yet; we need you to do
17 some additional work on this." And so that's the
18 approach that we really want to take. And we may
19 find that LEAs implement more than one type of
20 digital program based on students, based on different
21 age levels. And so we would expect some of that to
22 look different.

23 So once we finish today, if you approve this
24 process we will begin technical assistance visits by
25 the beginning of February. Our team is already

1 working on what the training and the assistance would
2 look like. Hopefully, applications could start
3 coming in in March and then we would be bringing them
4 to you all. We want to -- our goal would be to have
5 these all to you by May 1st, and part of the reason
6 why with the May 1st is that coincides with the date
7 that school level plans are due in districts. And
8 then the district takes those school level plans, and
9 the district support plans then are based on those
10 school level plans. So we see this as a plan-do-
11 check process as much as anything else. If something
12 needs to be adjusted, of course, we'll all work
13 together on that, but that would be our goal that we
14 could get this streamlined process done by May 1st;
15 then maybe those that didn't get approved by then
16 would have to be approved month-by-month. But also,
17 if we don't have things pretty much locked in place
18 by May 1 as a school district we're going to struggle
19 getting it all ready by the time school starts.

20 And that's the end of the presentation. I did
21 have another one I can pull up really quickly to kind
22 of give you a sense of what the online application
23 would look like. On your agenda you have the actual
24 application with all the questions. So if you have
25 any -- if you want to see the online one, we can put

1 it up there or a mock-up of it. Otherwise, if you
2 have questions about specific elements or the
3 application itself then we'll go through that -- and
4 I may need some help on getting some answers.

5 DR. MOORE: I have a lot. And I talked to you
6 some before and I appreciate the work that you've
7 done and the whole agency this year in preparing
8 ahead of time for next year as we look forward.

9 I guess -- and I won't ask all mine now; I'll
10 let other people ask and come back. But I guess my
11 first primary question is are we going to be able to
12 gauge a need for this? Are districts going to have
13 to show a demonstrated need, whether by, you know,
14 school board vote or any sort of approval? Because I
15 do think that, you know, when things -- probably not
16 next year but in the future -- return to some sense
17 of normalcy some districts might have a virtual
18 option that not many students use; therefore --

19 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah. So a couple of things --
20 and I may need to come back and really understand
21 better what you're asking by a sense of need. But,
22 yes, the school board will have to approve this.

23 DR. MOORE: Okay.

24 DR. PFEFFER: These are going through the Act
25 1240 waiver process, so they do have to get board

1 approval.

2 DR. MOORE: Okay.

3 DR. PFEFFER: And I believe -- and I need to
4 look back at the application.

5 Ms. Coffman, isn't it also other input from the
6 school's Ready for Learning team?

7 MS. COFFMAN: That's correct. They must provide
8 a URL to evidence that the local school board
9 approved the waiver request; that must be uploaded.
10 It's a requirement in the guidance for Act 1240. And
11 they must provide evidence of stakeholder feedback
12 regarding the waiver request and the district's
13 communication plan regarding digital learning
14 programs.

15 DR. PFEFFER: And as far as numbers, so we have
16 created a new instructional option as part of the
17 eSchool input on student demographics, so -- and that
18 is updated with each cycle. So we will be able to
19 look at district data from this year and know how
20 many virtual learners they had, how many blended
21 learners they have; we'll be able to look at that
22 next year as well, because part of the process will
23 be that students who are participating in virtual
24 options would be identified versus an onsite student.
25 And that's really important too just for long-term

1 data analysis, and I think districts would be very
2 interested also in monitoring overall success of
3 students who choose a virtual option over ones who
4 choose a hybrid or a traditional onsite.

5 DR. MOORE: Yeah. And I think that gets to the
6 concern that we don't want to have 300 virtual
7 schools in this state; that is a duplication of
8 resources and time by districts. And so, but how are
9 we having districts say, "Look, we have this number
10 of students we know will continue virtual no matter
11 what," in a fulltime virtual model? My hope is that
12 we see more innovation out of this than just a
13 duplication of virtual classes.

14 My -- I think -- and I talked earlier this week,
15 but my primary concern is the asynchronous learning
16 model, particularly in grades K-8. There are
17 students going every day that have no interaction
18 with teachers, no face-to-face live interaction. And
19 when we talked earlier about relationships, that's so
20 important. That being said, I know, particularly at
21 the high school level, some students might thrive in
22 a more asynchronous environment where they are
23 working on their own. But I have a lot of
24 hesitations about continuing that at the elementary
25 level, if we don't have to. And so I love the

1 application and how you split it up by building, by
2 grade band, but I do think that if a lot of districts
3 are applying to do asynchronous, particularly at
4 elementary and middle school, that is a flag for
5 concern.

6 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah. And in the review process
7 and in the approval process -- and this is where you
8 all in talking through and approving this today -- if
9 we need to pull aside applications that have a
10 certain type of model to give it a second look or to
11 pull out and notify you as board members so that you
12 could go in and look at some of those to make sure
13 you feel like if that is a model that's being
14 implemented at an elementary level that there are
15 enough additional supports in there. Because it
16 could be a model that would have the greatest risks
17 for lack of engagement.

18 DR. MOORE: Yes. And there are perhaps some
19 families at the elementary level that would prefer
20 that. But perhaps we already have that in charter
21 models or in other models, and so a district doesn't
22 need to replicate that. I think a district should to
23 the extent possible, especially in those early
24 levels, focus on that live instruction or live face-
25 to-face as much as possible.

1 And then I guess one more before I'll pass it
2 around would be just the grave concern this year of
3 teachers having dual roles, again particularly at the
4 early levels. And I don't want that moving forward.
5 You know -- you know, there are maybe some places
6 where it is going really well in the K-6, K-8 models,
7 but by and large I think teachers should be focused
8 on in-person or virtual. And so, how do we --

9 DR. PFEFFER: So I think when you go through and
10 look at the different examples that are outlined
11 there, depending on the type of interaction and the
12 delivery, that's part of what this application will
13 flesh out. And so, I mean it -- and this is where it
14 gets complicated because, you know, I may be in a
15 school district where maybe I do teach both students
16 who are virtual students and teacher -- and teach
17 students who are onsite, but I might be doing it at
18 different times during the day, so I'm only doing one
19 thing at a time. Does that make sense?

20 DR. MOORE: Yes. And I think that's better.
21 But I think that we have placed such a burden on
22 teachers to do both at the same time we should figure
23 out creative ways for that not to happen in the
24 future, and maybe that meant a district group -- you
25 know, four districts group together to have a virtual

1 offering in the future so they can have one
2 designated virtual kindergarten teacher versus each
3 district --

4 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah.

5 DR. MOORE: -- doing it on their own.

6 DR. PFEFFER: But I think again that's the
7 purpose of the application process and the
8 description in there. So during the review those
9 would be the kinds of things that would be flagged
10 and really examined to watch for, especially
11 depending on the number of students that are going to
12 be assigned to teachers who do a dual role. Other
13 options that I would look for -- and I think that
14 we'll work with in districts in the planning sessions
15 -- if you have teachers that are going to be expected
16 to do more -- because I'm just thinking too, there
17 are some really innovative models, like the
18 Opportunity Culture model -- the first thing about
19 that is you extend the reach of your best teachers so
20 they are teaching more kids. And so that -- okay,
21 well, that's making them do more work. Well, you do
22 that, but you also pay them more; you also give them,
23 you know, lead roles and responsibilities, so maybe
24 this teacher is helping to do more planning. So I
25 could see a scenario where in a district where maybe

1 you have teachers doing dual roles, you may have
2 other teachers over here who are really taking the
3 heavy on the lesson planning and on some of the other
4 pieces that -- uploading videos, and then the
5 teachers are facilitating more. So I think we would
6 have to be careful not to just close off options and
7 say you can't do it, but I think what we have to be
8 very firm about is if you're doing it in a way that
9 you are drowning your teachers then that -- those are
10 not things that would be approved.

11 DR. MOORE: Yeah, because --

12 DR. PFEFFER: Does that make sense?

13 DR. MOORE: That's -- I am totally on the same
14 page. How do we -- do y'all have -- feel confident
15 you can weed through that? Because I totally agree
16 with the innovative approach. You know, one teacher
17 with a paraprofessional or paired with another
18 teacher to -- in that sense.

19 DR. PFEFFER: I think --

20 DR. MOORE: But how do we --

21 DR. PFEFFER: I think our review process, we're
22 going to be -- our goal is to be very strategic and
23 very -- that's what we want to work towards. So I
24 think in this technical assistance process, making
25 sure that our co-ops are on the same page, so that as

1 these things are being designed, if that's the route
2 a district goes, they're thinking about what are
3 those additional supports that I've put in there or
4 what are those things that I do to help my teachers.
5 And it may be that you have teachers who volunteer to
6 take on those more challenging assignments; maybe
7 this is labeled as a more challenging assignment that
8 you really do reserve for teachers who apply to do
9 it, but they apply to do something and, you know,
10 there's incentives to do so.

11 DR. MOORE: I think that's great. And I think,
12 hopefully, out of this will become more innovation --
13 innovation in a way that'll push us all forward.

14 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

15 DR. MOORE: Okay, I'll stop there. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Chambers?

17 MS. CHAMBERS: My question I think, Dr. Pfeffer,
18 builds on that, which is how much of this process is
19 intended to include guidance based on what we've
20 already learned, as opposed to take all the variables
21 by waiver request and kind of shape our approval to
22 that? Here's just an example: so if I remember
23 right, we were trying to -- I think we appropriately
24 allowed a lot of latitude or supported a lot of
25 latitude when folks were looking at the LMS and the

1 CMS. There were -- but there were things they could
2 choose from or they could craft their own. And I was
3 curious what we had learned about how that worked,
4 and does that inform how we go about what we're going
5 to approve this fall? That's just one example.

6 DR. PFEFFER: And I may see if Dr. Pride or
7 Stacy --

8 I don't know if you all have had many
9 conversations around that?

10 One example that I have: Google Classroom and
11 what -- what -- I know what some districts learned
12 from that experience is that if they didn't already
13 have a strong Google Classroom foundation in their
14 district where teachers were very comfortable doing
15 that those -- and I'm not saying just the Google
16 Classroom but that type of system -- because it does
17 require teachers to upload all their lessons and to
18 put everything in there -- those were the districts
19 that really struggled early on. Districts that
20 thrived were those that were -- well, our PLC
21 districts did very well early on because they already
22 had that collaboration on the front-end. And so you
23 would have maybe one or two teachers who were
24 uploading videos and who were helping to prepare
25 lessons, but you didn't have every individual teacher

1 every day trying to do his or her own thing. So I
2 think we did learn that where there was a lack of
3 experience with digital learning, that when you had
4 content that was readily available in an easy-to-use
5 Learning Management System that was beneficial. And
6 a lot of it too was did the students have the right
7 technology at home to be able to interact and
8 interface with the way the lessons were designed.
9 And that's one thing in education -- you know, when
10 you have different individuals, you know, with each
11 designing their own classroom a certain way that
12 presents challenges.

13 I think Stacy is coming up and she'll be able to
14 add more to this part, I think.

15 MS. SMITH: Stacy Smith.

16 So just real quick, so one thing, the learning
17 curve for how to teach digital instruction has been
18 steep this year. But not only did we have a steep
19 curve there, you also saw lots of curriculum products
20 that were never before available in a digital format.
21 Vendors started immediately pulling their content
22 over. And so a lot of the programs that we actually
23 reviewed for K-2 or 3-8 literacy that were not in a
24 digital format at the beginning of last year are now
25 a digital format, and so a lot of those Science of

1 Reading programs that were not available at the
2 beginning of this school year are now available. And
3 so when we start talking about teachers and
4 curriculum and what are they using and what are their
5 platforms, there has been a tremendous increase in
6 curriculum access. But, again, with that becomes
7 that whole learning curve piece and how does that fit
8 in. Yesterday, I had a superintendent talk to me
9 about "how do I take the concepts we've learned with
10 Professional Learning Communities and the literacy
11 curriculum and the virtual world and like how do I
12 pull all those together? I'm struggling with that
13 right now." So they're constantly thinking about
14 this. And this application part, we were very
15 intentional with different folks that we involved to
16 figure out what are the right questions to ask
17 because -- and I think you can probably -- some of
18 the questions you're asking today I'm hoping that
19 you're seeing that those are in the application, and
20 that will drive more conversation and more questions
21 for superintendents and schools as they're going
22 through this process. If you have a really well
23 thought-out digital curriculum for teachers, they may
24 be able to have more students. If you're relying on
25 that teacher to create more for digital content, then

1 she probably can. I mean those are the gives-and-
2 takes that you have to look at and those are the
3 questions we have to ask on the front-end is what's
4 your curriculum, what's your LMS, what's your
5 content, how are you doing that. So those are big
6 pieces.

7 DR. PFEFFER: And those were pieces that we're
8 missing this year, because we didn't have the level
9 of detail about different things schools were doing
10 at the very beginning.

11 MS. CHAMBERS: Yeah. And there's such a sweet
12 spot with innovation. Sometimes when you have
13 everything available to you you're almost paralyzed
14 -- and yet, the Department is working really hard not
15 to dictate but to help and assist. An old mentor
16 used to refer to guidance -- the difference between
17 guidance and direction, that the direction in his
18 regard was more about -- I think we referred to
19 something earlier as non-negotiables. But it was the
20 things that we've learned. This would so help you if
21 you start with this because it's proven and it works
22 and you don't have to worry about innovating on this
23 specific thing so that you can focus on these things
24 that are going to be more relevant to what you're
25 trying to do that's different, where you're going to

1 innovate. And so I was just interested in this first
2 semester, which isn't very long. Well, I guess we
3 could include last summer and some of that spring.
4 But what did we learn and how can the districts use
5 that and apply it and continue to innovate in a way
6 where they don't drown in all the options that are
7 out there?

8 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah. Well, and one of the things
9 that I think we learned very quickly were the
10 districts did not have things like policies,
11 procedures, even plans around what are we -- it goes
12 back to the fundamentals of the Professional Learning
13 Process; what are we going to do when students are
14 not successful, how are we going to respond. And so
15 we've seen districts respond in different ways.
16 We've seen Newport School District and Fort Smith, I
17 believe, you know, with virtual learners that if
18 they're not going to allow students that have failing
19 grades to continue just learning virtually at home,
20 you know, they're going to require those students to
21 come back. And so -- and I know there are a lot of
22 other examples of how districts are responding. We
23 had districts that were having teachers do both in-
24 person and virtual teaching at the same time that
25 decided at the end of the first nine weeks "we've got

1 to stop because our teachers can't keep doing this."
2 And so they did shift to an asynchronous online model
3 for their virtual learners, but what they found was
4 that a lot of their virtual learners came on back to
5 the classroom because they realized they weren't
6 going to get that same quality experience if they
7 were not at school. Overall, our numbers have
8 decreased as far as the percent of virtual learners.
9 Right now in our classrooms where we started the year
10 with about 25% of our students virtual, identified as
11 virtual learners, and now that's down to twenty -- a
12 little bit -- not quite -- well, 20.6%, I believe.
13 So, you know, a lot more students have gone back
14 onsite, so -- so those were some of the things we've
15 learned, I guess.

16 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Woods.

17 MS. WOODS: I feel like my questions kind of
18 build off of Sarah's. Maybe this is a broader
19 question. But are we -- and, Secretary Key, this is
20 directed to you -- are we working with the
21 legislature at all this session to start building in
22 laws around digital learning? Because I don't --
23 it's not going anywhere. I mean I think that this is
24 something we're going to have now and forever and I
25 hate just continuing to like couch stuff under this

1 Act 1240 waiver and be like this is just how we're
2 going to get things done going forward, especially
3 when we have teachers that are virtual teachers right
4 now but they have 42 kids. And I know that was just
5 for this year because those are under the waivers
6 that we passed. So what structure are we putting in
7 place for the long-term? Have we started thinking
8 about that?

9 DR. PFEFFER: Well, my response is so I think
10 this is the right approach that we're taking right
11 now because last year, again, like Stacy Smith said,
12 I mean it was a steep learning curve.

13 MS. WOODS: Yes.

14 DR. PFEFFER: It was a -- you know, and we
15 didn't require districts to offer a digital option.
16 They did that because in their communities their
17 parents were saying, you know, what are we going to
18 do, what are we going to do; we don't feel safe
19 sending our kids. So they provided this option to
20 their parents. By the same token, that option is now
21 out there. And so they feel the need to -- most
22 districts anyway feel the need to at least be able to
23 continue to provide some type of option. And so I
24 think right now what we have to do is, kind of like
25 Ms. Chambers said, you know, that sweet spot, what is

1 it. We've got to really make sure we all understand,
2 because it hasn't been until these last couple of
3 months that we were able to articulate things like
4 this all falls under digital learning. You've got
5 remote, virtual, we've got hybrid. And in between
6 there you've got some little nuances here that
7 virtual looks a little bit different because it's,
8 you know, asynchronous or synchronous. Or in the
9 hybrid sense, what does that exactly look like. So
10 my thinking is, like you said, digital options -- we
11 are forever changing the way education is delivered,
12 we know that; so what do we do that's best for
13 students. In terms of legislation where we have to
14 be careful is that if we legislate and say districts
15 will offer a virtual option or put in some kind of a
16 requirement then we limit ourselves for the use of
17 federal funds because it becomes required and not
18 supplemental. So, right now districts have a
19 tremendous opportunity to use their new round of
20 emergency relief funding. You know, that's an
21 opportunity -- they've got a lot of options to really
22 do things and to do them well and get it all set up
23 the way it needs to be. Long-term might there need
24 to -- we look at, you know, if it's this kind of a
25 digital option should there be limits on numbers of

1 teachers or things like that. I think that's what
2 we'll learn more about this year as we go through
3 this process. In the application, you all might want
4 to have us add more clarification around how many
5 students will a teacher have maximum depending on the
6 kind of option so that we can learn a little bit
7 better of what to do.

8 Again, I want to go back though to even some of
9 the things like we've seen with Opportunity Culture.
10 We've had districts that have come and ask for
11 waivers from Class Size or Teaching Load so they
12 could allow their very best teachers to be able to
13 interact with more students.

14 So I think legislatively we do have to be
15 careful because, like Stacy described, if you have a
16 teacher who is not having to design content, not
17 having to create and do things for this, more of a
18 facilitator, asynchronously, he or she can teach more
19 kids than the one who's doing it differently.

20 So I know that was a long answer to your
21 question --

22 MS. WOODS: No.

23 DR. PFEFFER: -- but --

24 MS. WOODS: No, but that was a good answer
25 because my question is what safeguards are we putting

1 in place to protect our teachers, coming back to like
2 what you were saying. If they're just going to say,
3 "Yes, we want a waiver for this, but we don't have
4 any specifications" into how they're going to load
5 this onto their teachers, I don't know that we're
6 doing a good job, you know, protecting. I don't know
7 that a second grader needs to be in a class, a
8 virtual class with 42 other kids; so are we
9 shortchanging them. So --

10 DR. PFEFFER: No, we can -- we can double-check
11 the application to see if we've asked for numbers of
12 students or numbers of teachers if there are waivers
13 on that. So that might be an area on the application
14 to review.

15 SECRETARY KEY: If I may add to what Dr. Pfeffer
16 was saying too, as far as working with the
17 legislature, yes. I mean the framework -- there has
18 been a distance learning -- the framework of distance
19 learning in statute for 20-plus years.

20 DR. PFEFFER: 2010, I think.

21 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. Well, I think we came
22 back to digital learning and then there was one point
23 where we had distance learning with compressed
24 interactive video. And, you know, the law was
25 rescinded around that, and then we had digital

1 learning with more modern technology and it was -- we
2 tried to merge those because, obviously, the
3 compressed interactive video -- old technology,
4 things that were in the law then didn't really apply.
5 That's really where the challenge is in trying to
6 set-up legal frameworks, because the technology
7 changes so rapidly. But I think when you look at the
8 framework we have currently for digital learning
9 coupled with our Standards for Accreditation, we have
10 the frameworks in place. It's just a matter of
11 insuring that in this waiver process we don't stretch
12 too far. That's one of the things I think we've
13 learned. We -- there were some cases where teachers
14 were stretched too far and it was too much expected
15 of them. So, you know, now we know better what to
16 ask when we're working with districts on these
17 submissions. Because we don't want that to create a
18 scenario where teachers, you know, throw their hands
19 up and say, "We can't do this anymore." That's not
20 good for anyone. So Ivy said all the things I was
21 going to say with respect to this is supplemental;
22 you know, this is not to replace the standards of
23 education that we've come to -- to be accustomed to.
24 But we also know that the demand, parent demand, we
25 believe, in some cases that some percentage will not

1 go back to what it was before. So we do need to have
2 some avenue that -- and not every district is -- will
3 probably want to do this. I don't expect every
4 district to want to do this. But I think we -- and
5 then when we find that there's places where practice
6 and law diverge, then we'll need to come back, and if
7 we can't take care of it in standards or in rules and
8 regs, then we can address it with the legislature.

9 MS. WOODS: I think that's helpful too for the
10 districts, right, because you don't want one district
11 coming back saying, "Will you approve such-and-such
12 with this many?" Like if we give them more guidance
13 it sets everybody up for success.

14 Also -- this is my last question, because I
15 think you answered one of my other ones in your
16 presentation -- are we ever going to consider
17 creating our own like LMS or CMS, building it in-
18 house? Sorry.

19 SECRETARY KEY: Will we consider it? Yes.

20 DR. PFEFFER: Consider, yes. And that's where
21 my mind went. Yes. And I'm going to let Stacy talk
22 a little bit here because, you know, she -- even
23 before Covid, just the work that's been going on
24 around curriculum and instructional practices and
25 things like that -- but she -- I'll let her talk.

1 Five.

2 MS. SMITH: Five minutes. Okay. Earlier, I was
3 like I want to get in, I want to get in.

4 So I do want to comment on the question you had
5 before, before I answer that one. I think you made a
6 great point that we don't want to see 200 schools
7 coming each time for Act 1240 waivers to get around
8 something. So what we're seeing right now, you know,
9 1240 waivers, schools of innovation, charter
10 conversions, all those are supposed to be about
11 innovation, doing something different. And right now
12 because we're kind of in this crisis mode everybody
13 is thinking outside the box and how do we fill this
14 gap, and so the way is through this innovative
15 process. What we -- when you made the comment about
16 it's never going away, that "never going away" part
17 is what you will see show up in our Standards for
18 Accreditation in the future; you will see it in our
19 rules. I mean that's where that's going to come in
20 because that becomes the standard expectation for
21 excellence, and right now we're still learning about
22 what that is. And I laugh, if we had to have one
23 more conversation on what blended learning was I
24 think you and I both were just going to, you know --
25 because we find our-self going in circles, and then

1 we'd get back to, "Wait, is virtual remote? Is it
2 all the same or is it different?"

3 And so curriculum, we went in this world with
4 curriculum where for a long time teachers were
5 expected to write their own, build their own content;
6 you know, took any kind of textbooks off the shelf,
7 it was taboo to use one, you know. And then back in
8 this shift of we don't need to expect our teachers to
9 be the curriculum writers and facilitators of high-
10 quality materials. Dr. Pride is part of a group,
11 college prep group where we're really examining
12 research about high-quality instructional materials,
13 and with so much digital content coming out by so
14 many providers that's an opportunity for us. Areas
15 where we see gaps, we should be creating our own.
16 Okay. We do have a large investment in Virtual
17 Arkansas -- not ARVA, but Virtual Arkansas, who is on
18 a grant from the Department of Ed., who provides
19 content for classroom teachers virtually -- and has
20 been for a long time. So it's something that we're
21 very proud of. So we are continuing to fill holes in
22 areas that we need to fill holes, but I don't think
23 we should get to the point where we feel like we have
24 to create it all because there are scope and sequence
25 for reasons. Okay. And I think the best place that

1 I can point it out to people is with the literacy
2 that we've been talking about for the last couple of
3 years, especially with K-2 RISE -- explicit
4 systematic instruction, especially in phonics and
5 phonemic awareness; it builds on each other. And
6 when we expect teachers to be the masters of all that
7 knowledge and know what builds on what, we're really
8 doing them a disservice. And that's why you have
9 seen teachers who are tired, they don't know what to
10 do, don't feel like they have the support. And this
11 year with the digital content not only did we lay in-
12 person instruction on them, but they also had that
13 piece where they had to be -- become masters of
14 digital content at the same time. And so going into
15 next year, going in with thoughtful application and
16 questions, hopefully we can start kind of meshing
17 that together, because we want to keep our teachers.

18 So do we need to write curriculum in some areas
19 and provide support digitally with content?

20 Absolutely, and you will see that in some of our
21 grant pieces. But I don't feel like we feel like --
22 we should feel like we've got to tackle it all.

23 There's some great digital content providers out
24 there and there's some high-quality instruction
25 materials that are research-based.

1 MS. WOODS: Is it the same for the LMS? As I
2 understand the LMS, it's like your -- that's your
3 system that all the content is uploaded onto.

4 MS. SMITH: Uh-huh.

5 MS. WOODS: Correct?

6 MS. SMITH: So we have -- so within the LinkedIn
7 Learning system, that had buzz, and that was
8 something that was supported by the Department moving
9 forward. You saw Virtual Arkansas came out with
10 where they were really supporting Canvas. And so I
11 don't know that we will write our own like kind of
12 content -- or Learning Management System -- see,
13 you're getting me --

14 MS. WOODS: That's okay. I'm trying --

15 MS. SMITH: I'm calling them the same --
16 different things. I don't know that we're trying to
17 develop our own. But, you know, would we get to a
18 point where we're trying to support something moving
19 forward, it's possible.

20 SECRETARY KEY: The challenge with developing a
21 state LMS is you have to support it ongoing. And
22 there are experts in that that have that out there.
23 Districts have chosen various LMS platforms. What we
24 want to do is insure that what we do produce can fit
25 within whatever platform that -- you know, whether

1 they're using Google or whether they're using Canvas,
2 that what we do fits within the platform that they've
3 chosen to use.

4 MS. WOODS: And my thought was more just from a
5 cost perspective, long-term did it make sense to
6 develop our own and support it versus however the
7 districts are paying for it to get these.

8 So, I'm done with my questions.

9 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right. Ms. McFetridge?

10 MS. McFETRIDGE: (shaking head from side to
11 side.)

12 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: No, okay.

13 Mr. Lookadoo?

14 MR. LOOKADOO: Yeah, I've got a couple.

15 I guess so I would just strongly ask that
16 districts do -- or schools have to specify that
17 Teaching Load/Class Size on the application. I think
18 that's a really important piece just because even
19 when I think we're having that conversation of is it
20 too much on a teacher, we've also got to think about
21 what's best for the student in that too. Because
22 even if the teacher feels like, yeah, I can handle
23 it, it's not too much stress, is that student getting
24 enough feedback in all of that. And so I think we've
25 really -- I just think that's got to be there.

1 But then I was going to ask, so when they're --
2 when the committee is reviewing these, or was
3 reviewing these, how did they decide, you know,
4 what's kind of that -- is there a threshold that is
5 like this is too much, this is -- how are they going
6 to decide that? I know it's going to look different
7 for different districts or schools. But is there
8 some sort of threshold there that we would say
9 absolutely not?

10 DR. PFEFFER: You're talking about maximum
11 numbers?

12 MR. LOOKADOO: Yes.

13 DR. PFEFFER: Uh-huh. I think that what we'd
14 want to do is look at, you know, what maybe has been
15 approved in the past, maybe in a -- like what does a
16 virtual charter do and how is that instruction
17 delivered. So I think we would kind of get out there
18 and look to see what have we looked at in the past as
19 acceptable or approved levels, depending on the
20 circumstances. But certainly if you all have some
21 thresholds or numbers that you say, "Look, any
22 application where a number exceeds this, we would
23 kind of want to have the district individually
24 present their plan to us," then that's an option as
25 well.

1 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, that's what I was going to
2 suggest is that when these come -- you know, we're
3 talking about this approval, you're just approving us
4 moving forward with the process today, but the actual
5 approval of the waivers will happen afterwards. And,
6 you know, when we say "in batch" that doesn't mean
7 you can't -- as we do with, you know, our Consent
8 Agenda, if there are questions about certain things,
9 pull them out and we can say, "Look, District XYZ
10 needs to be prepared to come and discuss your
11 presentation or discuss your proposal." We don't
12 want to substitute our judgment with the judgment of
13 the State Board. You all are the ones that have the
14 authority to grant the waivers, so I want to be -- we
15 want to be very respectful of your role in this
16 process. We certainly are here to advise you and we
17 have folks who can give you opinions on various
18 things. But, you know, you and various areas you
19 represent, with the teachers you interact with, we
20 want your judgment and your expertise and the
21 feedback that you get to be what guides this, because
22 that's the only thing that makes this work; because
23 if we substitute our opinion for the authority of the
24 Board, then we don't have a good process.

25 DR. PFEFFER: And I do want to go back to -- I

1 think and this is part of the importance of the
2 training upfront -- to make it very clear to
3 districts that, you know, the expectation shouldn't
4 be every kid in your district is participating in
5 this kind of an option here. You know, they -- you
6 have to start with what is the capacity or what could
7 we do and, you know, what limitations might we face.
8 It may be that a district decides we want to start
9 down this road; we're only going to start with our
10 high school and then as we're successful we'll back
11 it down one grade level at a time or, you know, one
12 school at a time -- or the opposite. I think we've
13 had a school of innovation before that started with
14 kindergarten and worked their way up. So those are
15 the kinds of things that districts will be coached on
16 from the very beginning so that they understand too
17 if an application comes through and it's just really
18 expansive and we're looking and thinking, you know,
19 hmmm, is this -- you know, is this actually doable.

20 So I'm hearing we're probably going to need to
21 add a couple of questions to the application to --
22 that way, that we're going to have that clarity as
23 that comes in.

24 MR. LOOKADOO: And then just a curiosity
25 question -- that virtual identification that you said

1 was on eSchool, is that going to be able to be pulled
2 for like data purposes even with this year based on
3 --

4 DR. PFEFFER: Yes.

5 MR. LOOKADOO: Okay.

6 DR. PFEFFER: Yes. And actually Arijit this
7 morning was pulling in some -- you know, just
8 different types of information that we'll be able to
9 look at. And so, yes, that's going to be very, very
10 helpful.

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: All right. Ms. Newton?

12 MS. NEWTON: Just one more comment on the
13 numbers. I agree that it's very important because
14 of, you know, one of the problems that we've had this
15 year with virtual is lack of engagement with the
16 students. And, you know, not necessarily just
17 overloading the teachers, but when a teacher is
18 overloaded then the students will suffer. And so,
19 you know, I really think that we need to look at
20 those numbers as far as class load, a class size, and
21 then teaching load also. So I really think that
22 would make the application process better.

23 Just going back to the very beginning, I just
24 want to make sure I understand this -- so right now,
25 when a district has a situation arise and they -- as

1 a school they pivot to online learning, next year
2 they're going to be able to pivot for a maximum of 10
3 days. Is that -- am I understanding that correctly?

4 DR. PFEFFER: Well, so next year -- this year
5 that was necessary for them to be able to do it as
6 many times as possible --

7 MS. NEWTON: Right.

8 DR. PFEFFER: -- because of the expectation for
9 --

10 MS. NEWTON: Sure.

11 DR. PFEFFER: -- quarantines and things like
12 that. Now, you know, of course, if things are still
13 problematic where we would expect that more days
14 would have to be allowed for them to do that, we
15 could certainly come back and address that. The AIM,
16 yes, it's 10 days. And so, you know, hopefully we'll
17 be able to go back to a schedule where a whole
18 district doesn't have to do that except in very rare
19 circumstances.

20 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

21 DR. PFEFFER: So right now the law allows for up
22 to 10 days, but you all could always waive that or,
23 you know, we could look at -- and there's still other
24 options in case of emergencies and exceptional
25 circumstances with regard --

1 MS. NEWTON: So --

2 DR. PFEFFER: -- to a school day.

3 MS. NEWTON: -- if we have to, we could even do
4 that on maybe a case-by-case basis --

5 DR. PFEFFER: Right.

6 MS. NEWTON: -- sometimes?

7 DR. PFEFFER: Absolutely. Yes.

8 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right. And then, right
9 now we have the option where not only a school pivots
10 but a student may pivot, like they're in the
11 classroom and they pivot to online learning. Is that
12 -- how would that work if a district chooses not to
13 have this digital platform?

14 DR. PFEFFER: So, and that's a really good
15 question. We haven't really talked specifically
16 about that. But my thought is that districts are
17 going to continue to use technology, even in their
18 traditional onsite, just because of the fact that
19 teachers and students and parents, everybody, has
20 seen that benefit of being able to utilize it at
21 least in part for learning. However, I would
22 anticipate, because we did update our definition of
23 attendance -- or absence actually is I think what we
24 updated, and so a student can continue to participate
25 from home. And so I think, you know, moving forward

1 that we really have an opportunity for students not
2 to have to be absence unless they truly are sick. I
3 think you've got a lot of opportunities for students
4 when they have things like FFA shows, livestock
5 shows; you know, students could continue to learn
6 virtually. So I think individually we can look and
7 see if there's some clarifications that need to be
8 around as far as, you know, student attendance and
9 policies; you know, districts could look at how they
10 do their policies. But I think it's a tremendous
11 opportunity if a student is going to have to be out
12 for two or three days for a reason that a district
13 could continue to allow them to engage in learning.
14 So --

15 MS. NEWTON: I was just thinking, you know, if a
16 district may say, "I don't want to do this
17 application process, I'm going to do my AMI days and
18 that's all I'm going to do," you know, then that
19 potentially could put a student in a bind. You know,
20 if their parents choose not to vaccinate and this
21 child has to quarantine for 14 days and we're looking
22 at absences and penalizing and that sort of thing, I
23 could see some potential problems.

24 DR. PFEFFER: And that could fall under like a
25 homebound situation, and so there are already

1 allowances.

2 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

3 DR. PFEFFER: So I think that would fall under
4 cases like that.

5 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

6 DR. PFEFFER: And I think as this process plays
7 out we're going to want to really listen in for all
8 those kinds of questions.

9 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

10 DR. PFEFFER: But I'm glad you said that because
11 there really is a, you know, a scenario where a
12 district might say, you know, we're having
13 traditional onsite instruction but we are going to
14 plan for AMI; however, for specific student needs we
15 would allow, you know, this virtual type of
16 interaction.

17 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

18 DR. PFEFFER: So, no, that's a very good
19 question and we'll talk more about that.

20 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Let's see. The LinkedIn
21 Learning, I know that was provided to districts this
22 year at no charge. What about ongoing with that?

23 DR. PFEFFER: It will continue to be offered
24 next year as well. So we used SR funds so that it
25 would be continued for the 21-22 school year.

1 MS. NEWTON: So one more year of that?

2 DR. PFEFFER: Uh-huh. Yes.

3 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

4 DR. PFEFFER: And then, beyond that, that's
5 where districts -- that gives districts plenty of
6 time to really identify how it is they're going to
7 structure things and then make plans for the future.

8 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right. I think that's
9 all I have.

10 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Thank you.

11 Dr. Hill?

12 DR. HILL: No.

13 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. Any more questions?

14 Dr. Moore.

15 DR. MOORE: Just as I said -- I have a lot
16 actually that have come up just as I sit here and
17 think about it. Going back to the conversation prior
18 to all of this, we had districts that use virtual
19 courses because, quite frankly, they couldn't find a
20 teacher. How did that fit in? Will that continue on
21 its own separate track? Do we envision those
22 districts to jump on and be innovative in how they
23 look at that, or will that continue as-is?

24 DR. PFEFFER: So I would say ideally going
25 through a process like this would -- you know,

1 hopefully, there is capacity being built because of
2 having access to content and a system to deliver. It
3 gives districts a lot more flexibility maybe to
4 utilize their existing staff and be more flexible
5 with what they have. So maybe the need for a certain
6 number of teachers might diminish a little bit. You
7 know, there's still cases though if a district is not
8 finding a teacher who can be in the classroom they
9 would still, you know, very likely be having those
10 teachers through -- whether it's Virtual Arkansas,
11 whether it's through a contracted provider, a digital
12 provider. So it's going to be interesting to see
13 kind of how that plays out. You know, I know one of
14 the things that -- this summer when onsite
15 instruction was not available to -- not this summer,
16 but back last spring when onsite instruction was not
17 available to students, depending on what type of
18 situation, what type of arrangement they had, their
19 virtual learning may not have been available either
20 because of either the student not having what they
21 needed, the way the teacher was interacting with
22 students was maybe not allowing for each individual
23 student to log in. So that's what I think school
24 districts have to consider is that if their virtual
25 provider or their virtual learning set-up is not

1 going to afford individual students the opportunity,
2 then they're going to have to rethink what they're
3 doing. I think long-term it also taught us though a
4 lot of our investment was going into systems that
5 didn't really build capacity; you know, it was just
6 always this continued reliance on --

7 DR. MOORE: Right.

8 DR. PFEFFER: -- somebody else have a teacher to
9 teach our students. And so everything we've talked
10 about today, from the Grow Your Own all the way
11 through this, we have to be thinking long-term about
12 capacity building.

13 DR. MOORE: I think especially as we look at
14 struggling learners, which is hard to do face-to-face
15 -- and, you know, some struggling learners might do
16 better in a virtual instruction, but some might not,
17 and how are districts wrapping their heads around
18 that. I'm glad we include -- they include questions
19 about special education. Would dyslexia fall in
20 that, you know, especially when you're doing
21 screenings and thinking about things at the
22 elementary level? Do we expect those plans to be in
23 this?

24 DR. PFEFFER: So I think, yes, plans for any
25 type of special services, special needs would have to

1 be in there. And I thought dyslexia was in there; I
2 thought --

3 MS. SMITH: I thought it was in there on
4 content, but maybe --

5 DR. MOORE: Okay, maybe it is. I don't know. I
6 just --

7 MS. SMITH: No, I don't think it is.

8 DR. MOORE: Okay.

9 MS. SMITH: We can add that in there.

10 DR. PFEFFER: So we'll make a note on that, that
11 if that needs to be updated -- Dr. Pride, do you
12 know?

13 DR. PRIDE: Hello. I don't think it's in there
14 right now. We kept it to those special programs
15 like, you know, GTEL and special ed. But since
16 dyslexia is part of the core we still could reiterate
17 the importance of planning. We did talk about
18 planning for special supports, whether that's GT.
19 But we need -- we haven't specifically named
20 dyslexia, but I'll look into it.

21 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Ms. Coffman.

23 MS. COFFMAN: In my draft it does -- we have
24 under Student Supports --

25 DR. PRIDE: Okay.

1 MS. COFFMAN: -- described dyslexia screening
2 and services that will be provided to digital
3 learning students.

4 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

5 DR. MOORE: Great.

6 DR. PFEFFER: So we'll just make sure that the
7 actual online application will contain everything
8 that it needs, so --

9 DR. MOORE: As we think about -- help me wrap my
10 mind around if -- when a district applies to do this
11 and a student chooses this, are we talking schools
12 are creating new LEAs or will those students still
13 fall within that current school?

14 DR. PFEFFER: Yes, they're still part of the
15 current LEA. So we don't want them to even have to
16 create a whole new LEA because then you've got a lot
17 of different things that happen with that. So this
18 is an option, an instructional option --

19 DR. MOORE: Okay.

20 DR. PFEFFER: -- within that school.

21 DR. MOORE: I think it -- I mean particularly in
22 thinking about a high school, I think we -- I keep
23 thinking competency-based and how districts can use
24 different models to be innovative in this. And
25 that's what I'm envisioning, not just a regurgitation

1 of "if you don't want to be in the school building
2 you're going to be home doing X, Y and Z."

3 If we see, unfortunately, districts not doing as
4 well, can the waiver be revoked in a year, end-of-
5 year? What are we approving in that?

6 DR. PFEFFER: Yes, it can. And I mean it would
7 depend on what is actually happening. But our teams
8 will be -- you know, beginning when school starts
9 next year we'll be setting up monitoring, ways that
10 we can monitor throughout the year. And, you know,
11 if at any particular time there's an issue we could
12 bring the district in at any time to -- if waivers
13 did need to be revoked, that could happen at any
14 time.

15 DR. MOORE: Okay. My last thing, my fear at
16 times is that districts are going to do this just to
17 keep kids in their buildings -- in their district and
18 not to do it as an innovation piece. We have a lot
19 of small districts that maybe don't have the capacity
20 to do this on their own long -- five, ten years down
21 the road. Are we encouraging districts or co-ops to
22 work together in innovative ways to put plans like
23 this --

24 DR. PFEFFER: We are.

25 DR. MOORE: Are there any incentives for them to

1 work together?

2 DR. PFEFFER: So if you -- you might want to
3 describe what are you talking about with incentives
4 to work together.

5 DR. MOORE: I don't know. There could -- is
6 there -- would there be a monetary incentive? Would
7 there be any -- again, I don't want to see 250
8 districts coming to us, saying, "We're offering K-12
9 virtual options." We don't need that.

10 DR. PFEFFER: Right.

11 DR. MOORE: That would be dislocation of
12 services in the state. And so if they are going to,
13 we want to see it in an innovative way. And some
14 districts don't have the capacity to do that
15 innovative way, so they can get, you know, five
16 together to do it.

17 DR. PFEFFER: So, yes, we're encouraging
18 districts to work together to really look at the
19 capacity, look at the need, look at the opportunities
20 that they have. And so that is definitely part of
21 what the training or support piece will look like.
22 If we get 250 applications that say "we're doing a K-
23 12 virtual program," we're going to be looking at
24 those very deeply. So, you know, I think -- I do not
25 think that's what you're going to see.

1 DR. MOORE: Okay.

2 DR. PFEFFER: Now are there districts that are
3 doing this to keep students in their districts? I
4 mean I think everyday districts are doing things to
5 keep students in their district --

6 DR. MOORE: I know, but --

7 DR. PFEFFER: -- because, you know, parents --
8 you know, we talk a lot about school choice, but also
9 just within a school district there are a lot of
10 choices that parents make whether or not to stay in a
11 district or to go to another district because of
12 things that districts offer.

13 DR. MOORE: Uh-huh.

14 DR. PFEFFER: And so, you know, I look at this
15 in terms of it's an opportunity for districts to be
16 able to expand on what they're doing now. And there
17 -- you know, there are going to be cases where we see
18 things that are just really great and innovative; I
19 think that's what we encourage, definitely, to move
20 toward. And I think there will be districts that try
21 to start this out and decide that it's not being
22 successful and they, you know, look for other
23 supports. So, you know, we -- you know, I wish I had
24 a magic answer, and I don't. But I do think that
25 this is the best way to move forward in terms of

1 helping to meet needs of students that -- you know,
2 it's -- I think it's the -- I think it's the future
3 of education.

4 DR. MOORE: And I apologize for having maybe a
5 more cynical view. But I certainly agree with that,
6 and especially looking at the high school level,
7 thinking about the opportunities with CTE, with
8 internships, with jobs and so many different things,
9 with dropout, you know, that we can do here. I'm
10 excited. So, thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any other questions?

12 MS. NEWTON: Something Dr. Moore said kind of
13 made a light-bulb go off in my mind. And somebody
14 may already be thinking of this, but there's so many
15 times at the co-op level that a co-op takes the
16 initiative to step forward and take a program and run
17 with it and then offer it to their member districts.
18 Have any co-ops kind of -- or would it be impossible
19 under this model for a co-op to say, "Our member
20 districts are going to use this model and we're going
21 to work together?" And instead of the district doing
22 it, it would be more of a co-op model?

23 DR. PFEFFER: I definitely think there are
24 options for that. Exactly kind of what that looks
25 like in terms of, you know, each student remaining

1 part of their LEA --

2 MS. NEWTON: Right.

3 DR. PFEFFER: And -- but, you know, there could
4 be instances where if you have multiple schools
5 within a co-op area and they all want to work
6 together and they all want to use the same platform
7 and all want to use the content system and share
8 teachers, then --

9 MS. NEWTON: Right.

10 DR. PFEFFER: -- the co-op could be that hub.

11 MS. NEWTON: Right.

12 DR. PFEFFER: And, you know, with the hybrid
13 model, you know, it talked about students coming
14 onsite. It could be to a learning center.

15 MS. NEWTON: That's right.

16 DR. PFEFFER: So a co-op could become a learning
17 center for students from different districts to come
18 to for -- maybe they come there for their reading
19 instruction face-to-face and -- you know, and then
20 they have online resources to use when they're at
21 home. So, yes, there would be that option.

22 MS. NEWTON: I see a lot of potential in that
23 model. And also, you know, something Dr. Moore said,
24 and just because of my background of my husband, they
25 don't want to let-go of any student that's in their

1 district because, you know, it's money. And
2 especially in small districts you're going to have to
3 have those students to be able to survive. You know,
4 that's reality. And we don't like to think of it
5 that way, but it is reality. And this would be a
6 potential for some -- especially the smaller
7 districts sometimes that might not have the capacity
8 to be able to do a virtual program well.

9 DR. PFEFFER: Yes.

10 MS. NEWTON: And -- but then they didn't want to
11 lose their students to the virtual academy or
12 Arkansas Connections. So, you know, I don't know who
13 would even think about doing this, but I could see a
14 lot of potential in districts working together
15 through the co-op, if the co-op would be willing to
16 take this on. I know that would be a big ask for
17 some of the co-ops, but I think --

18 DR. PFEFFER: And that conversation has been
19 initiated with co-op directors.

20 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

21 DR. PFEFFER: But, again, I think it's part of
22 our training -- and what we're really thinking is
23 it's not necessarily a train-the-trainer as far as we
24 just go out and train and let it go. But it's
25 building the capacity at the co-op level to

1 understand what this whole process needs to look like
2 so then they're helping to lead it ongoing over the
3 next couple of months, and this design. So we'll,
4 you know, we'll definitely make sure those
5 conversations are there.

6 And I think something you said there with
7 districts not wanting to lose students, you know,
8 losing -- I mean when you start losing, it's like
9 losing population in a town. You know, at some point
10 even if you didn't want to leave the town you leave
11 because there are no other opportunities available.

12 MS. NEWTON: Right.

13 DR. PFEFFER: And so once students start to
14 leave, for whatever reason, then, you know, things
15 just kind of have that trickle effect. Because if we
16 don't have enough students that we can do X-program
17 or Y-program or we can no longer have, you know,
18 these additional options, then students don't want to
19 be there. And so it is, it's a balancing act.

20 MS. NEWTON: Yeah. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any other questions?

22 Okay. Let's see. Do we need to vote -- so do
23 we need to vote to accept --

24 SECRETARY KEY: We're asking for your approval
25 to move forward with the process.

1 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Okay. All right. So with
2 that, I'll look for a motion to approve the
3 forwarding of this process -- moving forward with
4 this process.

5 MR. SUTTON: So moved.

6 MS. CHAMBERS: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: So moved by Mr. Sutton,
8 seconded by Ms. Chambers.

9 All in favor say "aye."

10 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Any opposed?

12 Seeing none, motion passes.

13 DR. PFEFFER: Thank you all very much.

14 CHAIRMAN COOKSEY: Thank you.

15

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17 (The Action Agenda was concluded at 3:03 p.m.)

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VI.1 - ARKANSAS COMPUTER SCIENCE

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss.
 COUNTY OF SALINE)

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, State Board of Education, in Little Rock, Arkansas, and via Zoom, on January 14, 2021; 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: January 27, 2021.

SHARON K. HILL, CCR
 Certified Court Reporter
 Certificate No. 670

	academic (9) 36:23;37:11;38:2; 41:9;42:19;55:21; 78:23;99:19,23	actually (24) 17:14;68:1,23; 94:15;95:16;98:6,23; 103:12;104:19,20; 105:4;107:5;110:8,9; 121:21;126:9; 138:11;140:21; 154:22;172:19; 173:6;175:23; 178:16;183:7	ADOPTION (1) 93:23	3:7;57:17;61:21; 93:19;94:3;144:23; 171:8;190:17
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\$1.5 (1) 46:24	academically (1) 38:11		advanced (3) 97:7,9;101:6	
[academics (7) 41:1,3;42:4;46:3; 50:19,21;51:16		advancing (1) 136:22	
[BRIEF (1) 56:23	ACADEMY (11) 12:18,20,24;19:21; 53:19,23,25;57:8; 61:13;119:17;188:11		advantage (1) 120:20	agree (5) 82:1;116:24; 151:15;173:13;186:5
[END (1) 136:7		Adams (1) 54:6	advise (1) 171:16	agreements (2) 99:1;119:13
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