

In The Matter Of:
ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

October 14, 2021

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ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

OCTOBER 14, 2021
10:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

DR. SARAH MOORE, Acting Chair
MS. OUIDA NEWTON (via Zoom)
MS. CHARISSE DEAN
DR. FITZGERALD HILL
MS. KATHY McFETRIDGE
MS. ADRIENNE WOODS
MR. STEVE SUTTON
DR. BETH ANNE RANKIN
MR. RANDY HENDERSON

NON-VOTING PARTICIPANTS:

MR. JOHNNY KEY, Secretary of Education
MS. SUSANNA POST, Arkansas Teacher of the Year

DESE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. LORI FRENO, General Counsel

LOCATION:

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

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E X H I B I T S

VI.1. ETHICS HEARING - MICHAEL DEAN

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

List of Actions and Applicable Fines and
Sanction Guidelines for Ethical Violations

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

2 VI.1: RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE ARKANSAS SAFE SCHOOLS WEEK

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And now, first on our action
4 agenda this morning we have a resolution to recognize
5 Arkansas Safe Schools Week by Dr. Cheryl May,
6 Director of the Criminal Justice Institute.

7 Thank you for being here today, Dr. May.

8 DR. MAY: It's a privilege to be here. Thank
9 you very much.

10 Madam Chair, Secretary Key, Distinguished
11 Members of the Board, thank you for the opportunity
12 to be before you today. I'm here before you in my
13 capacity as -- not as the Director of the Criminal
14 Justice Institute, but as Chair of DESE Safe Schools
15 Committee.

16 I want to first and foremost when it comes to
17 school safety thank our Governor, Asa Hutchinson. He
18 has been committed and dedicated to school safety and
19 is unquestionably a champion for school safety in our
20 state. But I also want to thank Secretary Key and
21 Deputy Commissioner Pfeffer for their commitment and
22 dedication to school safety. Their support of our
23 initiatives that we've been trying to do through the
24 Safe Schools Committee has been unwavering, and I
25 thank them greatly for that.

1 I'm very honored to be the Chair of the Safe
2 Schools Committee. And just to kind of refresh our
3 memories, the Committee is charged with the
4 development of model school safety policies and
5 procedures, providing recommendations to the State
6 Board of Education of any necessary changes in rules
7 and regulations, and providing the House Committee on
8 Education and the Senate Committee on Education
9 recommendations on any necessary legislation for
10 insuring the safe school environment.

11 The Safe Schools Committee has had a very, very
12 busy year. I'm very proud of the work that this
13 committee has done. The majority of our time has
14 been spent framing legislation and the passage of
15 several key pieces of legislation during the 2021
16 regular session. Their work resulted in the passage
17 of Acts 551, 620, 622, and 648. We're extremely
18 grateful to Senator Irvin and Representatives Cozart,
19 Johnston, Scott, and Slape for their commitment to
20 the passage of these acts. These new laws are
21 undoubtedly going to make our schools safer
22 environments where our children can reach their full
23 academic potential. I commend the Committee for all
24 of their hard work on this critically important
25 initiative. But I also want to point out the efforts

1 of one particular person and that's Courtney Salas-
2 Ford. We couldn't have reached this goal without
3 her. So my sincere thanks to Courtney.

4 As Chair of the DESE Safe Schools Committee, I
5 am requesting your adoption of the following
6 resolution:

7 WHEREAS, more than 473,000 students attend
8 public schools in Arkansas; and

9 WHEREAS, a safe and secure environment enhances
10 student learning; and

11 WHEREAS, approximately 70,000 administrators,
12 faculty, and staff at Arkansas's public schools are
13 committed to providing a safe and secure learning
14 environment for all students; and

15 WHEREAS, more than 425 school resource officers
16 assist in insuring students remain safe in public
17 schools; and

18 WHEREAS, the Division of Elementary and
19 Secondary Education, Arkansas Center for School
20 Safety, and the Arkansas Safe Schools Association
21 have partnered together to provide school safety
22 resources and promote a safe educational environment;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, the Safe Schools Committee is charged
25 with developing model policies and procedures that

1 may insure a safe and productive learning environment
2 for students and school employees for recommending to
3 the State Board of Education any necessary rules and
4 regulations for insuring the safe schools environment
5 and for recommending the House Committee on Education
6 and the Senate Committee on Education any necessary
7 legislation for insuring the safe school environment;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, local and state law enforcement
10 agencies and local organizations provide support to
11 school districts;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the
13 members of the Arkansas State Board of Education,
14 recognize the week of October 17 through 23, 2021, as
15 Arkansas Safe Schools Week.

16 I would respectfully appreciate a good vote.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you so much, Dr. May, for
19 sharing your important work.

20 I will look for a motion to recognize Arkansas
21 Safe Schools Week.

22 MR. HENDERSON: I want to make a motion.

23 DR. RANKIN: And I'll second.

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Mr. Henderson, second
25 by Dr. Rankin.

1 All in favor say "aye."

2 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: All opposed?

4 Motion passes.

5 Thank you, Dr. May.

6 DR. MAY: Thank you very, very much.

7 SECRETARY KEY: So, Dr. May, if you'd bring that
8 to us we'll sign that. And then I just want to say
9 -- tell you how much I appreciate Dr. May's
10 dedication to this.

11 I mean, I think school safety -- I don't know if
12 it was always your life work, but I know that it is
13 now.

14 And we have seen tremendous increases in the
15 number of School Resource Officers since she's been
16 involved in this work, the quality of the School
17 Resource Officers, the quality of the training that
18 they've been receiving, and really the strengthening
19 of the partnership between this Department and
20 Criminal Justice Institute and the Center for Safe
21 Schools.

22 So I just want to let the Board know how -- to
23 echo her statement and really let you know how close
24 we do work with her to make sure that -- yeah, every
25 -- almost every week we see stories of why this work

1 is necessary.

2 So, thank you, Dr. May.

3 DR. MAY: Thank you very much, sir.

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. May, we're going to get you
5 for a picture really quickly for that. Thank you.

6 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, Ms. McFetridge asked if we
7 could provide a copy; so we'll make sure that a copy
8 gets sent to all the members.

9 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: A photograph was taken
10 of Dr. May, Secretary Key, and Chairman Moore to
11 commemorate the signing of the resolution.)

12 VI.2. STATE BOARD HEARING PLSB CASE NO. 21-055 - MICHAEL DEAN

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Moving along, next on our
14 agenda, Item 6-2, PLSB Case 21-55. Amy Douglas -- or
15 Lori Freno first with our procedures.

16 MS. FRENO: Thank you, Madam Chair. Lori Freno
17 with the Arkansas Department of Education.

18 This is an appeal of the Ethics Hearing
19 Subcommittee's recommendation that Educator Michael
20 Dean's educator's license be suspended for six months
21 for inappropriate physical contact and inappropriate
22 comments. Mr. Dean is here, along with his attorney
23 Travis Ragland. The PLSB is represented by Amy
24 Douglas.

25 Mr. Dean may make a statement of up to 10

1 minutes -- Mr. Dean or his attorney may make a
2 statement of up to 10 minutes, and Ms. Douglas,
3 likewise, will then have 10 minutes to make a
4 statement. The Chair may grant additional time at
5 her discretion. Board members may ask questions at
6 any time during this proceeding to the educator, the
7 PLSB investigator, or any of the attorneys.
8 Testimony of non-lawyer witnesses must be under oath.

9 Following the hearing, this board will make
10 three decisions: the first, you will need to make
11 Findings of Fact -- in other words, you'll need to
12 determine whether you agree with the Ethics
13 Subcommittee -- Ethics Hearing Subcommittee's
14 decision concerning the facts underlying this case;
15 second, if you do agree with the facts underlying the
16 Subcommittee's decision, you'll need to determine
17 whether, based upon those facts, Mr. Dean violated
18 Standard 1, Standard 2, or both of the Code of
19 Conducts for Arkansas Educators; and, third, if you
20 determine that Mr. Dean violated Standard 1, Standard
21 2, or both, you must then decide whether you agree
22 with the sanction that was imposed in this case --
23 which, again, was a six months suspension of his
24 teaching license. If you do not agree with the
25 sanction, you may modify it, and that includes

1 increasing or decreasing. And it would be best to
2 make these three determinations in separate motions.

3 Unless you have any questions, I will turn the
4 floor over then to Mr. Dean's lawyer, Travis Ragland.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Should I go ahead and swear in
6 first, or wait?

7 MS. FRENO: One moment please, Madam Chair.

8 DR. HILL: Yeah. This case here, this is a
9 former teammate of mine, so I'm going to recuse
10 myself. We went to school together. I'm going to
11 recuse myself from this.

12 MS. FRENO: And, Dr. Hill, if you're recusing
13 yourself, could you just please leave the room until
14 --

15 DR. HILL: Yes.

16 MS. FRENO: We'll come back and get you after
17 the hearing. Thank you so much.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Dr. Hill.

19 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Dr. Hill exited the
20 room.)

21 MS. FRENO: Yes, if you could swear in the
22 witnesses now that will be testifying, that would --
23 non-lawyer witnesses, that would be fine.

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Mr. Dean, will you be
25 testifying, or anyone else speaking?

1 MR. RAGLAND: I'll be speaking for Mr. Dean,
2 although he's available and ready to answer
3 questions.

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. If you would raise your
5 right hand and repeat after me? Do you swear or
6 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall
7 be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
8 truth?

9 MR. DEAN: I do.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

11 Now we will start 10 minutes with Mr. Ragland.
12 Thank you.

13 MR. RAGLAND: Good morning. My name is Travis
14 Ragland, as you just noted, and I represent Michael
15 Dean in this PLSB matter.

16 I'd like to give a little background about how
17 this situation came to be and a little bit about
18 Michael before -- his whole life. Michael is a
19 teacher and a coach, and Michael is a very outgoing,
20 a very social -- if you met Michael on the street he
21 would come up to you. He would -- if he had ever met
22 you he would come up to you, shake your hand, be
23 vocal, be energetic. He wants to get to know you, he
24 wants those interpersonal connections. And this is
25 one of the underlying reasons -- and to us, one of

1 the underlying misunderstandings -- of this
2 situation; because Michael is a social and outgoing
3 and a friendly person, he reaches out to those
4 people.

5 So the underlying incident here -- these are two
6 separate incidents and I'd like to differentiate
7 those -- these a little bit. They involve the same
8 group of people. Michael --

9 SECRETARY KEY: Stay close to the microphone.

10 MR. RAGLAND: They involve the same group of
11 students, although these incidents did not happen at
12 the same time; they were not connected. So I'd like
13 to differentiate these two a little bit and take each
14 one in turn.

15 The first allegation is of course inappropriate
16 touching, and that allegation is one we'd like to
17 categorically deny. Michael has never and would
18 never inappropriately touch a student. He did not in
19 this case and never would. It was never in his mind.
20 This touching, this alleged inappropriate touching
21 stemmed from one day there was a group of students
22 that -- Michael does lunch-duty. There's a group of
23 students that might not be the most outgoing, they
24 might not be the best -- the most social group.
25 Michael is that social person and Michael does

1 recognize that those social interactions are
2 important for students, so he seeks those students
3 out. He wants to include those students in school
4 life, not just in the classroom; but in the
5 lunchroom, in extracurricular activities, in everyday
6 life he wants to include those students. He
7 recognized there was a group of students like this
8 that may not be outgoing, that may not be -- to be
9 quite honest, may not be the most popular students in
10 the school. When he sees this, he wants to include
11 those students. So one day, this group of students
12 was walking through the hallway and he noticed there
13 was a tag sticking out of the student's coat.
14 Michael, being the person he is, he tucked the tag
15 in. The student reacted with a start, a funny sound;
16 all of her friends, they laughed; she smiled. So it
17 became sort of a running joke and this went on over
18 the course of a year that when he would see these
19 students and he would see this one girl in
20 particular, if he was behind her he would make a
21 noise with his hand and -- or do something like tap
22 her on the shoulder to startle her, to elicit a
23 reaction; everyone would laugh, she would smile; they
24 went on with their day. He made a point of whenever
25 he could to go up to this group of students and just

1 interact with them.

2 Michael has never interacted with these
3 students, never talked to these students in private,
4 never texted, never messaged, never saw -- every
5 interaction with these students has been in front of
6 literally hundreds of people. At no point in time
7 did Michael ever touch any student other than on the
8 shoulder, over her coat, tucking a tag in. We
9 categorically deny any inappropriate touching. This
10 was an attempt by Michael to bring these students
11 into the social life of the school, to include these
12 students that might not be included.

13 This allegation -- Michael is being punished for
14 trying to do the right thing here; he was trying to
15 include these students.

16 Now the second allegation, this is something
17 that we want to hit head-on. Michael had watched a
18 video. And there's a comedian on You Tube and what
19 he does is he does some outrageous things and he puts
20 people in uncomfortable situations, and it's a
21 satire. He puts people in uncomfortable situations
22 to see their reactions and shows how people, everyday
23 people can react in ways that are inappropriate to
24 different customs, different races, different
25 classes. He puts people in those uncomfortable

1 situations to show that everyday people have those
2 reactions sometimes, and these are satire. These are
3 not meant to be taken seriously, these are jokes;
4 it's a comedian. Michael made a mistake that day,
5 because these students had noticed some new students
6 who happened to be Muslim and they were pointing
7 those students out and asked Coach Dean about those
8 students. It triggered a memory in Michael's mind,
9 because he had seen one of those videos. And one of
10 -- this video is a guy had -- he's dressed up in garb
11 that can only be described as Middle Eastern and he
12 has a giant backpack. He walks up to a crowd of
13 people, he throws the backpack down, and runs. It
14 triggered his memory and he made an off-the-cuff
15 comment, a joke, and he said, "I don't know, but if
16 they throw a backpack down you'd better run." And
17 Michael, when I talked to him he said, "Man, I knew
18 the minute I said it it wasn't right." Michael has
19 regretted that joke every day since it happened. He
20 expressed regret to his Principal, he expressed
21 regret to his Superintendent, to the investigator, to
22 myself, to the Evidentiary Board, all along the way.
23 Michael knows he can't do that. It was a mistake.
24 There was no forethought. He knows he can't do that
25 though.

1 What we're asking you today is to look at the
2 facts in the case and look at the allegation of
3 inappropriate touching and look at the admittedly
4 joke in poor taste and ask if those actions justify
5 taking Michael away from his career for six months.
6 We recognize there may be some discipline, we know
7 that. That was a mistake and Michael recognizes that
8 was a mistake, and he's more than willing to talk to
9 you today, if you have any questions. But we would
10 ask that you look at the facts and look at the
11 underlying law about intentions and come to the right
12 decision and allow Michael to go back to work. Thank
13 you.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

15 Ms. Douglas with the Department, you have 10
16 minutes.

17 MS. DOUGLAS: Good morning. I just want to
18 address the actions by Educator Dean. I believe he's
19 a coach; I think he goes by Coach Dean typically.

20 So I would agree in some extent to Mr. Ragland's
21 position that the facts aren't disputed. Coach Dean
22 did touch a student on the shoulder area, and the
23 first time was to tuck in her tag. But it wasn't
24 always to tuck in her tag; it was to get a reaction
25 out of her. And that reaction, that behavior made

1 that student feel uncomfortable and that's part of
2 the reason we're here. It's up to our educators to
3 protect our students and to make them feel safe in
4 our schools.

5 Also, we are here for a racially and culturally
6 insensitive comment made by Coach Dean. And I would
7 submit to you that the panel of educators that
8 listened to his hearing and heard his testimony still
9 felt like it fell short and that it was -- that his
10 interactions were appropriate [sic] enough that he
11 needed a six-month suspension. They specifically
12 found that he admitted to touching a student; that he
13 admitted to saying statements that were culturally
14 and racially insensitive; that he said and did things
15 that made students feel uncomfortable; that he did
16 not express or show any accountability to student
17 impact; that he admitted to his behavior; and they
18 even agree that he's had positive interactions with
19 students as well; and they really, you know, felt
20 like the fact that his actions were intentional to
21 get a reaction out of the student was a problem.

22 You have the brief in front of you; you have --
23 I've sent you the transcript of the hearing, of all
24 the witnesses.

25 At this time I'm just going to reserve any time

1 to make any argument after you question Mr. Dean, if
2 you have any questions for him.

3 And Ms. Jennings, the investigator, is here as
4 well, if you have any questions for her.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Great. Thank you.

6 Now I will open up the floor to questions from
7 our Board.

8 Dr. Rankin?

9 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

11 MS. WOODS: I had a question for the
12 investigator, and I'm trying to remember if it was
13 this one.

14 Did you talk to any of the students that were
15 involved in this altercation? Is that --

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And I do need to swear you in.

17 MS. JENNINGS: Yes, ma'am.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Would you raise your right
19 hand? Do you swear or affirm that the testimony
20 you're about to give shall be the truth, the whole
21 truth, and nothing but the truth?

22 MS. JENNINGS: Yes, I do.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

24 MS. JENNINGS: Hi. I'm Vicki Jennings, an
25 Education Investigator for 21-055.

1 Yes, I did speak with a couple of the parents
2 and they would not permit me to speak with the
3 students.

4 MS. WOODS: Okay.

5 MS. JENNINGS: They did not want anything else
6 to be said to the students. And I did also attempt
7 to speak to the Principal to line that up, because I
8 first tried to make the attempt to speak with the
9 Principal to make sure that they can connect those
10 students and the parents, and that wasn't made. But
11 I did also try to reach out to the parents, and the
12 parents said, "yes, you have this time to speak with
13 them," scheduled a time with me, and did not adhere
14 to that time. They would not allow me to speak with
15 the students; so I did use the student statements.

16 MS. WOODS: Okay. And then, which action came
17 first? Was the insensitive joke reported first or
18 was it the touching that was reported first?

19 MS. JENNINGS: They were all reported to have
20 happened -- they were all reported on the same day.

21 MS. WOODS: Okay.

22 MS. JENNINGS: But the initial tag had happened
23 earlier on in the year; and then the second repeated
24 touching happened later -- happened like right around
25 this time; and then pretty soon -- at the same time

1 with the comments that were made in the cafeteria.

2 MS. WOODS: Okay. Thank you. I just was trying
3 to clarify.

4 MS. JENNINGS: Yeah, that's fine.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

6 Mr. Sutton?

7 MR. SUTTON: I probably missed this in either
8 some of the transcript or case review. But how old
9 were the students?

10 MS. JENNINGS: I do believe that I have their
11 ages. I think that they were seniors.

12 MR. SUTTON: Seniors?

13 MS. JENNINGS: Seniors, uh-huh. And I try to
14 verify those ages when I speak with them, but I
15 wasn't able to. But I do have their ages. Yes, they
16 were seniors and had been around Mr. Dean for
17 multiple years.

18 MR. SUTTON: I don't have any questions of her,
19 but --

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: You can ask of anyone.

21 MR. SUTTON: You know, based on the seriousness
22 of the recommended punishment, I would hate to not
23 hear from Coach Dean as to kind of what -- reflect --
24 you know, sort of what happened and give us a little
25 -- you know, your side of your story, if you're

1 willing to do that, Coach Dean. I think you deserve
2 the right to give us your spin on it.

3 MR. DEAN: My name is Michael Dean. I've been
4 teaching for 22-ish, 23 years. And by default I've
5 grown up in Arkadelphia around Buddy Bob Benson,
6 Sporty Carpenter, Bill Vining, Senior -- the old-
7 school John Outlaw type people. So I kind of have
8 that outgoing, gregarious -- I don't want to say
9 flamboyant, but just -- I'm a people person. And I
10 work in Christian sports camps in the summer, and
11 this is all I know how to do is -- I've got seven
12 kids and 12 grandkids. I just love kids. And when
13 this all came down, it was an inappropriate -- first
14 and foremost, I shouldn't have said it. This is a
15 video, it's a prank video; kids are into prank
16 videos. And before I could even catch myself, I said
17 -- I asked them if they'd watched that -- had they
18 ever seen that prank video about that. And right
19 when I said it, I knew I shouldn't have even went
20 there. But anyway, we'd had a -- I'd been doing
21 lunch-duty for five years at that school and, you
22 know, I just -- the first time it ever happened she
23 had -- her tag was out and I flipped her tag down and
24 said, "Your tag is out." And it was almost like a
25 joke thing; I would come into school and lunch-duty

1 and you could just see that table, "Look, there he
2 is, there he is," and almost wanting me to come, you
3 know, mess with them. But that's taken out of
4 context, I believe, you know. If I say -- you know,
5 I just wanted to engage them and just -- you know,
6 because that's just the way I am and I go from table
7 to table. And I was put there for a purpose, because
8 I'm a disciplinarian and a coach and I could
9 maintain, you know, the whole cafeteria myself. And
10 it's just -- it just blew out of proportion from that
11 point on.

12 When this was all brought to me I was just in
13 shock, and I'm still in shock, and disappointment.
14 And for them to say that I have showed no remorse --
15 I mean I don't sleep at night because of this, it
16 bothers me so much to be put out of character like
17 this. And since then, I've transferred to another
18 school and have absolutely no problem at this other
19 school there, and I'm glad to be there and -- but
20 it's made me a better teacher. It's made me realize
21 that you can't -- you know, maybe I play too much;
22 maybe I -- maybe at that time, you know. And -- but
23 those days of engaging and involving kids like the
24 old camp way, you can't do that anymore and I realize
25 that and I'm so sorry about that. And I can promise

1 you that if those girls at that table had realized
2 that I would be at this point here that that would've
3 never -- it would've never have happened like this,
4 because everything was just on the relationship of
5 just, you know, having fun and -- during lunch-duty,
6 you know, in front of administrators and cameras.
7 And it was nothing sinister; it was nothing, you
8 know, trying to deviate, anything like that, and it
9 has totally taken its own and just snowballed. And
10 I'm embarrassed that I'm here; I'm embarrassed for my
11 family; I'm embarrassed -- I'm sorry for those kids,
12 you know, and it's just an inappropriate [sic] thing.
13 I shouldn't have even said that and I humbly
14 apologize. And it wasn't meant to be racist; it was
15 just questioning had they seen this video that I've
16 seen that was kind of the same scenario, and it was
17 wrong. And I just would hate to, you know, lose this
18 passion that I so enjoy having, and I'm sorry that I
19 have to put y'all through this.

20 But if there's any other questions, I mean --

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

22 MR. SUTTON: No further questions from me.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Ms. McFetridge?

24 MS. MCFETRIDGE: Did you ever at any point
25 realize that you were making a young lady

1 uncomfortable? Was that apparent to you?

2 MR. DEAN: At no time -- believe me, with having
3 six daughters, at no time -- if those -- any of those
4 girls -- and it's not always girls, there's guys
5 there too. It just happens that the statements only
6 came from picked people at that table. At no time
7 would I have ever -- if they'd have said, "Coach
8 Dean, really, that makes me feel uncomfortable," or
9 said something to another teacher and the teacher
10 come up and said, "Hey, Coach Dean, that" -- believe
11 me, I'd have dropped that at that point on. I don't
12 go in and -- I don't do that. I would have
13 definitely stopped that. But like I said, I mean
14 they would almost look for me to come in. And when
15 I'd miss, they would say, "Where have you been,
16 Coach?" And so it took on a -- this whole thing took
17 on something else and just steamrolled out of context
18 and out of proportion. And I know the seriousness of
19 it. But I would definitely have stopped because I'm
20 not that type of person.

21 MS. McFETRIDGE: Can you describe or show us the
22 noise that you would do when you came up on people?

23 MR. DEAN: Well, no, because my hands are
24 sweating right now. But I can take my fingers and
25 just do it like that, right behind their ears, and it

1 just makes a buzzing kind of -- I mean your dry skin
2 kind of -- and it kind of -- that's all it was. And
3 they'd joke and laugh. And I wish I could do it with
4 one of y'all, but, you know, seeing it, it was just
5 -- it was nothing inappropriate. It's how I connect,
6 you know. And they'll say, "What was that?" And I'd
7 say, "I've got a moth in my hand." And they'd go,
8 "What?" It was just totally blown out of proportion,
9 and I hate that something so mild and so -- was --
10 but at the time -- you know, at the time everything
11 was -- until that day -- and I only had -- that
12 comment that day was what this is all about. And
13 then, you know, I started hearing stuff from years
14 ago, "he said" -- you know, and it was just one day's
15 incident and then they started bringing up that other
16 stuff. But all I do is walk by and -- not every day
17 either; you know, not -- it just -- I didn't go to
18 them every day; I just did my little patrol in the
19 cafeteria. And like I said, I maybe had -- in the
20 five years I did that I maybe had six -- five or six
21 conversations with them the whole year. And, you
22 know, it's unfortunate. And I first and foremost am
23 apologetic and wrong and -- but like I said, it's
24 made me a better person, a better teacher because of
25 it because --

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: What is your position in your
2 new district?

3 MR. DEAN: I'm a history teacher and head 9th
4 grade football coach. We've got a game today, so
5 this is kind of important. And I just -- I love it
6 just because -- it's made me a better teacher.
7 Believe me, if I -- I wish some of y'all could come
8 in my classroom because it's made me, you know, more
9 aware of things and aware of conversations and aware
10 of things, you know, and I love where I'm at. I feel
11 like it's been a blessing. It's been a blessing to
12 be moved to a situation where, you know, nobody has
13 an agenda and I can just be me. And we motivate --
14 bell-ringer -- we motivate and we teach. Kids look
15 forward to coming to my class. I love teaching. I
16 wasn't able to teach at the other school; I was just
17 a tutor. But now I'm able to teach and get involved
18 and help grow and -- so anyway --

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

21 Mr. Henderson?

22 MR. HENDERSON: No questions.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

24 MS. DEAN: Ms. McFetridge asked a lot of my
25 questions. I guess I just want to repeat one

1 question just for the sake of repeating it. So the
2 young lady that says that she felt uncomfortable with
3 your interactions never said anything to you or never
4 alluded that it made her uncomfortable?

5 MR. DEAN: I feel bad, once all this has
6 happened and I came -- and I heard what they had said
7 -- because I never heard it until I guess Ms.
8 Jennings or someone brought it all to me. And she
9 said that -- I heard she said that she felt
10 uncomfortable, that hurt my heart. Because if I'd
11 have -- if that were the case, I just -- I can't live
12 like that. You know, it just -- that hurts me so bad
13 that something like that hurt her. And if she
14 would've ever -- if she'd have ever gave any
15 inclination -- because I'm not -- you know, 99.9% of
16 the kids love me. If she'd have ever said anything
17 negative to me or -- "Coach Dean," I would have
18 definitely stopped because I'm not that type of
19 person that just picks and -- or whatever the word
20 is. I don't want to stay stop; you know, I'm not
21 that type of person. I'd have stopped from the get-
22 go and we wouldn't be here today, I guess. But, no,
23 because I'm not that type of person that would just
24 continue. I'd have stopped right there. And I am so
25 sorry. And today it hurts me that I can't even -- I

1 don't want to make those people feel uncomfortable,
2 but I'd love to talk to those people and tell them,
3 "Man, I'm sorry if that has made you" -- I never
4 intended that to be negative, sinister, crazy,
5 anything. It was just killing time in the lunchroom,
6 and I hate that. And so, no, ma'am.

7 MS. DEAN: Okay. I understand. I hear you.
8 And what gives me concern is when I read the --
9 through the evidentiary hearing and I hear previous
10 incidents where parents said that comments were made
11 that made the children uncomfortable. This is not an
12 isolated incident. So I guess in light of knowing
13 those previous situations, I guess my question is:
14 why will you be more conscious of your behavior with
15 students?

16 MR. DEAN: Well, I don't know -- I don't know of
17 actual statements from parents that you're talking
18 about. I know I saw that in that too.

19 MS. DEAN: Right.

20 MR. DEAN: But I never saw -- there's nothing in
21 my file. I've never seen -- I don't know of any
22 personal thing I can address on that issue
23 specifically because I don't know exactly what those
24 were, because I was never made aware of what those
25 were, whatever those are.

1 MS. DEAN: Okay.

2 MR. DEAN: But I'm just here to tell you now
3 that I have nothing but passion for teaching and
4 kids. And if I'm -- if I'd have known that -- you
5 know, I'm a coach; I get -- you know, I'm a hands-on
6 type of coach and teacher, you know. And the reason
7 that this is different, because it has been made this
8 big. The other stuff I can't really address
9 specifically because I don't know exactly what it is
10 that is being said, because it was such a general
11 statement, "some parents have said." I don't know,
12 you know. I'm a teacher; I deal with thousands of
13 kids. But I'm here to tell you that my heart is in
14 the right place and this was an incident that I
15 regret and that will not happen again, because I will
16 not be in that situation, you know, of just frivolous
17 talk. I can't do it. I can't do it.

18 MS. DEAN: No further questions.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, do you have any
20 questions?

21 She's on Zoom.

22 MS. NEWTON: Thank you, Mr. Dean, for your
23 testimony. It's very helpful to know. And I
24 understand the noise because my son can come up
25 behind me and do the same thing and it sounds just

1 like a bug in my ear. So I understand that, now that
2 you've explained that to us.

3 Could you be more specific about what your
4 duties are this year, what classes you have? Exactly
5 what are you doing this year?

6 MR. DEAN: Could you kind of -- I had a hard
7 time hearing what she asked.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes. She asked your duties
9 this year --

10 MR. DEAN: Okay.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: -- and exactly what you have --

12 MR. DEAN: Yes, ma'am.

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: -- in your school.

14 MR. DEAN: Yes, ma'am. I teach civics and
15 economics at Maumelle Senior High School. I have
16 over 120 students. I also am the head 9th grade
17 football coach and volunteer at -- my wife and I
18 volunteer at every activity they have at Maumelle.
19 We're bought into the system there. And I used to
20 say that I got the two worst history positions --
21 civics and economics. But I've learned -- because of
22 all this I've just learned to embrace it and love it
23 and teach it, and have nothing but positive things
24 from my administrators so far, because I ask them.
25 Because it's bothered me so much with all this past,

1 I make sure they stay on top of it and beg them to
2 come into my room and make sure that, you know, we're
3 doing what we're supposed to be doing. And it's
4 almost like a new page or a new breath of fresh air
5 to go to this other school and get to do what I love
6 doing. And I think if I could get people in here
7 from Maumelle they'd tell you the same thing.

8 Is that clear? Is that --

9 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

10 MR. DEAN: Thank you, ma'am.

11 MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

12 MR. DEAN: Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any more questions, Ms. Newton?

14 MS. NEWTON: No, that was all.

15 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Ms. Post?

16 MS. POST: Maybe not a question but just a
17 comment. Some of the Department of Education people
18 have been at a retreat earlier this week, talking
19 about the significant number of ACEs, Adverse
20 Childhood Experiences, that children in Arkansas have
21 been through, and I believe we're one of the leading
22 states in the nation. And what bothers me is that
23 sometimes girls don't have the words, they don't have
24 the voice to say "that makes me feel uncomfortable."

25 MR. DEAN: Uh-huh.

1 MS. POST: So I would just hope in this
2 situation and across the entire state some training
3 needs to happen --

4 MR. DEAN: Uh-huh.

5 MS. POST: -- so that educators -- you don't
6 know what you don't know, so I understand that. But
7 we all need to know. No one should be put in that
8 position where they feel like they are under an
9 authority figure where they can't speak up and say
10 those words. And it just makes me wonder if that was
11 the situation. And I know these things can blow up
12 out of proportion.

13 MR. DEAN: Yes, ma'am. Yeah.

14 MS. POST: But that -- from a teacher's
15 perspective --

16 MR. DEAN: Sure. And I agree with that. I have
17 kids and that would -- that concerned me. And from
18 working at Christian sports camps and every camp you
19 can think of, on Ouachita's campus, and growing up
20 going to sports camps and all this stuff, I really
21 think that looking back and reflecting over that --
22 like I said, I would feel horrible if she was that
23 type who -- but I think I know that group because of
24 my five years there. I really think that I would
25 know if they were uncomfortable to that point. I

1 really would have shut it down then. But like I said
2 -- and you're absolutely head-on with that because,
3 yes, yes, that needs to be addressed and taught maybe
4 at -- the week before -- you know, when all the
5 teachers come back, because it is a significant
6 point. But I'm just sorry that I would -- I'm not
7 brushing that under the rug, but I think it was not
8 that situation. I think I know that group enough to
9 know -- and please don't think this is anything other
10 than my own opinion. I really think that if it was
11 that bad I would've felt that and would've just
12 immediately walked away, because I've been teaching
13 for 25 years; I know -- I think I would've known if
14 it was that bad. But that's why it's so staggering
15 to me that here we are in this situation, not that
16 it's not important but I just don't think it was that
17 in this situation.

18 But, yes, it is a serious issue that needs to be
19 addressed. I'll be the guinea pig to talk about it,
20 if you need to, because something like this -- the
21 weight of this, the magnitude of this has been
22 awfully enlightening for me.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

24 Questions?

25 DR. RANKIN: Madam Chair, I did have another --

1 just a question. When was this first brought to your
2 attention? Because I think that interaction was
3 going on, if I am reading correctly, over the span of
4 about two years?

5 MR. DEAN: Yes.

6 DR. RANKIN: When did you first know anything
7 about this?

8 MR. DEAN: I think it was October, November of
9 this past -- it's been going on a year. And the
10 first inkling I heard of this was -- it was either
11 October -- October, November area, right then. And I
12 was just flabbergasted because I've, you know, been a
13 duty teacher -- and one was a cheerleader. And when
14 they brought this to my attention I said, "Who said
15 what?" Because, you know, I could not imagine, you
16 know, after our being around each other all these
17 years that -- that was the first sign of anything
18 negative, you know, that has occurred. And then they
19 -- then I heard, you know, that something had
20 happened two years ago and something had happened a
21 year ago. And these girls are -- I think they're the
22 type that would've said something way back then if it
23 was -- but it just seemed like at that point -- in
24 November is when everything was brought to this
25 point. I thought it was going to be just -- when I

1 first heard about it, he called me to the office, I
2 thought it was going to be -- you know, it was going
3 to be handled there in the office by the Principal.
4 I said, "I'm sorry. Man, you know I would've never
5 meant to be -- and I wasn't trying to be racist or
6 trying to single out any." I said, "It was just a
7 video I'd asked them if they saw." And I thought it
8 was just going to be handled there. But the more it
9 went, the more they started finding -- adding other
10 stuff, finding other stuff to it and I just -- so I
11 guess November -- October, November is when it first
12 got -- first became aware of anything at all about
13 this.

14 MR. RAGLAND: Can I respond?

15 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes, you can.

16 MR. RAGLAND: I just -- I believe it was the end
17 of October 2020, and the school investigation was
18 complete around the middle of November. Is that
19 correct?

20 MR. DEAN: I was suspended for like 37, 40 days.

21 MR. RAGLAND: Right.

22 And, Ms. Dean, if I could better answer your
23 question from earlier, Michael has never been
24 sanctioned on any level for any inappropriate
25 comments.

1 MS. DEAN: No, I didn't say he was sanctioned.

2 MR. RAGLAND: Okay.

3 MS. DEAN: Yeah. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton, did you have a
5 question?

6 MR. SUTTON: No more questions of --

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

8 MR. SUTTON: -- Mr. Dean, Coach Dean. I would
9 like to -- I do have a question though.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Of the Department?

11 MR. SUTTON: Of Ms. Jennings.

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Ms. Jennings, we have a
13 question for you.

14 Thank you, Mr. Dean.

15 MR. DEAN: Am I good?

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes. You may sit down.

17 MS. JENNINGS: Yes, sir.

18 MR. SUTTON: So if I'm reading this correctly,
19 it says the alleged violation occurred in May of '17?

20 MS. JENNINGS: Which I think was the first time
21 that he had the interaction with those students.
22 Like I said, there were a couple of years there that
23 he knew them in the cafeteria and interacted with
24 them.

25 MR. SUTTON: So May of '17 he tucks --

1 MS. JENNINGS: No, those were students -- those
2 were written in student statements; the alleged
3 allegations were written in student statements. Is
4 that what you're referring to?

5 MR. SUTTON: I'm just -- the facts on the --

6 MS. JENNINGS: Yeah, and -- okay. And Ms.
7 Douglas may know. So there were some student
8 statements written, and in those student statements
9 they stated allegations that had happened in previous
10 years, with no evidence of that because I was not
11 able to speak with them or to verify what their
12 allegations were for 2017. So the allegations that
13 were brought forth to me for -- in this instance was
14 allegations of the tag, the touching, and the
15 inappropriate comments.

16 MR. SUTTON: Yeah. So when are you -- or what
17 are you saying the approximate date was of the tag
18 tucking?

19 MS. JENNINGS: Okay. So the students'
20 statements state that and those were included in the
21 -- in our supporting documents. Let me get that for
22 you. And like I said, I wasn't able to verify those
23 students' statements. And there were no dates given
24 on one student's statement on the allegations. But
25 they did say on November 2, 2020 was when the

1 allegation was -- was the allegation made about the
2 comment about the Muslim students, and that was the
3 date there. And other than the November 3rd date for
4 that -- for Student 1 -- because they said it
5 happened on the 2nd and 3rd, there were no other
6 dates mentioned. And then they said -- mentioned
7 sophomore year, I do believe, and -- which was no
8 date given and I really couldn't pin anything down on
9 specific times there, because, like I said, I wasn't
10 -- was not able to speak with them. And -- but
11 mainly the two dates that they were in the
12 allegations were November 2nd and 3rd that were
13 definitive. Does that help any at all?

14 MR. SUTTON: Well, I guess I'm just a little
15 perplexed that the students could remember the date
16 that bring the allegation -- or that bring forth the
17 complaint in 2020, but they remember on May 25th --

18 MS. DOUGLAS: If I may interject --

19 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.

20 MS. DOUGLAS: I believe the educator's brief
21 misstates a date and that May 25, 2017 date --

22 MR. SUTTON: Okay.

23 MS. DOUGLAS: -- is a misstatement. We don't
24 have -- so we have no evidence of anything or any
25 record of anything specifically happening on May 15

1 [sic], 2017. I believe that was a typo.

2 MR. SUTTON: Okay.

3 MS. DOUGLAS: So I think that's probably
4 creating some confusion.

5 MR. SUTTON: Well, big-time confusion. Thank
6 you.

7 MS. JENNINGS: And I'm not privy to some of the
8 information from the evidentiary hearing for that
9 date either, so --

10 MS. WOODS: For you --

11 MS. JENNINGS: Yeah.

12 MS. WOODS: -- are the statements that you talk
13 about -- maybe I'm missing it in some of the
14 documentation -- is what was written on the school
15 letterhead?

16 MS. JENNINGS: Yes, ma'am.

17 MS. WOODS: Okay, got it.

18 MS. JENNINGS: Yes, ma'am.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: I believe, Mr. Henderson, do
20 you have a question?

21 MR. HENDERSON: Yes. Madam Chair, thank you.

22 I'd like to reflect back to a statement that
23 Attorney Ragland made. In your statement you
24 mentioned that there should be some type of
25 discipline at least.

1 MR. RAGLAND: Yes, sir.

2 MR. HENDERSON: Obviously, we're dealing with
3 some really serious allegations here --

4 MR. RAGLAND: Absolutely.

5 MR. HENDERSON: -- from my personal knowledge.
6 What type of discipline do you feel that should be
7 feasible for these actions -- or alleged actions?

8 MR. RAGLAND: Sure. Michael and I had a long
9 conversation about this before the evidentiary
10 hearing, and we spoke to the Committee at the
11 evidentiary hearing about this as well. Michael
12 knows that repeating that joke was culturally
13 insensitive; it's just something we can't do in
14 today's world. And Michael has expressed to me and
15 he expressed to the Committee at the evidentiary
16 hearing that he is willing to do anything and
17 everything to be able to keep his job and to be able
18 to continue coaching, to be able to help kids, to be
19 able to continue to be in those classrooms. That can
20 include a fine; training, of course; we would welcome
21 probation. Anything and everything that Michael can
22 do he's willing to do, starting today. I know
23 Michael has already completed some training with his
24 school, and he has reflected on that, he's done some
25 reading, he's done some reports -- and we've talked

1 about that as well. Michael is willing to do
2 anything that the Board asks of him. He's willing to
3 learn. Like he said himself, Michael is a little
4 old-school. He grew up around some old-school
5 coaches. He knows the world has changed. He wants
6 to be that person to grow into the teacher and coach
7 that is successful and supportive and available for
8 kids in 2021.

9 So, to answer your question: anything.

10 MS. McFETRIDGE: I have one.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay, Ms. McFetridge.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Did I hear Mr. Dean say he was
13 suspended for 45 days?

14 MR. DEAN: I think the total -- I'm sorry.

15 MS. McFETRIDGE: You have to come to the
16 microphone.

17 MR. DEAN: I think the total days was 37 days
18 for that.

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: And that was leaving your
20 previous school? Where did the -- where did that
21 come from?

22 MR. DEAN: Well, they sent me home while they
23 did that investigation. And then as the
24 recommendation -- they suspended me additional days
25 for the school's finding. And then after that

1 happened, then they sent me to --

2 MR. RAGLAND: If -- and correct me if I'm wrong,
3 Michael -- is we may be conflating some dates here.
4 Michael was on paid administrative leave pending an
5 investigation for a long period of time while they
6 completed their investigation, as is the case
7 sometimes. The actual sanction though -- the actual
8 suspension, I believe it was 15 days. Yes, 15 days.

9 MS. McFETRIDGE: One more question.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay, Ms. McFetridge.

11 MS. McFETRIDGE: I think this is a question for
12 the Department. Is there an ACEs training then for
13 our teachers or is that something that's new that's
14 coming out?

15 SECRETARY KEY: I'm sorry, Ms. McFetridge; could
16 you repeat the question? What type of training?

17 MS. McFETRIDGE: I think our Teacher --

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: ACEs.

19 SECRETARY KEY: Oh, ACEs.

20 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes, I'm sorry. Yes.

21 SECRETARY KEY: I hear ACEs and sometimes I
22 think AASIS, the financial side of the Department.
23 So --

24 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'm sorry.

25 SECRETARY KEY: -- it's spelled totally

1 different.

2 MS. McFETRIDGE: Sorry.

3 MR. SUTTON: Yeah, get the book out.

4 SECRETARY KEY: But I think what Ms. Post was
5 referring to was work that we are doing with
6 behavioral mental health, that overall package.
7 Their work has really just begun. It was started
8 before Covid. When Covid hit, we had to put a hold
9 on it, and now we're just re-engaging. So there's
10 nothing imminent at this point.

11 MS. SMITH: We have some standalone pieces on
12 training, but not statewide.

13 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. There have been
14 standalone training on Trauma Informed Practices, but
15 they exist now.

16 MS. McFETRIDGE: So that's something that we
17 would -- could require of Mr. Dean, to go through
18 that training as well, Trauma Informed training?

19 MS. SMITH: (Nodding head up and down.)

20 SECRETARY KEY: I mean I think Ms. Douglas would
21 say that the Board can identify certain training that
22 the Board sees fit within the scope of the
23 disciplinary action.

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, did you have
25 anything else?

1 MS. NEWTON: I think the suspension question is
2 cleared up. I thought I had heard that you'd already
3 served some suspension time. So he had some leave
4 time away from school, plus suspension time that he's
5 already served already. And then he's also already
6 done some training, is what I'm hearing.

7 MR. RAGLAND: Can I --

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes, Mr. Ragland.

9 MR. RAGLAND: Yes, I think you're exactly right.
10 On the district level, when the allegations were
11 brought forth he was put on paid administrative
12 leave, which I'm sure Michael -- it all strung
13 together. But that paid administrative leave
14 stretched for around a month, I believe. At the time
15 of their findings he was put on a 15-day suspension
16 at the district level before he came back to resume
17 his duties there. So there was paid administrative
18 leave and then there was an unpaid 15-day suspension.

19 MS. NEWTON: So that was almost another month
20 that he had already served, because you're talking 15
21 school days. Is that correct?

22 MR. RAGLAND: That's correct, 15 school days.

23 MS. NEWTON: And then what trainings has he
24 already done?

25 MR. RAGLAND: I'll ask Michael to answer that

1 question.

2 MR. DEAN: I was given weekly cultural
3 sensitivity training stuff to read and discussions
4 with our Principal for the remainder of the year.
5 And I was on -- well, I wasn't on -- I'm just letting
6 you know that not a thing happened for the rest of
7 the year. But from that point, when I got back, to
8 the end of the year me and the Principal met weekly;
9 sometimes we'd skip a week, but until the end of the
10 school year doing culturally sensitive readings and
11 discussions and training.

12 MS. NEWTON: Would you say that was --

13 MR. DEAN: He's documented that and it's in my
14 file.

15 MS. NEWTON: Would you say that was about six
16 months of that cultural training?

17 MR. DEAN: It was from when I came back, in
18 January -- December or January, to the rest of the
19 school year.

20 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

21 MR. DEAN: Four months -- however -- four months
22 -- four or five months.

23 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right. Thank you.

24 MR. DEAN: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Ms. Newton.

1 Okay. If there are no more questions --

2 DR. RANKIN: I do. This might just be a process
3 question for the Department. So the district
4 addressed the situation. I'm trying to understand
5 the trigger of then at what point does it
6 automatically bounce up the pipeline to PLSB? How
7 does that process play out?

8 SECRETARY KEY: So what you just heard described
9 was actions taken based on employment. This action
10 before you today is based on licensure. Two totally
11 different -- it could stem from the same originating
12 incident, but they are two totally different paths of
13 disciplinary action. One is just the disciplinary
14 action that the district has authority over for
15 employment; this is before you today as a licensure
16 action.

17 Did I answer that correctly, Ms. Douglas?

18 MS. DOUGLAS: Yes.

19 SECRETARY KEY: Thank you.

20 MS. WOODS: I have a follow-up, and this is for
21 those of you that have been on the Board longer than
22 I have. Does this seem like a larger punishment for
23 a similar violation or does this seem on par?

24 And, Ms. Newton, I'll welcome your input.

25 MS. NEWTON: It does seem larger than ones that

1 we've seen that have been similar. We've had some
2 that have gone, I think, further than this but did
3 not reach this level. So, you know, it does seem
4 inconsistent. I think you're spot-on there. And
5 then some of the allegations that have come on we
6 didn't have documentation of, too. So that was
7 another point that was a little troubling.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. I will remind the Board
9 we're going to have three separate motions.

10 MS. DOUGLAS: Can I finish, please?

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes, Ms. Douglas.

12 MS. DOUGLAS: I just want to take a few moments
13 to remind the Board of a few things that are in the
14 transcript. I know it was kind of small font and it
15 was a lot of information. And so I also want to
16 refer you to a handout I gave you today that's
17 Appendix B and D from the Rules Governing Code of
18 Ethics for Arkansas Educators. It gives you the
19 sanctioning options and also the sentencing matrix
20 that you guys approved in 2017, as guidance.

21 (WHEREUPON, VI.1. Exhibit One (1), Appendix B
22 and D, was marked for identification and entered into
23 evidence.)

24 MS. DOUGLAS: What I would like to say is that
25 the Panel here showed that there was more than one

1 violation; there was the touching incident and also
2 the comments. And so under the sentencing matrix,
3 multiple violations is right in line with the
4 suspension.

5 I also want to say that in the hearing it was
6 referenced -- it hasn't been so much referenced
7 today. But, in 2015, Mr. Dean was sanctioned on his
8 licensure and received a year probation for
9 violations of Standards 1 and 2. Here we are, six
10 years later. Probation just doesn't seem
11 appropriate. The facts were different, and Mr. Dean
12 can speak on them if you guys so choose. But the
13 Board did find that he was in violation of Standard 1
14 and 2 in 2015, and he did accept a probation sanction
15 at that time. Six years later, we're here; our
16 behavior has not significantly changed.

17 I would also remind you that -- you know, I
18 think it says in the transcript that one of his
19 mottos is like best practices, like "Do your best,
20 treat people with your best." He wasn't doing his
21 best. And he mentioned earlier that he thinks he
22 knows that group, that group of girls that he was
23 interacting with, and that if he -- he knows that if
24 he -- it had been that bad that he would know.
25 That's not the standard for our educators. It's not

1 -- my child should be able to walk down the hall and
2 not feel uncomfortable by a teacher, not even her own
3 teacher. It is incumbent on you for licensure to
4 make sure our educators are held to these standards.
5 You are the board that does that. You are the people
6 that protect our children. You are the ones -- it
7 should not be incumbent on the students to tell an
8 educator "hey, man, that makes me feel uncomfortable"
9 or "oh, that comment made me feel uncomfortable." We
10 shouldn't put that kind of pressure on children.

11 So I would ask you to uphold the six-month
12 sanction of suspension. I do agree that Mr. Dean has
13 done a lot of work with his school district, but this
14 rises to a licensure level. This is more important
15 than probation. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Freno, do you have any
17 other closing remarks?

18 MS. FRENO: No.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So it is time for the
20 motions. And as a reminder, there are three
21 different motions.

22 MOTION/VOTE RE: FINDINGS OF FACT

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: The first is Finding of Fact,
24 whether we agree with the decision concerning the
25 facts of the case.

1 MS. NEWTON: Can I have a reminder on the
2 Findings of Fact? I know we had the Findings of Fact
3 on the comment. How far did the Findings of Fact go
4 on the touching? Because some of the findings --
5 some of the allegations didn't have evidence to go
6 along with it. So what was the -- what were the
7 allegations there or the facts there?

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Douglas, would you state
9 those, please?

10 MS. DOUGLAS: For violation of Standard 1,
11 engaged in inappropriate interactions with a student,
12 the factual support was stated that the educator
13 admitted to touching the student.

14 I don't know if you want me to stop at each one
15 or --

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Keep going.

17 MS. DOUGLAS: The allegation that he engaged in
18 inappropriate communication with a student was that
19 the educator admitted saying the statements that were
20 culturally and racially insensitive.

21 And as far as exhibits inappropriate disposition
22 inclusive of professional and ethical behavior, the
23 educator said and did things that made students feel
24 uncomfortable.

25 MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So our initial motion is
2 Finding of Fact, the second will be Conclusion of Law
3 addressing those two standards.

4 MS. DEAN: I move that we uphold the Finding of
5 -- how do I say that -- the Finding of Facts in all
6 three of those instances.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: I have a motion. Is there a
8 second?

9 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll second that.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Ms. Dean, a second
11 by Ms. McFetridge.

12 All in favor say "aye."

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Opposed?

15 Okay.

16 MOTION/VOTE RE: CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: The second is the Conclusion of
18 Law -- based upon these facts, did Mr. Bean -- Dean
19 violate Standard 1, 2, or both of the Code of Ethics
20 for Arkansas Educators. I'll open the floor for a
21 motion on Conclusion of Law.

22 MS. DEAN: Ms. Douglas, would you remind us of
23 what Standards 1 and 2 are?

24 MS. DOUGLAS: Standard 1 is an educator
25 maintains a professional relationship with each

1 student, both in and outside the classroom.

2 Standard 2, an educator maintains competence
3 regarding his or her professional practice inclusive
4 of skills, knowledge, disposition, and
5 responsibilities related to his or her organizational
6 position.

7 MS. DEAN: Thank you.

8 I have a motion.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

10 MS. DEAN: I move that we find that he violated
11 both Standards 1 and 2.

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Motion on the floor.
13 Is there a second?

14 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll second that.

15 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. A motion by Ms. Dean,
16 second by Ms. McFetridge.

17 All in favor say "aye."

18 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Opposed?

20 Thank you.

21 MOTION/VOTE RE: SANCTION

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And now our third and final
23 motion is around the sanction, if you agree with the
24 sanction or you may modify it, including decreasing
25 or increasing it. Any discussion is appropriate too.

1 MR. SUTTON: I'll start some discussion.

2 I don't think there's any question from, you
3 know, what we read and Mr. -- or Coach Dean's own
4 admission that he violated some of the standards.
5 The recommended sanction by the PLSB I personally
6 think seems to be a little heavy. A suspension of
7 license is potentially a career killer, potentially.
8 I don't personally think that this rises to that
9 level. I am a little concerned that none of the
10 students were interviewed and that's -- I mean that's
11 a big missing piece of evidence; I have a problem
12 with that.

13 So I would recommend something less than six
14 months suspension. Now whether it's a letter of
15 reprimand or probation with some tutorial
16 requirements on ethics and standards, as we typically
17 do -- but that's my position.

18 MS. NEWTON: Mr. Sutton, I agree with what
19 you're saying. It was concerning to me that we did
20 not have the interview with the students. And, you
21 know, if I'm looking at the sanction guidelines,
22 under Probation it does say one or more violations
23 and evidence of some prior history. So it seems to
24 fit more in the probation line to me than in the
25 suspension column.

1 MS. WOODS: I had a question on probation. What
2 exactly does that entail?

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: That would be a question for
4 the Department.

5 MS. DOUGLAS: Well, it's really a question for
6 you, what you want it -- what do you want it to
7 entail? So there's no bright-line rules; it's
8 whatever you guys decide is appropriate. So it's up
9 to you on that.

10 MS. WOODS: But it's not like it's -- so he
11 could still teach --

12 MS. DOUGLAS: Yes.

13 MS. WOODS: -- at that point and coach and all
14 the things he's currently doing?

15 MS. DOUGLAS: Correct.

16 MS. WOODS: With added whatever we do on that?

17 MS. DOUGLAS: Yes.

18 MS. WOODS: Okay.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean.

20 MS. DEAN: Okay. As Ms. Douglas told us earlier
21 -- mic -- mic -- this is not -- I would agree with
22 you both had this not been the second time he's been
23 sanctioned. The previous sanction, if I'm not
24 mistaken, was probation?

25 MS. DOUGLAS: Yes.

1 MS. DEAN: And we're dealing with another
2 situation. So it needs to be bumped up, for lack of
3 a better term. There needs to be some sort of
4 leveling up of sanctioning because this is not the
5 first time. And that was just the sanction, as his
6 lawyer stated earlier; that's what he was sanctioned
7 for. That doesn't deal with some of the things that
8 we read in the hearing that you weren't sanctioned
9 for. There's a difference between being sanctioned
10 for something and there being multiple accounts being
11 brought against you, and multiple allegations that
12 you may not have been sanctioned for, but there were
13 allegations.

14 So in my opinion, I believe we do need to stick
15 with the recommendation of the PLSB and there needs
16 to be a suspension. Now whether -- I'll just say it
17 like this: I believe there needs to be a suspension
18 because probation is not any different than what
19 happened last time. It's not any different, so
20 something different needs to happen. Because, as she
21 stated before, it's our responsibility to make sure
22 that these children and these students feel safe in
23 their school. And if the behavior is not changing --
24 because this is not a first offense, this is not the
25 first time -- if behavior is not changing, something

1 more drastic needs to happen to facilitate that
2 change. Not to say that work has not been done; I
3 know he's been doing courses and classes. But
4 sometimes courses and classes aren't enough to
5 initiate thought change and behavior change like
6 needs to happen. So in my opinion, I believe we need
7 to stick with the recommendation of the PLSB and do
8 the six-month suspension.

9 MR. SUTTON: Well, you know I value your opinion
10 and your longevity on this board, Ms. Dean. I just
11 -- I don't -- if it didn't wreck a career, that's my
12 problem, that a man's career could be killed because
13 he tucked in a tag. The world is -- and I'm going to
14 show my generation -- I mean the world has gotten so
15 sensitive. And I don't mean to not be sensitive to
16 the concerns of students, because, you know, by
17 golly, I am. But I don't know what the violation was
18 on the first infraction that he got sanctioned on. I
19 don't know what that was. But what we're going to
20 have before this board at some point in time is, you
21 know, some student is going to say the teacher -- a
22 female teacher hugged a male student too hard and,
23 you know, "they touched me." You know, I mean, I
24 just have -- I just have a problem with the level of
25 the recommended punishment. But that's just my --

1 where I stand.

2 MS. DEAN: Uh-huh. But we're not just dealing
3 with the tucking of the tag.

4 MR. SUTTON: I'm sorry?

5 MS. DEAN: I said we're not just dealing with
6 the tucking of the tag. That's not the only thing
7 we're dealing with.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any more comments?

9 MR. HENDERSON: Madam Chair, you know, I'm a
10 father of three little girls and I have a very, very
11 broad perspective about this. When I think about
12 this -- it kind of reflects back on what Steve said;
13 I think if we had written statements from the
14 witnesses and stuff like that it would more -- it
15 would validate the punishment even greater. That's
16 where, you know, I feel empty about pushing this
17 farther.

18 DR. RANKIN: This is something the Department
19 can speak to. What does happen after the end of a
20 six-month suspension? Do we have any data on how
21 many educators have returned to the classroom, who've
22 been able to resume their passion for teaching? Or
23 is it truly the end of the line?

24 MS. DOUGLAS: I do not. I mean I hate to even
25 think about trying to pull that kind of data. If

1 we're in the middle of the school year, a six-month
2 suspension would presumably take him out for the rest
3 of the year. But he would be eligible for employment
4 for next year.

5 But I don't have any data, you know, of who's
6 going back into the classroom or not. I presume that
7 some are; their license are reinstated, they do --
8 they meet all their conditions, they pay their fines,
9 they do their trainings, and then they take a break,
10 and then they go back -- and hopefully with a clearer
11 and more focused mindset.

12 MS. NEWTON: One thing to think about also is
13 the students that he's teaching right now. I think
14 he said he has around 150 students in civics and
15 economics classes. What happens to those students
16 for -- if he's taken out for the rest of the year?
17 Are we talking a long-term sub for the rest of the
18 year? You know, we have to also think about them
19 too.

20 MS. WOODS: I keep looking at the weighting
21 factors between probation and suspension. And if I
22 go down and do my checkmarks, I don't know that there
23 was any loss to the school district property or
24 funds. So there's one or more violations -- multiple
25 violations; he checks both of those. Evidence of

1 some prior history versus violations that occur over
2 a period of years, he checks both of those. So the
3 question for me comes down to the impact to the
4 student and then the "E" buckets, whether he knew
5 that he was violating the Code of Ethics or whether
6 it was willful and an intentional violation. I don't
7 disagree on the suspension, but I also don't know
8 that he willfully or intentionally violated the Code
9 of Ethics. That's kind of where my rub is and where
10 I get stuck. I don't know. That's just my comment.

11 MS. POST: There is some training that I found.
12 All Arkansas teachers have access to IDEAS. And
13 there is a one-and-a-half credit hour course,
14 Paradigm Shift, Seeing Students Through a Trauma-
15 Informed Lens. And it does address ACEs, so that
16 might be something the Board would want to consider.

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

18 Okay. And just as a reminder, there is -- the
19 last motion is whether the sanction is appropriate.
20 The current sanction is suspension of license for six
21 months, \$300 fine, and three separate trainings
22 listed out on our sheet here. A motion around the
23 sanction?

24 DR. RANKIN: Is it possible, I'd love to just
25 hear from fellow board members. If we were to lean

1 toward probation, is there a probation that the Board
2 would feel comfortable with that would give us an
3 option other than a six-month suspension? Which my
4 heartburn there is that that's -- it does appear to
5 me to be more on the severe side of punishment with
6 the missing testimonies. So I'd love to hear what
7 board members think --

8 MS. NEWTON: If we went to --

9 DR. RANKIN: -- about probation.

10 MS. NEWTON: Sorry. I'm sorry. If we went two
11 years' probation, that would be the rest of this year
12 and then next year also. Would that be sufficient or
13 -- I'm just throwing that out there for discussion.

14 MS. WOODS: Can we do less than six months? Can
15 we change the suspension --

16 MS. DEAN: That's what I was going to say.

17 MS. WOODS: -- to like a month, for the rest of
18 -- I think this semester is appropriate? I mean we
19 could do that?

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

21 MS. WOODS: Okay.

22 MS. DEAN: I would lean more toward a reduced
23 suspension than I would an increased probation.

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Well, the floor is open for a
25 motion at any point.

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'd be comfortable with a two-
2 year probation. I would also like to require maybe a
3 monthly report from Mr. Dean, how things are going
4 and how he's progressing. And I also recommend that
5 he have the Trauma Induced training to go along with
6 what he's already been sanctioned with.

7 MR. SUTTON: Do you want to put that in a
8 motion?

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yeah.

10 MR. SUTTON: There is a --

11 MS. McFETRIDGE: It can be a motion. I make the
12 motion that we suspend Mr. Dean's license -- or I'm
13 sorry, excuse me -- now I'm rattled. Okay. I
14 recommend that we give Mr. Dean a two-year probation,
15 with a monthly report requirement from Mr. Dean on
16 how things are going. And I'd also like to add to
17 the training that he's also been required to go ahead
18 and add the Trauma Induced -- Trauma Informed
19 training added to the training list.

20 SECRETARY KEY: For clarification, Ms.
21 McFetridge, the monthly report would be to whom?

22 MS. McFETRIDGE: To the State Board, as to how
23 he was doing in his classroom work.

24 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. I mean would that be
25 State Board or PLSB, or does it matter?

1 MS. DOUGLAS: Whichever they prefer.

2 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. Thank you.

3 MS. NEWTON: I second.

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. We have a motion and a
5 second on the floor.

6 All in --

7 MS. DEAN: I'd like discussion on that motion.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay, discussion.

9 MS. DEAN: Yeah. As I previously stated, I
10 would feel --

11 Ms. Douglas, may I ask a question of you? What
12 was the length of his previous probation?

13 MS. DOUGLAS: One year.

14 MS. DEAN: One year. Okay, that's what I
15 thought.

16 Lengthening the time of the probation is not
17 much different. I mean, it's still probation. I
18 would feel more comfortable with a shorter
19 suspension. If it were to be three months, where
20 would that put him as far as the school year?

21 MS. DOUGLAS: January.

22 MS. DEAN: So as Ms. Woods stated earlier, if we
23 were to do suspension through the end of the
24 semester, I think that would be appropriate. I think
25 that's a middle ground that we could reach. Because,

1 in my opinion, lengthening the probation doesn't have
2 much more of an effect as far as sanctions. So --

3 SECRETARY KEY: So with a motion on the floor,
4 you're -- if you chose to make a substitute motion in
5 that regard -- to make sure the rules allow
6 substitute motions?

7 MS. FRENO: They do.

8 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. You would make a
9 substitute motion to modify to suspension through the
10 end of this calendar year?

11 MS. DEAN: Yes.

12 SECRETARY KEY: But keep the other components
13 intact?

14 MS. DEAN: Yes.

15 SECRETARY KEY: Okay.

16 MS. DEAN: So moved.

17 MS. NEWTON: Would we have to agree to the
18 substitute motion since we --

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes, there needs to be a
20 second.

21 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, there would need to be a
22 second on the substitute motion and vote on that
23 motion. Then if that motion fails, then it reverts
24 to the original motion made by Ms. McFetridge.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So is there a second to Ms.

1 Dean's substitute motion to change the original
2 motion from probation to suspension?

3 MS. WOODS: Potentially, but I also want to
4 modify it a little more. I don't know if we would
5 need a monthly report at that point. Because that's
6 the current motion; right? Two-year probation,
7 monthly reports to PLSB or the Board, whichever we
8 decide, and the Trauma Informed training. If we're
9 going to modify it to a suspension through the end of
10 the calendar year, I would say take off the monthly
11 reporting and keep the Trauma Informed training.

12 MS. DEAN: Say that one more time. I'm going to
13 write it down and make sure I get it.

14 MS. WOODS: So suspension until -- I'm just
15 going to say the end of this semester --

16 MS. DEAN: Suspension till the end of semester.

17 MS. WOODS: -- and Trauma Informed training
18 would be -- I just don't know if we need him to
19 continue to come back for --

20 MS. DEAN: No.

21 MS. WOODS: -- two years after he has been
22 sanctioned, telling us how he's improved. That's
23 just my --

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So is that -- are you
25 providing a substitute motion?

1 MS. WOODS: Am I substituting the substitute
2 motion? I'm --

3 SECRETARY KEY: I think she's offering that as a
4 suggestion --

5 MS. DEAN: Yes.

6 SECRETARY KEY: -- to Ms. Dean.

7 MS. WOODS: Correct.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

9 MS. DEAN: Let me just make sure I have it right
10 though. So are you saying to continue a two-year
11 probation?

12 MS. WOODS: No.

13 MS. DEAN: Okay. So through the end of the year
14 suspension, Trauma Informed, no monthly report?

15 MS. WOODS: Correct.

16 MS. DEAN: Okay. So moved.

17 MS. WOODS: If that's the motion, I will second
18 that.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So we have a motion -- a
20 substitute motion and a second. We are taking a vote
21 on this substitute motion by roll-call.

22 SECRETARY KEY: And if I may, just to clarify,
23 we don't know what this district's calendar is --

24 MS. DEAN: No.

25 SECRETARY KEY: -- at this point. To say

1 through the end of the semester may or may not be
2 appropriate.

3 MS. DEAN: Okay.

4 SECRETARY KEY: But I want to make sure -- is it
5 your motion through the end of this semester or the
6 end of this calendar year?

7 MS. DEAN: The end of this calendar year.

8 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. Thank you.

9 MS. DEAN: Thank you.

10 MS. POST: I just have one additional thought
11 from a teacher's perspective, and I don't know this
12 particular school and their situation. But there is
13 a tremendous shortage right now of teachers and
14 substitutes. And when I go back to that last point,
15 did he willfully or intentionally violate the Code of
16 Ethics -- and I think we're still a little gray on
17 that, the thought of taking a coach of the 9th
18 graders, the oldest in the school -- is it a junior
19 high situation?

20 MR. DEAN: It's 9 --

21 MS. POST: You'll have to step up to the
22 microphone.

23 MR. DEAN: Sorry. It's a 9 through 12. I'm the
24 head 9th grade football coach. I'm also on the
25 varsity staff, as well, on Friday nights too.

1 MS. POST: I just know what it does to kids.
2 I've been in that situation as an 11th grader and
3 lost my basketball coach before my senior year. So
4 I'm thinking through all of those implications and
5 for the teachers in that building to have to deal
6 with a substitute, if they can find a substitute
7 who's qualified to teach the subjects that he
8 teaches, trying to get through the end of the year.
9 Just something else to consider.

10 MS. WOODS: My internal battle this whole time.
11 And I'm like do I make the decision based on the fact
12 that we have a shortage or do I make the decision
13 based on the rules.

14 MS. DEAN: Right. And I'm thinking about all
15 those things as well. But I'm also thinking about
16 what you said earlier, Trauma Informed -- things that
17 happen to kids when they're younger have life-long
18 implications, life-long effects. And our position
19 here is not to make decisions on -- there's always --
20 I think there's probably going to be a teacher
21 shortage for awhile. I know Ms. Pfeffer is working
22 on that; I know that's something we're working on.
23 But we can't make decisions based on whether there
24 are shortages. There are things that still need to
25 happen and there are decisions we still need to make

1 to insure that we protect students.

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So we have a motion and
3 -- a substitute motion. We're voting on the
4 substitute motion.

5 Will that then require us to vote on the
6 original motion too, or --

7 SECRETARY KEY: If this motion passes, then it
8 substitutes; it takes the place of the original
9 motion.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

11 SECRETARY KEY: If it fails, then we go back to
12 the original motion and have either more discussion
13 or a vote.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Okay.

15 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. All right. And this is a
16 different situation. In this case, since Dr. Moore
17 is acting as Chair, we'll not be calling her, but we
18 will be calling Ms. Newton since she is not acting as
19 Chair. So just for clarification.

20 On the substitute motion, Ms. Dean?

21 MS. DEAN: Yes.

22 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Sutton?

23 MR. SUTTON: No.

24 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. McFetridge?

25 MS. MCFETRIDGE: No.

1 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Woods?

2 MS. WOODS: Yes.

3 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Rankin?

4 DR. RANKIN: No.

5 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Hill has recused.

6 Mr. Henderson?

7 MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

8 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Newton?

9 MS. NEWTON: No.

10 SECRETARY KEY: It's four no's, three yeses.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So now we go back to the
12 initial motion prior to the substitute, since that --

13 SECRETARY KEY: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: -- did have a second?

15 SECRETARY KEY: Yes. Since that motion failed,
16 then we return to the original motion.

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge, could you
18 restate the initial motion?

19 SECRETARY KEY: I've got it written down, Ms.
20 McFetridge.

21 The motion is to, you know, modify the
22 recommended sanction to a two-year probation, with a
23 monthly report to the State Board to report on
24 educator's progress, and to add Trauma Informed
25 training to the training and coursework already

1 recommended.

2 One thing that the motion, if I may, did not
3 address is the fine. The fine recommendation is
4 \$300; so that would stay in effect, I think, but
5 y'all didn't address that. So that's probably
6 something we need to clarify.

7 MS. FRENO: If there was a probation, the
8 maximum fine imposed is \$250.

9 SECRETARY KEY: So in that case there would need
10 to be a modification of that amount that's currently
11 recommended.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay.

13 MS. WOODS: Can I also suggest or ask -- if in
14 12 months we are satisfied with his reporting, can we
15 change that reporting requirement? I'm just thinking
16 two years of reports is a lot. Or is it once we pass
17 it he's got to report?

18 MS. NEWTON: In the past, Ms. Woods, we've done
19 -- instead of monthly, we've done like every nine
20 weeks.

21 MS. WOODS: Okay.

22 MS. NEWTON: Either once a nine weeks or once a
23 semester has kind of been the reporting that we've
24 gone with before --

25 MS. WOODS: Okay.

1 MS. NEWTON: -- instead of monthly.

2 MS. FRENO: And it could be modified later, the
3 reporting requirement.

4 MS. WOODS: It could, okay.

5 MS. FRENO: Yes.

6 MS. WOODS: Well, my thought is as he gets into
7 the school year and he's teaching and he's busy that
8 just -- that adds more work onto an already full
9 plate. But if we can modify it later, then we can
10 have that discussion later.

11 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. So, Ms. McFetridge, your
12 -- you would amend your motion to have the \$250 fine?

13 MS. MCFETRIDGE: Yes.

14 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. And, Ms. Newton, you're
15 the seconder of that motion. Do you concur?

16 MS. NEWTON: Okay, that's fine. That's fine.

17 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. Is everyone caught up?

18 MS. WOODS: Can you repeat it, just --

19 SECRETARY KEY: I knew you were going to ask.

20 MS. WOODS: I'm sorry.

21 SECRETARY KEY: All right. So this motion is to
22 modify the recommendation of -- the recommended
23 sanctions to a two-year probation, a \$250 fine,
24 monthly report to the State Board, and adding the
25 Trauma Informed training to the three training

1 coursework and readings that were recommended by
2 PLSB.

3 All right. Ready to go, Madam Chair?

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes. So we will do a roll-call
5 vote.

6 SECRETARY KEY: All right.

7 Ms. Dean.

8 MS. DEAN: Yes.

9 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Sutton.

10 MR. SUTTON: Yes.

11 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. McFetridge.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes.

13 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Woods.

14 MS. WOODS: Yes.

15 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Rankin.

16 DR. RANKIN: Yes.

17 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Henderson.

18 MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

19 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Newton.

20 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

21 SECRETARY KEY: Seven ayes, zero nays.

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: The motion passes. Thank you.

23 VI.3. STATE BOARD HEARING - LA22-002; RANDALL PECKHAM

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We're going to go ahead and
25 we'll do the next agenda item. It is not PLSB; it is

1 a licensure hearing. And Amy Douglas. Thank you.

2 MS. DOUGLAS: Okay. So we're switching gears a
3 little bit here. This is a licensure action. And so
4 it's probably even a little bit confusing why this
5 was an action item instead of more of a consent item.

6 Do you want to get Dr. Hill back?

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes, let's wait for him to come
8 in.

9 Did you find him, Lori?

10 MS. FREN0: No, we have not found him, but we
11 are trying to. I guess -- I mean there's no reason
12 why you cannot proceed without him.

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. You can proceed.

14 MS. DOUGLAS: So the law -- do you want me to
15 start or do you want to give him a minute?

16 MS. DEAN: Let's give him a minute.

17 MS. DOUGLAS: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

19 MS. DEAN: I don't know where he is.

20 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Dr. Hill returned to
21 the meeting.)

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Thank you. So this is
23 agenda item 6-3.

24 MS. DOUGLAS: Okay. So this is licensure action
25 22-02, educator Randall Peckham. So this is a little

1 bit different. Mr. Peckham has pled guilty to a
2 disqualifying offense which requires the State Board
3 to take action on his license. Typically, you see
4 there is an educator here requesting a waiver. Mr.
5 Peckham is not eligible for employment due to the
6 sexual nature of the offense he pled guilty to. He
7 has also consented to surrender his license. It
8 shall be permanently revoked. He is no longer -- he
9 is not eligible to even ask for reinstatement, based
10 on statute.

11 So we are here today asking to accept the
12 surrender and permanently revoke Educator Peckham's
13 license.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

15 MR. SUTTON: Motion to approve.

16 MS. WOODS: Second.

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Mr. Sutton, second
18 by Ms. Woods.

19 All in favor say "aye."

20 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Against?

22 Motion passes.

23 MS. DOUGLAS: Thank you.

24 VI.4. CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS FOR ACT 1240 WAIVERS

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Agenda item 6-4, Requests for

1 Act 1240 waivers. Lori Freno will be presenting from
2 the Department.

3 MS. FRENO: Thank you. Lori Freno.

4 And I have to say doing these Act 1240 waivers
5 on the tail of Mary Claire Hyatt and Tracy Webb I
6 feel very intimidated and somewhat inadequate. But
7 hey, you know. But we have two Act 1240 waivers to
8 consider today.

9 a) BAUXITE SCHOOL DISTRICT

10 MS. FRENO: The first is the Bauxite School
11 District. The school district will have up to 20
12 minutes to make a statement and present their
13 request. All non-lawyers must be placed under oath.
14 And at any time the State Board can ask questions to
15 any members of the ADE staff -- the DESE staff or to
16 the school district. And the Bauxite School District
17 is seeking a waiver of Class Size for only one
18 kindergarten class, and it's Pine Haven Elementary
19 School, only through the remainder of this semester.
20 And I will turn the floor over to Dr. Leann
21 Pinkerton.

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

23 For anyone speaking, please raise your right
24 hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony
25 you're about to give shall be the truth, the whole

1 truth, and nothing but the truth?

2 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

4 DR. PINKERTON: Thank you for hearing our
5 request this morning. I'm Dr. Pinkerton. This is
6 Becky Reynolds; she's the principal of Pine Haven
7 Elementary. And this is Mr. Matt Donaghy; he's the
8 superintendent of Bauxite School District.

9 So we will be brief; we won't take the 20
10 minutes. But we would just like to give you a little
11 background information, and I believe you have this
12 PowerPoint in your notes. Basically, from 2018
13 through 2021 we've had a loss of enrollment of about
14 200 students over the course of those three years.
15 And so we very carefully tried to trim down our staff
16 to absorb positions as they became available and we
17 pay very close attention to grade members in each --
18 or to class size members in each grade level. When
19 we did our kindergarten round-up in April of 2021, we
20 were expecting 95 kindergartners. By September of
21 2021, we have 127 kindergartners; so we have more
22 than we were supposed to have. And actually 15 of
23 those enrolled after the first day of school; 15
24 kindergartners alone enrolled after the first day of
25 school. So we actually did post four elementary

1 positions this summer and we had a very difficult
2 time finding elementary teachers. Generally, when we
3 post for an elementary position we have dozens of
4 applicants, but this year we struggled to find a
5 certified teacher. As a matter of fact, we actually
6 have one teacher at the elementary on an ALP. He is
7 licensed for 4-8, but we have him in a 3rd grade
8 classroom because that's where we needed him. So
9 we're just having difficulty finding staff.

10 Also, those first two weeks of school, before we
11 came up with this plan of action, we had about 21 to
12 22 kindergartners in each classroom, and that's a
13 standards violation. So we have a plan -- and also
14 during pandemic that 21 to 22 it's very hard to
15 spread students out.

16 So that plan leads to our request for you today.
17 It's to allow a mentor teacher, one of our certified
18 teachers to work with a UCA intern as the teacher-of-
19 record. So the mentor teacher is our staff member
20 and she will be mentoring a UCA intern who is in her
21 student teaching semester right now. She graduates
22 in December. And that would allow both of those
23 teachers to have 18 -- it would allow every classroom
24 to have 18 or fewer students, which meets standards.
25 We are paying that intern at -- we're paying her as a

1 paid intern, but we're paying her the full rate of a
2 classroom teacher this semester, and then next
3 semester we will hire her as a regular classroom
4 teacher, if she gets her license. So our request is
5 only through the end of this semester, until that
6 intern graduates. If everything goes well, we intend
7 to hire her as our classroom teacher. That will give
8 our kindergarten students consistency and allow for
9 all of our kindergarten classrooms to be spaced out
10 and socially distanced.

11 Ms. Reynolds is going to talk about what we're
12 doing to support that intern.

13 MS. REYNOLDS: So within our building at Pine
14 Haven our mentor teacher and our student intern
15 teacher right now, they meet daily during their prep
16 time. And then I've also arranged for their recess
17 time to match up so they have recess duty together,
18 and then on that second recess time they have an
19 additional prep time together, to work and plan
20 together. They also have weekly PLC time together
21 with the kindergarten team teachers. And then they
22 also have myself and then our assistant principal,
23 who actually does walk-through's in their classroom
24 weekly, if not more than that. And then we check in
25 with her as well. So we're in and out of her

1 classroom all the time. We also have our novice
2 teachers meeting with our Dawson Co-op, and then
3 she's also already finished with her RISE training.
4 She only has one more day of her RISE training
5 through our Dawson Co-op. And then Dawson Co-op also
6 has our -- we work very closely with our math
7 specialist and our literacy specialist, and so they
8 come in for extra support there as well. So we feel
9 like we're really giving her extra support within our
10 building as well with the kindergarten teachers and
11 our admin. And then our literacy facilitator also is
12 in our building quite frequently, and so she's giving
13 her support as well. They're keeping a daily
14 journal, working with our mentor teacher. They're a
15 couple of classrooms down the hall from her. So we
16 feel like she's getting quite a bit of support within
17 our building.

18 DR. PINKERTON: And UCA is where the intern is
19 coming from, and UCA is also providing support to
20 her. We're allowing her to miss days in the
21 classroom to go meet with UCA as they are working
22 with all of their student teachers this semester.
23 So, they're providing support, and they've provided
24 some information here on their slide just so --
25 everything that they're doing to support their intern

1 as well.

2 We did do stakeholder input with staff, with the
3 parents, and with that cooperating teacher, the
4 mentor teacher. And our kindergarten staff, they
5 were all onboard with that. One-hundred percent of
6 them said "yes, we agree with this idea," and there's
7 some comments there on slide 7; it said they're
8 excited to have this intern, they look forward to
9 helping her during this internship, they're able to
10 give their own students better one-on-one attention
11 because of this plan or request. And then, our
12 parents -- we had about 10 responses from our
13 parents, and there's only 18 in there, so that was
14 actually pretty good for parent responses. And they
15 one-hundred percent supported this and they have some
16 comments there about how much they like that intern
17 and that they're loving their new teacher and that
18 she's doing a great job and treating them with
19 patience and kindness. So -- and then we also have
20 input from the mentor teacher stating that she is
21 willing to do this and was onboard with this. And
22 she has served as a mentor before.

23 So, in summary, as y'all have already mentioned
24 today, we are in a teacher shortage. We are
25 struggling to find certified teachers. We do have

1 streamlined staff due to low enrollment. We didn't
2 have extra people that we could have moved into that
3 position, and we do need to socially distance our
4 students. So we are requesting just this temporary
5 flexibility through the Act 1240 waiver.

6 That's all of our presentation, unless you have
7 questions for us.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Questions, Dr. Rankin?

9 DR. RANKIN: Just a question of curiosity. Do
10 you have any idea why 15 kindergarten students
11 enrolled after school had already started? Any
12 trigger for that that you know of?

13 MS. REYNOLDS: We don't know. We just had an
14 influx.

15 DR. PINKERTON: After the first day of school,
16 15.

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

18 MS. WOODS: I don't. I just want to comment and
19 say that I think this is a brilliant plan. My
20 husband does a lot of recruiting for finance and he
21 says, you know, it's -- you can always tell those
22 people in finance that have dealt with real money
23 versus fake money. And so I think from a teaching
24 perspective, I mean how great is it that she's going
25 to have a job when she graduates and is already in a

1 classroom and she's already had real experience with
2 the students that she's interacting with. So I think
3 this is a great solution.

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

5 MR. SUTTON: No questions.

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

7 MS. McFETRIDGE: No. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Henderson?

9 MR. HENDERSON: No questions.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. Hill?

11 DR. HILL: (shaking head from side to side.)

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

13 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side.)

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton?

15 MS. NEWTON: This question, I think, is more for
16 the Department than it is for the district. We're
17 starting to see more and more of the requests for an
18 intern to fill in for a semester, you know, in the
19 actual spot. Is the Department planning on
20 collecting any long-range data on these teachers to
21 see how they compare with the ones that are going
22 through traditional internship versus where they're
23 missing the internship and going right in the
24 classroom, and maybe seeing three to five years if
25 they're still in teaching, if -- how their students

1 are doing compared to the ones that went through a
2 traditional internship?

3 SECRETARY KEY: Dr. Pfeffer, is that something
4 you want to tackle now or do you want to wait till
5 later today?

6 DR. PFEFFER: I can do both. I can do this
7 really quickly.

8 So, Ms. Newton, I think at the end of the day
9 when we do the presentation on the teacher residency
10 model you'll see that this is the concept that
11 essentially we are going to be outlining. Right now
12 the challenge would be we couldn't really collect
13 data because we don't necessarily know exactly who
14 the teachers are and how many schools utilize this,
15 what prep programs they're with. So if we re-think
16 what we're doing with educator preparation and create
17 a new model where this becomes a norm, then we are
18 going to be able to have that information and better
19 understand how well prepared teachers are, depending
20 on the type of route they choose.

21 MS. NEWTON: Excellent. I just know with 1240
22 waivers the more information that we can get the
23 better informed decisions we can make. And so I
24 think that's a great idea. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Post?

1 MS. POST: No questions, just a comment. I was
2 over there fixing my coffee and listening to all the
3 supports that you are offering this teacher, and it
4 sounds like that person is definitely set up to
5 succeed. So, well done.

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any more questions?

7 Okay. I'll open the floor for a motion.

8 DR. RANKIN: I'll make that motion to approve
9 the waiver.

10 MR. HENDERSON: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Motion by Dr. Rankin,
12 second by Mr. Henderson to approve the Act 1240
13 waiver for Bauxite School District.

14 All in favor?

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

17 Motion passes. Thank you all.

18 SUPT. DONAGHY: Thank you.

19 DR. PINKERTON: Thank you.

20 b) MARVELL-ELAINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Up next we have a request for
22 an Act 1240 waiver from the Marvell-Elaine School
23 District.

24 MS. FRENO: Yes. This is -- the Marvell-Elaine
25 School District requests a waiver of Class Size for

1 only its kindergarten and 3rd grade classes at the
2 Marvell-Elaine Elementary School. And, again, 20
3 minutes to the school district. All non-lawyers
4 should be sworn in. And at any time questions can be
5 asked to ADE staff or to the school district.
6 Superintendent Denetra Williams is here and I'll turn
7 the floor over to her, if there are any questions.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Ms. Freno.

9 Okay. Ms. Williams, if you and whoever else
10 might be speaking would please raise your right hand.

11 SUPT. WILLIAMS: Well, I have the principal, the
12 elementary principal --

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

14 SUPT. WILLIAMS: -- Karmen McNutt, who's joining
15 via Zoom. So --

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

17 SUPT. WILLIAMS: -- she may have some things to
18 add, as well.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McNutt, if you want to add,
20 if you will raise your right hand. Do you swear or
21 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall
22 be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
23 truth?

24 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

1 SUPT. WILLIAMS: Good morning. My name is
2 Denetra Williams and I'm currently serving as the
3 interim superintendent in the Marvell-Elaine School
4 District. To Commissioner Key and the State Board
5 Members, I want to thank you all for considering our
6 waiver request in regards to Act 1240, a Class Size
7 waiver request for kindergarten and for 3rd grade.

8 We are requesting a waiver based upon our
9 current enrollment in kindergarten and also in 3rd
10 grade for the 2021 school year. Currently, we have
11 24 students in kindergarten and we have 26 students
12 enrolled in grade 3. We have obtained stakeholder
13 input from our stakeholders. We did surveys; we
14 administered surveys and we also talked with the
15 staff members. And based upon surveys, some of the
16 parents who surveyed and some of the other
17 respondents said that the current committed staff,
18 teachers knowing where the students are academically,
19 and that the teacher plans to provide engaging
20 lessons were important to them. Also, the
21 respondents said that students receiving quality
22 education was important to them and they indicated
23 that we should apply for this waiver because they
24 understand there's a teacher shortage; also for us to
25 comply with the standards, and also our enrollment

1 has increased.

2 As you know, last month the State Board released
3 the Marvell-Elaine School District from its fiscal
4 distress designation. But in order for us to get to
5 that point where we were financially solvent, there
6 was some decisions that had to be made. So we had to
7 make decisions which maximized our human capital, but
8 also our enrollment in both grade levels exceeded the
9 number stated in the standards because we had some
10 students who enrolled after the start of the school
11 year. As a matter of fact, how we ended up with 24
12 students was we had a kindergarten student that
13 enrolled last week. All right. How -- what we plan
14 to do in regards to our waiver is that we will have a
15 classroom teacher, but we will place a REACH
16 associate in that classroom with that classroom
17 teacher fulltime. And the teacher who we talked
18 about in regards to what was going to happen, she
19 said yes, she would appreciate having a fulltime
20 REACH associate in her classroom because that person
21 could help to provide interventions, could work one-
22 on-one with the students, could help differentiate
23 things; but, most importantly, she said also to make
24 sure that the students are safe. So I thought that
25 was something that was valid and a concern that needs

1 to be addressed. We -- the REACH associates are
2 really highly qualified instructional
3 paraprofessionals. They have at least an associate's
4 degree; it's either in Education or Early Childhood
5 Education. In addition to having an associate's
6 degree, they have at least completed Pathway D,
7 Arkansas IDEAS, the Science of Reading training. One
8 of them has completed RISE for the grade level that
9 she will be working, in K-2; she's completed that.
10 And the other REACH associate is currently
11 participating in RISE for 3-6. So the ladies who
12 will be in the classroom working with the teachers
13 directly -- which is what they've already started to
14 do anyway, working with the teachers, assisting
15 students and things like that -- they bring with
16 them, like I say, strengths. And also in addition to
17 bringing those strengths with them, our students will
18 stay in their own grade level classrooms, receive the
19 on-grade level instruction on grade level content.

20 Now this is the best option that we could
21 determine at this time because we have advertised for
22 teachers, but we have not been able to hire any
23 teachers. Also, we do not have any long-term subs
24 that we can even place in those classrooms. But we
25 will continue to advertise for teachers because we

1 want to do what's in the best interest of the
2 students. But right now, this is the best interest
3 of the students. I have contacted some colleges and
4 universities in regards to graduates who have
5 graduated or who will be graduating. I even inquired
6 about interns -- you know, people who were currently
7 working on their intern perhaps to come into the
8 school district and assume a classroom position. At
9 this point in time I have not been successful, but we
10 will continue to seek qualified applicants to place
11 in our classrooms. And we're going to monitor our
12 enrollment and we're also going to evaluate this plan
13 in late November or early December to see where we
14 are and to see what we need to do moving forward.

15 Now in terms of support, the teachers
16 participate in PLCs; they work together, along with
17 the REACH associate. They also help to identify and
18 implement strategies. Also, what amazes me
19 sometimes, I've just seen teachers collaborating
20 together and they'll say, "Well, let me help you;"
21 say, "Have you tried this? Have you thought about
22 that?" You know, it's just a sense of teamwork and
23 everyone realizes that I have knowledge that someone
24 else may not have, so I can assist you.

25 And also we are participating in the National

1 Institute for Excellence in Teaching, so we are
2 receiving professional learning and support as well.
3 We also receive support from the Office of
4 Coordinated Support and Services. Ms. Barbery is in
5 the district at least monthly. Also, we had the
6 state RISE specialist to train us, who is onsite
7 weekly. We have been receiving assistance from Great
8 Rivers Educational Co-op in regards to professional
9 development, teacher support, and other things like
10 that.

11 And in addition to those outside entities, we
12 have a behaviorist and we have a social worker who
13 will be able to help with the students in terms of
14 like behavior modification, things like that.

15 So we have kind of -- we have thought about this
16 and we think this is the best decision that we can
17 make for our students at this time.

18 And also we will collect data and analyze the
19 data to see where our students are and to see what
20 additional supports that we need to provide our
21 students.

22 I think that's about all I have to say at this
23 time.

24 But also I want to acknowledge the fact that I
25 do have my board president with me.

1 And, Ms. McNutt, is there something that you
2 would like to say? I'm sorry.

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: No, that's great. Thank you,
4 Ms. Williams.

5 MS. McNUTT: My name is Karmen McNutt; I'm the
6 K-5 Principal/School Improvement Specialist here in
7 Marvell-Elaine School District.

8 As well as having the support from our Great
9 Rivers Educational Cooperative, ADE, DESE, Ms. Dallas
10 Henderson, Jennifer Barber, we also have Ms. Latasha
11 Banks who works with us in math. We just brought on
12 Alisha Whiteside who's also going to support us in
13 literacy. In my position, I also go into the
14 classrooms; I support the teachers. My background is
15 mathematics. So we have strong leadership support
16 there. And I have a great background in mathematics,
17 so I go in and help the teachers identify essential
18 standards of learning so that we can continue to
19 provide high quality education to our students, as
20 well as providing them with equitable opportunities.

21 At this time the plan that Ms. Denetra has
22 presented is the best option for our district, and we
23 ask for leniency and that our petition will be
24 accepted.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Ms. McNutt.

1 SUPT. WILLIAMS: So, in conclusion, I would just
2 like to say thank you for your time and consideration
3 of our waiver request.

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

5 Board, do we have questions?

6 Dr. Rankin?

7 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

9 MS. WOODS: No, ma'am.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

11 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

13 MS. MCFETRIDGE: No. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Henderson?

15 MR. HENDERSON: No questions.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. Hill?

17 DR. HILL: No, ma'am.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

19 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side)

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton?

21 MS. NEWTON: Just one quick question. I saw
22 they're calling their aids REACH associates.

23 Are they participating in Opportunity Culture or
24 is that just what they're calling their aids?

25 SUPT. WILLIAMS: That's what -- our highly

1 qualified instructional paraprofessionals who possess
2 at least an associate's degree --

3 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

4 SUPT. WILLIAMS: -- that's what they are
5 referred to. But, no, we are not participating in
6 Opportunity Culture at this time.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Post?

9 MS. POST: No questions.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. If no further questions,
11 the floor is open for a motion.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll make the motion that we
13 approve the waiver for the Marvell-Elaine School
14 District.

15 MS. DEAN: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Ms. McFetridge,
17 second by Ms. Dean.

18 All in favor say "aye."

19 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Opposed?

21 Motion passes.

22 Thank you, Ms. Williams.

23 Okay. We'll go ahead and do the next agenda
24 item because it does include Marvell-Elaine as well,
25 and then we'll take a lunch break after that.

1 VI.5. CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS FOR MINIMUM SCHOOL DISTRICT
2 SIZE WAIVERS

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: This is 6-5, Considerations for
4 Petition for Minimum School District waiver.

5 MS. FRENO: Thank you.

6 Act 60 of 2004 requires that if a school
7 district has below 350 ADM in the two years preceding
8 the immediate school year they must annex to or
9 consolidate with another school district. The
10 Division has to put out a list every year indicating
11 which schools fall within this category. This year,
12 there were six school districts and they're all --
13 they were all listed in your agenda materials. And
14 we have all of them here, either by Zoom or by -- in
15 person. And the State Board -- under the law, the
16 State Board shall grant the petition of a school
17 minimum -- of the school district -- it's a Minimum
18 School District Size waiver. So you grant the
19 petition to waive the Minimum School District Size.
20 And the criteria are: the school district may not be
21 in Level 5 intensive support and not be in
22 probationary status for violation of the Standards
23 for Accreditation; its academic facilities, as
24 evidenced by the district's Facilities Master Plan,
25 must be adequate; and it must be in the best interest

1 of the students as the board of that local school
2 district has noted in a resolution. And just to make
3 sure, I don't think I covered all these -- the school
4 district cannot be in Level 5 intensive support,
5 fiscal distress, or facilities distress.

6 And we have six school districts here today.
7 They have presented petitions.

8 Just to give you a preview, all of these six
9 school districts meet all the requirements that are
10 set forth in law. None of them are in fiscal
11 distress, Level 5 intensive support, facilities
12 distress, probationary status for violations of the
13 Standards for Accreditation; the facilities have all
14 been deemed adequate by the Facilities Master Plan;
15 and they all have the appropriate board resolutions.

16 I will go through them one at a time though,
17 Madam Chair, if that's the way you would like to do
18 that, in case this board has any questions of any of
19 the districts.

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Do we need to do it in separate
21 motions or each one, or can we --

22 MS. FRENO: Yes.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: -- take all six --

24 MS. FRENO: I think it would probably be a good
25 idea to do a separate motion for each one.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

2 b) AUGUSTA SCHOOL DISTRICT

3 MS. FRENO: And the first one that we have today
4 is Augusta School District. Superintendent Kathy
5 Tanner is on Zoom. And if there are any questions
6 for Superintendent Tanner or for any division
7 personnel, I'm sure we'll be happy to answer those.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. And we did receive a
9 handout from the Augusta School District -- or
10 regarding the Augusta School District this morning.

11 So we'll start questions.

12 Dr. Rankin?

13 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

15 MS. WOODS: No questions.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

17 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: No.

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Henderson?

21 MR. HENDERSON: No.

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. Hill?

23 DR. HILL: No, ma'am.

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

25 MS. DEAN: No questions.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton?

2 MS. NEWTON: No questions.

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Post?

4 MS. POST: No questions.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. If no questions, I will
6 open the floor for a motion. And the motion should
7 be --

8 MS. FRENO: The motion would be to grant a
9 Minimize School District Size waiver or deny a
10 Minimum School District Size waiver.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Ms. Freno.

12 MR. SUTTON: I'll make a motion to grant the
13 waiver for the Minimum School District Size.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And for Augusta School
15 District?

16 MR. SUTTON: For Augusta.

17 SECRETARY KEY: Let me clarify. The first one
18 is Strong-Huttig?

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes, it was, but she said
20 Augusta. Oh, I'm sorry.

21 MS. FRENO: Oh, we can -- yes, and I brought up
22 Augusta --

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Uh-huh.

24 MS. FRENO: -- and I've been talking about
25 Augusta. So we could just proceed with Augusta --

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

2 MS. FRENO: -- because the motion has already
3 been made. Just --

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So this is 6-5(b) for Augusta.

5 SECRETARY KEY: I just want to make sure I'm
6 writing on the right one.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yeah.

8 MS. FRENO: No, I'm sorry.

9 SECRETARY KEY: That's okay.

10 MS. FRENO: I'm going off a different list.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion has been made.

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Yes, I'll second that for
13 Augusta.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Mr. Sutton, second
15 by Ms. McFetridge.

16 All in favor say "aye."

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

19 Motion has passed.

20 Thank you.

21 a) STRONG-HUTTIG SCHOOL DISTRICT

22 MS. FRENO: Madam Chair, at this point I will go
23 back to the Strong-Huttig School District --

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

25 MS. FRENO: -- which I accidentally skipped, if

1 that's acceptable.

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes. Thank you.

3 MS. FRENO: Again, the Strong-Huttig School
4 District meets all the requirements that are set
5 forth in law. They are not in Level 5 intensive
6 support, fiscal distress, facilities distress,
7 probation for standards violations; their academic
8 facilities are adequate as evidenced by their Master
9 Plan; and their local board has supported this
10 waiver.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. And we have
12 Superintendent Kimberly Thomas.

13 Do we have any questions?

14 Dr. Rankin?

15 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods? Mr. Sutton?

17 On this side, questions? Ms. McFetridge? Mr.
18 Henderson?

19 Ms. Newton, any questions?

20 MS. NEWTON: No.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And Ms. Post?

22 MS. POST: No questions.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: I'll open the floor for a
24 motion for the Strong-Huttig School District.

25 DR. RANKIN: I'll make the motion to approve the

1 waiver.

2 MS. DEAN: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Dr. Rankin, second
4 by Ms. Dean.

5 All in favor say "aye."

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

8 Thank you.

9 c) MARVELL-ELAINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

10 MS. FRENO: And the next one is the Marvell-
11 Elaine School District. And we have already visited
12 today with Superintendent Williams, who is still here
13 with us. Like the other school districts, Marvell-
14 Elaine is not currently classified in Level 5
15 intensive support, in fiscal distress, facilities
16 distress; they are not on probationary status for
17 violations of the Standards for Accreditation; and
18 their academic facilities are adequate, as evidenced
19 by the district's Master Plan; and the local board of
20 directors has issued a resolution supporting the
21 waiver.

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Questions on the right side?

23 Okay. Questions?

24 Ms. Newton?

25 MS. NEWTON: No.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So this is for the
2 Marvell-Elaine School District. The floor will be
3 open for a motion.

4 MS. DEAN: I move to approve the waiver for
5 Marvell-Elaine.

6 DR. HILL: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. A motion to approve by
8 Ms. Dean, second by Dr. Hill.

9 All in favor?

10 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

12 Thank you, Marvell-Elaine.

13 d) GUY-PERKINS SCHOOL DISTRICT

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next is the Guy-Perkins School
15 District.

16 MS. FRENO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

17 The next is the petition of the Guy-Perkins
18 School District. Superintendent Joe Fisher is with
19 us via Zoom in case there are any questions for him.

20 The -- like the other districts, Guy-Perkins is
21 not in Level 5 intensive support, fiscal distress,
22 facilities distress; is not on probationary status
23 for violations of Standards of Accreditation; its
24 academic facilities are adequate as evidenced by the
25 Facilities Master Plan; and the waiver request is

1 supported by the local school board of directors.

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Thank you,
3 Superintendent Fisher.

4 Questions, Dr. Rankin?

5 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

7 MS. WOODS: No, ma'am.

8 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton. Ms. McFetridge?
10 Mr. Henderson?

11 Ms. Newton, questions?

12 MS. NEWTON: (shaking head from side to side.)

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. No questions. The floor
14 is open for a motion for the Guy-Perkins School
15 District.

16 DR. RANKIN: I'll move to approve the waiver.

17 MR. HENDERSON: Second.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Dr. Rankin, second by
19 Mr. Henderson.

20 All in favor?

21 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

23 Thank you. Motion passes.

24 e) SHIRLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next, we have the Shirley

1 School District.

2 MS. FRENO: Yes. The Shirley School District --
3 Superintendent Tyrene Gardner is with us via Zoom
4 today, in case you have any questions.

5 The Shirley School District is not currently
6 classified in Level 5 intensive support, fiscal
7 distress, facilities distress; it is not on
8 probationary status for violations of the Standards
9 for Accreditation; its academic facilities are
10 adequate as evidenced by the district's Facilities
11 Master Plan; and the waiver is supported by its local
12 board of directors as evidenced in their resolution.

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Superintendent
14 Gardner, for being on.

15 Do we have questions?

16 Dr. Rankin?

17 DR. RANKIN: No.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: On the right side, any
19 questions?

20 Any questions down here?

21 Ms. Newton, any questions?

22 MS. NEWTON: No.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Post?

24 MS. POST: No.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. The floor is open for

1 the Shirley School District.

2 MS. DEAN: Move to approve.

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Ms. Dean.

4 Do we have a second?

5 MR. SUTTON: I'll second.

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Second by Mr. Sutton.

7 So there's a motion on the floor for the Shirley
8 School District.

9 All in favor say "aye."

10 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

12 Motion passes.

13 f) WESTERN YELL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Last, we have the Western Yell
15 County School District.

16 MS. FRENO: Yes. And the superintendent, Deanna
17 Klaus, is with us via Zoom today.

18 The Western Yell County School District is not
19 currently classified in Level 5 intensive support,
20 fiscal distress, facilities distress; it is not on
21 probationary status for violations of the Standards
22 for Accreditation; its facilities are adequate as
23 supported -- as evidenced by the district's
24 Facilities Master Plan; and the waiver is supported
25 by the local board of directors of the school

1 district.

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Superintendent
3 Klaus, for being on.

4 Do we have any questions down here?

5 Okay. Any questions?

6 Ms. Newton, any questions?

7 MS. NEWTON: No.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. The floor is open for
9 Western Yell County School District.

10 MS. McFETRIDGE: I move that we grant the waiver
11 for Western Yell County.

12 MS. WOODS: I'll second.

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Motion by Ms.
14 McFetridge, second by Ms. Woods for Western Yell
15 County School District.

16 All in favor?

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

19 Thank you. Motion passes.

20 Thank you, Ms. Freno.

21 We are at our break now for lunch. Do we want
22 to come back at 1:00? What do y'all think? 1:00,
23 okay. We'll be back here at 1:00 to start our
24 afternoon agenda. Thank you.

25 (LUNCH BREAK: 12:22 P.M. - 1:10 P.M.)

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. It is 1:10, so we will
2 get back started for our afternoon meeting, if we are
3 ready. Great. Welcome back to our afternoon
4 session.

5 VII.1. ACT 1240 DIGITAL LEARNING APPLICATIONS, WAIVERS, AND
6 REPORTS

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We are starting with agenda
8 item 7-1, the Act 1240 Digital Learning Applications;
9 Stacy presenting.

10 a) VIRTUAL ARKANSAS REPORT

11 MS. SMITH: So good afternoon. So Stacy Smith,
12 Deputy Commissioner.

13 So Virtual Arkansas submitted a report. I think
14 that was requested at the last board meeting for
15 Virtual Arkansas. So we asked them to put together a
16 written report, which we attached. They are on the
17 Zoom, the principal and the director; John Ashworth
18 is on Zoom, if you have any questions for him. If
19 not, then we ask that you just accept the report.
20 But he is online if you have any questions.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So first item, (a),
22 Virtual Arkansas report, do we have questions?

23 Dr. Rankin?

24 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

1 MS. WOODS: No.

2 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton.

4 Ms. McFetridge?

5 MS. McFETRIDGE: No.

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any questions?

7 Okay. Ms. Newton, are you back with us? I
8 should have checked before. I apologize. Hello,
9 good to see you. Do you have any questions for
10 Virtual Arkansas?

11 MS. NEWTON: (Shaking head from side to side.)

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you. Okay.

13 b) WESTSIDE (CRAIGHEAD) K-2 ADDENDUM

14 c) SEARCY K-3 ADDENDUM

15 e) ALPENA K-3 ADDENDUM

16 f) HELENA/WEST HELENA K-4 ADDENDUM

17 g) OMAHA K-8 ADDENDUM

18 h) LAKESIDE GARLAND ADDENDUM TO ADD VIRTUAL ARKANSAS
19 FOR 7-8

20 i) PIGGOTT

21 j) LEE COUNTY

22 k) DECATUR

23 l) SMACKOVER-NORPHLET

24 m) FORDYCE

25 n) RECTOR

1 o) BUFFALO ISLAND

2 p) LAWRENCE COUNTY

3 MS. SMITH: And as far as presenting the rest of
4 the virtual applications, we have Tally Harp's name
5 down, but it's actually going to be Tracy Holland and
6 she's from Public School Accountability. So --

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

8 MS. HOLLAND: Good afternoon, Board. My name is
9 Tracy Holland. I'm in place of Tally Harp, as Ms.
10 Smith just said, to present for your consideration
11 Digital Learning Plans.

12 So we do want to ask for you to consider them as
13 a batch. We have Westside Consolidated that's adding
14 K-2 to an existing State Board approved plan; Searcy
15 School District is adding kindergarten through 3rd
16 grade to their State Board approved Digital Learning
17 Plan; Alpena is adding K-3 to their already-approved
18 State Board plan; Helena/West Helena is adding K-4 to
19 their State Board approved plan; Omaha is adding K-8
20 to their State Board approved plan; and Lakeside
21 Garland is adding Virtual Arkansas as a provider for
22 7th and 8th grade students.

23 And then we have some new Digital Learning Plan
24 applications for the following districts. We have
25 Piggott for K-12; we have Lee County offering K-12;

1 Decatur School District is offering K-12; Smackover-
2 Norphlet is K-12, they're using Arkansas River
3 Consortium; Fordyce is offering to K-12, they too are
4 using the Arkansas River Consortium; Rector is
5 providing digital learning for kindergarten through
6 6th grade, they're using the Tri-Region Consortium;
7 Buffalo Island is offering to K-12, they're using the
8 Tri-Region; Lawrence County is offering to K-12, they
9 too are using Tri-Region.

10 MS. SMITH: So let's pause there --

11 MS. HOLLAND: Okay.

12 MS. SMITH: -- and see if there's any in that
13 group that we want to pull out.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So I'll start down here.
15 Y'all take a second to look at them to see if you
16 have questions that you want to come back and ask.
17 So we'll pull out the ones that we have questions
18 about first.

19 MR. SUTTON: Have these districts already
20 started with the Digital Learning Program --

21 MS. HOLLAND: Several -- yes. Oh --

22 MR. SUTTON: -- given where we're at in the
23 year?

24 MS. HOLLAND: Yes. So the ones that are new
25 have filled out the contingency learning form, so

1 they were following those waivers that had already
2 been granted by you guys.

3 MR. SUTTON: Okay.

4 MS. SMITH: And I will comment too that on some
5 of these there are -- you know, a lot of these
6 districts that we're adding new ones were --

7 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.

8 MS. SMITH: -- in case they needed it.

9 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.

10 MS. SMITH: And some of them -- for example,
11 that was one of the reasons Little Rock pulled theirs
12 back, because what they thought they were going to
13 need they ended up not needing. So those that --
14 most of them that had added extra grades on --

15 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.

16 MS. SMITH: -- they have started.

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So, Dr. Rankin, do you
18 have any ones you want to pull for questions at this
19 point?

20 DR. RANKIN: No.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods:

22 MS. WOODS: No, ma'am.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

24 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: I think the only one I have is
2 Earle, but I don't think you've mentioned that one.

3 MS. HOLLAND: Not yet.

4 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Henderson?

6 MR. HENDERSON: No.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. Hill?

8 DR. HILL: (Shaking head from side to side)

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

10 MS. DEAN: No.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, do you have any
12 ones that you'd like to pull for questioning?

13 MS. NEWTON: No.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Post?

15 MS. POST: No.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Do we want to go ahead
17 and take a vote on those or do we want to --

18 MS. SMITH: Let's -- yeah.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

20 MS. SMITH: Let's go ahead and do a motion all
21 the way to the -- I guess that would be P.

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So B to P -- or A to P, but we
23 did pull D, Little Rock?

24 MS. SMITH: Yeah. Yeah. So B, because A was
25 the report --

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

2 MS. SMITH: -- that you guys have done; so B all
3 the way to P, with the exception of Little Rock, the
4 one that was pulled as amended on there.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So Westside (Craighead)
6 through Lincoln.

7 Ms. Newton, did you have a question?

8 MS. NEWTON: Yeah. I thought we'd stopped
9 before that and I misunderstood. I'm going to want
10 to pull Lincoln.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

12 MS. NEWTON: Are you doing Cossatot River, also?

13 MS. HOLLAND: We had not.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We have not, no.

15 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So we will -- this motion then
17 will be B through O. B through O.

18 Any other -- any questions on B through O?

19 MS. SMITH: Let me make sure that we're on the
20 same -- okay. I'm showing O as the Buffalo Island
21 and I'm showing P to be Lawrence County (Tri-Region).

22 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

24 MS. SMITH: And then Lincoln was Q, and so we're
25 not doing Lincoln right now. So all the way to P, to

1 Lawrence County.

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. I'm sorry. I printed it
3 out on Tuesday and I think it changed since then.

4 MS. SMITH: That's fine.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: I tried to change it but --

6 MS. SMITH: No, you're fine.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

8 MS. SMITH: I just wanted to make sure.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: So B through O, Buffalo Island.

10 MS. HOLLAND: P.

11 MS. SMITH: P, Lawrence County.

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Through Lawrence County. Okay.
13 So the floor is open for a motion.

14 MR. SUTTON: I'll make the motion to approve the
15 waivers.

16 MS. DEAN: Second.

17 MR. SUTTON: And I was going to say B through P
18 under item 7 --

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes, 7-1.

20 MR. SUTTON: -- 1.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Mr. Sutton and second
22 by Ms. Dean.

23 All in favor?

24 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

1 Motion passes. Okay.

2 q) LINCOLN

3 r) COSSATOT RIVER

4 s) LAMAR

5 t) EARLE

6 u) OUACHITA

7 v) FORREST CITY

8 MS. HOLLAND: So next for your consideration we
9 have Lincoln School District -- and, again, these are
10 all new Digital Learning Plans. So we have Lincoln,
11 which is offering K-8; Cossatot River is offering K-
12 12; Lamar is K-12, they're part of the Guy Fenter
13 Consortium; we have Earle offering K-12; Ouachita
14 School District offering K-12; and then Forrest City
15 offering to K-12 students.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So we will go -- we've
17 pulled Lincoln. Are there any other ones that we
18 want to pull for questioning?

19 Dr. Rankin?

20 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

22 MS. WOODS: No, ma'am.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

24 MR. SUTTON: No. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

1 MS. McFETRIDGE: Earle. Can we look at Earle?

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yes.

3 Mr. Henderson?

4 MR. HENDERSON: No questions.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. Hill?

6 DR. HILL: No.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

8 MS. DEAN: (Shaking head from side to side.)

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, do you have others
10 that you'd like to pull for questioning?

11 MS. NEWTON: Cossatot River.

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So we have Lincoln,
13 Cossatot River, and Earle that have been pulled for
14 questioning. Do we want to go ahead and do a motion
15 for the others? Okay.

16 MS. SMITH: Yes. We'd be asking for a motion to
17 approve then Lamar, which would be S; Ouachita, which
18 would be U; and Forrest City, which would be V.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. The floor is open for a
20 motion for those four districts' plans.

21 MS. McFETRIDGE: I make a motion to approve
22 those schools.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Ms. McFetridge.

24 Is there a second?

25 DR. RANKIN: I'll second.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A second is on the floor to
2 approve the four schools' plans.

3 All in favor say "aye."

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

6 Motion passes.

7 So now do we want to start back up with Lincoln?

8 MS. SMITH: Yes. So to make sure my notes match
9 your notes, we have -- the three districts we talked
10 about are Lincoln, Cossatot River, Earle.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And Earle. Yes.

12 MS. SMITH: Okay. Perfect.

13 So, yeah, we'll start with Lincoln.

14 q) LINCOLN

15 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Lincoln. And do we have
16 Superintendent Mary Spears?

17 MS. SMITH: She should be on.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Is she on Zoom?

19 SUPT. SPEARS: Yes, I'm here.

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Awesome. Thank you.

21 I believe first -- Ms. Newton pulled them.

22 So, MS. Newton, we'll let you start with
23 questioning.

24 MS. NEWTON: My question on Lincoln, I saw that
25 you had a dedicated teacher K-3. And in the

1 requirements where they maintain their pace and their
2 curriculum and have a weekly check-in, are you not
3 doing any synchronous Science of Reading with your K-
4 3?

5 SUPT. SPEARS: Okay. I'm going to defer --
6 Traci Birkes, our elementary principal is on here and
7 she will answer to that.

8 MS. BIRKES: Yes. We are doing -- my name is
9 Traci Birkes and I'm the principal at the elementary
10 school. And we are doing synchronous learning. We
11 have eight total students, so we've grouped them
12 accordingly. They are receiving Science of Reading
13 for 30 minutes daily.

14 MS. NEWTON: Okay. The ones -- your teacher is
15 doing the Science of Reading for 30 minutes a day.
16 Okay.

17 MS. BIRKES: Yes.

18 MS. NEWTON: Is that the only synchronous they
19 have?

20 MS. BIRKES: They also have synchronous check-
21 ins.

22 MS. NEWTON: Okay. And that's once a week?

23 MS. BIRKES: The check-ins?

24 MS. NEWTON: Yes.

25 MS. BIRKES: Yes. Well, it's as-needed,

1 basically. They have office hours, so it's as-
2 needed.

3 MS. NEWTON: Are you not doing any small group
4 reading with the -- with your students?

5 MS. BIRKES: That's what the 30 minutes daily
6 is, is their small group instruction.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay. So, okay.

8 MS. BIRKES: That's based on the Science of
9 Reading.

10 MS. NEWTON: Okay. That's a little concerning
11 to me, 30 minutes a day, for K-3 instruction in
12 literacy and reading. That seems not very much. And
13 so that was really concerning to me.

14 MS. BIRKES: Okay. But what we did was we
15 looked at -- you know, we offered Florida Virtual; so
16 we really went through and vetted their program. So
17 they have -- I mean all of their -- they have
18 phonological awareness; it's like adding/deleting
19 polynomials, substituting polynomials, initial -- you
20 know, all those things. And it also has -- for
21 phonics it does all the syllable types, just like --
22 and all the patterns, just like our phonics program
23 would. So we kind of -- we went through and vetted
24 it pretty well.

25 MS. NEWTON: Okay. All right. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Do we have any other questions
2 for Lincoln?
3 Dr. Rankin?
4 DR. RANKIN: No questions.
5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?
6 MS. WOODS: No.
7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?
8 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.
9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: On this side, any questions?
10 Ms. Post?
11 MS. POST: No.
12 MR. DAN DAVIS: Microphone.
13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, do you have any
14 more questions for --
15 Thank you.
16 Ms. Newton, do you have any more questions for
17 Lincoln?
18 MS. NEWTON: No.
19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Do we want to go ahead
20 and vote on this one or wait and do all three?
21 MS. SMITH: This one.
22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So we will go ahead and
23 the floor is open, unless there's any more questions
24 for Lincoln, their Digital Learning Plan. We're
25 looking to accept or deny the Digital Learning Plan

1 for Lincoln School District.

2 (A MOMENT OF SILENCE)

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Do we have any more questions
4 for them?

5 (A MOMENT OF SILENCE)

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Do we have a lack of a motion
7 or do we have any --

8 MR. SUTTON: Motion to approve.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay.

10 MS. DEAN: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Mr. Sutton, second by
12 Ms. Dean for Lincoln School District's Digital
13 Learning Plan.

14 All in favor?

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Opposed?

17 Motion passes.

18 r) COSSATOT RIVER

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next, we have Cossatot River
20 School District.

21 MS. SMITH: Samantha Sellers -- I can see it on
22 the screen. So, Samantha Sellers, can you hear us?
23 Cossatot River School District?

24 SUPT. BROYLES: This is Superintendent Tyler
25 Broyles.

1 MS. SMITH: Tyler. Yeah.

2 SUPT. BROYLES: Samantha Sellers is in here with
3 me.

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you for being here today.

5 Ms. Newton, you can start with your first
6 question.

7 MS. NEWTON: My questions were very similar to
8 the last one. It just said in your plan your local
9 teachers have no responsibilities. And so my
10 question is -- I saw you have one 1st -- one 2nd
11 grader and two 3rd graders. What are you doing for
12 Science of Reading with those? And are they getting
13 any small group and reading instruction?

14 SUPT. BROYLES: Well --

15 (A MOMENT OF SILENCE)

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We can't hear you.

17 SUPT. BROYLES: Sorry about that. We -- I got a
18 prompt that said Join as Panelist and I -- yeah. So
19 I'm back now.

20 What we were relying on here was in partnership
21 with Edmentum. They take care of the Science of
22 Reading component for us. We have four students that
23 -- only four students that are involved. But what we
24 had in our plan was -- well, Edmentum was our virtual
25 program, which is both asynchronous and synchronous

1 model, and Edmentum takes care of that for us. We
2 don't have the exact amount of time. But I'll let
3 Samantha add, if she has anything to add to it as
4 well.

5 MS. SELLERS: Hi, Ms. Newton. This is Samantha
6 Sellers. One of the ways -- our teachers don't -- we
7 use their -- we still have students come onsite to
8 complete their data, so their DIBELS and their
9 iStation data. And that lets me work with the
10 classroom teachers that they would normally be with
11 on the tier that the students are in. And then from
12 that, the teachers are not -- the teachers are not
13 teaching the students but they are aware of the
14 students' proficiency and where they're at with the
15 Science of Reading components. And then I take that
16 data and work with the teachers and we kind of
17 develop a learning coach scenario between myself and
18 the caretaker, and those are the ways that we help
19 support them (sound cuts out) with the Science of
20 Reading.

21 MS. NEWTON: Okay. That makes sense. Okay.
22 Thank you.

23 MS. SELLERS: You're welcome.

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, any more questions?

25 MS. NEWTON: (Shaking head from side to side.)

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Down here to my right,
2 any questions?

3 Any questions here?

4 Okay. So if there are no remaining questions
5 for Cossatot River, the floor will be open for a
6 motion to approve or not approve their Digital
7 Learning Plan.

8 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll make the motion to approve
9 the Cossatot River learning plan.

10 MR. HENDERSON: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Ms. McFetridge, a
12 second by Mr. Henderson to approve Cossatot River
13 Digital Learning Plan.

14 All in favor say "aye."

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

17 Motion passes. Thank you.

18 t) EARLE

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next, we have the Earle School
20 District.

21 SUPT. KNOWLES: Good afternoon. Tish Knowles
22 from Earle; Earle superintendent.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Hi, Ms. Knowles. Thank you for
24 being here today.

25 SUPT. KNOWLES: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Questions. Ms. Newton, do you
2 want to start?

3 MS. NEWTON: I didn't have any questions for
4 Earle.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Dr. Rankin?

6 DR. RANKIN: No.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

8 MS. WOODS: No.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

10 MR. SUTTON: No.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

12 MS. McFETRIDGE: Good afternoon, Ms. Knowles. I
13 appreciate you joining us today.

14 In looking at your plan, you have synchronous
15 learning students and onsite learning students. Is
16 that correct, the blended?

17 SUPT. KNOWLES: Yes, ma'am.

18 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Talk to us a little bit
19 about -- I think the concern that I have is you talk
20 about -- I need to find it here on your report --
21 that if one teacher is out you've got one teacher
22 that will take the 40 students at one time. Is that
23 right?

24 SUPT. KNOWLES: Yes. So, first of all, let me
25 say that we actually have no intention to implement

1 unless we have a major catastrophic event where
2 onsite learning becomes extremely problematic. So
3 this is a plan for us in the event that we would have
4 to utilize it. So we're being proactive rather than
5 reactive; so we put a plan together.

6 We actually have everybody onsite, so I do want
7 to say -- I do want to preface that -- with that. So
8 in the event, let's say, that a teacher would be
9 absent long-term and maybe there would have to be --
10 there's -- let's just say it's a 2nd grade teacher,
11 one is out, and there are a few teachers -- a few
12 students that would need to be -- to have instruction
13 when that other teacher was out, we might be able to
14 utilize that other teacher instead of having a sub;
15 so that you would have the same reading, math, and
16 everything would be the same teacher in that grade
17 rather than utilizing a sub. So that is the only
18 reason that we would do something like that.

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. So do you feel like
20 you've prepared your teachers in case they would have
21 to do this?

22 SUPT. KNOWLES: Yes, ma'am, absolutely. We
23 learned a lot last year with our situation. And
24 everybody -- our students are one-to-one computers,
25 we're on go. If we had to pivot for any reason, or

1 whatever, or if we had to be long-term, longevity, we
2 could do that. But we have no intent of using the
3 plan; we just wanted to be proactive.

4 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. And your request is just
5 for the one year; is that correct?

6 SUPT. KNOWLES: Yes. Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay. Thank you very much.

8 SUPT. KNOWLES: Thank you.

9 MS. McFETRIDGE: No further questions.

10 SUPT. KNOWLES: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

12 Questions, Mr. Henderson?

13 MR. HENDERSON: No.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. Hill?

15 DR. HILL: No.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

17 MS. DEAN: No.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Post?

19 MS. POST: No.

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Knowles.

21 Any -- if no further questions, the motion --
22 the floor is open for a motion to approve or not
23 approve the Digital Learning Plan for Earle School
24 District.

25 MS. DEAN:

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Ms. Dean.

2 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll second that.

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A second by Ms. McFetridge to
4 approve Earle's Digital Learning Plan.

5 All in favor say "aye."

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

8 Motion passes. Thank you.

9 SUPT. KNOWLES: Thank you so much for your time.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

11 VII.2. CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENTS FOR DIGITAL
12 LEARNING PLANS

13 a) PREMIER HIGH SCHOOL - SPRINGDALE

14 b) ACADEMIES AT RIVERCREST HIGH SCHOOL

15 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next, we have Consideration for
16 Amendments to Charter School Digital Learning Plans.
17 Tim Johnston.

18 MR. JOHNSTON: Good afternoon. Tim Johnston,
19 DESE Charter Unit.

20 First of all, I will acknowledge that the
21 attachment for Rivercrest was not included on the
22 agenda. I'm not sure what happened. But I did go
23 into Boardbook today and add that.

24 But we have two that the Charter Authorizing
25 Panel voted to approve last month, so I'm bringing

1 this to you today just to determine whether you want
2 to review or not review the Panel's decision.

3 The first one is Premier High School -
4 Springdale. Their charter does expire June 20 of
5 '26, the Charter Authorizing Panel approved it for
6 three years only.

7 And Rivercrest High School is the same; their
8 charter does not expire till 2026. But the Charter
9 Authorizing Panel approved theirs for three years as
10 well.

11 Both are asynchronous and synchronous models.

12 And representation from the districts is
13 available via Zoom, if you have any questions.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

15 So this is Premier High School and Academies at
16 Rivercrest High School. Do we have questions?

17 Dr. Rankin?

18 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

20 MS. WOODS: No.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

22 MR. SUTTON: No.

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

24 MS. MCFETRIDGE: No. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Henderson?

1 MR. HENDERSON: No.

2 DR. HILL: (shaking head from side to side.)

3 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side.)

4 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Ms. Newton, do you have
5 any questions for either school?

6 MS. NEWTON: No.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: No questions.

8 Can we take this as one vote?

9 MR. JOHNSTON: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. And it will be to review
11 or not review the Charter Panel's decision.

12 MS. WOODS: I'll move to not review.

13 MS. DEAN: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We have a motion, and a second
15 by Ms. Dean to not review.

16 All in favor say "aye."

17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

19 Motion passes.

20 MR. JOHNSTON: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

22 VII.3. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST TO RELEASE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:
23 DESE RULES GOVERNING THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER ACT

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Up next, we have item 7-3,
25 Release for Public Comment the Rules Governing the

1 Star-Spangled Banner Act. Do we have Ms. Courtney
2 Salas-Ford presenting this, or someone else?

3 Should we skip it and come back?

4 MS. FRENO: Yeah, this is Lori Freno, Department
5 of Education. The Star-Spangled Banner rules, these
6 are being presented to you for your consideration for
7 public comment release pending the approval of the
8 Governor's office.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Do we have questions?

10 MS. FRENO: Just for any new board members that
11 don't know, the procedure is first it comes to you
12 all to look at, see if they're okay with you; we send
13 them to the Governor's office; and once the
14 Governor's office approves them, then we send them
15 out for public comment.

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: And then we vote again for
17 final approval?

18 MS. FRENO: Oh. Oh, yes, absolutely. Then they
19 are brought back to you after all the public comments
20 are made. Division responds to those that are
21 submitted, and any changes are made to the rules.

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Questions to my right?

23 Okay. Any questions?

24 Ms. Newton, do you have any questions?

25 MS. NEWTON: No.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. This would be a motion
2 to release the rules for public comment pending
3 Governor's office approval or do not do that. The
4 floor will be open for a motion.

5 MR. SUTTON: I make the motion --

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by --

7 MR. SUTTON: -- to approve the release.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: -- Mr. Sutton to approve.

9 MS. FRENO: To approve the release, Mr. Sutton,
10 pending Governor's office review?

11 MR. SUTTON: What she said.

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Yeah, pending.

13 MS. DEAN: Second.

14 Second by Ms. Dean.

15 Okay. All in favor say "aye."

16 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

18 Motion passes. Thank you.

19 VII.4. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST TO RELEASE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:
20 DESE RULES GOVERNING ARKANSAS MILITARY CHILD SCHOOL TRANSITIONS

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next, item 7-4, Release Rules
22 for Public Comment Governing Arkansas Military Child
23 Transitions. And I believe Whitney James will be
24 presenting.

25 MS. JAMES: Hi. I'm Whitney James with the

1 Department.

2 The Division of Elementary and Secondary
3 Education requests that the Board release the rules
4 governing Arkansas Military Child School Transitions
5 for public comment pending Governor's office
6 approval. I'm happy to take any questions, and I
7 have John Kominar here as well.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

9 Questions, Dr. Rankin?

10 DR. RANKIN: No questions.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

12 MS. WOODS: No.

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

14 MR. SUTTON: No.

15 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Down here? Ms. McFetridge?

16 MS. McFETRIDGE: No.

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: No questions.

18 Ms. Newton, do you have any questions?

19 MS. NEWTON: No.

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. No questions.

21 This is similar to the last. It will be seeking
22 approval for public comment pending Governor's office
23 approval. The floor is open for a motion.

24 MS. McFETRIDGE: I'll make a motion that we
25 release it for public comment with approval by the

1 Governor's office.

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. A motion to release for
3 public comment pending Governor's office approval.

4 Do we have a second?

5 DR. RANKIN: I'll second.

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A second by Dr. Rankin.

7 All in favor say "aye."

8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

10 Motion passes.

11 Thank you, Ms. James.

12 MS. JAMES: Thank you.

13 VII.5. ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY PRESENTATION

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next on our agenda is item 7-5,
15 a presentation by Assessment and Accountability.

16 MS. SMITH: So today we're going to give you a
17 quick overview of where we are with our assessment
18 data that came in and how that directly impacts
19 accountability. And then we want to also talk to you
20 about the possibilities of a new state assessment
21 that could happen within the next two years and where
22 we are with that and the feedback that we've had or
23 received from our educators in the field. So Dr.
24 Pride is going to walk us through the assessment data
25 piece.

1 DR. PRIDE: Thank you. Good afternoon. Kiffany
2 Pride, Assistant Commissioner of Learning Services.

3 All right. Before I start, I do want to
4 recognize Rachel Horn who is the director of
5 Curriculum Assessment, and the Program Coordinator is
6 Sherry Baird, and then the assessment team; they've
7 done an awesome job throughout the transition with
8 the pandemic and they've worked really hard to
9 support assessments. So I just wanted to publicly
10 say thank you to them and acknowledge their efforts.

11 All right. As we move -- Dan is like "you're
12 up, you move it." All right. I'm not sure why it's
13 showing like that, Dan; it's crossing over.

14 But just to give you a little bit of background
15 about grade 11 ACT, every student in the 11th grade
16 is provided the opportunity to take the ACT during
17 the spring of their junior year at no cost to the
18 student. We do encourage that students take it
19 multiple time, as we have seen a trend that their
20 scores increase as they take it multiple times. This
21 is the sixth year for the Arkansas Department of
22 Education to offer the ACT to all 11th grade
23 students.

24 This year, in terms of participation, we saw
25 about 78% of our 11th grade students participate in

1 the statewide administration. Again, this is a
2 little bit more than what we typically see, just
3 because of the pandemic and that this assessment was
4 administered onsite. Typically, we see about -- I
5 think it ranges from about 85% to about 89%
6 participation. So there was a little bit of a
7 decrease in participation, but not from lack of
8 effort by our schools, our teachers, and then our
9 administration -- our assessment administration here.

10 The percentage of students who met readiness
11 benchmarks decreased proportionately across math,
12 science, and reading, but we knew that there would be
13 a little bit of a decrease. But I think the great
14 piece about them taking the assessment is that they
15 can take it multiple times and then we can respond to
16 support students as they continue to take those
17 assessments.

18 Okay, she's telling me to pause.

19 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. Let's pause just for a
20 second, yeah, to see if we can get this presentation
21 configured right.

22 DR. PRIDE: Oh, better, much better. Better for
23 you guys, too; right?

24 All right. So as you see there, again, there
25 was a slight decrease you see in -- you look at the

1 first graphic there, it's the Arkansas Grade 11
2 percent at or above college and career readiness
3 benchmarks. And, again, you see there the six-year
4 trend and you see a decrease from 14% to 12% from
5 2019 to 2020. And, again, you know, students -- this
6 is, again, less participation, but just slight. And
7 then, of course, we were working through a pandemic.
8 And you see there in terms of each of those subject
9 specific scores there were some slight decreases
10 there as well. But we see that there was a decrease
11 across all. So it lets us know that this was a
12 result of probably many things -- you know, students
13 -- we didn't know whether or not they were
14 quarantined, you know, they were missing things; so
15 several things could have impacted this result. But
16 I think the take of this is that we can always
17 support our students, especially our 11th grade
18 students, as they continue to have opportunities to
19 take the assessment multiple times.

20 All right. When we think about our ACT
21 graduating classes, it will include all of our
22 students, including 11th grade, 12th graders, all of
23 those who have taken the assessment under the state
24 window, as well as national assessments. We see
25 there some of the same kind of consistency in terms

1 of meeting all four and slight decreases across those
2 subject areas. And so if you see that blue line, we
3 highlighted it there so you could see 2021.

4 And, again, there's -- so that 14% of Arkansas
5 students met all four readiness benchmarks. And if
6 you see there, of the 2021 class, 31,152 students
7 took that assessment.

8 All right. When we think about -- let me make
9 sure I'm at step one. All right. So the one before,
10 let me make sure, this is the percent that met the
11 benchmark. Here, we're looking at the actual
12 composite score for students. So when you look at
13 those students who met all four, you see the
14 composite score of 18.8. And actually that's just a
15 slight -- well, we kind of held -- we held steady
16 actually in that area. You see in 2020, just above
17 the blue line, where they met all four; they held
18 steady there in terms of a composite score. And,
19 again, remember, students can take the assessments,
20 the different content area assessments more than one
21 time, and we encourage that.

22 All right. So that was ACT that we talked about
23 for juniors, and then the ACT class -- regulation
24 class for seniors and juniors.

25 Now, we're talking about ACT Aspire which was

1 administered to grades 3 through 10. 97% of our
2 students statewide completed the assessment. That's,
3 I think, a success considering the pandemic. And,
4 again, this was the first statewide summative
5 assessment administered in two years, as we had
6 Covid-19 to disrupt administration. Comparatively,
7 the year before, it was -- two years prior, it was
8 99% of our students took the assessment; so just a
9 slight decrease. This is actually, I think,
10 something very celebratory because we have
11 information for our students where we can start to
12 accelerate learning, and any disruption that they may
13 have had we can -- we have data to support helping
14 them to get what they need to show proficiency at
15 grade level.

16 As you see there, when you look at the graph on
17 your left -- or my left, for English, you see some of
18 the larger score declines were in 3rd and 4th grade.
19 Again, this could be attributed to the fact that they
20 hadn't taken assessment before because it's just the
21 first assessment administered within two years. So,
22 again, those students weren't accustomed to taking
23 assessments. And, again -- and, again, just given
24 the environment of the pandemic it could have
25 impacted their scores.

1 I would also say when you look at reading you
2 see where there, again, a larger decline in grades 3
3 and 5 and 7. We know those are all pivotal years.
4 But, again, we do see some evidence of where there
5 were slight decreases and our students were
6 resilient. If you look at grade 10, you see there's
7 just a 1% decrease. We expected decreases, but some
8 -- in some grade levels, they're very slight. And I
9 think that can be attributed to that our students
10 weren't in school; our teachers were working very
11 hard, although under different circumstances. They
12 were doing the best that they could to help our
13 students not lose so much ground. So we have
14 variance across grade levels. You'll see where
15 students hadn't tested before; those were the biggest
16 declines, as well as, you know, where students may
17 begin new content.

18 In terms of mathematics and science, now we will
19 -- we noticed that in the data the largest decrease
20 was in -- it occurred in math, and in particular in
21 grade 5. And so we're aware of that. You see that
22 that benchmark took some double-digit gains. But,
23 again, as we know, math -- there are multiple factors
24 that could've contributed to that; that math is more
25 of a staircase, and so students have to apply those

1 skills before they can get the next one. So we're
2 working really hard to support our schools with some
3 acceleration, supports around mathematics, especially
4 in these grade bands where we see that there was a
5 big decrease.

6 And then when you look at science, much like
7 reading, there were declines. And we're looking into
8 what we need to do to support and accelerate learning
9 for those grade levels.

10 I think that's my last slide. But I would like
11 to say that I know you guys know that our team did a
12 great job; they put in lots of flexibilities for our
13 schools. And we continue to, as a team in Learning
14 Services, think about all of the supports that we can
15 provide for our schools in terms of accelerating
16 learning and not remediating to create further gaps.
17 So we're working really hard in those areas. Our --
18 I would say our regional specialists are also -- are
19 extension and legs for some of that work. And so
20 we're just working at that daily.

21 Any questions for me?

22 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Questions, down to my right?
23 Questions?

24 Ms. Newton, questions?

25 MS. NEWTON: Just a curious question. I know

1 our ACT was quite a bit lower than the national
2 average in every area. Are other states letting --
3 or having all of their students take the ACT or is it
4 just a select group of students that are taking the
5 ACT?

6 DR. PRIDE: I don't know if I have the answer to
7 that. Stacy may now though.

8 MS. SMITH: Yeah. We're one of the few states
9 that actually have an all-assessment for ACT. Most
10 of the other states, it is just a group. But there
11 is a handful of states that administer the ACT to all
12 of their students, but not very many. So --

13 MS. NEWTON: So will we?

14 MS. SMITH: Yeah. So when we are getting that
15 comparison to national average, it's comparing all of
16 our students to the national average, which for some
17 states may only be 20% of their student population,
18 could be half of their student population, could be
19 those who are just planning on going to college. In
20 our case, all of our students take the test their
21 junior year, and if they don't retake it their senior
22 year, then that junior test is their score. But when
23 you look at all these other scores for the junior
24 year, that's for our state, for our kids.

25 MS. NEWTON: That makes sense. Okay. Thank

1 you.

2 DR. PRIDE: Okay. Thank you.

3 MS. SMITH: Okay. So some pieces I just kind of
4 want to pull out of what Dr. Pride just presented to
5 you -- we knew our scores were going to go down.
6 Right? I mean it wasn't a shock and it wasn't a
7 surprise. We were expecting some type of drop.
8 Okay. I think that we did really, really well. And
9 I think what the state committed to was that we
10 wanted to test as many kids as we could because it
11 was going to be one of the only yardsticks that we
12 could be able to compare where we were across the
13 state. So, you know, we did test over 95% and hit
14 that 97% piece. So those -- that -- those are good
15 things. Okay. And with that data piece, again, all
16 grade levels and all content areas went down. They
17 all did. We weren't surprised. All right.
18 Mathematics took the hardest hit; that's what we saw.
19 We saw math across the board had the biggest decline.
20 And so for us at the Department and for schools,
21 that's an opportunity to think about, okay, why math.
22 Okay. And we know that, especially math teachers,
23 you have to go deep for it to stick.

24 Ms. Newton, you would probably be able to talk
25 about this more than anyone.

1 But you have to have a deep level of
2 understanding and applications and making sure that
3 you're getting all of your skills and that they're
4 building on each other. How did math lend to -- a
5 lot of kids were doing it on their own digitally,
6 without that, you know, immediate classroom support.
7 So math is an area that we've got to roll our sleeves
8 up in and fill some holes.

9 The grade level that showed the biggest decrease
10 on this assessment was 3rd grade. Okay. Again, lots
11 of reasons for that. It could be that was the first
12 year for these kids to ever take a test. You still
13 have large portions of elementary students still
14 being at home. All right. There is a sense of
15 getting ready and getting prepared to take a state
16 assessment that you did not have this past year. And
17 I guess like when you take your driver's test, how
18 many of you took the kids out and drove the route
19 before they took it? Right? Same thing with this.
20 Okay. So there was an accountability piece that was
21 kind of lifted a little bit. People didn't have that
22 same regular piece. So we did see a decline there
23 and we saw it with 3rd grade. All right. We did see
24 lots of younger elementary kids not in school,
25 kindergarten kids not enrolled in school. So those

1 are things that we have to continue to work on.

2 Reading and English, you saw similar declines
3 across the board in those two areas, but not as
4 significant as math, and I take that as a win.
5 Especially in some of the upper grades, you didn't
6 see sharp declines in literacy. And I think part of
7 that is a lot of the work that we've done in
8 literacy. And a win for us this last year is when we
9 did start having to go to digital options and school
10 districts were having to look at their curriculum
11 that they were using, and we were pretty much kind of
12 approving everything; you know, if that's what you've
13 got to do, that's what you've got to do. And I can't
14 tell you how many school districts said, "Wait a
15 second. We've done too much with this Science of
16 Reading. Is this aligned?" And they were calling
17 and asking those questions. We saw that. There's
18 still a lot of work to be done. It's not where we
19 want to be. Okay.

20 So are we where we're supposed to be? No. Are
21 we where we want to be right this minute? No. Are
22 we surprised by any of the data pieces that came in?
23 I can't say that I am. All right. And it's not an
24 opportunity or a time, I think, to beat anybody over
25 the head. All right. I think it's -- we -- our

1 schools did what we asked them to do; they tested as
2 many students as possible so that they had data that
3 could inform us.

4 So how does that impact our accountability
5 moving forward? Well, our entire accountability
6 system -- okay -- the majority portion of our
7 accountability system is built on this assessment.
8 So if the assessment scores went down, what is that
9 going to tell you about their ESSA School Index
10 scores? We're going to see a decline, and that's
11 what you're going to -- we're going to kind of hit
12 today, those reports that was attached, and you saw
13 that when you were looking at that.

14 Dan, if you'll click to the next slide -- or was
15 Kiffany clicking?

16 So, first off, school districts are going to be
17 able to go on and get their own ESSA School Index
18 scores that are being released. They are on My
19 School Info for any school district out there, for
20 parents. Everybody can go to My School Info; they
21 can type in their district, their school; they can go
22 into Reports, ESSA School Index, and actually pull up
23 their own report. And this is what it looks like.
24 Okay? In the past, when they would get this report,
25 they would also have the state level A to F grade.

1 Remember, A to F was waived this year and so schools
2 were not assigned a letter grade. So what you see in
3 place, where the A to F used to be, you see one that
4 says Adjusted Score and one that says Unadjusted
5 Score. These are the ESSA School Index scores.

6 And I believe Dr. Airola is on with us. So when
7 we get very technical, she will jump in and save me.
8 Okay.

9 When we look at what is the unadjusted score,
10 that is for any -- that is all the students that
11 actually took the test at that school district.
12 Okay. The adjusted score is if a school district did
13 not meet the 95% tested requirement. So we did have
14 districts out there that did not test 95% and we had
15 to adjust their score to meet at least 95% or higher.
16 If you tested 95% or higher, you had 97%, 98%, your
17 unadjusted score would reflect that and they would be
18 the same. If you were under that, your adjusted
19 score and your unadjusted score would be different.
20 All right. And so --

21 Do you want to stop? Did you want to say
22 something?

23 Okay. So the ESSA School Index takes in lots of
24 pieces. Okay. And we're going to kind of walk
25 through some of those pieces.

1 Again, I just want to show you that we did test
2 97% statewide, but we did have fluctuations
3 throughout the districts.

4 So this was a chart that you actually had on
5 your report that you were given, and this goes to the
6 overall ESSA School Index score summary statistics.
7 All right. And we group our schools -- elementary,
8 middle, and high school. And when you look at --
9 let's just look at elementary there. So when you're
10 looking at elementary, and you look at the mean, in
11 2018, you can see that the mean for schools in the
12 state was at 71.12; 2019, 71.41. So we didn't see a
13 lot of difference. And then this year it dropped to
14 66. Okay. So that was that average. All right. If
15 you go over to the far side, you see the minimum and
16 the maximum; that means somewhere in the state you
17 had a school, an elementary school had a score of a
18 90. And then you saw -- you also had a school that
19 had a minimum score of 44. So we had that huge range
20 there of scores that went across.

21 Middle school and high school: in every category
22 -- elementary, middle, and high school -- if you
23 compare the 2019 to 2021 school years, you see that
24 decrease and that's because our scores dropped.

25 On this chart, which is an overlay, the 2021 --

1 so you really want that purple score -- I believe
2 it's the purple or the blue -- it's showing up blue
3 there -- we really want that blue to be on the other
4 side of the chart. Okay. But, again, that blue
5 being on that side indicates the loss that our
6 students had.

7 So how does this compare across all of our
8 categories? Did we have any schools or any groups
9 that had some improvement? So percentage of schools
10 improving or declining -- so 88% showed a decline,
11 while we did have 11% that had an increase, and then
12 you look to your different subgroups; and you can see
13 that back and forth. The majority of the state, the
14 majority of the groups declined. We did have some
15 that showed a slight increase.

16 Dr. Airola, are you on? Can you talk at all?

17 DR. AIROLA: I think so. Can you hear me?

18 MS. SMITH: Yes. Yes. Is there anything so far
19 on any of these charts that I've said that you want
20 to add to?

21 DR. AIROLA: Well, I think the only
22 clarification I would make on this slide is that for
23 all of these subgroups we're looking at the subgroups
24 that meet the minimum in. So for every school --
25 everybody -- every school's all-student group is

1 included in the top row. But for each of these
2 subgroups you're only included if you had at least
3 that minimum in of 15. And this is based on their
4 adjusted score; so even if they did test less than
5 95%, their score has been adjusted to account for
6 that. So the fact that we had almost a 12% increase
7 -- improvement from schools is really something to
8 celebrate and look more deeply into.

9 MS. SMITH: Those of you on the Board who have
10 not met Dr. Airola yet, she is our resident expert in
11 all things statistics and assessment and
12 accountability. And those of you who haven't had the
13 pleasure to actually see her in person and have her
14 do a presentation, I'm sorry that you're having to
15 hear me today do this because she really is the
16 expert in this area and this field.

17 And so when we get into some of these
18 statistical pieces, Denise, please feel free to jump
19 in at any time and clarify anything that I'm saying
20 or something that I'm missing. Okay?

21 Okay. The weighted achievement -- Denise, why
22 don't we do a quick on how schools get points for
23 weighted achievement? If you'll talk about
24 readiness, the point, and just kind of give a quick
25 explanation of that. Because I know there's several

1 new board members who don't know that.

2 DR. AIROLA: Sure. Sure. And it may seem like
3 it's complicated, but the design of this is really to
4 give schools credit for having kids in the higher
5 readiness levels. So our assessment has four
6 readiness levels: the lowest one is In Need of
7 Support, the second one is called Close, the third is
8 Ready, and the highest is Exceeds. And so if you
9 have students In Need of Support, you get zero points
10 for those students but those students are in your
11 denominator. And then you get half a point for the
12 kids in Close; a full point for the kids who are
13 Ready; and then for the kids in Exceeds, if the
14 number in Exceeds is greater than the number In Need
15 of Support, you'll get not just one point but you'll
16 get 1.25 points. And the rationale behind that, the
17 theory of action, is that as you -- as kids learn and
18 grow in achievement, just moving your kids out of In
19 Need of Support to Close gives you a half-a-point.
20 So we're trying to incentivize all movement, not just
21 movement at a single level like we used to under
22 NCLB. And then you take all of those points and
23 divide them by the total number of kids tested. And
24 that's where if you didn't test 95%, instead of
25 having the number of kids that you tested, you would

1 have the number that's equal to 95% of the students
2 who were supposed to test. So that's in the law, but
3 it's also a good incentive to test all your kids, and
4 it's a nice adjustment so that we can really compare
5 the information.

6 MS. SMITH: Thank you, Denise.

7 And, again, on all elementary, middle, and high
8 school the average score in all those categories went
9 down, which we knew that would happen when scores go
10 down.

11 Second category is growth. We have achievement
12 of our test scores, which was how they actually
13 scored, in which category. And then we look at
14 growth, how students -- how the school improved,
15 those students grew. And that's what actually
16 impacts the growth score.

17 Denise, do you want to add anything specific to
18 this chart?

19 DR. AIROLA: Yeah. I just want to say you're
20 going to notice that at the elementary level the
21 spread of the scores is much greater. And to me, it
22 means that where you see a lot of really high growth
23 or really low growth you really want to take a closer
24 look. Because some schools were really able to move
25 children in their achievement to a higher level and

1 some were not as successful at that. And so what
2 those who were successful were doing during this
3 pandemic might really inform what we may want to be
4 doing all the time in some of these other schools.
5 And so the score that you expect to get is an 80 or
6 above. That means that on average kids are growing
7 as much as you expect them to or growing more than
8 you expected them to. And if it's less than 80 on
9 average, then on average your kids are not making the
10 growth they need to make. And so that's usually --
11 that's like a warning shot; you're not going to
12 improve in weighted achievement if you're not scoring
13 higher in growth. And this year we really saw some
14 high growth scores, that 91.75. That's just amazing,
15 and we want to know, so what made the difference for
16 your kids, and follow-up on that in terms of
17 strategies that were successful in helping kids to
18 grow in achievement.

19 This measure also is not reliant upon the
20 performance levels. So it gives schools credit for
21 helping children learn and grow in their achievement,
22 regardless of where the student started. So high-
23 performing kids are expected to grow, low-performing
24 kids are expected to grow, and everybody in between.
25 So it's a really nice part of our ESSA School Index

1 that really gives some useful information.

2 MS. SMITH: Thank you, Denise.

3 And I know one of the questions we're going to
4 get is those areas where schools did grow, what did
5 they do, and were they virtual, were they onsite,
6 what did -- so those are those next pieces that we
7 have to dig into. And we'll be working again with
8 Denise's office to help us identify that. Deb has
9 been identifying Schools on the Move; I know you've
10 seen that before -- so those schools who did really
11 well. And the Learning Services group, again, trying
12 to figure out what people did right and what we need
13 to replicate and share.

14 SECRETARY KEY: Stacy and Dr. Airola, the -- if
15 you look at the measures of central tendency on the
16 growth versus achievement -- and, you know, there's
17 really -- you know, with the exception of the
18 standard deviation at elementary for 20-21, if you
19 look at the other two grade spans -- and we don't see
20 a lot of difference from 20-21 to the '19 and '18, as
21 -- you know, when you compare it with the
22 achievement. And you touched on it just a little
23 bit, about the disconnect between -- you know, the
24 direct correlation not really being there between
25 achievement scores and growth scores because of how

1 growth scores are calculated. But, you know, we do
2 have some new board members who weren't with us
3 during all the work we did on developing and
4 explaining growth. So maybe take us down a little
5 tutorial for a second about why these numbers are
6 what they are.

7 MS. SMITH: Denise, I'm bunting that to you.

8 DR. AIROLA: No problem.

9 We -- our state reviewed a number of growth
10 models. And under NCLB we were stuck with only one
11 kind of growth model that they would let us use, and
12 under ESSA they really opened the door to other
13 possibilities. And one of the things that our model
14 does that our -- that we couldn't do under NCLB is we
15 take a student and we look at their score history; we
16 look at the four prior scores that we have, and that
17 gives us a really good sense of where a student has
18 been in terms of achievement, and it helps us to
19 estimate where we think they should be based on where
20 they've been. And the difference between where the
21 model -- the computer, if you will -- says they
22 should be and where they end up ends up being -- that
23 difference is actually their growth score. And we
24 average that at the school level and then we apply it
25 to a formula where 80 is like the 0. So when I first

-- when we first run these different growth pieces, kids have positive and negative scores, negative meaning they didn't make enough growth and achievement and positive meaning they made more than expected, and zero meaning they made exactly what they needed. What's nice about this is by using a student's own score history it controls for a lot of the factors that schools can't control for. I can't -- you know, when I was teaching I couldn't say "I want this kid in my class and that kid in my class and this kid in my class because they're going to make me look like a really good teacher." It controls for all those factors because we're using that student's prior achievement to estimate where we think they should be, and that makes a big difference. So that's why in this model if you have high-performing kids that -- say they come to you already, you know, at or above grade level and you're not continuing to help them grow in achievement, that's going to show up as a negative. The same with if you have low performing students under some older models, you know, you could work for two years and not see that credit with them jumping over a performance level. So this creates a balance for schools in that achievement has a negative

1 correlation with factors beyond our control, like
2 poverty and other factors that might impact learning
3 -- other challenges kids may have, whether they have
4 disabilities that they're trying to learn how to work
5 with or if they're learning the English language or
6 if they just come to school behind, you know, because
7 they didn't have those opportunities as young
8 children. The growth model says "I'm interested in
9 what you've done before and how that tells me what
10 you think you -- what we think you should be doing
11 and whether or not you got there." So you really can
12 differentiate where you see kids changing in
13 achievement using the growth model, because it is
14 much more sensitive to the nuances that the
15 performance levels may not be. One of the reasons I
16 think -- Secretary Key, you were alluding to this --
17 as we get into middle level and high school, you
18 know, we do have a -- we have a percentage of kids
19 that are always being challenged. But then sometimes
20 we have kids where the expectations don't keep up
21 with the grade level standards, and so they may not
22 be showing the growth they need to show and so they
23 end up having a narrower range of growth on average
24 when you pull those numbers together. But it still
25 gives you really important information. You know,

1 even though -- again, the middle level, thinking
2 about it from having taught that age and also doing
3 curriculum, I would often notice that in working with
4 curriculum sometimes kids weren't being exposed to
5 things in math that they needed to have in middle
6 school in order to be prepared for Algebra and
7 Geometry. And the reason for that is because they
8 were behind. But if they're never exposed to grade
9 level material, then they never show the growth they
10 need to because they're not successful on those on-
11 grade-level items on assessment. Well, the growth
12 model kind of calls that out. Whether you're above
13 grade level, at grade level, or below grade level, it
14 looks for you to continue to grow, in whatever way
15 that is. And so it means you really have to attend
16 to those kids' needs, even if they're not the
17 majority in your classroom, or they're not going to
18 show the growth you need them to show.

19 MS. SMITH: Thank you, Denise.

20 DR. AIROLA: You're welcome.

21 MS. SMITH: Okay. So another category to our
22 ESSA School Index is the SQSS, so School Quality and
23 Student Success. And that category has multiple
24 different measure points in there, everything from
25 attendance to the number of students meeting their

1 readiness scores on the ACT, to science is in there
2 at some points, reading scores are in there again.
3 So this is like lots of different variables in there
4 that play into what the SQSS score is going to be.
5 And, again, I don't think you see a significant
6 decline in some of these areas as you saw in the
7 other one, but you still see a decline when you pull
8 all those pieces together. Not 100% of everything on
9 there is tied back directly to the assessment, but a
10 large portion of them are. Okay.

11 So I'm going to try to channel my best Deb
12 Coffman, because these were Deb Coffman slides for
13 accountability and she's not here today; so I'm
14 stepping in to present them for her. But one thing
15 that she had talked about, and one of the points that
16 she wanted to make, was it's really about time for
17 communication and not comparison. Okay. It's time
18 for us to really communicate and dig in and find out
19 what worked, what didn't, and making sure that we're
20 talking about that. It's also this opportunity for
21 school districts to engage their stakeholders and
22 update their school improvement plans and their
23 district support plans based on their data.

24 Not only did we have a statewide summative
25 assessment data, but the state also supported school

1 districts last year in providing interims throughout
2 the year, whether it was NWEA -- I mean we gave
3 several different options. So, again, school
4 districts need to be digging in locally to their data
5 and making plans.

6 All districts or majority of districts in the
7 state received American Rescue Plan money, and it
8 requires that 20% has to be set aside to address
9 learning loss. That's the minimum. And I'll tell
10 you one thing that I know Commissioner Key is beating
11 the drum about, that literally is the floor. And a
12 lot of our schools need to be looking at the funds
13 that they are receiving and making sure that they're
14 using those funds, well above 20%, to identify where
15 their kids lost and how they're going to fill that
16 hole in. And that's where their district support
17 plans and their school improvement plans should be
18 reflecting that. The plans that they're submitting
19 to us for the ESSER funds and what they're doing,
20 those are those actionable pieces. The state --
21 you've seen us with our set-asides, as far as
22 tutoring goes, working with out-of-school network,
23 providing summer programs and after-school programs.
24 Again, everything is about how do we address any type
25 of loss that our students have had in the past year-

1 and-a-half. Okay. So, again, it's those funding
2 pieces.

3 So let me pause there for a second, because I
4 know it was a lot. But, again, I don't think there's
5 any surprises. Does anybody have any specific
6 questions?

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Questions down to my left?

8 MS. SMITH: I will say it's easy -- with the
9 state A to F, when you can see A to F and compare
10 that to what the ESSA School Index scores mean, it
11 makes more sense to people. And because there are no
12 A to F's on this, and you're looking at these mean
13 scores, it's like, okay, what does that mean; what
14 does the 60-something mean on this ESSA School Index.
15 It's kind of hard to shake it out and make sense of
16 it. So, for me, it was like going back to 2019 and
17 where were we and recognizing that we did drop some.
18 In 2019, were we where we wanted to be in all of our
19 schools? No. Therefore, we're still not where we
20 want to be in all of our schools. But we need to
21 identify where the losses were and where we need to
22 continue to improve and do that. Math is one area of
23 concern that we expect school districts to be really
24 digging into.

25 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, did you have any

1 questions at this point?

2 (MOMENT OF SILENCE)

3 MS. NEWTON: Did you ask me? I didn't hear you.
4 I'm sorry.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Did you have any questions?

6 MS. NEWTON: Okay. Just a comment. On the
7 growth scores, you know, I know we expected this year
8 for, you know, the scores not to be quite as good.
9 But, you know, overall, I was impressed that, you
10 know, fairly closely the schools were able to
11 maintain growth. You know, it was difficult, a
12 difficult year, and things didn't always go the way
13 we wanted to. But, you know, being able to keep that
14 mean in the middle and elementary level in the 80 --
15 you know, that was an accomplishment, you know, that
16 -- I'm not sure we would've expected it if we had
17 thought about it. But I was impressed with that.
18 You know, and I can understand why high school
19 would've been a little bit harder to maintain because
20 it was so much of the online with not a lot of
21 teacher support sometimes; you know, it was more kids
22 on their own sometimes at the high school level. So,
23 you know, that made a little bit more sense too.
24 But, you know, I was pleased with that. I know, you
25 know, we're not pleased when things go bad, but

1 sometimes we're pleased when they don't go quite as
2 bad as what we thought they might've gone.

3 MS. SMITH: I absolutely concur. I mean I think
4 that was the -- when the scores came in, I really
5 wasn't disappointed. I know maybe I was expected to
6 be disappointed, but I really wasn't. It definitely
7 made us ask some questions, and I definitely think
8 there's some places that we need to shine a
9 flashlight on or -- and some places we need to shine
10 a spotlight on and -- but I wasn't -- I'm very, very
11 proud that our state committed to actually giving the
12 assessment. We're one of very few for the numbers
13 that actually tested, and that is because our school
14 districts joined in with us and participated and
15 didn't pushback or fight us on it; they worked with
16 us to do it.

17 All right. So I want to take you through
18 progress towards an ACT Aspire replacement. So,
19 first off, ACT Aspire basically is experiencing --
20 because they're a Covid casualty. Okay. Their
21 business model and how they were set-up took a very
22 large hit when the states were not -- didn't provide
23 the assessment the year before. They lost funds,
24 they had to do huge layoffs, and then rehire. I mean
25 they've had to make some adjustments. So our

1 contract with ACT Aspire and the terms of us giving
2 assessment is still intact and they are still working
3 very closely with us. As you all know, we are giving
4 the ACT Aspire assessment this year. Okay. We have
5 contracts with them to give the test through next
6 year. Okay. So we've got it two more years. All
7 right. However, after that, how we know ACT Aspire
8 is -- will not be the same. They're creating their
9 own platform, they're moving things over. So the
10 test that we know will not be available two years
11 from now. All right. So we can't wait two years
12 from now to decide what we want to do. All right.
13 So everybody -- not everybody -- a lot of you from a
14 couple of years ago know superstar Hope Worsham back
15 here; she was our assessment director and worked here
16 at the Department for awhile. I've brought her back
17 just for this project. She led our state through --
18 during our K-2 procurements and how we were
19 innovative in that section. She actually was here
20 the first year we gave PARCC and then helped lead the
21 state through all the changes with ACT Aspire. And
22 so we've brought her in to help us with this. She's
23 known nationally, on a national area for national
24 assessment pieces in different groups and meetings.
25 And so she's been valuable to have here. She's

1 partnered up with Dr. Airola and her team. And one
2 of the things with that I felt was very important is
3 I wanted to hear from educators in the field about
4 what they needed in a state assessment and help us
5 inform of where we're going next.

6 So I'm going to turn this next portion over to
7 Hope. I will tell you, they have put together a
8 report that -- I almost loaded it onto the board
9 packet but you would've gotten it like in the last
10 two to three days and it's pretty lengthy. I will
11 upload it to the next board agenda so that you have
12 it just to read and have, and that it also becomes a
13 public document. But she's going to walk you through
14 the things that are in this document. Okay?

15 MS. WORSHAM: Thank you.

16 MS. SMITH: There you go, Superstar.

17 MS. WORSHAM: Thanks, Ms. Smith.

18 So I don't want to lie to you; this is my only
19 project, so --

20 MS. SMITH: No, it's not your only project.

21 MS. WORSHAM: All right. So, like Ms. Smith
22 said, I have been leading up the efforts to gather
23 feedback for the new state assessment, draft the RFP,
24 and then see that process through of getting a
25 replacement for ACT Aspire.

1 So our process is three-fold. Number one, it's
2 gathering put -- and I'm going to walk you through
3 how much input we have been able to gather. Then,
4 drafting that RFP based on the input and then based
5 on our state expert's advice. Our Technical Advisory
6 Committee is a valuable resource to us. They
7 actually met yesterday. That is a group of experts
8 in the field of accountability and assessment from
9 all over the nation, and they actually looked at our
10 RFP yesterday, at the draft language, and started
11 poking holes in it and telling us, you know, kind of
12 tensions we would have. So they're a really great
13 resource for us. And then, also, in that second
14 piece, we will have a committee of educators and DESE
15 personnel that will work together to review the
16 proposals that do come in and then make that
17 selection of the new state assessment. And then
18 we'll go operational once we choose our vendor; we'll
19 work with that vendor and TAC to operationalize our
20 vision for assessment and the change we want to see.

21 So, first of all, some numbers to throw at you,
22 3,343 survey responses came in around the state
23 assessment. We released a state survey just to
24 educators, in general what -- how do you use the
25 state assessment, what do you want to see in the

1 assessment. And we had over 3,000 responses. We had
2 over 300 educators individually get to sit in on
3 focus group sessions where they got to give -- talk
4 about their input, verbalize their input, and even
5 have time after those meetings to give input. And
6 then 76 educators were participants in more intensive
7 focus group sessions; so that includes districts, co-
8 op personnel, our Technical Advisory Committee, and
9 DESE personnel is included in that number of 76. So,
10 in total, close to 4,000 educators and stakeholders
11 were able to -- we were able to gather input from
12 those people.

13 So we started with an assessment focus group;
14 that was the first thing I did when I came on in
15 early July. Dr. Airola, Dr. Brashears, and I worked
16 together to identify a core group of educators. So
17 we worked through the Arkansas -- through the ASHA
18 group, which is our curriculum coordinators across
19 the state; so we had identified people from there.
20 We worked through our cooperatives, APSRC, DESE
21 contacts to identify the educators that would be
22 invited. So 54 were invited, 28 committed to
23 participate, and 26 were able to fully participate,
24 and we had 2 due to medical reasons had to miss a
25 meeting or another. So meetings happened in July and

1 August. Starting with July 9, we went into an
2 intensive full day of what is the assessment system,
3 what are the state requirements, what are the federal
4 requirements. I have to say that group was
5 absolutely amazing. It was a lot of district
6 leaders; we did have teachers. The report that you
7 get will outline exactly who all was a part of that
8 group, but we were able to get a wide spread of
9 representation on that panel and they were just real
10 troopers. That first day with the virtual meeting
11 was a lot of information. The 21st and 22nd, we did
12 bring in five vendors. That was released via
13 Commissioner's Memo. Vendors were able to respond
14 and say, "hey, we'd like to come present to your
15 group." I had five that responded; we were able to
16 let five present. That was not for the intent of
17 them to choose an assessment; it was for the
18 assessment focus group to see what's even out there.
19 Because what's happened in Arkansas, if you remember
20 back years ago we were giving benchmark; we were
21 fully in control of that assessment, we wrote it from
22 bottom up and everything in between. Then we went to
23 PARCC; we were on a consortium, so we were -- still
24 had a voice but it was not -- it was -- we had to
25 share that voice with other states. When we went to

1 ACT Aspire, that's a completely off-the-shelf
2 product; we didn't have any input in the design or
3 anything in the process of that assessment. So our
4 educators, many of them that were sitting on the
5 panel, didn't -- hadn't seen what was out there
6 innovatively in assessment or hadn't seen what other
7 states were doing in some number of years. So that
8 was our purpose of bringing in the vendors, just to
9 help our educators see there are other things out
10 there than an off-the-shelf test and the consortium
11 test and what even is possible. Great two days. And
12 they heard from a lot of different perspectives.

13 Then, the 23rd through the 30th, that group of
14 leaders led content subgroups, and that's where that
15 333 teachers that you saw representing comes in.
16 They actually held those groups for us, took that
17 feedback. I was able to jump in -- and that's the
18 wonderful part about Zoom now, right, is I can just
19 jump on all those meetings and listen. The educators
20 were very open and honest; they did not hold back,
21 which I'm very happy to say. And then, Dr. Airola
22 and Dr. Brashears and I took that feedback and were
23 able to synthesize it.

24 On the 31st, we brought the whole group back
25 together and that was what much of that day was, was

1 really taking what was said in those content
2 subgroups and really making sense of what is 3rd
3 grade -- 3rd through 5th grade math, what are they
4 really asking for; you know, 9th through 12th grade
5 science, what are we really asking for there.

6 Those subgroups, like I said, we had multiple
7 different subgroups. We had nine different groups
8 that met. Our educators led those for us and we were
9 able to get a large number of participation. That
10 number is slightly different there that you see on
11 the screen, 361 versus 333. That's because we did
12 have some duplicative participation. So it was 333
13 individual educators, 361 overall; so some people
14 attended twice.

15 We were able to get 85 districts represented in
16 that and 11 educational cooperatives. And when we
17 looked at it by region, all five regions in the state
18 were well represented in those meetings. So we felt
19 comfortable that we had gotten feedback from across
20 the state.

21 And then, the survey we released via
22 Commissioner's Memo in August and ran that through
23 August. And you saw the number of submissions on
24 that.

25 One thing I don't have a slide on, I just want

1 to let you know, the survey findings -- in the
2 survey, what came out from that was really educators
3 utilized the assessment to identify what students
4 know and are able to do -- that's what they want to
5 be able to use the assessment for -- and to use the
6 summative assessment to help plan next-steps of
7 instruction and document student growth. And so
8 those were the two areas that we knew we wanted to
9 maintain in our new system.

10 Past the content subgroups -- so when you get
11 your report, the report is all about the content
12 subgroups and the educator focus group. Past those
13 groups that we convened, I did meet with the DESE
14 leadership, Learning Services, Public School
15 Accountability, and Research and Technology to get
16 input from all of those groups. We shared with them
17 the educator feedback, got DESE's feedback, and kind
18 of went back and forth to identify what are the needs
19 that we have. We also hold meetings for the
20 educational cooperatives and APSRC to get together
21 and also give feedback. And, lastly, our Technical
22 Advisory Committee -- that feedback yesterday, they
23 will also inform us. When we get the final RFP
24 written, before we release that, they will put an eye
25 on that and make sure we're not missing anything or

1 give us guidance. Their role is not to tell us what
2 to do; their role is to say, "Hey, you're getting a
3 little bit too close to the edge" or "you're boxing
4 yourself in." They were really good yesterday to
5 say, you know, "Your vision is to really have an
6 assessment system that supports instruction; you're
7 boxing yourself in in this area." So that is kind of
8 their role for us.

9 So, again, our process -- feedback, feedback --
10 again, emphasizing that. Next steps are the Request
11 for Proposal with the Committee.

12 So if we go into what came out of all of this
13 feedback, all of those responses that we got, there
14 were kind of four large buckets. First of all,
15 validity -- that was the first kind of concern that
16 came out. Number one top priority is alignment; we
17 heard that over and over and again, that Arkansas
18 state standards have to be what we're aligned to,
19 that we want Arkansas educators involved in
20 determining if a question is aligned to our
21 standards. So that's a non-negotiable for us. That
22 would look like Arkansas educators looking at all the
23 questions, a committee of them, before they go on the
24 test, things like that.

25 Transparency was another bucket that came up. A

1 lot of our educators feel like we don't currently
2 have enough released items or enough transparency in
3 how the assessment is created. And so that's
4 something that the Department can work with the
5 vendor to make sure there's transparency, and also
6 work with focus groups along the way to make sure
7 we're meeting that need.

8 And then, lastly, passage-based writing with
9 Aspire -- I don't know if you know or not, our
10 assessment right now is a prompt-based; so it just
11 says, you know, here's the situation, write about it.
12 And our standards actually require for students to
13 read something and respond to that piece of reading.
14 And so that was something that came out of the ELA
15 groups that's different.

16 Design -- one thing that's very different in
17 design is adaptive capability. So what we mean by
18 that is that the test itself can respond to where a
19 student is. Now when you say "adaptive" in a
20 summative test, that doesn't mean that a student in
21 5th grade is taking a 3rd grade test. That's not
22 what it means. It just means within the context of
23 that year, one year above, one year below, we can
24 adapt and get a gauge on where that student is. And
25 so that is something that is new in state assessment

1 since we wrote our old assessment, since we wrote
2 benchmark, that is available and the technology is
3 there to do that.

4 One thing that -- another thing that's different
5 is through-year or periodic interim assessment.
6 There's a real desire across the state from educators
7 to get information about instruction all year long,
8 how are my kids doing across the year. So the
9 Technical Advisory Committee had a lot to say about
10 this part yesterday, about through-year means we're
11 giving the test all year long, at different periods,
12 and there are challenges within that, versus an
13 assessment system where you have interim assessments
14 available for teachers instructionally, and then you
15 still have your summative assessment system. And
16 that's a place where we're still going to have to do
17 some refining of our thought process there to
18 determine what's the right direction.

19 And then, equity and accessibility came up over
20 -- quite prevalently, just having the correct
21 accommodations for our students; having enough
22 accommodations that a student is not limited to show
23 what they know how to do just because we don't have
24 the right accommodation for them. So that's very
25 important to us.

1 When we look at scoring and reporting, nothing
2 different there than what we already want. So
3 academic growth across the year, performance again to
4 find expectations -- that's the Arkansas standards.
5 But the achievement and progress within a year is the
6 piece that may add that more of an assessment system
7 approach, rather than just an end-of-year assessment.

8 Platform considerations -- this is kind of a --
9 this is for our educators that give the assessment.
10 They just really wanted to see that the platform is
11 user-friendly for students, user -- and easy for them
12 to manage. That's one concern that our district
13 testing coordinators have; they have very large jobs.
14 And anything we can do to minimize the amount of work
15 they have to do to give the assessment is obviously
16 giving them time back in their pocket. So we agree
17 with that, as well.

18 And then, lastly, characteristics from DESE that
19 were added for us there -- it's also the desire to
20 have that performance towards college and career
21 readiness and be able to report that out.

22 Longitudinal trend analysis -- so being able to take
23 what we had with Aspire, can we make connections into
24 our new assessment as far as scores so that we can
25 keep that trend analysis going. Student readiness

1 for the next grade level. And really for us that
2 national comparison is very important as well, not
3 just to be able to look at other states but also
4 nationally, what are we doing.

5 All right. So I'll stop there before I go on to
6 tensions. I did put a quote in there from Ms. Cluck
7 from Siloam Springs just because I like how she kind
8 of summed that up. But I really like the part where
9 she says "we've seen the same format year after year,
10 and change can be scary." However, breaking into
11 groups to discuss the methods, it's really opened her
12 eyes to new possibilities, which is what this whole
13 process was about for our educators.

14 Any questions there before we go into tensions?
15 Because this is kind of where we -- you may see a
16 little variance from what the educators wanted versus
17 what we can do.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Questions? Questions over
19 here?

20 MS. WORSHAM: It's a lot.

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, questions?

22 Okay. Thank you.

23 MS. WORSHAM: All right. So the last part --
24 there were kind of three areas that we're still
25 seeing a little bit of tension, and this really came

1 from our discussion yesterday with Technical Advisory
2 Committee. And by "tension" I mean this is a place
3 where the educators may want one thing, but what's
4 possible is not necessarily -- doesn't necessarily
5 match up.

6 So, one of those places is the through-year
7 versus the assessment system -- what does that look
8 like. So through-year means we're giving the test
9 three times a year -- everybody is required to take
10 it three to four times a year -- versus an assessment
11 system where we can have assessments that are
12 available to give instructional information and we
13 still have the summative test. So that's a place
14 we're still kind of working through.

15 Science is another big one. With Aspire, we had
16 a science every single year and our science educators
17 overwhelmingly said "we want science assessed every
18 single year." The trade-off is the quality of items
19 could be lower if we assess every year, because the
20 cost of high-quality items aligned to the Next Gen
21 standards is significantly higher than those that are
22 not. So that's where that tension and trade-off is.
23 If we go with science in just a few years, we can
24 give a more high-quality assessment that's directly
25 aligned to the NGSS standards, that really get to

1 that phenomenon-based science questions. But we do
2 lose growth in science if we do that. So that's
3 where we see tensions and we're trying to balance
4 that and figure out what's best.

5 And then, lastly, is in high school, and this
6 really comes down to high school math. And as a
7 former high school math teacher, I totally get it.
8 But the high school math group really was -- they're
9 adamant that they want to see course-based
10 assessments. And it wasn't necessarily course-based
11 assessments; they just kept saying test us on what
12 we're teaching. And, currently, with ACT Aspire, the
13 high school test has both Algebra I and Geometry on
14 it. But if I'm only an Algebra I teacher, that kind
15 of freaks me out to have that Geometry on there, and
16 vice-versa. So that's a place where we're still
17 looking at if we go to course-based, you lose growth
18 -- and the educators also really wanted to continue
19 to see growth. So the Technical Advisory Committee
20 is helping us with are we able to have a grade level
21 assessment that adapts to -- according to what the
22 student -- what course they're enrolled in. And
23 that's what we're working on right now, to try to
24 meet both of those needs.

25 So, Next Steps -- we have already drafted the

1 RFP. And now, based on all this feedback and the
2 TAC's feedback from yesterday, we will be updating
3 that draft in the next week or two. That will then
4 go to the Office of State Procurement who will then
5 release that as a Request for Proposal. We will form
6 a committee of educators and DESE personnel to review
7 those proposals, and then hopefully make an
8 announcement this spring about the new vendor and the
9 timeline that that will be implemented.

10 So I will take any questions you have now.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Ms. Worsham.

12 Questions over here?

13 Questions?

14 Ms. Newton?

15 MS. NEWTON: (shaking head from side to side.)

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Post?

17 MS. POST: No.

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

19 MS. WORSHAM: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: That was very thorough. It's a
21 lot of information, and we appreciate it.

22 MS. SMITH: So I will say this, it's kind of
23 funny that when you go in and you're getting the
24 educator feedback. And it drove me crazy every time
25 I heard people say "if it's not tested, it's not

1 valued," and that is something that we kind of heard
2 at different times. And we have to remember,
3 sometimes we get conditioned by what we're used to.
4 All right. And so the idea or the concept -- you
5 know, when Arkansas committed to testing science
6 every single year, that's not a federal requirement;
7 we did that in our state assessment, and so it became
8 accepted. And so this idea of pulling back on every
9 year assessment in the area of science, the science
10 teachers -- we've heard overwhelmingly "we want them
11 tested; if you don't test them, it's not going to be
12 valued." And I kind of laughed because I thought,
13 goodness gracious, you know, 20-something years ago,
14 when I first started teaching, we weren't testing
15 every grade to begin with, you know. It eventually
16 got there through federal accountability. And so
17 we're conditioned to what we're used to, as well.

18 And then the very -- a couple of weeks later,
19 we're sitting in a meeting somewhere and teachers are
20 in the audience and they said, "They've got to quit
21 testing us so much." And I thought, well, she wasn't
22 on the committee; I need to sign her up. And so, you
23 know, when it gets down to what is it we really want,
24 we want good data. We want good data that's useful.
25 And I think we've heard that loud and clear from our

1 teachers. We still want something interim,
2 throughout the year, that's giving us good actionable
3 data so that we can make good instructional
4 decisions. But the value of the test is not what
5 makes us good teachers. And so keeping that in
6 perspective I think is really important as we move
7 forward. And I hope that we actually, when we do
8 this, that we come up with something very, very
9 innovative, that is something that other states look
10 at us and say, "Well, they didn't just stay in the
11 pot, but they came up with something that was pretty
12 good, pretty specific, and pretty neat and different
13 that was good for kids and good for teachers."

14 So that's our goal and that's what we're going
15 to try to rise up to you. And as we go through the
16 Request for Proposals, hopefully we'll bring
17 something back that's going to wow us all.

18 So I appreciate you today. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

20 Yeah, let's do a break. Let's do a 5-minute
21 break right now.

22 (BREAK: 2:40 P.M. - 2:47 P.M.)

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We will start back on our
24 afternoon agenda.

25 It's come to my attention that we did not vote

1 to accept the report on 7-5, for the Assessment and
2 Accountability presentation. And because it's on the
3 action agenda, we do need a vote on that. So the
4 floor will be open, unless there are any further
5 questions on the Assessment and Accountability
6 presentation.

7 MS. DEAN: I move to accept the presentation on
8 Accountability and Assessment.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Ms. Dean.

10 Is there a second?

11 MR. SUTTON: I'll second.

12 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A second by Mr. Sutton for the
13 Assessment and Accountability presentation.

14 All in favor say "aye."

15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

16 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

17 Motion passes.

18 VII.1. ACT 1240 DIGITAL LEARNING APPLICATIONS, WAIVERS, AND
19 REPORTS

20 a) VIRTUAL ARKANSAS REPORT

21 CHAIRMAN MOORE: It also has come to my
22 attention that we didn't vote for the Virtual
23 Arkansas report. So we do need to vote for that, as
24 well. I apologize, still learning this job.

25 So if we go back on the agenda to 7-1(a), the

1 Virtual Arkansas report, we do need to vote to
2 approve that. We didn't have any questions, but if
3 anyone has any now, it would be the time to do that.
4 Or the floor is open for a motion, again, on 7-1(a),
5 Virtual Arkansas report.

6 MS. DEAN: Move to accept the report on Virtual
7 Arkansas report.

8 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you, Ms. Dean.

9 We have a motion to accept the report.

10 MS. WOODS: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A second by Ms. Woods.

12 All in favor say "aye."

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

15 Motion passes.

16 VII.6. CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT RELEASE: DESE RULES
17 GOVERNING GRADING AND COURSE CREDIT (CHAPTERS 1 AND 7 ONLY)

18 CHAIRMAN MOORE: We also have one more set of
19 rules, item 7-6, the Rules Governing Grading and
20 Course Credit. They are requesting to release for
21 public comment pending Governor's approval. We have
22 Lori Freno.

23 MS. FRENO: Thank you, Madam Chair. That is
24 correct. We are only amending Chapters 1 and 7 of
25 these rules, because Chapter 7 basically is a brand-

1 new section and the Chapter 1 just had some
2 definitions added. So we request that you release
3 these rules for public comment pending Governor's
4 office review.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any questions, starting down
6 here?

7 Dr. Rankin?

8 DR. RANKIN: No.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Any questions to my
10 left?

11 Ms. Newton, do you have any questions on these
12 rules?

13 MS. NEWTON: No.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. If not, then the floor
15 will be open for a motion to release the rules for
16 public comment pending Governor's office approval.

17 DR. RANKIN: So moved.

18 MR. HENDERSON: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN MOORE: A motion by Dr. Rankin, second
20 by Mr. Henderson.

21 All in favor say "aye."

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

24 Motion passes.

25 MS. FRENO: Thank you.

1 VIII. EDUCATOR PREPARATION REPORT

2 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Next on our report we have item
3 8, the Educator Preparation Report.

4 DR. PFEFFER: All right. Good afternoon. All
5 right. So you just had a break, and so is everybody
6 ready to go? Anybody need to move around a minute?

7 I saw a phenomenal move by our Teacher of the
8 Year yesterday at the recognition ceremony for the
9 new Teacher of the Year. The students had been
10 sitting there for awhile, and we were making the
11 announcement and introducing the new Teacher of the
12 Year, and Ms. Post was doing her recognition. And
13 about halfway through, she realized these
14 kindergarten/1st/2nd graders were getting a little
15 antsy, and so she just paused, and she said, "Guys,
16 y'all need a wiggle break." And I thought, oh, my
17 gosh, a wiggle break -- you know, because I had
18 experience with high school, and I'm thinking, you
19 know, let them wiggle and you've lost it there. But
20 anyway, they were holding up pictures of our new
21 Teacher of the Year, and she just said, "I want you
22 to wave that," and she had them repeat a phrase. And
23 they did it and then immediately everyone was ready
24 to go. And it was a masterful, beautiful teacher
25 moment where just -- you were able just to move right

1 on with everything and insure that everyone was ready
2 to go.

3 And that is something that doesn't just happen
4 instinctively; those are learned behaviors that you
5 have either through being well-prepared and having
6 that experience or having some good models and some
7 good examples. So if I'd done a good job today, I
8 would've given y'all all a picture of something that
9 you could have waved around. But you just had your
10 break and so I think we're all ready to go.

11 But, so, Dan, if we could start out with the
12 attachment on the agenda. We're not going to do the
13 presentation yet.

14 MR. DAN DAVIS: Okay. I'll have to get that
15 attachment pulled over.

16 DR. PFEFFER: Well, I tell you what, we can do
17 this -- let's do this, and then we'll go to that and
18 they can approve that. That'll be fine.

19 Okay. So we've got kind of two things. I want
20 to walk through a report today with you, and then
21 we'll go to the actual EFFER report -- we call it the
22 Teacher Preparation Provider Quality Report -- and
23 that can be -- we'll finish up with the action item,
24 if that works.

25 So starting with this presentation here -- and

1 last month, Ms. Newton had asked us if we could give
2 an update on educator preparation programs, kind of a
3 high-level overview. And over the past several
4 months, Ms. Saracini's team in Educator Effectiveness
5 has been really digging in and working on a lot of
6 different things around ed-prep. And so we've got
7 several of the team members here today and I'll
8 introduce them in -- we'll just go ahead and do that.
9 We have Edie Stewart, and we have Sharlee Crowson,
10 and Joan Luneau. These are three of the team members
11 that really focus their attention on education
12 preparation, and they have spent the last several
13 months visiting every one of our ed-prep providers.
14 They are regularly engaging with the providers, with
15 also our Ed-Rising, which is our student groups that
16 are in several of our schools now. We're seeing
17 tremendous growth in all of that. So that makes me
18 feel really good about some of the things I'm going
19 to share with you today. Because we're going to
20 identify some concerns that we have, but we're also
21 going to highlight our next steps and what we see as
22 the solution and the way we really do transform
23 educator preparation in Arkansas.

24 And why is this important? One reason is that
25 the K-12 public school system is the largest single

1 employer group in the state of Arkansas. So let that
2 sink in for just a minute. Over 70,000 employees are
3 part of the K-12 public education system. We invest
4 a lot of resources in our -- in the education of our
5 K-12 students, and I am so thankful for that. I'm so
6 thankful to be in a state where a substantial amount
7 of the state budget goes towards the education of our
8 children. And that's why it is critically important
9 that when we focus on the factor that makes the most
10 difference in the achievement of a child, that is the
11 classroom teacher and the preparation -- having a
12 well-prepared educator is where it all starts.

13 So we'll start with the teacher pipeline. And
14 several of you probably think, oh, this looks
15 familiar. Right? We've shown these charts before.
16 Now, the good thing about this chart is when we first
17 started showing it -- does anybody remember what the
18 chart looked like? It was a steep decline, wasn't
19 it? And it was alarming and it really got our
20 attention, and for a few years we were really focused
21 on that. Then, along about '15, '16, we started
22 noticing, well, we're not seeing that steep decline;
23 we're starting to level out. And so in some ways
24 that -- we felt a lot better about that, because not
25 only were we leveling out, we're starting to see an

1 increase in the diversity of our ed-prep candidates,
2 which is a positive thing. So we were working really
3 hard to address the enrollment into ed-prep programs
4 and to also attract a more diverse group of
5 candidates. But enrollment in ed-prep alone is not
6 going to be enough. And so as we've gone through the
7 past few years, what we're starting to see now are
8 results of an enrollment that was substantially lower
9 from prior year. And we are also seeing that those
10 program completer numbers are not quite as high as
11 those enrollment numbers. Right? So from that, we
12 can understand that when you look at the year of
13 enrollment and project out about two years, maybe
14 three for those candidates to complete, we've got a
15 gap there between those enrollments and those
16 completers.

17 And then, when you look at this chart -- and
18 this chart is part of that ed-prep report as well --
19 over the last several years, when you look at that
20 bottom, those state percentages, about 60% of those
21 completers will actually go to work the year after
22 they complete in an Arkansas public school. Okay.
23 So when you think about that number of completers
24 each year --

25 Oh, I don't think I'm going backwards, Dan.

1 MR. DAN DAVIS: Sorry. There we go.

2 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. So you look at that number
3 of completers, 1,848, and then if you think about 60%
4 of 1,848, we lose about 40% somewhere. And so for
5 the last years, we've talked about, well, what are
6 some of the reasons why teachers don't go to the
7 classroom the year after they complete a program.
8 And there are several reasons. What is the impact of
9 that though when you start looking at -- and I'm
10 going to come back to this in a moment -- when you
11 start looking at the actual number of teachers who
12 are employed in the workforce? So that blue line is
13 representing the number of Arkansas beginning
14 teachers each year, since 2012-2013. That red line
15 is representing that number of completers. And so as
16 you look at that, what do we see? That gap is
17 getting -- what? That gap is getting wider. Okay.
18 So when we look at the percent of those employees
19 versus the percent of those prepared, we're starting
20 to see some alarming numbers there and that we have
21 -- in the 20-21 school year we had a 48% gap between
22 the number of educators who were prepared and ready
23 to go to work with our students and the ones who were
24 actually hired. And so we started thinking about,
25 okay, who's in the classrooms; where are teachers

1 coming from. And I think probably a lot of you know,
2 based on what you see here a lot -- because more and
3 more, you're starting to have a lot of requests for
4 what in your board meetings every month? Waivers.
5 Okay.

6 Now there are some candidates who maybe didn't
7 go to work back that year after they completed a
8 program; maybe they went to work on their master's
9 degree; maybe they took a year off and did something
10 else; maybe they didn't pass their -- all their
11 licensure assessments and needed a little more time.
12 There are a lot of different ways that we're finding
13 teachers. But we also know that we are seeing more
14 and more teachers who are teaching on an Act 1240
15 waiver. Our number of long-term subs is about twice
16 what it was last year. We're also seeing increasing
17 percentages of districts that have high percentages
18 of teachers who are not fully licensed to teach what
19 they're teaching. And so we have got to address that
20 gap. That gap that in 2012-2013 was only 8% now is
21 at 48%. We've got to take action.

22 And so this is what our team has worked together
23 to provide. And when I say "our team," it isn't just
24 Educator Effectiveness; it isn't even just our teams
25 within the DESE division. This is a result because

1 of what transformation now allows us to do so much
2 easier than what we tried to do four or five years
3 ago. We actually started talking about this five,
4 six years ago, Secretary Key. But it's so hard to do
5 when you have different groups that are not all
6 together. So now, under the Department of Education
7 umbrella, we have the right groups that can work
8 together to get things done very quickly. We have
9 our Division of CTE working with our Division of
10 Educator Effectiveness. So, why is that important?
11 Because these courses that are the pre-educator
12 program of study, those are also CTE courses. So our
13 students are able to engage in career preparation
14 training, real preparation, real training for a
15 career very early on in high school. We also have
16 our Division of Higher Ed. that has been at the table
17 regularly. So not only are we getting things worked
18 out for the four-year degree, we now have those
19 opportunities for those students to earn their
20 Associates of Arts in Teaching at a lot of different
21 institutions around the state, and we're going to
22 review all of that.

23 So I want to start the conversation about the
24 Arkansas Teacher Residency, which will be coming in
25 the fall of 2022. So let's get ready for it.

1 So what is this? It's really thinking
2 differently about ed-prep, a true teacher residency
3 model when we think about preparation. And so when
4 you think of another profession that has a residency
5 model and how they prepare, their workforce, what
6 comes to mind? The medical profession; right? In
7 the medical profession, a surgeon doesn't just walk
8 out of a preparation program, get handed a license
9 and immediately go do surgery; correct? We have not.
10 Okay. We know that that surgeon has years of on-the-
11 job training where they're working, they're learning,
12 they're getting experience, they're getting coaching,
13 they're getting -- they're experiencing good and bad;
14 they're making some mistakes, but they're learning
15 how to correct that and they're learning how to be
16 that professional. So what's so exciting about a
17 teacher residency is it actually can get started in
18 high school. We can now allow our students to begin
19 their career focused education, they can earn a
20 credential as a Certified Teaching Assistant, and
21 then go be eligible to participate in a teacher
22 residency pathway to complete not only a four-year
23 degree, but also their license. The Certified
24 Teaching Assistant isn't just limited to high school
25 students; this certification will also be available

1 to current paraprofessionals in the workforce.
2 Because we know we have some awesome professionals
3 that some may have some college hours, some may not,
4 but they are committed to kids; they're already
5 there, they're already working, they're already
6 gaining that field experience that they need.

7 So when we think about why a teacher residency
8 model is needed, they're getting preparation based on
9 authentic quality clinical experiences and the
10 opportunity to work while meeting qualifications for
11 teaching -- teacher licensure. So that's something
12 though: an opportunity to work. How many of you had
13 a job while you maybe were going to work on your
14 college degree? Okay. Oftentimes, those jobs
15 consist of what? Working late at night, working on
16 the weekends, sometimes working two and three jobs.
17 Okay. This is going to give future teachers, "rising
18 educators," as Sharlee calls them, the opportunity to
19 work and earn a wage while they're going to college.
20 Working in a school system, becoming an employee of a
21 public school system, what else could you be eligible
22 for if you're -- you could be eligible for teacher
23 retirement; you could be eligible for insurance. So
24 at a young age, while you're gaining this experience,
25 not to mention the affordable that we're going to

1 look at here in a minute for earning your degree,
2 solving a teacher shortage while this is going on,
3 but also, becoming a true professional very early on.

4 Okay. So what is a Certified Teaching
5 Assistant? This is the definition that we will work
6 from. Someone will become a CTA when they have
7 earned 9 hours of college coursework and passed the
8 parapro assessment. And with that college coursework
9 comes work experience or field experience. So this
10 can be a high school student that's getting to take
11 these courses while in high school; it can be someone
12 post-high school that is also able to do this. So
13 these courses here, when we say 9 hours of college
14 coursework, these are the equivalent courses of what
15 the pre-educator program of study within our CTE;
16 this is what that will transfer to. And the great
17 thing about our CTE pathways is that students are
18 getting to be a completer in a career field, they're
19 getting to take a lot of other electives as well; so
20 they can really build up their skills in a lot of
21 education related areas. And those concurrent credit
22 hours, there's a lot more flexibility in the
23 enrollment for a student who is enrolling through a
24 CTE pathway. So, sometimes students that have a
25 barrier because maybe they don't have a 19 on an ACT,

1 there are flexible admission requirements that can be
2 attached to those courses to give them that early
3 start, to give them that early chance to earn
4 college-bearing credit. And so by the time they
5 leave high school and go to college, they're ready;
6 they've already had that experience.

7 So the teacher residency model really consists
8 of two steps: one is we need school districts to
9 offer the CTA credential to high school students and
10 paraprofessionals. Okay. But the beauty of this,
11 it's not just a school district responsibility
12 because, although the district is going to need to do
13 their part, the higher ed. partner is also going to
14 be involved. The higher ed. institutions are going
15 to be providing flexible options, providing those
16 concurrent credit MOUs so that those students taking
17 the high school coursework are able to earn the
18 concurrent credit or making those courses available
19 for paraprofessionals at a time when they can take
20 those courses, whether they're online options that
21 have the field experience documented from the current
22 work they're doing or whether they're meeting in
23 groups maybe a couple of times a month, on a
24 Saturday. So the higher ed. is coming up with that
25 flexible scheduling option. And then, together,

1 they're working to make sure that the -- that there's
2 a teacher who can teach those courses for concurrent
3 credit.

4 And I want to pause here because we have already
5 been talking to superintendents and presidents of our
6 two- and four-year universities, and at every turn we
7 have heard the higher ed. partners say, "If a school
8 district is having trouble getting a teacher who can
9 teach for concurrent credit, we're going to make sure
10 that we can make one available." So that true
11 commitment and that true partnership is there.
12 There's no reason that we can't make this happen.

13 The second step is going to be personalizing the
14 CTA licensure pathway. Okay. So we've creating some
15 non-negotiables, and the non-negotiables mean that
16 through this residency model there have to be coaches
17 to support the students while they're completing
18 their degree requirements. So whether those are
19 academic coaches that the higher ed. institution
20 employs to kind of provide those wraparound services
21 -- because we don't want this to be an online degree
22 program where people are never associated with that
23 two- or four-year institution that they're attending.
24 We want them to feel welcome and supported, not only
25 there but we want those coaches onsite so they see

1 firsthand what's going on in the life of a new
2 teacher or in the life of a teacher-in-training.

3 Cohorts where all of these teacher residents can
4 come together, and then the opportunity for student-
5 facing work -- and that student-facing work will
6 increase as the candidate progresses through their
7 educator preparation program. They'll be getting
8 licensure assessment support. So we don't want to
9 hear that three years from now our candidates still
10 are coming out of preparation programs and not having
11 passed their licensure assessment; that should not
12 happen. If they're being well-prepared to teach well
13 what they're choosing to teach, they should be
14 passing all of the assessments. And we want to make
15 sure that they have the financial aid guidance so
16 they're not saddled with that with they complete
17 their program.

18 And so the residency model, it's basically three
19 levels for the Certified Teaching Assistants who will
20 be the residents. At Level 1, that's when they're
21 getting started in their program. So if it's a
22 student coming out of high school, it's most likely
23 that freshman/sophomore year of college, although now
24 with concurrent credit opportunities we know that
25 sometimes that happens quicker than in two years.

1 Right? But up until the time that they have earned
2 an associates degree or they're ready to be admitted
3 into an ed-prep program they'll be at that Level 1.
4 And at that Level 1 the work requirement is that
5 they're able to work at least 10 hours in a school,
6 doing what we're calling student-facing work; so,
7 engaged with students in teaching and learning
8 opportunities. So that may be someone who's doing
9 tutoring; it may be someone who is working as a
10 student aid or a paraprofessional; and they may be
11 working part-time, they could even be working full-
12 time. We just want to have at least the 10 hours.

13 As they get admitted into an educator
14 preparation program and really get focused on the
15 licensure level and content area that they're going
16 to teach, we want their work hours to increase. And
17 so as part of the residency the number of work hours
18 will increase and the focus of the work will
19 increase. So you may have school districts that
20 really want to focus on growing special education
21 teachers or they may want to focus on growing math
22 teachers who also can teach special education
23 students. So in these schools we're going to see
24 these candidates being recruited and being trained
25 and being given those work opportunities so that

1 they're learning to work with not only students in
2 the area of math, but students with special needs.

3 And then they transition into that final part of
4 their ed-prep program. So what you've been hearing a
5 lot about when we have student interns coming, we
6 want that final semester or year to be a true
7 internship where that resident is taking over the
8 classroom. For all intents and purposes, they are
9 the teacher, but they are not the teacher-of-record
10 by themselves. They are the teacher who has that
11 support of that master or lead professional who is
12 there helping them prepare, helping to watch them
13 teach and giving them feedback on little tips and
14 techniques, like I saw yesterday, to model things.
15 You know, I won't forget that because I got to see a
16 master at work. But also that can be there to help
17 guide them through their first parent-teacher
18 conference, someone who can be there to make sure
19 that when they get assigned lunch duty the first week
20 of school knows how to interact with junior high
21 students who are out by a tree smoking. Okay.
22 Because as a first-year teacher, if you've never had
23 that experience, it's really hard to argue with a 13-
24 year old -- and y'all know that. So we want these
25 teachers to have already had those experiences so

1 that they know how to respond to students in any
2 situation.

3 So when we think about how are we going to get
4 our educators there, you actually got to see this
5 slide last month. And then the next slide you got to
6 see and you weren't quite as excited as I want you to
7 be, but you're going to be today because of
8 everything that I've just told you. How do we do
9 this? Well, we made sure that every road that leads
10 to licensure is the right fit and the right
11 preparation so that our teachers are day-one ready.
12 And this group back here from Ed-Prep, that is a
13 focus of theirs right now. They conducted focus
14 groups all across the state; they're putting together
15 with Ed-Prep the kinds of learning experiences that
16 are needed so that we have day-one ready teachers.
17 And I would submit that this residency model is the
18 single best thing that we can do to have day-one
19 ready educators in the future. And so whether we
20 continue to have candidates who come straight out of
21 high school to a four-year university, or whether we
22 have those candidates who work through the community
23 college, either of those pathways can be part of that
24 residency model. It's not a new program that they're
25 going to have to complete. Our higher-ed partners

1 are just going to be part of that Step 1 and 2 with
2 our school districts. And we still have the
3 alternate routes that are now preparing a substantial
4 number of our teachers and we want to keep those in
5 place.

6 MR. SUTTON: Can I ask a question?

7 DR. PFEFFER: Yes, sir.

8 MR. SUTTON: If a high school student obtains a
9 CTA, how -- what would that translate into credit
10 hours at a university?

11 DR. PFEFFER: So the 9 hours would be that --
12 the criteria in order to earn that certificate, and
13 it would be the 9 hours that would fit within the
14 pre-educator program of study and also passing the
15 parapro assessment. From there, it -- they would go
16 on and they could either complete a two-year
17 associate degree or go on through the four-year
18 program. So that 9 hours is kind of the jump-start;
19 it would be -- I think it's going to be the
20 equivalent of like a Certificate of Proficiency, if
21 they were just to do it straight at the college
22 level.

23 MR. SUTTON: Okay. Got it. Thank you.

24 DR. PFEFFER: Yeah. And we're working through
25 that process to get all of the courses aligned. I'm

1 looking back here. Pretty much this whole row back
2 here is working to align those courses with the
3 higher ed. courses. And I've talked about this
4 enough with higher ed. folks that nobody has come up
5 and said, "You are dead wrong." So I feel like I'm
6 pretty much in line with everything they're saying.
7 Okay. So we're aligning those pathways up so it will
8 be ready to go.

9 SECRETARY KEY: And, Ivy, just to clarify,
10 that's just the 9 hours for this program. If there
11 are other hours that students are able to take or --

12 DR. PFEFFER: Sure.

13 SECRETARY KEY: -- AP credits or anything like
14 that --

15 MR. SUTTON: Oh, yeah.

16 SECRETARY KEY: -- that's stackable on this. So
17 --

18 MR. SUTTON: I got it.

19 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah.

20 DR. PFEFFER: Yes. We may have students that
21 complete their associate degree before they even
22 leave high school.

23 MR. SUTTON: Right. Right.

24 DR. PFEFFER: Absolutely might be. So there are
25 numerous opportunities. While they're in high school

1 taking those courses, those concurrent courses,
2 within that CTA pathway, the Concurrent Challenge is
3 available along with other ways for that tuition to
4 be taken care of for students, so they're not going
5 to have the cost of that. If they -- so this is the
6 slide I want y'all to get excited about, remember it.
7 I know you've seen it. Okay. So this -- on this, if
8 the student chooses to start at a two-year
9 institution, then we now have the opportunity,
10 because of the shortage area in the field of
11 education, that the ARFuture grant will pay for that
12 tuition. So the opportunity is there for the student
13 not to have any cost to earn their associate degree.
14 And then they can transfer over. And we've outlined
15 -- these are already existing programs that are
16 available to candidates. And even in addition to
17 this, there could be other types of financial aid
18 that could be available to a candidate. So think
19 about the opportunities that our young people have to
20 complete a four-year degree, a licensure program,
21 while they're getting experience on-the-job, and
22 doing something that they love and can love for a
23 long time -- and doing it all without having to incur
24 any debt for their college education. To me, that is
25 exciting. That's a barrier that had been in place

1 for a long time. We can see here on the map where
2 those institutions are. And because several of those
3 institutions have received regional workforce grants,
4 that's where when they're partnering with the high
5 schools they're able to come up with some of those
6 additional supports that maybe in the past higher ed.
7 programs might not have always had.

8 So I'm going to pause there for just a moment to
9 see if you have some questions.

10 MS. WOODS: I just have one follow-up to Mr.
11 Sutton. Is there any point -- I guess it would be
12 when they move to Level 2 that they can actually earn
13 college credit while they're working?

14 DR. PFEFFER: That is the whole -- that's the
15 whole premise of this.

16 MS. WOODS: Oh.

17 DR. PFEFFER: While they're working, they're
18 going to school. So that's where the personalization
19 --

20 MS. WOODS: Okay.

21 DR. PFEFFER: -- from a higher ed. comes in, so
22 that maybe some of their coursework is done online.

23 MS. WOODS: Okay.

24 DR. PFEFFER: But their work-work --

25 MS. WOODS: Can be actual in-class.

1 DR. PFEFFER: -- can account for the
2 experiential credit.

3 MS. WOODS: Okay.

4 DR. PFEFFER: And so they're not having to go
5 longer; they're not having to jump through a lot of
6 hoops. You know, there will be higher ed. -- you
7 know, this will change some of what higher ed. does
8 in terms of how they look at programs and what can
9 count for experiential learning. Or, maybe the pace
10 of coursework or things like that may change a little
11 bit or be combined. But really, the opportunities
12 are limitless here.

13 So, yes, sir.

14 MR. HENDERSON: Yes. This is such an incredible
15 opportunity. Just listening to the things you've
16 shared -- and hopefully you didn't mention it and it
17 was an oversight on my behalf -- whenever they
18 complete the program, what type of commitment that
19 insures that they stay in Arkansas so we get a return
20 on the investment?

21 DR. PFEFFER: So there are no, I guess, specific
22 strings that are tied to the residency model itself.
23 Okay. However, if I'm in a school district and if I
24 am hiring residents as part -- if I'm hiring CTAs to
25 come and work through their residency program, I have

1 the opportunity to work with them as far as tuition
2 assistance. But having commitments signed, I have
3 the opportunity to give them their contracts a little
4 bit early and entice them to stay with me; I have the
5 opportunity to help them find those things that
6 they're going to love about my district, so that
7 they're going to want to stay. I think the data
8 really support the fact that most teachers are
9 teaching in a class proximity to where they went to
10 high school. And so I think that if we're creating
11 the opportunities, if they are already developing the
12 connections, already developing the professional
13 relationships and having opportunities, then that is
14 going to really be a driver to stay. I think this
15 piece here -- because this isn't just a recruitment
16 tool and preparation tool; this is also a retention
17 tool. Because if I'm in a district, I'm going to
18 need my designated master and lead professionals to
19 be part of that Level 3. Because if I want to be
20 able to fill some vacancies that I have -- because
21 these residents will be able to help fill vacancies
22 and take over classrooms if they're under the
23 supervision and direction of a master and lead
24 professional. So the examples that have been brought
25 to you by different institutions and districts, this

1 is the model that we're setting up that they now can
2 work through. And these master and lead
3 professionals can earn additional stipends, and
4 they're having that opportunity to really lead from
5 the classroom. They're having the opportunity to
6 help shape and mentor our future teachers.

7 So we've been setting up timelines that we're
8 going to be working through. We are having meetings
9 with two- and four-year ed-prep programs. We're
10 having meetings with superintendents and every co-op.
11 The team here is working on MOUs and updates to
12 courses so that by January/February we're able for
13 our high school principals and counselors to start
14 putting these courses on the master schedule, start
15 helping to recruit students into that early pre-
16 educator program of study, promoting this through
17 higher-ed. But it's not going to happen without a
18 comprehensive campaign, and so that is something
19 we're going to be really working on. Ms. Post and
20 some of our Teachers of the Year have already started
21 coming up with some ideas to help. I think our
22 novice teachers within their novice teacher mentoring
23 programs, I think we can find some really good ways
24 to plug them in and to really help recruit. Because
25 every single district can now have the opportunity to

1 grow their own workforce, and I think it's pretty
2 exciting.

3 So I'll pause and see if there are any other
4 questions or comments.

5 MR. SUTTON: Well, I think it's better than
6 exciting; I think it's super.

7 DR. PFEFFER: I think -- I think so too. It's
8 super.

9 MS. McFETRIDGE: Maybe you said this earlier.
10 In years past, when a student did their student
11 teaching in a school, in a classroom, they would not
12 be paid -- or maybe even could not be paid. So this
13 -- is this a district decision if the student teacher
14 is paid? I'm not talking about the paraprofessional
15 that's already working.

16 DR. PFEFFER: Sure. So within the residency
17 model, part of that is that the candidate is employed
18 in a school district.

19 MS. McFETRIDGE: Okay.

20 DR. PFEFFER: And so by the time they get to
21 that student intern piece, yes, they would continue
22 to be working and could be paid for the student
23 teaching. And if you don't mind, I'm going to read
24 you just something really brief, because this all has
25 come together at the same time. But Arkansas Tech

1 has their alumni magazine, and I just happened to
2 flip through it one night. And she probably doesn't
3 know I'm going to read this about her today, but she
4 was in the magazine. So, "Brooke Custer always
5 believed in the power of her dreams. Upon graduating
6 in May 2021, Custer had a teaching job lined up in
7 Marshall, Arkansas. Inspired by her high school
8 agriculture teacher in Waldron, Custer knew she
9 wanted to follow in his footsteps by the time that
10 she graduated. Custer excelled in her classes and
11 was one semester away from graduating when an
12 unexpected event almost postponed her degree plans.
13 Custer had to become the legal guardian of her
14 younger sibling, Dakota." So, and I'll summarize the
15 rest of this story -- so this candidate had been
16 saving up money from her job so that she didn't have
17 to work while she student taught. When her family
18 circumstances changed she wasn't going to be able to
19 afford to quit her job, so she wasn't going to get to
20 student teach because she didn't get paid for student
21 teaching. Thankfully, Arkansas Tech had a program in
22 place and they call it "The Fight-On Fund." And she
23 had another teacher from Arkansas Tech who had been
24 part of her education and said, "Don't -- you're not
25 dropping out; give me a day to figure this out." And

1 they found a way to help provide the financial
2 support so she could go ahead and student teach and
3 she could graduate. And I believe Ross has checked
4 and she is teaching. What district?

5 MR. WHITE: She's at Marshall.

6 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. She's at Marshall. So she
7 was able to make it, and I'm very thankful that Tech
8 took that on.

9 But why do we have to do that? Why do we have
10 to make choices? Why do we have to have our
11 students, that they're worried, and that they're
12 working and working and working to save up enough so
13 they hope that they can make it? It shouldn't be --
14 it shouldn't be a lottery for our teachers to have
15 good jobs. It shouldn't be a lottery for our kids to
16 have access to quality teachers. It doesn't have to
17 be that way. So that's what I'm hoping every
18 institution can realize; it doesn't have to be that
19 way. If we create this type of a model, and if we
20 can bring together our school districts and our
21 institutions that already are doing so much great
22 work -- if we can bring them together and make this
23 happen, then we have day-one ready teachers who are
24 able to start their careers miles ahead of where they
25 would otherwise.

1 And so, I'm really excited. And it's going to
2 be a lot of hard work. We probably are going to have
3 some mistakes along the way and have to kind of step
4 back. But the only thing I've asked of our teams,
5 when we come together, is that I -- you know, I know
6 at some point you're going to find issues; fix it.
7 Whatever we've got to do we're going to fix it,
8 because this is too important.

9 So I think that's all. There are some good
10 financial opportunities too. We're working with
11 districts about the possibility of how this might fit
12 in with Arkansas's apprenticeship model. And so with
13 apprenticeships there can be opportunities for wage
14 reimbursement, and our team at the Office of Skills
15 Development is working with us on that. So we've got
16 a lot of people who are going to help make this
17 happen.

18 Okay. All right. So I'm done with that part of
19 the report.

20 EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER QUALITY REPORT (EPPQR)

21 DR. PFEFFER: If we can shift over very quickly
22 -- I don't think this part will take too long, but I
23 do think that it's important for us to look at. And
24 it's a report that you all take action on each year.

25 So this is our statewide report for 2021 for

1 Educator Preparation that gives information about
2 provider quality. And so our Professional Licensure
3 Standards Board is very involved with the development
4 of this and the review of this report. And the
5 report has evolved some over time. In the future,
6 this report will really help become a guide for our
7 state review. That's part of our new rules for
8 licensure and ed-prep is that our programs will now
9 start undergoing a state review, because it's really
10 important that we're constantly assessing the quality
11 of the experiences and the relevancy of the
12 experiences that our candidates who are in our ed-
13 prep programs are getting.

14 And so, Dan, we'll just kind of go down through
15 each section.

16 I'm just going to tell you, you know, briefly
17 what's there -- and you may or may not have thought
18 about questions.

19 We can go on down to the charts, I think. This
20 is all definition and --

21 So this is a list of our providers here. And
22 the number --

23 Joan, help me out. The number of different
24 providers are 25?

25 MS. LUNEAU: Yes.

1 DR. PFEFFER: Okay. So we have 25 different
2 providers here, the abbreviations, because you see
3 those periodically. We identify whether they're a
4 public or independent or private institution or
5 program, and whether it's a traditional or
6 alternative, or both. Because I think sometimes we
7 forget that a lot of our traditional -- our
8 institutions that offer traditional programs also
9 offer nontraditional or alternative routes to
10 licensure. And you can click on those and it takes
11 you to the web pages of each of those institutions.

12 The next section has the workforce data. And
13 something that's probably helpful there at the
14 beginning of that section -- some of our EPPs, our
15 education program providers, do require that
16 candidates pass their licensure assessment before
17 they're considered a completer of the program, and
18 some do not. And that has been a topic of interest,
19 I guess, over the last few years, because it does
20 make it a little harder to compare things. So when
21 we're looking at enrollees and completers, it muddies
22 the water a little bit; so it makes the data a little
23 bit harder -- but, again, different providers do
24 things differently. So I think that's why also with
25 this residency model these candidates will be ready

1 day-one for licensure, for completion. And so I
2 think that's going to help as we go long-term.
3 Because we do have a challenge sometimes in
4 collecting data because there are some -- quite a few
5 variances with our different providers in how they
6 design their programs.

7 So if we can go on down a little bit.

8 This next section, we have our enrollment and
9 completers and you can see the differences by route.
10 When you get into the 2021 school year, you see that
11 the gap really closes between the traditional and
12 alternative routes. We did have smaller numbers, and
13 I think it would -- could be directly attributed to
14 the pandemic of those who are enrolling and
15 completing in a traditional program. But our
16 alternative routes, our numbers are continuing to
17 increase.

18 We also have information on our completers for
19 administrator programs.

20 And probably it would be good sometime to do an
21 update for y'all about just our administrators, what
22 our administrator workforce looks like, and some of
23 those things.

24 So this is the chart that you saw that shows
25 those -- the percentages by institution who are

1 employed. We do have those in green that are at or
2 above the state average. So we are constantly
3 wanting to have conversations with our institutions,
4 that if they have a low rate of candidates who
5 complete a program but don't get employed, those are
6 things that we want to talk about. Because if in
7 that geographic area, where we know there are
8 shortages, we're wondering why are those candidates
9 not going to your area schools. So, again, this is
10 about -- Stacy mentioned while ago the flashlight.
11 This report really becomes our flashlight. And if we
12 see areas that we need to spotlight, then we work
13 with those institutions to do that.

14 We can see the candidates and comparing our EPP
15 candidates to the student population. And we still
16 have challenges to make our teacher workforce more
17 representative of that of our students, and that is
18 and remains a priority.

19 Go on down a little bit.

20 Teacher retention rates are here. And we are
21 still seeing a workforce that's getting younger and
22 younger. That time period of three to five years is
23 really critical when you look at the numbers of
24 teachers who -- that's when we start seeing that
25 dropping-off point. And I think that's another

1 benefit of having a residency model where, in the
2 future, a first-year teacher is really going to
3 already have experience behind them. So your first-
4 year -- your teacher doesn't start off as a first-
5 year teacher. And I think that we're going to see a
6 lot better rate of retention as we go forward because
7 of that really high-quality experience they have at
8 the very beginning. You know, when you're successful
9 at something you want to continue, you want to keep
10 doing it. And when you have that opportunity to
11 continue advancing, you're going to stay with that
12 career.

13 This next section here is a newer section, and
14 this is one where our PLSB is involved in reviewing
15 the criteria of different -- no, I'm jumping ahead on
16 that. This is -- this section identifies whether or
17 not our programs are accredited by CAEP, which is the
18 Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
19 Programs. And with the proposed rules, we would be
20 changing that CAEP accreditation to continued
21 accreditation by state review. Programs can still
22 have CAEP accreditation so they have that outside
23 entity coming in as a measure of program quality, but
24 they won't be required to. I would anticipate that
25 we will have programs that want to do that; they'll

1 want to still have that outside group come in. But
2 it can be very expensive and it can be very difficult
3 to manage for a smaller program, so it may not be the
4 most appropriate type of accreditation for everyone.

5 Okay. The licensure assessment summary pass
6 rate -- this chart here is a little limited in the
7 fact that what we're reporting on is overall pass
8 rates for all subject areas and assessments taken by
9 candidates. Recently, the National Council for
10 Teacher Quality, NCTQ, has really started looking at
11 licensure pass rates by institution for both first-
12 time test takers and the overall pass rate. There
13 can be merits to doing both. Our goal will be, as
14 we're doing more of the state review, to really be
15 looking at it by institution, by subject area,
16 looking at first-time and overall. I think that can
17 give a good indication about different components of
18 programs. And I think overall data -- good data help
19 us make good decisions.

20 The next section is novice teacher survey data.
21 And I know that Ms. Saracini has talked a little bit
22 about how this can be much more robust. But a
23 positive is that our candidates are getting an early
24 tie to the Danielson framework, which really is the
25 roadmap for good teaching, and it's also the criteria

1 that will help them identify how well they're doing
2 on the different teaching domains and components in
3 the future. So this part here is available to the
4 novice teachers to help identify how well they're
5 being prepared for those different areas, their
6 perceptions of preparation.

7 And then, the last part is broken up into four
8 areas. And we have identification as to whether or
9 not different programs are meeting or not meeting, or
10 exceeding, in these different areas that have been
11 identified as very important areas for accreditation.
12 If a program is not meeting the standard, then the
13 program is put on a -- I guess an improvement plan, a
14 plan of action for improvement. And if they do not
15 meet the standard and are unable to meet the
16 standard, then we do not let them accept new
17 candidates, and ultimately that program may have to
18 be discontinued if the improvements are not made.
19 When you look at these, these are areas where if the
20 program does not have a strategy to help us meet our
21 shortage areas, that is not a program that is
22 preparing candidates for Arkansas schools. If they
23 don't have a good recruitment plan to attract
24 minority candidates into their program, if they're
25 not establishing partnerships with area schools, and

1 if they're not meeting the Science of Reading
2 components, then those things are identified. And
3 these reviews are done by peers that are in our --
4 part of our Professional Licensure Standards Board.
5 So this has been a work in progress and I think it's
6 very important work and appreciate the things that
7 they've done.

8 So that's an overview of the report -- and,
9 again, we'll continue to have it evolve over time.
10 But if there are any questions, I can try to answer
11 or get somebody from the team. Otherwise, we would
12 ask for the report to be accepted.

13 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. Questions, Dr. Rankin?

14 DR. RANKIN: Yes. Dr. Pfeffer, thank you and
15 your team. Thank you for that report. That's
16 incredibly helpful information and we all feel more
17 well-versed in this now because of that.

18 I just had a quick question. On page 2 of the
19 workforce data, the EPPs are not requiring the
20 passing licensure test and still counting the
21 candidates as completed. I see that's about evenly
22 split. Has that just been the way those boxes have
23 always fallen out traditionally, or do you see trend
24 lines and movement there in universities deciding
25 "no, we are going to require a definition of

1 completing the program?"

2 DR. PFEFFER: And I'm going to let Joan Luneau
3 talk about that. She's worked with our ed-prep
4 programs for awhile, so she'll know a little more
5 historical data on that.

6 MS. LUNEAU: June Luneau, Coordinator of
7 Educator Preparation.

8 Those have stayed about the same over the years.
9 Some of our programs will allow candidates to
10 graduate, and that's why they call them completers,
11 their graduates that they can't license. But they
12 want them to have that degree and then they can go on
13 and continue on. We started -- I think y'all are
14 familiar with the Alternate Assessment Plan. And
15 because of that plan, I've seen this last year quite
16 a few of ours are moving from the left to the right
17 and they're allowing those candidates to graduate
18 without getting licensed. So that's kind of a good
19 thing because it gives them a little bit more time to
20 prepare, but they can go four years and they can
21 still get a degree.

22 Does that kind of answer your question?

23 DR. RANKIN: It does. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Woods?

25 MS. WOODS: No.

1 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Sutton?

2 MR. SUTTON: No, ma'am.

3 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. McFetridge?

4 MS. McFETRIDGE: No. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Mr. Henderson?

6 MR. HENDERSON: No.

7 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Dr. Hill?

8 DR. HILL: No.

9 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Dean?

10 MS. DEAN: No.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Ms. Newton, do you have any
12 questions?

13 MS. NEWTON: I just have some comments for Dr.
14 Pfeffer. I thank you for all that you've done on the
15 work on the residency program. And I think to me one
16 of the most exciting parts of it is the development
17 of the partnerships between the higher ed. and the K-
18 12. And I can see where those partnerships will not
19 just help with the residency program, but also in
20 this report that you can just (inaudible) on the
21 prongs of the report. I look for the quality of the
22 prep programs to improve, not just because of having
23 the residency but because of those partnerships that
24 they're going to be developing between there and the
25 K-12. I just -- I think -- I can see some really

1 great things coming out of that.

2 So great work on all of it, and so thank you and
3 thank the team for us --

4 DR. PFEFFER: Okay.

5 MS. NEWTON: -- on how much good work that
6 they've done on this. And I'm excited to see the
7 future.

8 DR. PFEFFER: Thank you. We expect the same
9 thing. Thank you very much.

10 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any more questions, Ms. Post?

11 MS. POST: No, just a couple of comments.

12 I'm as excited, I think, as you want us to be.
13 I don't know if the other board members are.

14 But three different things that stood out to me
15 -- I have yet to meet a teacher that felt like he or
16 she was day-one ready. So this is huge to me.

17 Secondly, I was advised by a professor in
18 college to get a traditional math and computer
19 programming degree. Had this been in place, I don't
20 know that I could have resisted the free, the big all
21 capitals free. So we might hook some of those people
22 that do have a heart for teaching but are considering
23 other options.

24 And then, lastly, for teachers who are wanting
25 leadership roles and only see becoming a principal as

1 their path to leadership, that master teacher
2 designation is significant.

3 So I applaud efforts on all three of those
4 fronts.

5 DR. PFEFFER: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Thank you.

7 Any more questions or comments?

8 Okay. So we will vote to accept the Educator
9 Preparation Report. Is that correct?

10 SECRETARY KEY: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Okay. So the floor is open for
12 a motion to accept the report.

13 MR. SUTTON: Motion to approve the report.

14 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Motion by Mr. Sutton.

15 Is there a second?

16 MS. McFETRIDGE: Second.

17 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Second by Ms. McFetridge.

18 All in favor say "aye."

19 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIRMAN MOORE: Any opposed?

21 Motion passes.

22 Thank you. I think that concludes our action
23 items.

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25 (The Action Agenda was concluded at 3:44 p.m.)

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VI.2 - PLSB CASE NO. 21-055 MICHAEL DEAN

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

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VII.5. ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY PRESENTATION

EXHIBIT ONE (1)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss.
 COUNTY OF SALINE)

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, State Board of Education, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on October 14, 2021, that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have no contract with any parties within this action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial agency, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties to the action.

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: October 23, 2021.

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

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