

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Great.

2 All right. What else do we need to do now?

3 MS. HYATT: That's it on this one.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. Is everybody
5 -- okay. Everybody good? All right.

6 Next up -- thank y'all for your hard work on
7 these events.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Next up we go down to Action
9 Item 4. This is a Hearing on the Open-Enrollment
10 Charter School Renewal from Pine Bluff Lighthouse
11 Academy.

12 COMMISSIONER KEY: Make sure that anybody that
13 may have been here for the Friendship or Covenant
14 Keepers item, that item is over for today.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Correct.

16 COMMISSIONER KEY: Okay.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And I don't have any public
18 comment on Covenant Keepers for today. Is there any,
19 Miss --

20 MS. HYATT: No.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So there is not any
22 public comment on that item. Okay. Thank y'all.

23 **A-4: HEARING ON OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL: PINE**
24 **BLUFF LIGHTHOUSE ACADEMY**

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. We are down to Item 4.

1 This is our hearing on the renewal of the Pine Bluff
2 Lighthouse. Of course, last month we voted to have a
3 hearing to review the Charter Panel's decision.

4 MR. BALLARD: Correct. So Item Number 4 is a
5 Hearing on Open-Enrollment Charter School Renewal
6 with Pine Bluff Lighthouse Academy.

7 On December 18, 2018, representatives of Pine
8 Bluff Lighthouse Academy appeared before the Charter
9 Authorizing Panel requesting a renewal for their
10 charter. By a vote of -- 3 to 2 vote, the Panel
11 denied the application request. On January 10, 2019,
12 the State Board of Education voted to review the
13 decision by the Panel.

14 We do have representatives here.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. And so the procedure,
16 Ms. Clyatt -- Ms. Hyatt, excuse me.

17 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Arkansas
18 Department of Education. So the procedure is all
19 persons with the exception of attorneys representing
20 the parties should be sworn. You can do them all
21 together. The applicant -- so Pine Bluff Lighthouse
22 will have 20 minutes to give its presentation,
23 followed by 20 minutes for anyone in opposition, and
24 then Pine Bluff Lighthouse will have an additional 5
25 minutes, unless you allow additional time as the

1 Chair. Following, questions would be appropriate for
2 both sides and then whatever you choose to do.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

4 MS. HYATT: And I have a list of options for you
5 that I can give you.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. So we'll
7 start off with anybody who plans to testify -- I do
8 also have Ms. Roberts who is on the public comment
9 list. Is Ms. Roberts part of the original 20 minutes
10 or is she -- is that separate? Ms. Danna Roberts.

11 MS. ZOOK: I think some people just signed in
12 but not to speak.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

14 Okay. It sounds like she's not here.

15 MS. HYATT: Yeah. It sounds like it's just --

16 MS. ROBERTS: I'm here. I'm Donna Roberts.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Oh, okay. Okay. Donna
18 Roberts, I apologize. Do you -- so you plan to do
19 public comment or do you -- are you just wanting to
20 note your presence?

21 MS. ROBERTS: Public comment.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Well, so we'll do that
23 out of the original 20 minutes.

24 Okay. So those individuals who are part of the
25 original 20 minutes for Lighthouse or plan to testify

1 in opposition to it, could you please stand and raise
2 your right hand, unless you're an attorney?

3 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you're
4 about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth and
5 nothing but the truth?

6 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank y'all.

8 And so I will turn it over to Pine Bluff
9 Lighthouse to -- I believe Representative Flowers is
10 going to open things up.

11 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: Thank you, Board. This
12 might be a record for how quickly I speak and how
13 short my remarks are.

14 So I am here once again to support the renewal
15 of Lighthouse. And I want to make it known that I am
16 not a super-supporter of charter schools in general,
17 while I support successful schools and I'm open to
18 some measure of diversity in terms of the structures
19 and the way that we approach education.

20 I want to make just a couple of points and that
21 is that when I was approached about this issue I went
22 myself to the school and probably spent a couple of
23 hours touring, talking to teachers, talking to the
24 administration, looking at the data, and I think that
25 they're doing a great job; they're passionate. There

1 was a teacher who was traveling two hours and she's
2 moved closer since then, since she first started.
3 So, you know, I think that the commitment is there.
4 I saw the commitment on the part of teachers, as well
5 as parents. I met with one of the parents.

6 As far as the activity of the school and the
7 students, I was impressed by the fact that there was
8 improvement when I looked at the data. You know, I
9 think that the A through F -- I have issues with that
10 because it doesn't fully indicate what the issues
11 are. So to hear an F the assumption is that all kids
12 are failing in all areas. Of course that's not the
13 case. We know that attendance was a very significant
14 problem and impacted the grade for the school, and
15 they're doing better in that area. They're doing
16 very well in terms of behavior. They're doing very
17 well in terms of literacy. And so those things
18 really garnered my attention and are reasons behind
19 my support.

20 And then, finally, I think the displacement that
21 would result from not renewing in my mind would be
22 counterproductive in that the children who would be
23 displaced would be selecting from schools that are
24 also F schools. So I think those coupled with
25 finally the advantage I think that this school has,

1 along with their progress, is that they have a grant
2 to partner with Boys and Girls Club, which is
3 something that they wouldn't have with the other
4 schools.

5 So I think that we need to keep those factors in
6 mind, afford them the opportunity to continue to
7 progress in the way that they have, and let the
8 benefits of that grant with Boys and Girls Club also
9 help in the academics as well as other aspects of the
10 educational quality for those students. This is
11 right smack dab in my district.

12 And I'm going to stop and ask that you all just
13 please take those things into consideration in
14 support for the renewal of Lighthouse. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE FLOWERS: And I'm out.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you, Representative
18 Flowers. Good luck with the rest of your day.

19 All right. Next up on the Lighthouse
20 presentation -- Mayor Washington. Yes.

21 MAYOR WASHINGTON: I got nervous there for a
22 minute. I thought my name was not on the right list.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: We'll take care of you.

24 MAYOR WASHINGTON: Thank you so very much for
25 having us this morning.

1 Before serving as mayor -- and I think you all
2 already know --

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Mayor, if you'll just lower
4 your microphone just a little bit.

5 MAYOR WASHINGTON: Okay. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Perfect. Thank you.

7 MAYOR WASHINGTON: Good morning. Thank you
8 again.

9 Before serving as mayor -- and I think you all
10 already know this -- that I was a teacher. I was a
11 teacher for 22 years, I was a principal for 16 years,
12 and that gave me a total of 38 years in education.
13 So, public education and meeting the needs of our
14 young people in Pine Bluff is most critically
15 important to me as mayor -- and I think you probably
16 already know that, because within the last six months
17 I believe this is the third time that I have come
18 before you to speak on behalf of either the Pine
19 Bluff public schools or the Lighthouse Charter
20 School. I have high expectations for our teachers,
21 for our students, and our schools. I know that our
22 traditional public and charter schools have work to
23 do to reach the spirit of excellence that our youth,
24 that our parents, and our families deserve.

25 I believe that Lighthouse Charter is an

1 important part of the educational landscape in Pine
2 Bluff. I feel especially strong about that at a time
3 in our community where I'm sure all of you already
4 know that we are making great strides in rebuilding
5 Pine Bluff. Pine Bluff is going through a series and
6 a -- I guess I should say a time of renaissance and
7 it's critically important at this time that families
8 have choices. Lighthouse is one of those few choices
9 that will serve kids in grades 2 through 8. I think
10 it's critical that we have that choice.

11 Much like Representative Flowers just said, she
12 was not a proponent of charter schools and I wasn't
13 either because I thought at the beginning charters
14 took away from public schools. But then as time has
15 progressed my feeling toward that has changed because
16 I think it gives parents choices, and we need that
17 choice. Some students don't do as well in the larger
18 environments as they do in the smaller environments
19 that charter schools provide.

20 Charter -- this charter currently serves grades
21 2 through 8. It is also the home of 270 students and
22 families who in a few short months would be left
23 without a school to call home and without a proper
24 transition plan. Academic data shows that students
25 staying with Lighthouse for three years or more have

1 shown consistent gains. And I believe that with more
2 time and by implementing a rigorous improvement plan
3 -- and I have read that improvement plan that I
4 believe they've presented to you -- and I think that
5 if they follow that plan -- I have no reason to doubt
6 that they will -- that they will continue to show
7 gains.

8 I hope -- I sincerely hope that you will
9 consider renewing Lighthouse Charter so that they can
10 stay around and provide quality educational
11 experiences for students in our city, Pine Bluff,
12 Arkansas. Thank you for your time.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you, Mayor Washington.

14 All right. Next up?

15 All right. And you're at about 13-and-a-half
16 minutes.

17 MS. ROBERTS: Thank you. Good morning. I am
18 Lenisha Roberts and I am the executive director for
19 Lighthouse Charter School.

20 Today we look forward to sharing with you our
21 mission of who we are, our community, our social and
22 emotional program, our academic outcomes and
23 programs, our family and community engagement, and
24 our future plans for improvement.

25 We pride ourselves in providing a nurturing

1 environment where students are supported in
2 developing their social and academic skills. As
3 stated before, we serve 270 students and 100% of our
4 scholars receive free breakfast and lunch each day.
5 Our campus has a Title 1 school-wide designation. An
6 added asset is that we offer transportation for all
7 students daily for the regular school-day and for our
8 afterschool program. A majority of our students come
9 from the Pine Bluff School District, with a small
10 percentage coming from other surrounding districts.

11 We pride ourselves in providing students with a
12 stable and positive school culture where all students
13 feel welcome, encouraged and challenged to become
14 their better selves. Our program includes character
15 education known as our Shine Core Program and
16 incorporates proactive and restorative components
17 meant to build healthy relationships between our
18 students and teachers in order to fix issues when
19 issues arise. This is further supported by the
20 partnership with the P.A.T. Center, which provides
21 therapists and counselors, along with our fulltime
22 dedicated culture coordinator who works with children
23 on a day-to-day to deal with social and emotional
24 issues. When students come to Pine Bluff they
25 experience an immediate and dramatic difference in

1 the attention to their social and emotional growth.
2 The focus on setting a common nurturing environment
3 allows us to re-orient students' focus to academics
4 over time.

5 The story of Pine Bluff Lighthouse over the last
6 three years is one of transformation and growth, and
7 the change is evident in the data and results.
8 Realizing that we have to start with commitment and
9 culture in order to turn things around, in 2015 we
10 started comprehensive overhaul of our social and
11 emotional learning programs. What you'll see in the
12 data is almost a complete eradication of suspensions
13 and expulsions, going from 88 to only 1. The
14 outcomes we have seen from our social and emotional
15 program has contributed in 89% overall family
16 satisfaction.

17 Pine Bluff Lighthouse is operated by a charter
18 management organization with long ties to Arkansas
19 that operate a total of 19 programs in three states,
20 with a proven track record of success. The school is
21 also fortunate to have a committed board who have
22 served between two to five years. This has allowed
23 our school to make operation improvements to our
24 facilities, as well as become a one-to-one tech
25 campus for our 3rd through 8th grade classes. And

1 these are just a couple of major improvements we have
2 been able to solidify since our opening in 2011 with
3 the support of our local board and Lighthouse
4 National.

5 The operations and fiscal management of the
6 school is superb with more than \$469,000 cash on-
7 hand, and Pine Bluff has a track record of managing
8 multiple budgets and remaining in compliance on the
9 state and federal level. This is only the first part
10 of our transformation.

11 Most importantly, at our school you will see
12 scholars who are learning more, supportive of the
13 community and each other, scholars who can articulate
14 their needs, scholars who resolve conflict in a
15 positive and constructive manner, and scholars who
16 feel safe to take academic risk and who are being
17 prepared for future impact in their community and the
18 world.

19 MS. SMITH: Hello. My name is Renea Smith and
20 I'm the principal of Pine Bluff Lighthouse Charter
21 School's Upper Academy.

22 All of our curriculum that is utilized at our
23 school is both research-based as well as aligned to
24 Arkansas state standards; it includes the components
25 of Arkansas RISE for ELA. You will find those

1 alignment documents for our curriculum included in
2 the packet that we submitted.

3 For math we utilize the Eureka math curriculum.
4 It is in its third year of implementation at our
5 school for all grade levels. Eureka math includes
6 mathematical fluency, mathematical justification
7 through modeling, and real world problem-solving.

8 For English Language Arts, in kindergarten
9 through 2nd grade we utilize the Core Knowledge
10 curriculum which emphasizes foundational skills,
11 read-alouds, shared reading instruction, and
12 decodable texts. In 3rd through 8th grade we utilize
13 Expeditionary Learning which is a comprehensive
14 literacy program that utilizes real world connections
15 for all students. In addition to Expeditionary
16 Learning, all teachers utilize the components of Word
17 Study that they received in their RISE training in
18 their ELA instructional block. To supplement the
19 curriculum for phonological awareness, grades K
20 through 4 has implemented Heggerty's program.

21 MS. BRYANT: My name is Quawana Bryant,
22 principal of Pine Bluff Lighthouse Charter School
23 Lower Academy.

24 I'm going to talk to you about our intervention
25 instruction at our school.

1 Knowing where we stand, we have created the time
2 in our schedule for all students to receive a minimum
3 of 60 minutes of daily intervention and small group
4 instruction in the classroom that targets each
5 student's individual instructional level. To
6 determine each instructional skill level and gaps,
7 all students are given formative diagnostic
8 assessments. Students are placed in intervention
9 groups based on instructional need, regardless of the
10 grade levels. At multiple points in the school year
11 students are again assessed and placed to insure that
12 they are receiving the current level of instruction
13 at all times. During reading intervention time
14 students receive targeted support for decoding,
15 fluency, and comprehension. During math small group
16 instruction, students work on mastering missing
17 skills in mathematical fluency, number sense, and
18 other grade level math skills.

19 Pine Bluff Lighthouse Charter School implemented
20 the Arkansas RISE during the 2018 school year for
21 kindergarten through 2nd grade, and the current
22 school year for 3rd through 6th grade. We also went
23 above and beyond by having our middle school ELA
24 teacher RISE trained for the current school year
25 because she also teaches reading intervention. We

1 knew that in order for her to meet the needs of her
2 students she would need to understand the science of
3 reading. All reading teachers have received ongoing
4 professional development to aid in the implementation
5 for Arkansas RISE through the ADE -- principals, as
6 well as district literacy specialists.

7 A major challenge for the community is scholar
8 mobility, which is a challenge for all schools in the
9 Pine Bluff area. The average student comes to us
10 substantially below grade level. The chart you see
11 indicates the average percentile for our current new
12 students for the fall NWEA MAP assessments. For
13 example, the new students to us this school year in
14 3rd grade are on average scoring at the 16th
15 percentile in reading and the 23rd percentile in
16 math. The linking study between NWEA MAP and ACT
17 Aspire summative test indicates that a student must
18 be at the 65th percentile in math and the 70th in
19 reading to be on track to meet benchmark at the end
20 of the year. Our priority has been to address
21 literacy first as it is the foundation of all other
22 learning. Thank you.

23 MS. CROWDER: Good morning. My name is Amanda
24 Crowder; I'm the regional academic director for
25 Lighthouse Academies of Arkansas.

1 Today I'm going to go through our growth and
2 performance over the last current charter term, our
3 three-year charter term.

4 This slide you see today illustrates the value-
5 added growth component of the ESSA report for both
6 the Lower and Upper Academy, for both 2017 and 2018,
7 in comparison to the local school district, as we
8 were asked in the last State Board meeting where our
9 students would attend if they left Lighthouse.

10 Schools meeting the expected growth score an 80
11 on this metric. As you can see, our school is close
12 to an 80, sometimes just over, sometimes just under.
13 However, the local school district is typically five
14 points under the 80. Larger groups have a smaller
15 margin because a single extreme score won't impact
16 the mean as much. However, as in Lighthouse the
17 smaller groups have a larger margin because a single
18 extreme score can impact the mean significantly.

19 Pine Bluff Lighthouse has been recognized by the
20 Office of Education Policy and Arkansas Department of
21 Education for the school recognition for growth in
22 2016 and 2017. In 2016, Pine Bluff Lighthouse
23 received the Beating the Odds awards in mathematics
24 and was ranked third in the central Arkansas region.
25 In 2017, Pine Bluff Lighthouse was one of the 10

1 schools to receive the ELA High Growth award.

2 This slide illustrates the overall ESSA scores
3 for 2017 and 2018, again for Pine Bluff Lighthouse,
4 as well as the local school district -- Pine Bluff.
5 As noted, Pine Bluff Lighthouse Lower Academy was
6 only three-tenths of a point from receiving a D.

7 We were also asked to break down the elements
8 that comprise the overall ESSA score. It was
9 included in the packet we submitted, but we also
10 provided you with a handout that I will go through in
11 detail -- so bear with me as I go through each
12 component.

13 The overall ESSA is comprised of weighted
14 achievement --

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: You're still on this item;
16 right?

17 MS. CROWDER: Yes, it's on the second page --
18 starting on the second page.

19 It's comprised of the weighted achievement, the
20 value-added growth, and the school quality and
21 success score.

22 The overall weighted achievement is calculated
23 based on each student's performance on ELA and math
24 on the portion of the ACT Aspire summative test. The
25 change in the weighted achievement report for Pine

1 Bluff Lighthouse could be partially attributed to the
2 change in the ELA cut score in 2018. An analysis of
3 the weighted achievement scores -- the 2017 benchmark
4 scores were used to isolate the influence of this
5 change in cut scores. Pine Bluff Lighthouse Charter
6 School's overall ESSA score would have been a D as a
7 weighted achievement would have increased some 37.5
8 to 42.5 for Lower Academy and 27.3 to 35.9 in Upper
9 Academy. Also noted, the weighted achievement also
10 includes the math performance on the ACT Aspire
11 summative assessment. Pine Bluff Lighthouse had 81
12 students out of 169 students that tested, that scored
13 close on this math assessment.

14 As we talked earlier, the value-added growth
15 score is composed of the school growth for each
16 subgroup. Three subgroups had a value-added growth
17 over an 80, although the overall growth was below 80.
18 Again, with the sample size as small as ours there's
19 not a significant difference between our score and an
20 80. In the Upper Academy we had two scholars who
21 declined significantly that partially attributed to
22 decline in the value-added growth.

23 The school quality and success score is
24 comprised of student engagement, which is the chronic
25 attendance, the reading level, and the science

1 achievement and growth. In analyzing the school
2 quality and success score, the student engagement
3 score significantly impacted Lighthouse. Pine Bluff
4 Lighthouse had 56 scholars that represented 35
5 families that were chronically absent over 10% of the
6 enrollment. Scholars' reading level also was
7 attributed to part of the SQSS. The number of
8 scholars reading on grade level increased from 17
9 scholars in 2017 to 25 scholars in 2018. Science
10 achievement and growth decreased in 2017 and 2018.
11 Again, the overall reading levels, especially of
12 informational texts, had a major impact on science
13 achievement and growth scores. However, as noted in
14 the slide, Pine Bluff Lighthouse Lower Academy is
15 significantly outperforming the local school
16 districts in both 2017 and 2018.

17 As we look at the overall ELA scores utilizing
18 the 2017 benchmark scores, we had an 8% increase in
19 the number of scholars meeting benchmark. The
20 students are increasing their mastery of the ELA
21 scores over time.

22 The chart you see now illustrates the academic
23 gains we have seen from scholars that have remained
24 consecutive with us at Lighthouse. Pine Bluff
25 Lighthouse had 109 students that remained at the

1 school over the current three-year charter term. On
2 average the students have seen a 3.8 scale score
3 increase in ELA over these three years. As you can
4 see, Pine Bluff Lighthouse has significant and
5 positive impact on student achievement and growth
6 when they remain at the school.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: You're getting very close on
8 time, so if you could finish up that would be great.

9 MR. OSBORNE: Okay. Thank you. Hello. My name
10 is John Osborne. I serve as the math curriculum
11 specialist for Lighthouse Charter Schools.

12 Ms. Crowder has just talked to you a little bit
13 about the ESSA report and what we have seen in the
14 past few years. I would like to talk to you a little
15 bit more about what we are currently seeing in this
16 school year and to show you that the fruits of our
17 labor are not in vain.

18 From 2016 to 2017, Pine Bluff Lighthouse Charter
19 School saw a net increase of 2% in math proficiency.
20 In the 2017-2018 school year we saw in 7th grade a
21 change of 15.8% and 5.6% in math. As noted by the
22 Arkansas Department of Education, the 7th grade math
23 scores showed similar trends across the state. You
24 will also notice in 4th grade we experienced a change
25 in performance. Of those 4th graders, 30% of those

1 students were new to Lighthouse as well as brand-new
2 to the Eureka math curriculum. However, the second
3 chart will analyze those students who have stayed
4 with us for three or more years. These numbers
5 represent their summative math ACT Aspire scale
6 scores. As indicated, the scholars have increased an
7 average of 2.8 scale points on their ACT Aspire
8 summative assessments from the 2016 to the 2018
9 school year. This data shows us that Pine Bluff
10 Lighthouse has a truly positive impact on students'
11 mathematical growth.

12 As we look at our current growth on the winter
13 NWEA national assessment, Pine Bluff Lighthouse
14 Charter School has had a 12% increase in the number
15 of scholars who are currently reading on grade level.
16 Our scholars are currently trending to have their
17 best performance year yet as we are dedicated to
18 increasing scholars' lexile levels. Our scholars
19 have currently exceeded expected lexile growth by
20 148% based on the NWEA MAP assessment. Our ACT
21 Aspire interim 2 is showing that each individual
22 grade level has increased in reading on their most
23 recent data. Pine Bluff Lighthouse had an 11%
24 increase in reading --

25 (TIMER BELL RINGS)

1 MR. OSBORNE: -- for grades 3 through 8.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you. All right. Thank
3 y'all very much. And we will -- may well have some
4 questions for you as well.

5 Is there any opposition on this -- to speak on
6 this item?

7 (MOMENT OF SILENCE)

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Then we can move to 5
9 minutes for closing. And so however y'all would like
10 to close.

11 MR. OSBORNE: I'm going to go ahead and continue
12 talking about some of our math growth. So I just
13 mentioned the reading growth. Our scholars are also
14 showing steady growth in mathematics as well. On the
15 same national NWEA winter MAP assessment the grade
16 levels had an overall average increase of seven RIT
17 points. This translates to 99% of expected growth
18 was met across the board for our scholars. Our ACT
19 Aspire interim data and the same winter NWEA data
20 shows an increase in proficiency levels as well for
21 our scholars for the current school year.

22 We know that family and community engagement is
23 essential to increasing our academic outcomes. Our
24 goal is to continue to enhance our parental and
25 community involvement by having a focus on parent

1 education training programs, community service
2 projects, transition programs for families that
3 enroll, provide a viable resource center for the
4 community, and, lastly, build a genuine community
5 partnership with Pine Bluff School District.

6 MS. GALLAGHER: Good afternoon. My name is
7 Sarah Gallagher and I serve as the Chief Academic
8 Officer for Lighthouse Academies.

9 As you have heard, our team has been
10 aggressively working on the plan to insure academic
11 gains for our students in Pine Bluff. The action
12 planning process is one that we did not take lightly.
13 We began a deep analysis of our state accountability
14 outcomes as early as June 2018, when the preliminary
15 test results were released in the summer months. We
16 considered all factors that led to our results and
17 identified strategic levers that would significantly
18 change the trajectory of our academic results in
19 every minute of every day for every child.

20 Our action plan encompasses a three-year
21 timeline. This plan is intentional and deliberate.
22 Our plan focuses on three major areas of development
23 which include attendance, a family involvement
24 instructional program, and teacher capacity and
25 retention.

1 You will see on the handout provided our year-
2 one work has focused on increasing our proactive
3 outreach to families; so I'm referring to the second-
4 to-last page here.

5 At this time each week a taskforce works to
6 identify students who have missed more than 5% of
7 days of school and works to engage in conversation
8 with these families to identify any barriers and
9 remove them, such as transportation issues or health
10 issues. We are also in the midst of planning for the
11 next academic school year. We know that waiting
12 until families are struggling with attendance will
13 never be enough; rather, we are re-conceptualizing
14 our school as a community resource center where
15 families will be drawn into the school building for
16 various purposes, such as a food bank and a laundry
17 facility. Our intent is to provide these services so
18 that our families come into the building, are
19 inspired by what they see and can partner more deeply
20 with us in the years to come. Perhaps they will even
21 volunteer while waiting for the laundry to dry.

22 The second portion of our plan focuses on the
23 instructional program and direct service to students.
24 In the summer of 2018, we deeply analyzed our student
25 achievement scores and analyzed the number of minutes

1 that our students were spending receiving their just-
2 right level of instruction. We recognized that with
3 as many students who are behind as we had we needed
4 to insure that we fully embedded the RISE program,
5 complete with small group learning stations, as well
6 as additional -- an additional hour every day of
7 intervention that truly served the needs of each
8 individual child during the entirety of that hour.
9 To date, our work has focused on maximizing just-
10 right instruction within our ELA program, and in the
11 coming months we will be working to do the same in
12 our mathematics program.

13 As my colleague Mr. Osborne shared earlier, we
14 are seeing the fruits of this labor in ELA already.
15 Our students have shown on average 148% of expected
16 lexile growth just between the beginning of this
17 school year and December. This means that they are
18 poised to attain between a year-and-a-half and two
19 years of growth on average in this first year of
20 implementation of this strategy.

21 In addition to reworking our just-right
22 instruction and implementing RISE, we have also added
23 two exceptional educators to our team as literacy and
24 math specialists who serve our five Lighthouse
25 schools, in Jacksonville, North Little Rock, and Pine

1 Bluff. Joining our team is Ms. Elizabeth Shock who
2 formerly served as the Arkansas Department of
3 Education literacy specialist for charter schools and
4 was an ADE school improvement specialist. Ms. Shock
5 is RISE trained and is working to insure that we have
6 fully implemented the RISE program with integrity to
7 its design, and she does this --

8 (TIMER BELL RINGS)

9 MS. GALLAGHER: -- two full days a week in Pine
10 Bluff. She is providing weekly professional
11 development to teachers and principals and she is
12 supporting individual students who need significant
13 support.

14 Similarly, in mathematics, Mr. John Osborne has
15 been serving as our district math specialist. Mr.
16 Osborne is an award-winning Teacher of the Year and
17 comes to us with extensive experience teaching and
18 coaching mathematics. Mr. Osborne spends two full
19 days a week in Pine Bluff providing direct support to
20 students, as well as professional development to our
21 teachers and data driven coaching with our
22 principals.

23 In the coming year we will refine our just-right
24 instructional model, as well as bring two substantive
25 improvements to our program as well. Knowing that we

1 will have many new students in the fall, we are
2 actively planning ways to insure that our students
3 can hit the ground running on the first day. Our
4 students will start to join us two weeks in advance
5 of the first day for our new Strong Start program in
6 which students and families will have the opportunity
7 to build relationships with teachers and peers, learn
8 the norms of our school, and engage in critical
9 diagnostic testing that will help us insure that we
10 are serving them well from the very first day.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

12 MS. GALLAGHER: In -- okay.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you very much. Thank
14 you.

15 MS. GALLAGHER: Thank you so much for your time.
16 There's more, but --

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: But we will be asking you
18 questions --

19 MS. GALLAGHER: Certainly.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- as well. So I apologize for
21 cutting you off but we want to respect our limits.

22 Okay. Then we can -- my plan is that we'll see
23 what questions the Board has, then we'll go to public
24 comment, and then we'll move to a proper motion.
25 Does that sound great?

1 I'll start over here.

2 Ms. McFetridge, did you have any questions at
3 this point?

4 MS. McFETRIDGE: No.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Newton?

6 MS. NEWTON: Tell me a little bit -- because one
7 of the things that I noticed was the chronically
8 absent percentage had increased, nearly doubled from
9 2016. Tell me a little bit more about your efforts
10 to address the chronic absenteeism?

11 MS. SMITH: Hi. So some of the ways --

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Would you just identify your
13 name for the record?

14 MS. SMITH: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm Renea --

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: It makes it easier for the
16 court reporter.

17 MS. SMITH: I am so sorry. I'm Renea Smith,
18 principal at Pine Bluff Lighthouse Upper Academy.

19 So some of the ways that we began to address
20 this chronic attendance is we first tried to sit down
21 and meet with our families to see what it is that
22 they need. In our process, they're going to get a
23 notification every day that they're absent. So up
24 until the third day -- that's when we bring them in
25 and we sit down and we try to figure out how can we

1 assist; is it transportation, is it that you have
2 doctors appointments that we can be notified about in
3 advance so that scholars can get the work that they
4 need.

5 MS. NEWTON: Because the percentage went -- it
6 went from like 14% chronically absent in 2016 to
7 almost 30% in 2018. Did you find the root cause for
8 that? Did you --

9 MS. SMITH: A lot of the reasons for the
10 attendance was just lots of them had different
11 appointments that were conflicting, and so the timing
12 for them getting to school was -- they were missing
13 it. So their appointments conflicted with the time
14 that we're in school, in the school day.

15 MS. NEWTON: Have you seen any positive results
16 this year as far as --

17 MS. SMITH: Yes, ma'am. So, this year our
18 absences have been significantly reduced just because
19 we are starting to meet families before they get to
20 where -- a danger zone. And so at that third day
21 we're able to diagnose what the problem is, get kids
22 on buses, and work with families who have those
23 doctors appointments so that they can work with us
24 and get kids to school.

25 MS. NEWTON: Okay. And can you tell me a little

1 bit about your staff attendance?

2 MS. SMITH: So our staff attendance -- we have
3 been working trying to dedicate time to give
4 incentives for attendance. And so our staff
5 attendance is still up and down, but we're working on
6 getting our staff incentives for coming to work every
7 day.

8 MS. NEWTON: Because when students don't see
9 staff place an importance on coming to school then
10 they don't think it's important either. So --

11 MS. SMITH: Thank you.

12 MS. NEWTON: That's all I have right now.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

14 Dr. Hill?

15 Ms. Chambers?

16 Ms. Dean?

17 MS. DEAN: I don't have a question. I just want
18 to say thank you for providing the information. It's
19 good to see that you have it seems like a healthy
20 parental involvement, and it seems to be growing. So
21 that's good -- like good to hear that. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great.

23 I have a quick question. I see Dr. Airola back
24 there and I hope she's willing -- she's a person I
25 trust enormously on analyses of test data.

1 You heard their portrayal of the data, and the
2 ESSA data in particular, and the varying factors
3 involved in that and where they were having some
4 challenges. I just wondered if you could -- I know
5 this -- you weren't expecting this. But are you --
6 did you feel their portrayal of the data was on
7 target?

8 DR. AIROLA: I was kind of in the middle of
9 checking a few things -- Denise Airola with the
10 Office of Innovation for Education -- and I am
11 running some of it.

12 What I think is important to note is that we do
13 have information about the cohort of students
14 compared to all the students. And the data I think
15 that we provide, that I ran, was looking at just the
16 data that are available publicly, but then looking at
17 it for what it is right now for all the kids who
18 attend the entire system of Pine Bluff Lighthouse
19 versus all the kids who actually stayed for at least
20 three years. So I'm thinking some of the differences
21 in our numbers may be how we constructed our cohorts.
22 But I looked at kids who started in grades 3, 4, 5
23 and 6 that were finishing over the three years, by
24 2018. So I ended up with 66 students compared to
25 their 109, but those 66 students are the students

1 that we have data from the state-required assessment
2 for ACT Aspire.

3 So I was just trying to run really quickly their
4 retrofitted scores. One thing that struck me is
5 there was an adjustment made to the scale for A
6 through F letter grades to account for that change in
7 cut score for ELA from 2017 to 2018; so in effect
8 that scale had already been adjusted. You know,
9 there's just some general patterns that I had
10 presented. Growth is -- you can take into account
11 the numbers of students, particularly the cohorts
12 being so small. Only 44% of the students who started
13 there in 2016 were still there in 2018 that were in
14 grades 3 through 8 for us to follow the numbers; so
15 that is a very small number. So we do have to be
16 careful that we look at those confidence intervals
17 around the data and that -- you know, they have a lot
18 of numbers in there, some of which are publicly
19 available and are split out between the two systems.
20 And the numbers that you have --

21 Oh, thank you.

22 So the chronic absence rates are coming from
23 theoretically the same data. We're looking at the
24 cycle data, so it's certified data that has been
25 submitted and, you know, we just put in the percent

1 for the state just as a comparison, just a point of
2 reference. I mean, I think points of reference are
3 really important, and there has been a dramatic
4 increase which they have acknowledged and have been
5 talking about. That only accounts for 3.7% of the
6 overall score for ESSA. And again the ESSA grade,
7 it's comprised of an entire index and the cut scores
8 for A through F were adjusted to account for the
9 change in the ELA cut scores. All things being
10 considered, basically schools are working on a level
11 playing field; that was the intent of the adjustments
12 that you all approved last year.

13 Let's see. So I think it's helpful to see the
14 numbers side-by-side -- and again, this is all
15 students. I did not adjust these students for
16 eliminating mobile students because there does seem
17 to be a lot of in-and-out and that in and of itself
18 can impact a student. And so if you don't keep all
19 the kids who are in the school in for these
20 comparisons, then you're not getting a complete
21 picture. So, that was the purpose of putting in the
22 full group of students grades 3 through 8, which you
23 can see 191 in '16, 175 in '17, and 177. And then
24 the chart just below it --

25 I don't know how to make it scroll. Maybe

1 there's a side thing that -- no, it doesn't.

2 But you can see that by the time we get to 8th
3 grade there's a group there that was 31 and they're
4 cut in less than half by -- they started in 6th
5 grade, 31 students; cut in less than half by 12 -- to
6 12. So side-by-side, looking at the -- I put value-
7 added growth as the very first one because that is a
8 measure of growth that we use in ESSA, 80 being the
9 expected score --

10 Uh-oh, it's not going to move because I think I
11 touched a button that had been like --

12 MR. DAN DAVIS: Do you want to go down?

13 DR. AIROLA: Yeah, I want to go down.

14 And so if you put -- so if you stop right there
15 -- if you put the information in context and you put
16 the confidence intervals around it, basically that
17 inconsistency -- that little bit of up-and-down is
18 due to the fact that you've got a small number of
19 students that you're looking at over time and those
20 kids have a wide variety of growth scores. And so
21 that variance -- that difference from one end of the
22 continuum of growth to the other does result in kind
23 of a flat or inconsistent growth pattern for the
24 school when you put it all together. And we broke it
25 out by grade level because there are definitely grade

1 level patterns. And you can see the all-students
2 versus the PDL cohort, which is interesting because
3 you see that jump from 75.74 up to 81 and then back
4 down to 77.71. So consistency across time for the
5 same group of kids is what we would be looking for
6 over time.

7 Some of the other numbers are -- so these
8 numbers are really close to what they presented from
9 the data that they pulled off of their reports, but
10 these are focused predominantly on -- as I said, this
11 includes all the students; we're not deleting the
12 kids out that were highly mobile during the year --
13 so everybody you're educating during that time
14 period.

15 Can you scroll down a little bit?

16 And this is English Language Arts. And English
17 Language Arts was the area where we saw the change in
18 the cut score. So looking at growth you still want
19 to see an increase in the scale score of students if
20 they're going to move to that higher level. And what
21 growth picks up -- it's agnostic to a cut score. It
22 doesn't care that there's a change in the cut score;
23 it's basically looking at is there a positive
24 trajectory for the student. And so the closer -- 80
25 and above there's a positive or even better

1 trajectory; anything below 80 we get a little
2 concerned about. We get more concerned when those
3 values are lower than 78. Just in general, 78 is a
4 good spot when you think about -- it's close to the
5 standard deviation for across the state and it's
6 around the standard, really close to a 95% confidence
7 if we go around the scores.

8 So, just looking, it's interesting because you
9 can see in 2017 that blip was really just -- it's a
10 couple of grade levels. So the consistency is part
11 of the issue here. That's when you think about
12 growth in ELA. Now if you go across the different
13 subjects there's -- in growth --

14 Can we scroll down and just kind of --

15 Again, you know, general patterns, general
16 trends. Even with a confidence interval around it
17 you're looking at really how are those kids going.
18 And in math what's interesting to me is it appears,
19 based on looking at these two lines, that they
20 benefit from kids coming in, because kids obviously
21 are losing ground in mathematics -- or were, you
22 know, from '16 to '17, '17 to '18. Now that may be
23 very different for '18 to '19, but we won't have that
24 information till the end of the year. So we're just
25 dealing in what's the reality of the data that are

1 available to us to work with.

2 And then as you continue to scroll down, again
3 look at the variation from grade level. Let's go
4 down to science. Science is probably the most
5 concerning, I think, as we go down here because it
6 does -- you know, ACT Aspire does have a continuum of
7 expectation of increased skill and knowledge being
8 applied, increased analytical ability as you look at
9 materials and you go over the years. And this is
10 showing a very downward trend, well below that 78
11 that would be of concern. And the variation from
12 grade level to grade level, particularly in 2018,
13 would -- these are kids that are leaving Pine Bluff
14 Lighthouse and I'm assuming most of them are going to
15 head to the high school in Pine Bluff because there's
16 not a system -- another choice system for the
17 students. So, and then the achievement trends that
18 are in here -- if we'll keep scrolling down -- I
19 think, you know, again, you've got this information
20 side-by-side.

21 Stop there for just a second.

22 This is ELA. And, yes, we acknowledge that the
23 change from 2017 to 2018 is in part due to the change
24 in the ELA cut score. So that's why as you go down
25 -- now we expected that here.

1 Let's look at math. Math is -- yeah, that was
2 reading. I'm sorry. Let's stop at reading for a
3 minute because that's a highlight. You actually do
4 see that there's something going on in reading.
5 There's a positive trend in reading with both the
6 cohort of students and the students that -- the
7 larger group of students that they have.

8 So, and then down we can look at mathematics.
9 Mathematics has got a downward trend, and I believe
10 science as well. So we can scroll down to science.

11 I think the thing I wanted to -- I'm trying to
12 put all of this into a context that makes sense. If
13 you go down to the mean scaled scores, when I look at
14 the average increase -- the mean scaled score
15 increase for this group of students, the cohort, as
16 compared to the overall group of students that
17 they're educating, that they're saying is 3.8%, this
18 cohort has a 3.5% increase over time. And then as we
19 scroll down, what we've done is put side-by-side --
20 on the right --

21 If you'll stop right there.

22 On the right-hand side, these are the
23 trajectories for each subject area for students who
24 would be taking the 3rd grade assessment, then the
25 4th grade, and then the 5th grade. That is the -- on

1 the right-hand side you see the expected progress in
2 order to meet the readiness level from year-to-year.
3 So, yes, it's true; the students coming in to Pine
4 Bluff Lighthouse start below grade level, as you can
5 see by their starting point in 2016. The question is
6 -- you know, so here you can see what that pattern of
7 change is. So for ELA, you know, you want to see a
8 bigger increase and you want to see a continuous
9 increase of students who are going to catch up to
10 that new benchmark. And as you scroll through you
11 can see each cohort -- how that cohort looks compared
12 to what the expectation is for that cohort if they
13 were to come in ready and continue ready. So
14 generally what we're trying to do is when we have
15 kids who come in less than ready we're trying to
16 accelerate that. So we want to see a steeper slope
17 for this group of kids, particularly by 3rd grade and
18 up.

19 So I know it's hard because K-2 data are useful
20 in the K-2 context, but there's still a lot of work
21 being done to connect what is a score at K-2 or what
22 does a particular percentile at K-2 mean for a
23 student that then is in turn 3rd grade and what
24 progress they need to make to be on target for 3rd
25 grade. So that's why we focused on what's available

1 to you -- and I know it's more than you probably
2 asked for.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: No, that's very helpful.
4 Because I think it's especially -- we've also got to
5 think about -- if there is a decision to continue the
6 charter, there's also the choice about the length of
7 that; correct, Ms. Hyatt, in terms of --

8 MS. HYATT: (Nodding head up and down.)

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So that's something else I'm
10 trying to get my head around, when are we actually
11 going to be able to see patterns.

12 DR. AIROLA: Right. And also just to have that
13 grade level breakdown helps you to understand, you
14 know, that there's that consistency issue. So is
15 that something that --

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Right.

17 Any other questions for Dr. Airola before she
18 wanders away?

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'm just curious, how many --
20 well, maybe it's not a question for you. I'm sorry.
21 How many students have been in a pre-K program going
22 into that school?

23 DR. AIROLA: Oh, I --

24 MS. McFETRIDGE: Do we know?

25 DR. AIROLA: I don't have --

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: Is there any information on
2 that?

3 DR. AIROLA: -- the answer to that question.
4 That's a good question.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Ms. Zook, anything?

6 MS. ZOOK: Not for Dr. Airola.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Thank you so much.

8 Ms. Zook.

9 MS. ZOOK: First, I want to compliment you on
10 having a lot of your PD on Saturdays so you're not
11 taking teachers out of the classroom. I'm all about
12 teacher attendance and getting away from the chronic
13 absenteeism and the role modeling for those.

14 Do you have and are you actively screening
15 children for dyslexia?

16 I knew I'd get you up out of your chair.

17 MS. PHILLIPS: Good afternoon. My name is
18 Melanie Phillips and I am the special ed. director
19 for Lighthouse Charter Schools of Arkansas and I
20 oversee the dyslexia program as well.

21 Yes, we are screening all of our students that
22 are required by the State, kindergarten through 2nd
23 grade. The assessments that we use are DIBELS, the
24 DSA, and the AR-RAN. Some students that show some
25 significant concerns with teachers we have -- also

1 had our speech therapist to do some additional
2 screeners to help us determine if there is a
3 possibility of some type of possible language
4 disorder. And based on those results, sometimes we
5 move students to a higher urgency kind of -- I guess
6 would be a word -- to determine how we will support
7 them so that we can try to close the gaps while
8 they're younger as opposed to waiting till 2nd or 3rd
9 grade. A lot of our students that do have language
10 barriers have been in pre-k programs and actually
11 received services under early childhood special ed.
12 So some of those students we already kind of know
13 about, but we like to kind of give them a chance to
14 see what was taught in those programs, will they
15 transfer over to kindergarten and the language
16 development.

17 MS. ZOOK: What level of confidence do you have
18 that your 3rd through 8th grade teachers know how to
19 spot a child that needs to be screened between 3rd
20 and 8th grade?

21 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, I do have confidence in
22 that. One thing that I'm very confident about is --
23 because I'm aware and the teachers that are being
24 trained further in dyslexia -- we know what to look
25 for. So when we're in grade level meetings and we're

1 meeting with teachers one-on-one we know the
2 questions to ask. We also are training them on the
3 standards that are set by the State with dyslexia and
4 how to measure those things. But it's a very
5 difficult thing to understand.

6 MS. ZOOK: Yes.

7 MS. PHILLIPS: And a lot of our teachers are
8 new, so it's a lot at one time. So that's why they
9 have a lot of support.

10 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And I don't know if this
11 question is for you or one of the other presenters.
12 But is the curriculum that you have adopted -- is it
13 having to be modified by a teacher in order to be in
14 compliance with the Science of Reading? Or is it
15 fully aligned with the Science of Reading and the
16 standards for the State?

17 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, I will answer or somebody
18 else can. A little bit of that is that students --
19 it's modified based on the need of the student. So
20 is the curriculum aligned to what the state
21 expectations are? Yes, it is. But we do have to
22 make some modifications based on the ability of
23 students so that we can move them to where they need
24 to be as far as grade level. So there are a lot of
25 intervention groups, there's a lot of push-in with

1 our speech therapist, with our special ed. teacher,
2 and our building level interventionist as well.

3 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Because I know when you're
4 learning a new skill, which Science of Reading for
5 probably the majority of your teachers is a new
6 skill, it's hard to do the new skill and adapt a
7 curriculum that's not complimentary of that. So --

8 MS. PHILLIPS: The benefit is that we do have a
9 small school. So we are able to support teachers a
10 little more in-depth than if you were -- we have one
11 kindergarten teacher, so she's able to get a lot of
12 support. I think another benefit too is that as I've
13 been in this position I've tried to be very vocal to
14 support teachers on helping them identify possible
15 areas that could be a language barrier; so just
16 teaching them the things to look for.

17 MS. ZOOK: Okay. When you're saying "language
18 barrier," are you talking about the processing or are
19 you talking about things that people typically think
20 of when they think of speech therapy?

21 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, yes. So, basically to
22 teach them those two concepts, because it's language
23 and articulation.

24 MS. ZOOK: Right.

25 MS. PHILLIPS: So to be able to support them in

1 the things like in kindergarten with language, being
2 able to follow one-step directions, being able to ask
3 a question, to communicate their wants and needs with
4 their peers, to properly listen and focus on what
5 someone is saying.

6 MS. ZOOK: Okay. Because, theoretically, not
7 being in your building my presumption would be,
8 looking at the data of Dr. Airola and those of you
9 there, is that you see a decrease because you have
10 students who can't read and comprehend well enough to
11 be able to score well in whether it's math or whether
12 it's science or that -- because the level and need of
13 comprehension of those things to be able to answer
14 those questions is much more difficult.

15 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, ma'am. That's exactly
16 correct.

17 MS. ZOOK: So I don't know if that's true, but
18 --

19 MS. PHILLIPS: We do have a lot of students with
20 language barriers in kindergarten.

21 MS. ZOOK: Okay. And let me see. Okay. Also,
22 this may be for one of the principals. Are you
23 working with the high school that probably will get
24 your students so the transition from 8th to 9th is
25 not a shock to their system or their parents' system?

1 And I know you have a superintendent down there now
2 who will do anything he can for his students, just as
3 you all are. And I think that would be a great model
4 for the state for the collaboration for moving from
5 8th to high school when you don't have a continuing
6 program -- because the number of students that they
7 will be in class with, the difference in the level of
8 nurturing, the level of wraparound services may or
9 may not be there. So if you're doing that, terrific
10 and share with the rest of the state; if you're not,
11 please consider it.

12 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, what I can answer, with the
13 students that receive services under IDEA, we do work
14 closely with the schools to make sure that there is
15 not a gap as far as transfer of services and IEPs and
16 documents. And we also monitor closely the students
17 that will possibly turn 16 in the upcoming school
18 year so that we have already implemented their
19 transition plans. So there's not a waiting period
20 and those things are already in place when they get
21 to high school.

22 MS. ZOOK: Thank you. That's all, Dr. Barth.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Zook.

24 MS. ROBERTS: And just to piggyback on that, in
25 previous years we have not had the opportunity to

1 build that type of relationship with the district.
2 But I used to work with Dr. Owoh in North Little Rock
3 School District, so we have met to try to start
4 making sure we have that transition in place; so we
5 are going to work towards making sure that our kids
6 are ready to go into high school. He and I have
7 talked about that earlier this year. So we plan on
8 making that happen.

9 MS. ZOOK: Thank you.

10 MS. ROBERTS: Uh-huh.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Mr. Williamson, anything?

12 Dr. Moore?

13 Okay. Any other questions over here?

14 Okay. Then we need to move to public comment.
15 And because we have not had a motion to accept public
16 comment for folks who showed up today, can I
17 entertain that motion?

18 MS. ZOOK: So moved.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

20 MS. DEAN: Second.

21 MS. McFETRIDGE: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms. Zook,
23 second by Ms. Dean.

24 All in favor say "aye."

25 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

2 All right. Then we have Ms. Roberts. You have
3 up to 3 minutes if you would like to take that.

4 MS. ROBERTS: Good afternoon.

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Good afternoon.

6 MS. ROBERTS: My name is Donna Roberts. I am a
7 parent of a Lighthouse scholar. He's 7th grade. I
8 did not come with any charts or any paper or
9 anything. I'm coming from my heart because my heart
10 goes to Lighthouse Charter School.

11 Now I heard about the -- I just want to say this
12 one comment about the attendance at the school. Me
13 as a parent, my son is not going to miss a day. He
14 can say, "Mom, I'm sick." I get the -- I check his
15 temperature. If it's okay, he's going to school;
16 he's there. Now I've also heard -- I've heard and
17 listened to other parents that have said, "I
18 overslept, so I didn't get my son or my daughter up;"
19 "My son or daughter overslept, so I let them stay in
20 bed." So to me, it's not quite a Lighthouse -- you
21 know, it's not dealing with them, their Lighthouse
22 guidance; it's coming from parental guidance. I
23 betcha if you go to half of those that's not there
24 and you go into that household you would see the
25 reason why. It's not that child; it's based on

1 parental guidance.

2 But my thing -- I've been here three times since
3 I've heard about Lighthouse not being renewed. My
4 son has been at Lighthouse since day-one. My son is
5 a straight-A student. I thank God for that, and I
6 thank God for Lighthouse because that enabled him --
7 they enabled him to get there, and he's still getting
8 that and he's still growing. So I don't want that
9 growth taken out of Pine Bluff.

10 Pine Bluff is a city that we need every type of
11 positivity that we can get right now, y'all, and
12 that's one positive thing we have is Lighthouse.
13 Lighthouse is dedicated and they're consistent.
14 They're dedicated and they're consistent in
15 implementing to the students to work hard, get smart,
16 and graduate from college.

17 So I pray that you all please, for me and I'm
18 sure I'm speaking for the majority of the parents,
19 please take into consideration to leave Lighthouse
20 open. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you, Ms. Roberts.

22 And, Mr. May, did you want to speak?

23 MR. MAY: (shaking head from side to side.)

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. I thought I'd seen your
25 name earlier. So thank you.

1 So thanks; that's the end of public comment on
2 this item.

3 And so I'm going to turn it back over to Ms.
4 Hyatt who's going to talk through our options.

5 MS. HYATT: Mary Claire Hyatt, Arkansas
6 Department of Education.

7 So you have lots of options and I'll go through
8 them, and then if you've got questions I'll be happy
9 to answer them.

10 The first option would be to affirm the decision
11 of the Charter Authorizing Panel, which would be to
12 non-renew the school, meaning that it would -- the
13 charter would end June 30th of this year.

14 The second would be to immediately revoke the
15 charter or to revoke it at any other time between now
16 and June.

17 Then you could decide to renew the charter
18 either for the requested time, which was five years,
19 a shorter time than that, or up to 20 years. And
20 then if you decided to renew, you also have the
21 ability to put the charter on probation, which could
22 include additional reporting to you or to the Charter
23 Panel, anything like that.

24 And that's about it.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. Questions

1 before we move to consideration of motions?

2 All right. Thank you, Ms. Hyatt.

3 Any -- the floor is open for motions.

4 MS. ZOOK: I move to renew the charter for a
5 period of three (3) years.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. And is there is a
7 second?

8 DR. HILL: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook, are there any other
10 probationary conditions or anything like that?

11 MS. ZOOK: No. I was at the Charter Panel
12 meeting before, and I noticed that at that time they
13 were up to come back in December. I don't know that
14 I care to have that as a stipulation because as most
15 people know, and some people don't, we can call a
16 charter in at any time. So I think that I would --
17 my motion is that we renew it for three (3) years
18 with no stipulations unless, you know, something
19 comes up.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right.
21 Ms. Newton?

22 MS. NEWTON: I was just looking at their
23 timeline and that --

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: If you could grab your
25 microphone, please.

1 MS. NEWTON: I'm sorry.

2 I was just looking at their timeline and what
3 she said kind of makes sense because they're in year-
4 one of what they had said would be improvement. And
5 then year-two would be next year, and then the third
6 year would allow us to get data to see if what they
7 said they're going to do to make improvements would
8 actually make a difference. So that -- I first
9 thought two years, but then when I think about it,
10 you know, if they do two years we won't have the data
11 back until the third year.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Mr. Williamson?

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: I'm ready to vote.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right.

15 DR. HILL: Can I say something?

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Yes, Dr. Hill.

17 DR. HILL: Just a general comment because I
18 appreciate all the data and the progress that you're
19 making. I just think one thing that we should keep
20 in mind is the parent; what she says is that it looks
21 like progress is being made in the classroom. And I
22 often say from experience that the barriers are
23 outside the classroom. And if we can find even more
24 supportive ways to get kids to school because of
25 their problems, I mean, you know, that becomes as

1 much a part of the education process as math and
2 reading. I mean, because if they're not there -- and
3 so -- and then you're held against it because they're
4 not in class. And so that participation starts
5 outside the classroom and doing as much as possible
6 from community engagement, you know, and
7 transportation. I mean, oversleeping, you know, all
8 those type of things are really part of the
9 educational process now that we never -- that we
10 didn't think about growing up; you know, that was
11 just standard operating procedure.

12 So I'm -- you know, I'm very supportive of kids
13 having individualized attention, which they're
14 getting, you know, and the support that they need,
15 and we appreciate the work that you're doing to try
16 to make, you know, a positive education experience
17 for everyone. And if we can find very creative ways
18 to grow the incentives -- like I remember I used to
19 work at International Paper Company and every day
20 that everybody showed up or didn't have a problem or
21 didn't have an accident they posted it up there. I
22 think for our teachers -- I mean, if we posted up
23 100% attendance for our teachers everybody knows --
24 and then if somebody doesn't come, then who is it.
25 You know, I think sometimes, you know, it's just like

1 a football coach; when you don't win, everybody knows
2 you don't win. It's not like it's public, you know.
3 So I think we need public accountability for our
4 teachers, you know, as well, because they're hired to
5 do this. And so we want to be responsive in a very
6 special way to let them know we expect for you to be
7 here, and we know that there -- you know, you have
8 days -- but if not, I mean, that's -- we should
9 incentivize that. And then when our kids see that
10 we're incentivizing that then they'll say, "Well, we
11 can't miss," you know. How many of y'all got perfect
12 attendance in Sunday school, you know, growing up? I
13 mean, that was a huge deal in Sunday school that
14 everybody go every Sunday -- and then if you didn't
15 miss, you know, at the end of the year you got
16 something. And so as a kid I wanted to have 51 weeks
17 of church, so -- but that was the goal. And I just
18 think those things are so important that we have
19 goals and we aspire for those goals for the
20 betterment of our kids which impact our community;
21 then everybody is happy. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

23 Ms. Chambers.

24 MS. CHAMBERS: I have a question for us, but
25 first wanted to -- I very much appreciate the

1 presentation. I sat here the whole time thinking
2 about where would these scholars go if they weren't
3 in your care, which really influences -- I will vote
4 to renew the charter.

5 But my question for my peers is given the very
6 significant goal you've set for three years from now,
7 is there anything we want to see between now and
8 three years? And maybe more to the point, is there
9 anything to do differently -- if you're going to
10 accomplish these things three years from now, what
11 would have to be true? What would you need to have
12 achieved a year from now to stay on that path? And
13 would we do anything different if we knew that, with
14 you, for you?

15 And so I just -- I want to make sure we were
16 thinking about -- three years is a long time in the
17 life of a student, and I just want to make sure that
18 we've thought of that as we vote on a period of time.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: That's a -- I mean, your --
20 something I think is important to think about,
21 because I think, you know, there have been occasions
22 where there have been -- where everybody related to
23 the school has kind of been in some ways kind of
24 caught off-guard with the problems, you know, that
25 everybody kind of saw coming who was paying close

1 attention. But I think many of those folks, you
2 know, got there and they weren't warned along the
3 way.

4 And so that's the only thing about more regular
5 check-ins is that if things are going off-track it
6 helps prepare everybody possibly in some cases for
7 the inevitable. And we hope that's not the case; we
8 hope that this trajectory just continues up and up.
9 But I do think there is this concern about not
10 surprising people as we get close to that fear part.
11 That's the only thing I have.

12 COMMISSIONER KEY: Well, I would offer that just
13 to keep in mind, you know, when you think in terms of
14 a charter, it is a contract between the State Board
15 of Education and the entity that is seeking the
16 charter. If there are specific measures in there
17 that -- from year to year that you all want to see as
18 far as progress, that's part of the negotiation. So
19 I know what typically happens is a charter submits
20 their application and they may have their goals, but
21 part of reviewing, you know, that application is if
22 you want more specific goals you have that right as a
23 board to engage in that negotiation.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: The other thing I really want
25 to see in addition -- and I maybe don't care as much

1 about test score goals, although I care about test
2 score direction. But I also care about collaboration
3 with the Pine Bluff School District because I do
4 think that we have -- because of state authority, we
5 have a special responsibility to care for that
6 district. And anything that we turn into
7 confrontation between these two schools, rather than
8 collaboration between the two schools, is not good
9 for that school district where we have a lot of
10 responsibility as a state board right now. So that's
11 something I care more about as something going
12 forward.

13 So would anybody -- is everybody good with the
14 motion as-is or would anyone like to add additional
15 elements, try to amend the motion with additional
16 components?

17 MS. McFETRIDGE: I would like to see more
18 reporting. I'm just not sure how to word that
19 correctly. To me, we're insisting that we have the
20 Pine Bluff School District report back to us on a
21 regular basis. I just feel like in order to be fair
22 to both sides it may be good to get a little more
23 reporting from the Lighthouse.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER KEY: There is regular reporting.

1 I think Dr. Boyd can come and clarify what those
2 reporting requirements are and their presentation to
3 the Board.

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great.

5 DR. BOYD: Thank you, Commissioner Key.

6 So with the Charter Unit moving to the Public
7 School Accountability Division, and with the number
8 of things that are going on at Pine Bluff Lighthouse,
9 I do believe that they'll be put on a consistent
10 monitoring schedule with our state monitoring tool.
11 So that information will be available to you once
12 monitoring is conducted.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Is that -- Dr. Boyd, is that
14 automatically put on our consent agenda or is it not?

15 DR. BOYD: It's not.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. That would be -- it
17 could be though? We could ask that that be placed on
18 the consent agenda on a regular basis in case folks
19 want to pull it up?

20 DR. BOYD: Yes, you could.

21 MS. COFFMAN: You could.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Coffman's not keen on that,
23 but I think the Board likes that. So --

24 COMMISSIONER KEY: Well, let me clarify because
25 there's monitoring of certain things that are under

1 the Standards for Accreditation, and, you know, I
2 don't hear that being what you all are talking about.
3 You're -- so --

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: We're 10,000 feet.

5 COMMISSIONER KEY: Yeah. So let's make sure
6 that we're clear on when we say --

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Tell us what we want, Ms.
8 Coffman.

9 MS. COFFMAN: Good morning. Debbie Coffman,
10 Public School Accountability.

11 So we're monitoring every day, all the time. We
12 have a whole team that just -- that's what they do.
13 So we monitor for state Standards for Accreditation
14 so that we can accredit schools. That's going on.
15 We have daily updates from the data coming in to see
16 if schools are in compliance with Standards for
17 Accreditation. In addition to that, we have a
18 charter team that is always keeping an eye on what's
19 going on in our charter schools. There's a lot of
20 scrutiny for charter schools, as you know. So
21 they're always keeping an eye on what's going on
22 there.

23 In addition to that, any school that receives
24 federal funds is monitored by our federal team and
25 they're looking at applications and budgets and every

1 time there's an expenditure. And then in addition to
2 that, we do monitor them. So we monitor in what we
3 consider a tiered system, both at the state and
4 federal level.

5 We're monitoring all the time with desk
6 monitoring, and any time something pops up and it
7 doesn't look right we start going deeper and deeper.
8 And then we could go on-site based on because we went
9 deep and we still don't have the answer we're looking
10 for or some risk popped up; that's the second reason.
11 Third reason could be that there's a request for a
12 monitoring visit, which is very thorough -- or it
13 could just be that we're doing some random sampling,
14 which we do also.

15 So we have been approved by the U.S. Department
16 of Ed. as having an excellent monitoring plan. And
17 so if there's something specific, we're happy to look
18 at it. But we're monitoring all the time.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I think what -- and I think --

20 MS. COFFMAN: If you know something, say
21 something; we'll look into it.

22 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I think that's all great, but I
23 do think there is this responsibility to the public
24 and stakeholders to --

25 MS. COFFMAN: Sure.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- to elevate things a little
2 bit. And I do think that's what happens at this
3 level, which is different than that day-to-day
4 monitoring where the red flag pops up and then we
5 have a crisis. This would be more of a regular
6 response.

7 Ms. Newton.

8 MS. NEWTON: How often is Pine Bluff coming in
9 because they're a Level 5?

10 COMMISSIONER KEY: I'm sorry; how often -- what?

11 MS. NEWTON: How often is Pine Bluff coming
12 because they're a Level 5?

13 COMMISSIONER KEY: Yeah. Quarterly.

14 MS. NEWTON: Quarterly. I don't think we at all
15 need to go there, but maybe a yearly that would be
16 similar to what Pine Bluff has to do, talking about
17 progress toward meeting goals, that sort of thing. I
18 don't think the monitoring of the standards is what
19 we're interested in; just are they making progress
20 toward meeting academic goals, culture of the school,
21 the attendance, that sort of thing, are we making
22 progress there. I think that's more what we're
23 interested in.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Chambers.

25 MS. CHAMBERS: I agree with what Ms. Newton just

1 suggested. I also thought as part of that -- and it
2 does fit into the annual review -- I'd love to hear
3 Lighthouse come back and say -- okay -- so that the
4 primary comment, which I loved -- every student
5 enrolled for three years or more will meet or exceed
6 grade level standards. Okay. If that's the goal
7 three years from now, what would -- you would have --
8 you could tell us then what are the things that will
9 help determine that. I think that'll be pretty
10 straightforward. But where would you have to be two
11 years from now? If you come to us in one year what
12 would we need to see to know that you're on that
13 path? That would be very helpful to me if the folks
14 that have put forward the motion would agree to that.

15 MS. COFFMAN: And if the timeline is in
16 conjunction that they will have received their ESSA
17 school index report that would be much more useful to
18 the school district -- or to the school as well.

19 MS. CHAMBERS: That's a tie-in.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Ms. Zook, are you amenable to
21 this or do you want to really stick with your
22 original motion?

23 MS. ZOOK: I'm comfortable with my motion as it
24 is -- or -- but if somebody wants to make a second
25 motion, that's fine.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. So I'll look to Ms.
2 Chambers or Ms. Newton or Ms. McFetridge to see if
3 there's interest in a different motion.

4 MS. CHAMBERS: I would -- I'm not sure in terms
5 of protocol on that.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So a motion to amend -- it
7 would be a motion to amend -- Ms. Hyatt, a motion to
8 amend the original motion to add annual reporting
9 requirements at a time appropriate to be in sync with
10 ESSA index reports?

11 MS. HYATT: That's correct. So a motion to
12 amend; then you would vote to amend the motion, and
13 then vote on the amended motion.

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. And if it failed, we
15 would go back to the original motion --

16 MS. HYATT: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: -- that is a clean three-year.
18 Okay.

19 MS. HYATT: Sorry. Yeah.

20 MS. CHAMBERS: That's okay.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. So we have a motion
22 to amend from Ms. Chambers in the way it's laid out.
23 Is there a second to that?

24 MS. NEWTON: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Second by Ms. Newton.

1 Further discussion on that motion to amend?

2 Dr. Moore.

3 DR. MOORE: I have a question.

4 So this is a report to the State Board or
5 Charter Authorizing Panel?

6 MS. CHAMBERS: I would like to see it.

7 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. To the State Board?

8 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Is that all?

10 DR. MOORE: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Everybody good?

12 Okay. Let's do a roll-call on this. So this is
13 on the amendment to the motion.

14 COMMISSIONER KEY: Get my roll-call sheet.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I'm sorry. We can go down the
16 row perhaps.

17 MS. CHAMBERS: Are we moving to amend or moving
18 on what the amended motion is?

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: It's moving to amend. Ms. Zook
20 did not agree to the amendment and, therefore, we do
21 need to go through the process. Is that right, Ms.
22 Hyatt?

23 MS. ZOOK: It's not that I disagreed; it's just

24 --

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: No. Yeah. No --

1 MS. ZOOK: -- that I didn't understand exactly
2 what they wanted, so I couldn't word it.

3 MS. HYATT: Let me double-check just to make
4 sure I'm right now.

5 Yeah. So the Board can amend a motion before
6 voting on it. If the maker of the motion agrees to
7 the amendment it can be done without a vote. If the
8 maker doesn't, the motion can only be amended by a
9 majority vote.

10 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. So we'll
11 move to a vote on this amendment.

12 COMMISSIONER KEY: Unless now that you've heard
13 it and understood it --

14 MS. ZOOK: If somebody else wants to word it,
15 I'm happy with that.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: I think we worded it.

17 COMMISSIONER KEY: Yeah.

18 MS. ZOOK: I guess my point is because we have
19 access to My School Info, and because of the things
20 Ms. Coffman said, and the things that Dr. Boyd said I
21 really didn't see any point in having anything else
22 done, you know, whether -- I mean, they could come in
23 and say it or you could bring Lighthouse in again and
24 say it. But I think because we now have access
25 ourselves and we have -- we're working under ESSA,

1 which is much more in detail than in the past, I just
2 thought that anything that I would want to know I can
3 easily access. That doesn't mean that getting a
4 report or whatever -- I have no problem with that
5 whatsoever.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: It sounds like you're resistive
7 to the amendment, so let's just do a vote.

8 COMMISSIONER KEY: Okay.

9 Ms. Chambers.

10 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. McFetridge.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER KEY: Dr. Moore.

14 DR. MOORE: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. Newton.

16 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. Dean.

18 MS. DEAN: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. Zook.

20 MS. ZOOK: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER KEY: Dr. Hill.

22 DR. HILL: Yes.

23 COMMISSIONER KEY: Mr. Williamson.

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. It's unanimous.

1 So now we need a final -- we do have to have now
2 a final vote on the full motion as amended.

3 All those in favor -- let's go and ahead and do
4 a roll-call, since you've got it out.

5 COMMISSIONER KEY: Okay. Ms. Zook.

6 MS. ZOOK: Yes.

7 COMMISSIONER KEY: Dr. Hill.

8 DR. HILL: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER KEY: Mr. Williamson.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. Chambers.

12 MS. CHAMBERS: Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. McFetridge.

14 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER KEY: Dr. Moore.

16 DR. MOORE: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. Newton.

18 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER KEY: Ms. Dean.

20 MS. DEAN: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. All right.

22 Unanimous on the three-year extension with annual
23 reporting in coordination with the accountability
24 team at the time appropriate.

25 And so I thank you for your professionalism in

1 your presentation today, and thanks to everybody from
2 Pine Bluff who was here this morning -- which is now
3 this afternoon.

4 All right. We've got one last thing before
5 lunch. So if y'all could kind of quietly clear the
6 room so we can move on. Thank y'all.

7 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We have -- okay, if
9 we can kind of head on out that'll make everything
10 easier.

11 **PUBLIC COMMENT BY HAROLD VINES**

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We have one more
13 item before lunch. And we had previously moved a
14 public -- one item of public comment to this point to
15 save Mr. Vines being here all day.

16 And so, Harold Vines, you have three minutes --
17 up to three minutes for your presentation on an item
18 not on the agenda.

19 MR. VINES: Start right now?

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Start right now.

21 MR. VINES: All right. I'm Harold Vines. I
22 live down in Nevada County, south of Prescott. I'm a
23 retired police officer with 30 years experience. I
24 retired as sheriff of Nevada County and then I spent
25 eight eights on the Quorum Court.

1 I came to talk to you people today about this
2 medication they're giving our kids in these schools.
3 They had my son on it in the 3rd grade. I got him on
4 the weekends. He told me -- as soon as he got in my
5 vehicle, he said, "Daddy, my stomach is killing me
6 and it's been hurting. It hurts all the time." I
7 took him to the emergency room in Arkadelphia. The
8 doctor found out what he was on; he told me, "Don't
9 never give that kid any more of that." All right. I
10 followed him there. I followed him -- what they
11 done, they took him back to the doctor up here in
12 Little Rock that I'd never heard of -- I didn't get
13 -- and he doubled his dose. That's how he fixed it.
14 I got him the next time, his stomach was killing him.
15 His stomach was killing him. I took him to the
16 pediatrician -- his pediatrician there in
17 Arkadelphia, and she told me, said, "Harold, don't
18 never give that boy none of that medicine." She
19 said, "I would not give my kid a bit of it."

20 Well, I followed him and I followed him, and the
21 counselor -- I moved him to Nevada and they put him
22 right back on it. I fought till I was just wore out,
23 I guess. I let my son down, and I apologized the
24 other day to him for doing that. I didn't fight hard
25 enough for my son. But I told those counselors when

1 they started talking about putting him on that
2 medication that that junk was going to follow these
3 kids all their lives. Of course, they lied to me and
4 told me it wouldn't -- wouldn't follow him. And I
5 told them, "I know it is. I know it is." I've got a
6 little bit of sense.

7 Well, I moved him to Spring Hill and he finished
8 12th grade in Spring Hill, done wonderful, never had
9 a problem, no medication. He graduated. He wanted
10 to be a Marine sniper. He went to Texarkana. His
11 mother and I went with him and signed him up, and
12 they started on the paperwork. And there was the
13 question on his application have you ever had any of
14 that medication. He put yes, like he was supposed
15 to. Soon as the Marines got that application and
16 went through it -- soon as they come to that question
17 and answer they kicked him right out. So my son
18 didn't get to go serve his country like he wanted to
19 do. He's a patriot, I'm a patriot. I've served this
20 state for 38 years. But I knew what was fixing to
21 happen, and now I don't believe he's going to be able
22 to get in law enforcement -- and that's his second
23 choice. And I guess I'd just been holding off
24 checking because I don't want to break his heart
25 again, but I don't think they will. They can't get

1 in the military. And most of that, the way I see it
2 -- I have worked real close with the schools and have
3 the highest respect for school teachers that I can
4 have, and y'all too. Y'all do a wonderful job. I
5 appreciate y'all. But we've got to do something for
6 our kids, and that hurt my son. That was his first
7 goal in life was to be a Marine sniper. Now he said
8 something about following me in law enforcement.

9 (TIMER BELL RINGS)

10 MR. VINES: Is that it?

11 CHAIRMAN BARTH: That is it, sir. And we very
12 much appreciate your years of service and your
13 dedication to your kids. And so thank you for being
14 here and thank you for those words.

15 MR. VINES: I just love our kids. It won't help
16 my son. I'm working for other kids now.

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

18 MR. VINES: Thank y'all.

19 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Have a great day.

20 MR. VINES: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We will return at
22 2:00 -- take a lunch break. We'll return at 2:00.
23 We've lost an item this afternoon, so our agenda is
24 getting a little bit shorter. So I think we're an
25 hour behind, but we're not that far behind that.

1 We'll see you at 2:00.

2 (LUNCH BREAK: 1:29 - 2:07 p.m.)

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. We'll get going
4 again. This afternoon may be a little messy because
5 there is a special Charter Authorizing Panel meeting
6 that's going to take place at 3:00. We obviously
7 have some staff who are crucial to some of the issues
8 we have who are also crucial to that meeting. So we
9 may have to go a little back and forth. So I just
10 ask the Board's patience this afternoon as we work
11 through these things.

12 I also want to let everybody know that on Item
13 3, the 1240 waivers, the Flippin waiver request has
14 been pulled; so that one is not up for consideration.

15 So what we're going to do is we're just going to
16 go back to the start of the agenda, pick up those
17 things that we have not yet dealt with, work through.
18 We may have to take a break on some items as folks go
19 up. We'll continue working down the agenda and then
20 come back to those items as people can come back into
21 our meeting.

22 **A-3: DISTRICT REQUEST FOR WAIVERS GRANTED TO OPEN-ENROLLMENT**
23 **CHARTERS**

24 **a) DIERKS SCHOOL DISTRICT**

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: But we'll get started with the

1 Act 1240 waivers, with Ms. McLaughlin, and the first
2 one up is the Dierks School District waiver request.

3 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Good afternoon. Kelly
4 McLaughlin, Charter School Office.

5 Dierks School District is here today to ask for
6 Flexible Schedule/Early Start Date. Just a little
7 point of reference, the school district will have 20
8 minutes to make their presentation; if there is any
9 opposition here, they will have the 20 minutes as
10 well; and then the district will then have 5 minutes
11 to respond before the Q-and-A begins.

12 As you know, Act 1240 of 2015 allows a school
13 district to petition the State Board of Education for
14 all or some of the waivers granted to an open-
15 enrollment charter school that serves students who
16 reside in their school district.

17 We do have representatives of the Dierks School
18 District here to petition. Their 90 days will expire
19 on April 15, 2019, and they are requesting for three
20 (3) years, ending on February 14, 2022. They have
21 brought a handout, and with your permission I would
22 like to pass that out.

23 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. Thanks, Ms. McLaughlin.

24 I'd ask the folks from Dierks who plan to
25 present please stand and raise your right hand. Do

1 you swear or affirm that the testimony you're about
2 to give shall be the truth, the whole truth and
3 nothing but the truth?

4 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

5 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you.

6 Why don't we wait -- you can come on up and then
7 as soon as we're good with the distribution of the
8 handout your three -- your 20 minutes -- excuse me --
9 although you should not feel pressured to use it all
10 -- will begin.

11 MS. FINLEY: No pressure.

12 CHAIRMAN BARTH: But also it's yours.

13 MS. FINLEY: I assure you I don't think it will
14 take 20 minutes.

15 (WHEREUPON, A-3(a) Exhibit One (1) was marked
16 for identification and entered into the record.)

17 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great. All right.

18 MS. FINLEY: I would say -- my name is Lori
19 Finley; I am the elementary principal at Dierks. I'm
20 here as Mr. Jody Cowart's designee. He is at a
21 superintendent's conference in California that our
22 co-op graciously gave him the opportunity to attend
23 and had covered financially back in October, before
24 he knew this date was set. So he asked me to attend
25 in his place.

1 The handout that you have covers the main points
2 that we would make in request of this waiver. The
3 balance of our four quarters is presented first.
4 This is according to -- we presented potential
5 calendars to our classified and licensed staff in the
6 event that we received the waiver just so we could
7 have a feel for what -- you know, what they
8 preferred. So those numbers are based on what their
9 preferred calendar would be.

10 Also, an advantage to us is, if we receive this,
11 giving our semester exams at the high school level
12 prior to Christmas. And the students in particular
13 who are enrolled in current -- or, excuse me --
14 concurrent credit or virtual courses, it would align
15 more closely with them; they take their exams before
16 the Christmas break. Any students who might be in
17 need of credit recovery, it would allow the high
18 school -- by having those tests prior to the break
19 would allow the high school counselor to give a
20 smooth transition and get those students enrolled
21 prior to the second semester starting.

22 Probably most advantageous is allowing us to
23 have more days for student/teacher interaction and
24 instruction leading up to the testing period. If we
25 should have inclement weather or emergency situations

1 that required us to take days, we like the idea of
2 having those days taken care of sooner rather than
3 later and potentially conflicting with some early
4 June PD that might be offered to staff.

5 The three years -- Mr. Coward provided the
6 percentages from the previous three years. The
7 numbers that are on your handout are dates taken from
8 the first of April -- whatever the first school day
9 in April was -- to the end of the school year, not a
10 total year.

11 And then, finally, our school community at-large
12 tends to prefer a calendar where they're starting
13 early and ending by -- hopefully ending by Memorial
14 Day.

15 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Great.

16 Is there any opposition on this item?

17 (MOMENT OF SILENCE)

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right.

19 MS. ZOOK: While she's going to check, I know
20 there's a -- I don't know if it's been filed or just
21 being talked about -- a bill up at the Capitol to
22 change the acceptable start date to the Monday before
23 Labor Day. And if that should pass, will it go into
24 effect for the 19-20 school year or will it be the
25 20-21, or do we know?

1 COMMISSIONER KEY: We don't know at this -- that
2 bill has been filed. We don't know how it would be
3 applied and then how it would impact these waivers.
4 But that's something that we would ascertain before
5 final passage, if it were to move that far.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: That does raise a more general
7 question. When we have legislative action that kind
8 of takes care of waivers that have been put in place,
9 what -- do they just disappear or do --

10 COMMISSIONER KEY: Well, that is an ongoing
11 conversation and I think there are differing opinions
12 based on whether you're a recipient of a waiver or
13 not. So I don't know that we have a good answer for
14 that at this point. But we will do an analysis and
15 maybe get that to y'all, if that's acceptable.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: If it becomes relevant.

17 COMMISSIONER KEY: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: As it becomes relevant, yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER KEY: All right.

20 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Probably makes sense.

21 All right. No opposition is here.

22 Are there -- Dr. Moore.

23 DR. MOORE: Yes. In your proposed schedule, if
24 you were to move the date up what is your
25 Thanksgiving break and are there any other fall

1 breaks in the schedule?

2 MS. FINLEY: With the proposed calendar it is a
3 five-day Thanksgiving break and there is one
4 additional day that was voted in outside of the Labor
5 Day holiday.

6 DR. MOORE: Previously, have y'all had a five-
7 day Thanksgiving break or is that different?

8 MS. FINLEY: My understanding is since Mr.
9 Cowart has been at the district -- I believe this is
10 his fifth year -- fourth or fifth year -- and he said
11 they have had the full week at Thanksgiving.

12 DR. MOORE: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Any additional
14 questions on this side?

15 Any questions over here?

16 Okay. Thank you very much.

17 MS. FINLEY: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: So we are ready for a motion.
19 The proper motion is to accept the waiver or to deny
20 the waiver, and it is a three-year waiver for the
21 Dierks district.

22 MS. McFETRIDGE: I move that we accept the
23 waiver for the Dierks district.

24 MS. DEAN: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Motion by Ms.

1 McFetridge, a second by Ms. Dean.

2 All those in favor say "aye."

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

5 All right. Thank you very much. Safe travels
6 back home.

7 **c) JUNCTION CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Next up is the Junction City
9 waiver request.

10 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Yes. Junction City School
11 District has asked for Flexible Schedule/Early Start
12 Date. Their 90 days will also expire on April 14,
13 2019. They are requesting for three years, ending on
14 June 30th. And we do have Mr. William Lowe,
15 superintendent, here to make his presentation.

16 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Mr. Lowe, if you
17 would please raise your right hand. Do you swear or
18 affirm the testimony you are about to give shall be
19 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

20 SUPT. LOWE: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you very much. If you'll
22 state your name for the record, you then have up to
23 20 minutes to make your presentation.

24 SUPT. LOWE: Well, I promise it won't take that
25 long.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay.

2 SUPT. LOWE: William Lowe, superintendent,
3 Junction City Schools.

4 And the same reasons that were presented by
5 Dierks are the same reasons. Last year many school
6 districts were granted the waiver and so everybody is
7 kind of on that August 13th start-date, and so we
8 want to be with everybody. One thing, last year we
9 weren't eligible for the waiver and this year we are.
10 We do have a student in the charter school. It
11 allows us to have balance between the first and
12 second semesters; it allows for instructional time
13 before mandated testing; and it allows us to complete
14 the first semester before Christmas and then the
15 second semester before Memorial Day, and pretty much
16 be with everybody in the state.

17 And so that is basically my presentation.

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: All right. Thank you very
19 much.

20 Any questions -- oh, actually -- sorry. Are
21 there any questions before we move to see if there's
22 any opposition?

23 Ms. Zook.

24 MS. ZOOK: I know that's a charter school for
25 Louisiana. Will that conflict with the rules

1 governing you from the state of Louisiana?

2 SUPT. LOWE: No, ma'am.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Dr. Moore.

4 DR. MOORE: Same question. Do you all have a
5 week-long break at Thanksgiving and any other fall
6 breaks?

7 SUPT. LOWE: We have no other fall break. We do
8 have a week at Thanksgiving.

9 DR. MOORE: And is that something parents are in
10 support of?

11 SUPT. LOWE: A week off at Thanksgiving?

12 DR. MOORE: Uh-huh.

13 SUPT. LOWE: Yes.

14 DR. MOORE: And they're in support of the
15 earlier start-date in August?

16 SUPT. LOWE: Yes.

17 DR. MOORE: Did y'all do any polling or school
18 board meeting? Where did y'all get that feedback
19 from?

20 SUPT. LOWE: We informally talked to our parent
21 involvement and they want to stay with everybody in
22 the state.

23 DR. MOORE: Yeah, that makes sense. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. Ms. McFetridge, any
25 questions?

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: I have no questions.

2 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Okay. All right. We -- thank
3 you, sir.

4 No opposition is here on this item?

5 MS. McLAUGHLIN: No.

6 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Therefore, we can move to a
7 motion.

8 MS. NEWTON: Move to approve the waiver.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Second.

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

12 All in favor say "aye."

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Opposed, same sign.

15 All right. Safe travels back to Junction City.
16 Thank you for being here.

17 **d) PARKERS CHAPEL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

18 CHAIRMAN BARTH: And, finally, on the Act 1240s
19 we have the Parkers Chapel School District.

20 MS. McLAUGHLIN: Parkers Chapel School District
21 is here for Flexible Schedule/Early Start Date.
22 Their 90 days will also expire on April 14, 2019.
23 They did request for five years, ending on June 30,
24 2024. And we have Superintendent Michael White here
25 to make his presentation.

1 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Mr. White --

2 SUPT. WHITE: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you. Do you swear or
4 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall
5 be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
6 truth?

7 SUPT. WHITE: I do.

8 CHAIRMAN BARTH: Thank you. State --

9 SUPT. WHITE: Michael White, superintendent of
10 Parkers Chapel.

11 Very short -- I'd use the word "ditto" what's
12 been presented to you before. The obvious things are
13 that academically by allowing us to start earlier
14 you're allowed to have more teaching days before the
15 Aspire testing. We can keep our calendar in such a
16 way that we don't have to have short weeks. Research
17 over the years have found that if you have less than
18 three days during the week of schooling there's a lot
19 of missed days, especially if it's around a holiday.
20 So that's why we prefer the five days on the
21 Thanksgiving break, because two days on Thanksgiving
22 break -- sometimes the parents want to go ahead and
23 take trips and we miss our kids. The same thing
24 happens if you have to come back a day or two after
25 Memorial Day. We've had the same issue going on