

**In The Matter Of:**  
*ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION*

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*July 8, 2021*

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*Sharon K. Hill, CCR*  
*(501) 680-0888*

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E X H I B I T S

V.1. WAIVER REQUEST - ASHLEY WILLIAMSON

Exhibit One (1)  
Child Maltreatment Licensure Action Flowchart

Exhibit Two (2)  
Licensure Action Outline for Ashley Williamson

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

MS. LORI FRENO                      General Counsel

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## 1 PROCEEDINGS

V.1: STATE BOARD HEARING - REQUEST FOR WAIVER - LA-21-003;  
3 ASHLEY WILLIAMSON

4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: We're going to move on to our  
5 action agenda. The first item on the agenda is  
6 request for a waiver. Ms. Freno.

7 MS. FRENO: Thank you, Ms. Newton.  
8 Lori Freno, Department of Education.

9 The Arkansas Department of Education received  
10 information that an educator has a -- had a true  
11 finding for abuse in a child -- on the Child  
12 Maltreatment Registry. A true finding in a Child  
13 Maltreatment Central Registry is a disqualifying  
14 offense pursuant to Arkansas Code 6-17-410.

15 The educator is on Zoom today and she is before  
16 you to request a waiver.

17 And if I may at this point, I'd like to read the  
18 procedures for this matter.

19 Each party will have -- that being the educator  
20 and the Division -- will have the opportunity to  
21 present an opening statement of no longer than 5  
22 minutes, beginning with the representative for the  
23 Division, which will be in this case Ms. Karli  
24 Saracini. The chairperson of the State Board may for  
25 good cause allow more time. Each party will then be

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<p>1 provided 15 minutes to present their case, beginning 2 with the representative from the Division. The 3 chairperson may, again, afford more time if she deems 4 it necessary. And of course no one has to take up 5 their entire 20 minutes if they don't want to. Every 6 witness giving oral testimony must be sworn under 7 oath by the chair and shall be subject to direct 8 examination, cross examination, and questioning by 9 the Board. The Division shall have the burden of 10 proving by a preponderance of the evidence that cause 11 for the proposed licensure action exists, which in 12 this case is a true finding of abuse of child 13 maltreatment -- on the Child Maltreatment Central 14 Registry.</p> <p>15 And if no one has any questions, I will turn the 16 floor over then to Ms. Saracini.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Do I have anyone that I 18 need to swear in?</p> <p>19 MS. FRENTO: Yes. Ms. Williamson will be 20 speaking. She is on the Zoom, so she will be sworn 21 in. And Ms. Saracini will be sworn in as well.</p> <p>22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>23 Good morning. If you would raise your right 24 hand and -- do you swear and affirm that the 25 testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,</p>	<p>1 another district or another position and has to do a 2 background check, that true finding will always pop 3 up. Okay? I just -- I'm trying to clarify things so 4 that it's not so confusing.</p> <p>5 So if you look at the handout, Ms. Williamson -- 6 if you look at the handout and you kind of look at 7 the timeline -- does everyone have the timeline?</p> <p>8 When you look at the timeline she was afforded 9 her due process because there was -- in February 10, 10 2020, DHS was notified of an abuse of an allegation. 11 So they go through the process, and let's look on the 12 DHS side. It goes through and it becomes, after 13 their investigation, a true finding. Then they go to 14 a hearing, if they so want to, kind of like this 15 hearing. And it was not thrown out or dismissed; it 16 was a true finding. So before it ever comes to us it 17 has to go through this process. Then we did not know 18 that much information; all we get, when their report 19 comes to DESE, that it was denied, that there is a 20 true finding. So therein starts what we start to do 21 on our side. When we're notified that there is a 22 true finding, a letter goes out to the educator and 23 to the district that they're ineligible to be 24 employed because of a true finding.</p> <p>25 Now this came about because she started the</p>
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<p>1 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?</p> <p>2 MS. WILLIAMSON: I do.</p> <p>3 MS. SARACINI: Yes.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Saracini.</p> <p>5 MS. SARACINI: Karli Saracini, Assistant 6 Commissioner.</p> <p>7 Today I have passed out a graphic and I hope 8 this will help us as we go through this process. 9 Remember, this is a licensure action; this is not a 10 PLSB action. So this came through Licensure. And we 11 can remember the code says no person holding a 12 license issued by the State Board shall be eligible 13 for employment by an educational entity if the 14 results of the Child Maltreatment Central Registry 15 check released to DESE revealed that the applicant 16 has a true report in the Child Maltreatment Central 17 Registry, unless the State Board waives revocation 18 under 6-17-410.</p> <p>19 So today it will either deny appeal and uphold 20 the revoking existing license or grant waiver for 21 educator to hold an educator license.</p> <p>22 So even if you waive -- the State Board waives, 23 it is only for the educator to keep their license and 24 employment. Every time Ms. Williamson renews her 25 license or maybe changes a position -- goes to</p>	<p>1 process because her license was going to need to be 2 renewed at the end of this year. And so when she 3 went through that process, this is what triggered us 4 to get the allegation to us.</p> <p>5 So once the educator receives her letter from 6 us, then she has a choice to appeal to the State 7 Board or accepts the revocation of her license.</p> <p>8 Does that help some with this kind of a process?</p> <p>9 Now at any time someone can petition for their 10 name to be removed from the Central Registry and 11 there's a process, but there are no assurances that 12 their name would be removed.</p> <p>13 So does that kind of help us as we go through 14 the process?</p> <p>15 DR. MOORE: May I ask a question?</p> <p>16 MS. SARACINI: Uh-huh.</p> <p>17 DR. MOORE: It's safe to assume that this 18 incident that led to that did not happen on school 19 grounds; is that correct? Because if it was on 20 school grounds would it not be a PLSB --</p> <p>21 MS. SARACINI: Well, right now is all we're 22 doing. And I'm going to keep looking at Ms. Douglas 23 or our attorney.</p> <p>24 DR. MOORE: Uh-huh.</p> <p>25 MS. SARACINI: I'm not an attorney. But right</p>

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<p>1 now is all we have before us is this.</p> <p>2 DR. MOORE: Okay. But because it's not through</p> <p>3 PLSB this -- the Department of Education did no</p> <p>4 investigation into this?</p> <p>5 MS. SARACINI: Correct.</p> <p>6 DR. MOORE: Correct.</p> <p>7 MS. SARACINI: Uh-huh.</p> <p>8 DR. MOORE: So this is just a yes/no and then we</p> <p>9 go --</p> <p>10 MS. SARACINI: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.</p> <p>11 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>12 MS. SARACINI: And they give us very limited</p> <p>13 information.</p> <p>14 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>15 MR. SUTTON: Can I ask --</p> <p>16 DR. MOORE: Thank you.</p> <p>17 MR. SUTTON: -- When was the true finding found</p> <p>18 or determined?</p> <p>19 MS. SARACINI: The true finding --</p> <p>20 MR. SUTTON: Yes.</p> <p>21 MS. SARACINI: The date on the timeline, January</p> <p>22 25th, educator lost her appeal and has a true finding</p> <p>23 with DHS.</p> <p>24 MR. SUTTON: January of --</p> <p>25 MS. SARACINI: '21. So it went through a long</p>	<p>1 today.</p> <p>2 We are here today asking for a waiver for Ms.</p> <p>3 Williamson or [sound cuts out on Zoom] or in the</p> <p>4 alternative --</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Go ahead.</p> <p>6 ATTY. BARR: I'm sorry -- or in the alternative</p> <p>7 a probationary period with any sort of conditions</p> <p>8 that you might impose, though I feel that you will</p> <p>9 find that she has completed everything that's been</p> <p>10 asked of her.</p> <p>11 I think it's already been mentioned but I will</p> <p>12 review: this case does not come to you as a</p> <p>13 complaint, a standards violation, an ethics</p> <p>14 complaint, and the Department of Education did not do</p> <p>15 any sort of investigation. This is solely a</p> <p>16 Maltreatment Registry issue. It's similar to a case</p> <p>17 that you guys had a couple of months ago, in some</p> <p>18 ways, in that there was no internal investigation.</p> <p>19 The incident that placed her name on the</p> <p>20 Registry -- and we will tell you about that; Ashley</p> <p>21 will tell you about that -- it involved her own</p> <p>22 child. There were no charges filed in the case. She</p> <p>23 was not even investigated criminally, but there was</p> <p>24 no involvement with the police at all. And the</p> <p>25 incident did not result in any removal by DHS or</p>
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<p>1 process through DHS.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Let's hear from Ms.</p> <p>3 Williamson and then we'll give you more time here in</p> <p>4 a minute.</p> <p>5 Ms. Williamson.</p> <p>6 ATTY. BARR: Well, good morning. I'm Aubrey</p> <p>7 Barr and I'm here for Ms. Williamson. She also is</p> <p>8 here, and she was sworn in earlier.</p> <p>9 Before I start, we have a packet that we sent</p> <p>10 in. Did everyone receive that packet? I only</p> <p>11 received it this morning at 8:00, so I want to make</p> <p>12 sure that everyone has seen that and been able to</p> <p>13 review it.</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Has everyone on the Board seen</p> <p>15 the packet? Anyone who has not seen the Williamson</p> <p>16 packet?</p> <p>17 Dr. Hill, do you need a little bit more time?</p> <p>18 DR. HILL: No.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You got it, okay.</p> <p>20 Okay. I think we're good.</p> <p>21 ATTY. BARR: Okay. Thank you so much.</p> <p>22 I hope that you will not take the fact that we</p> <p>23 are here today on Zoom that we are not very seriously</p> <p>24 pursuing this. I had another hearing this afternoon</p> <p>25 and that's why we could not be present in person</p>	<p>1 anything beyond her name on this registry.</p> <p>2 I will tell you a couple of things about the</p> <p>3 incident itself. Again, it was her own child. This</p> <p>4 is a child that she adopted through DHS. So prior to</p> <p>5 adopting that child she had taken all the steps</p> <p>6 required to do that; she'd taken all the classes,</p> <p>7 background checks -- it's quite a process. Then the</p> <p>8 child has to be placed in her home for a period of</p> <p>9 six months; then it has to be approved by the court,</p> <p>10 an ad litem, which is an attorney for the child, and</p> <p>11 several other people. He's been in her home for</p> <p>12 several years now. The incident is that she, for the</p> <p>13 first and last time, spanked her child with a belt</p> <p>14 and it left a mark; it left a bruise. And she will</p> <p>15 tell you how she handled that herself, the reason</p> <p>16 that it was the first and the last time, and that she</p> <p>17 apologized -- she'll tell you all about that. But</p> <p>18 here's the kicker: it was reported anonymously. When</p> <p>19 someone came out to her house to investigate it, she</p> <p>20 took responsibility for it. She told them that she</p> <p>21 had done that. And, truthfully, that's why we're</p> <p>22 here today, because she took responsibility for it.</p> <p>23 She said, "I did that," and she told them what she</p> <p>24 had done as far as apologizing and all that sort of</p> <p>25 thing. And I think you'll see she had took some</p>

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<p>1 things upon herself to make better any parenting 2 environment that she's in. 3 I'd also like to remind you of just a few 4 things. One, it's legal to use a belt for a 5 spanking. Like I said, first and last time for Ms. 6 Williamson. But no one investigated it, besides DHS. 7 A child -- no children were removed from her home. 8 She has two children; they were not removed for any 9 period of time. There was no police involvement, no 10 criminal investigation, she's not been charged with 11 anything. In fact, all that happened was that DHS 12 came out and questioned her. She said, "Yes, I 13 spanked him with a belt. That's where this mark came 14 from." And they asked her to take some parenting 15 classes, which she again will tell you about, and 16 then her name was placed on this Registry. 17 If you are a teacher and your name is placed on 18 the Registry for any reason, you're going to lose 19 your appeal at DHS because you have regular access to 20 children. And I'm going to read to you what was 21 stated in that report. It says, "This should be 22 noted that this incident of child maltreatment was an 23 isolated incident, that petitioner does not have a 24 criminal history or previous or [Zoom audio 25 distortion] -- true finding occurred and that she</p>	<p>1 you just the facts that we know, and that is the 2 superintendent indicated in June that she does not 3 have a contract for the 21-22 school year. You also 4 see a letter in there from her principal. I mean, is 5 all we can do is go over the facts with you because 6 we are not privy to everything that Ms. Williamson 7 has. Because, again, you see the process and the 8 most important thing is how the process goes. 9 And if there's any questions that I might can 10 answer, or I may have to call on Ms. Douglas or Ms. 11 Freno. 12 MS. WOODS: I have a quick question just so I 13 understand the timeline. 14 MS. SARACINI: Uh-huh. 15 MS. WOODS: So her license was originally 16 granted in 2017; correct? 17 MS. SARACINI: Correct. 18 MS. WOODS: And so at some point between -- this 19 incident occurred between 2017 and 2021? 20 MS. SARACINI: It happened, if you look on the 21 timeline, February 10, 2020. 22 MS. WOODS: Of this year -- or last year. Okay. 23 MS. SARACINI: Uh-huh. 24 MS. WOODS: All right. I just wanted to make 25 sure I understood.</p>
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<p>1 expressed remorse for and took responsibility for her 2 actions. Ms. Williamson cooperated with DCFS and 3 followed through with services, including counseling. 4 She is an accomplished and respected teacher and has 5 gone above and beyond to serve the public school 6 system in her community. However, although three 7 risk factors were found, DCFS did consider all the 8 factors, and I cannot find that DCFS has abused its 9 discretion in making its finding that she may cause a 10 risk of maltreatment to a vulnerable population 11 because she is a teacher and she has access to 12 children regularly." 13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Barr -- 14 ATTY. BARR: She has petitioned -- 15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Barr, your initial 5 16 minutes is up and we'll come -- give you more 17 additional time in just a minute. 18 ATTY. BARR: Okay. 19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Saracini. 20 MS. SARACINI: Karli Saracini, Assistant 21 Commissioner. 22 As you can see on the timeline, it gives you the 23 facts that went through on the process for DHS. 24 Again, we are not given the information that they 25 have; we are only given the bare minimum. I can tell</p>	<p>1 MS. SARACINI: And then it was in January I'm 2 assuming she went through the whole process at DHS -- 3 the true finding, the investigation, the hearing, the 4 appeal. And then that was denied on January 25, 5 2021. 6 MS. WOODS: Is there an automatic notification 7 when somebody ends up on the Registry or do they have 8 to run another background check to find this? 9 MS. SARACINI: It has to be -- they have to 10 start the process, and when they start the process is 11 when it comes to us. And if you look, she started 12 the process on January 28th, that she applied for -- 13 started her background check, and then we did not 14 receive information that it was a true finding till 15 April 5th. 16 MS. WOODS: Okay. All right. Thank you. 17 MS. SARACINI: Okay. 18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other questions? 19 Okay. Ms. Barr, back to you. 20 ATTY. BARR: Yes. If I might respond to that 21 quickly, we did go through the entire process and she 22 -- we received an order in January, at the same time 23 her license was due to be renewed. And so she just 24 went through that process. She did self-report as 25 soon as her name was going to be put on the Registry.</p>

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<p>1 We also did not receive a letter from the Arkansas 2 Department of Education, and so we reached out and 3 said, "Hey, you know, the school district has told us 4 that we're supposed to be getting a letter from you." 5 And so we reached out to them, received the letter, 6 and requested the hearing for the waiver. So she did 7 self-report and she was put on administrative leave 8 at the proper time. So, just to provide a little bit 9 more information on that.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you. 11 Do you want -- do you have any additional 12 comments that you want to add? I know I cut you off 13 while ago.</p> <p>14 ATTY. BARR: I do. And I am going to call my 15 client as a witness as well.</p> <p>16 I just wanted to let you know, she has 17 petitioned for removal of her name. We did that 18 immediately after her name was placed on the 19 Registry. There are no deadlines for DHS in 20 responding to those, so we could hear something on 21 that today or in two months or however long it takes. 22 I will tell you that the letter from her principal, 23 Ms. Green, was also sent to the Maltreatment Registry 24 for removal. And I would encourage you all if you 25 have not read that letter, please read it because</p>	<p>1 she took responsibility for it; she admitted that she 2 had caused this mark by giving a spanking, and that 3 is -- there's really nothing to be done when you take 4 responsibility for what's happened in that way. And 5 so when you appeal, the court -- they have to find 6 whether or not they abused their discretion, that 7 family service worker, in making the decision for a 8 true finding. And there are certain things they have 9 to consider, and one of them is whether they are a 10 risk to a vulnerable population. And if you are a 11 teacher and you work with kids, you're always going 12 to be considered to be a risk to a vulnerable 13 population, no matter what the offense was.</p> <p>14 MS. WOODS: Okay. 15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 16 ATTY. BARR: Shall I call my client? 17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes. Go ahead. 18 ATTY. BARR: Okay. 19 ASHLEY WILLIAMSON, Witness 20 DIRECT EXAMINATION 21 BY MS. BARR: 22 Q Can you state your name, please? 23 A Ashley Williamson. 24 Q And, Ashley, you're here today asking for a waiver; right? 25 A Yes.</p>
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<p>1 they -- Howard would like to rehire her. Now they 2 are aware of the circumstances and they would like 3 her to be a teacher at their school. And if you'll 4 see, she has -- she's done grants upon grants. In 11 5 years, she's done 15 grants from all over; she's done 6 a Fort Smith Public School Foundation grant; she's 7 done all kinds of stuff. And I'll let her tell you a 8 little bit more about that. But I would encourage 9 you all to please read that letter from the 10 principal.</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. 12 ATTY. BARR: And should I call my -- 13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Go ahead. 14 MS. WOODS: I have a quick question, because I 15 just don't know. What's the standard of review for 16 the investigation on the Maltreatment Registry? 17 ATTY. BARR: They -- it's an abuse of 18 discretion. 19 MS. WOODS: Okay. 20 ATTY. BARR: So, and for anyone else I'll give 21 just a little explanation. There's a family service 22 worker who responds to these calls and investigates, 23 and that's the person who determines whether or not 24 her name goes on the Registry where there is a true 25 finding. For Ashley, she admitted that she had --</p>	<p>1 Q Okay. And can you tell them a little bit about what 2 happened with this incident? 3 A Well, what happened was I was having some problems with my 4 son. We tried time-out, we tried taking things away; those 5 things wasn't -- were not working. So after him being 6 disobedient I decided that I was going to whoop him with a 7 belt, and that was just a one-time thing. It was a -- it just 8 wasn't a good thing. I shouldn't have done that. I made a 9 mistake. I apologized to my child. I watched him, you know, 10 trying -- you know, making sure that he was okay. This whole 11 ordeal, I apologized to both of my children for putting them 12 through this. All the different things that we've -- I've had 13 to go through with this process, it's just been unknown and 14 scary and very traumatic and -- but that's what happened. I 15 spanked my child with a belt. And we went through the Families 16 Nurturing of Arkansas counseling. We -- I enrolled myself in 17 counseling. My son is now in counseling through the school and 18 -- 19 Q And the mark -- tell -- the mark was on the lower back, 20 right near the butt. Correct? 21 A Yes. 22 Q The whooping was like -- or the spanking was on his butt? 23 A Right. 24 Q Okay. 25 A Right.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p> <p>1 Q It wasn't his face, it wasn't his arms, it wasn't his  2 chest or legs; it was on the butt-slash-lower back. Correct?  3 A Yes.  4 Q Okay.  5 A Yes.  6 Q Tell me what DHS did when they came out?  7 A When the worker came she told me that she had went to his  8 school. He was actually going to two different schools at that  9 time because the main school that he goes to does not -- did  10 not offer therapy for preschoolers. So he had to go to a  11 different school and that's the school that the report came  12 from. But once she came -- she said that she had went to the  13 school and talked to him and took pictures. But when she came,  14 she asked me what happened; I told her what happened. And she  15 said that because of that, it would be a true finding. She  16 also said that I would have to go to a meeting, and I did the  17 next day with my mother. After that, they told me that there  18 was nothing else that they were going to do; there were no  19 requirements for me to do anything. And then a month later is  20 when I got the letter in the mail, the certified letter. So  21 for a whole month I sat there in fear that my children were  22 going to get taken away or I was going to be arrested, and no  23 one contacted me about anything. But I received notification  24 that a new person would come and do visits and things like  25 that. And so she also recommended me to do the -- do a family</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p> <p>1 foundation grants through our district, Donors Choose grants;  2 I've gotten so many different field trips. We do a career  3 project where my students stay -- have guest speakers come and  4 they can listen to them talk about what they do. We do a  5 project on whatever they want to be when they grow up, and then  6 we visit our local college campus, and we also visit our -- one  7 of our local radio stations.  8 Q Okay.  9 A That's a big project that we -- where we -- that I  10 received for several years. And it's always just an eye-opener  11 for children that they really can -- even in 3rd and 4th grade  12 they can start thinking about what they want to do with their  13 lives and do what it takes to make sure that they get there and  14 be successful.  15 Q Okay. This letter that your principal wrote, when she  16 wrote this she was aware of what had happened. Is that right?  17 A Yes.  18 Q And she knows your children?  19 A Yes. Actually, my principal, Ms. Green, she's known me my  20 entire life. Like I said, I went to Howard when I was a child  21 and she was actually my 5th grade teacher. So she's known me,  22 went to church together when I was a child; so I've known her  23 my entire life. But she did know the situation and she told me  24 that anything that she needed for me she would be able to do.  25 Q And she knew exactly what had happened as far as the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p> <p>1 counseling, and we did. And she came and took more pictures of  2 my son, and then that part of the case was closed.  3 Q Okay. And DHS never removed any children from your home?  4 A No.  5 Q And how many times did they come visit your house?  6 A She came one time.  7 Q Okay. And they asked you to do a parenting class. Did  8 you do that?  9 A Yes.  10 Q And we've provided copies of those certificates in your  11 packet; correct?  12 A Yes.  13 Q Okay. You enrolled yourself in counseling?  14 A Yes.  15 Q The kids are in counseling?  16 A Yes.  17 Q Okay. And you've done everything you can; correct?  18 A Right.  19 Q Okay. And you -- tell me about teaching and why you chose  20 to go back to Howard?  21 A I've always wanted to be a teacher. I went to Howard as a  22 child, and so that's the place where I fell in love with  23 education; so being able to go back there was a dream come  24 true. Being a teacher is what I feel like God has called me to  25 be. I have done so much for my school and written grants,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p> <p>1 spanking and all?  2 A Right.  3 Q She knew all the circumstances when she wrote this letter;  4 correct?  5 A Right.  6 Q Okay. Is there anything else that you'd like to tell the  7 Board today?  8 A I just, first, want to thank you for allowing me to speak.  9 And I just hope that -- I understand that this is not a usual  10 reason for request for a waiver. I do understand that I made a  11 mistake and I feel like I have relived this for almost a year-  12 and-a-half now. And so I have apologized several times to my  13 children. My -- I missed the last several weeks of school this  14 school year with my class. My students were worried about me.  15 I could not have any contact with them. But even in that I  16 still -- every weekend I went up to the school and I made sure  17 that I had enough material for my substitute. I talked to my  18 substitute every single day. Any problems that she had she let  19 me know. And if I wasn't able to just directly tell her what  20 she needed to do, I was in contact with other teachers that  21 could help. I also, again, just want to state, you know, as a  22 single mother this has really affected me, not knowing what  23 would happen. Again, as of right now, I'm unemployable. So,  24 just the unknown has just been scary. This has been a  25 traumatic experience. And even in this I know that I am a</p>

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<p>1 great educator. I've done a lot. And I know that this</p> <p>2 experience has just helped me to even have more passion for</p> <p>3 education. And I know that if I am granted the waiver you will</p> <p>4 not see me again. I will not be back. I have not done this</p> <p>5 again. I have learned my lesson. And I want to be able to go</p> <p>6 back into the classroom and do what I feel like God has told me</p> <p>7 to do.</p> <p>8 Q Okay. And, quickly, you've never received any sort of --</p> <p>9 well, any discipline at all from your school district?</p> <p>10 A No.</p> <p>11 Q No complaints?</p> <p>12 A No.</p> <p>13 Q Nothing that's ever happened negatively at all?</p> <p>14 A No, not at all. I actually -- I have my bachelor's degree</p> <p>15 in Early Childhood Education; I have my master's degree in</p> <p>16 Education Leadership. I am -- hopefully there one day I will</p> <p>17 become a principal. I have the support of a lot of people in</p> <p>18 our district. I have completed several leadership academies</p> <p>19 and programs. And we just a few years ago started an Aspiring</p> <p>20 Leaders program and I have participated in that as well.</p> <p>21 ATTY. BARR: Okay. That's all the testimony I</p> <p>22 have.</p> <p>23 I would like to just briefly say I know that the</p> <p>24 timeline sometimes can be confusing. Ms. Williamson</p> <p>25 has followed all of the recommendations of me as her</p>	<p>1 If --</p> <p>2 MS. SARACINI: I'll get Ms. Freno, because she</p> <p>3 gives the procedures. I don't want to do anything</p> <p>4 incorrect.</p> <p>5 MS. WOODS: I'm fairly certain I know the</p> <p>6 answer.</p> <p>7 With her appeal, if it were to come back and her</p> <p>8 name were to be removed is she automatically</p> <p>9 reinstated? Is her license granted or does she have</p> <p>10 to apply again to the Board?</p> <p>11 MS. FRENO: If her name is removed from the</p> <p>12 Registry, she is not automatically -- it's not</p> <p>13 automatic.</p> <p>14 MS. WOODS: Okay.</p> <p>15 MS. FRENO: But the rules do provide and the law</p> <p>16 provides that it can -- she can come before the Board</p> <p>17 and the Board -- this board can decide with or</p> <p>18 without a hearing whether or not to reinstate her</p> <p>19 license. Now the important thing is that under</p> <p>20 Arkansas Code 6-17-402(k)(6) there are exceptions to</p> <p>21 when the State Board can reinstate a license, and one</p> <p>22 if there are physical or sexual injury or abuse,</p> <p>23 physical mistreatment resulting in death, or sexual</p> <p>24 mistreatment.</p> <p>25 MS. WOODS: Okay.</p>
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<p>1 attorney and when to report things, when we've</p> <p>2 appealed things, when her name officially would be on</p> <p>3 the Maltreatment Registry after an appeal, because</p> <p>4 during the time of the appeal her name was not placed</p> <p>5 on the Registry. So if you have any questions about</p> <p>6 any of that, I'm happy to answer that. I know it can</p> <p>7 be kind of confusing because of the appeal process,</p> <p>8 complicated by Covid. So I'm happy to answer any of</p> <p>9 that.</p> <p>10 Again, she has petitioned for removal of her</p> <p>11 name, but they have no deadlines as to when to</p> <p>12 respond. And she is asking for you to grant a waiver</p> <p>13 or any other option -- probationary license,</p> <p>14 professional development, whatever there is -- to</p> <p>15 allow her to continue to teach.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>17 ATTY. BARR: And I'm happy to answer any</p> <p>18 questions.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.</p> <p>20 Ms. Saracini, I think you had some additional</p> <p>21 time.</p> <p>22 MS. SARACINI: We waive our closing argument.</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right.</p> <p>24 MS. WOODS: I do have a quick question for the</p> <p>25 Department, just to make sure that I understand.</p>	<p>1 MS. FRENO: But it's not automatic.</p> <p>2 MS. WOODS: It's not automatic.</p> <p>3 MS. FRENO: Long story, short --</p> <p>4 MS. WOODS: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. We'll begin with</p> <p>6 questions.</p> <p>7 Dr. Hill?</p> <p>8 DR. HILL: No. I don't really have a question,</p> <p>9 but I do might have a comment.</p> <p>10 All of this was triggered by a whooping?</p> <p>11 ATTY. BARR: That's correct.</p> <p>12 DR. HILL: And we have spent much money and</p> <p>13 investigative time and bureaucracy for a whooping?</p> <p>14 ATTY. BARR: That's correct.</p> <p>15 DR. HILL: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean?</p> <p>17 MS. DEAN: I echo Dr. Hill's sentiment. I don't</p> <p>18 have a question either; I have a comment.</p> <p>19 This is upsetting to me. I know we have a</p> <p>20 process and I know there are things in place to</p> <p>21 protect our children. But this goes -- this is far-</p> <p>22 reaching in my opinion. This woman's life has been</p> <p>23 turned upside-down from one visit to her house</p> <p>24 because of one mark on her son's lower back from her</p> <p>25 being a single mom and trying to raise her child in</p>



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<p>1 the best way she knows. I have four children; I have 2 two boys, two girls. And it is not easy raising a 3 child, just one.</p> <p>4 My heart goes out to you, Ms. Williamson. I 5 cannot imagine what you have been put through for you 6 caring enough about your son to discipline him.</p> <p>7 So this is upsetting to me about this whole 8 process, how a woman's life can be turned upside-down 9 with one visit, and possibly have to come back every 10 five years. It's upsetting.</p> <p>11 I read through the letters of support. You have 12 a wonderful community. They love you, they need you. 13 You obviously have been an asset to your community 14 and to your school. And when the time comes I will 15 be making the motion to waive -- to approve the 16 waiver. Because we need more -- there's a teacher 17 shortage. There's a teacher shortage. Am I 18 mistaken? Okay. There's a teacher shortage and we 19 are putting this woman who is obviously an asset to 20 her community through hell -- that's exactly what I 21 said. For what? And as a result, not only has her 22 -- she been affected, her family has been affected, 23 her students have been affected by this. The last 24 seven weeks of the school year they had to have a 25 substitute. They had no idea where their teacher</p>	<p>1 that we would put a lady like this through this 2 process. So I think you know where I would stand on 3 the vote. But those are my comments.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Woods?</p> <p>5 MS. WOODS: I guess my comment is I'm just -- 6 I'm very conflicted, not because I disagree with any 7 of -- anybody's position on here. I'm conflicted 8 because of the way the law is written -- and that's 9 not our battle to fight, that's somebody else's. But 10 then also trying to be an advocate for the 11 legislature has put forth and the rules and 12 regulations that we have. I'm just -- I'm 13 conflicted.</p> <p>14 To your point, I think if we have a true finding 15 and she has made the time to be here, and we are 16 tasked with whether or not we're going to waive this, 17 they should be here. And I'm not saying that I'm 18 putting more work on them; I'm just saying I'm very 19 conflicted. I was conflicted in May, when we went 20 over this the last time, and I thought today was 21 going to be a lot more cut-and-dry and I'm still 22 conflicted over it.</p> <p>23 So, yeah, that's where I'm at. But there was 24 probably no point to that comment, other than it's -- 25 I'm just conflicted.</p>
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<p>1 was; they had no idea what was going on.</p> <p>2 So I don't know who to talk to about the process 3 for this, but it's upsetting to me how this happened.</p> <p>4 So, Ms. Williamson, be encouraged, trust God 5 that He's going to make everything work out. And 6 know that there are people who obviously love you and 7 support you, and this too shall pass.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin?</p> <p>9 DR. RANKIN: I have no questions.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore?</p> <p>11 DR. MOORE: (shaking head from side to side.)</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Sutton?</p> <p>13 MR. SUTTON: I just want to ask, does DHS ever 14 send a representative to these type hearings when 15 they have found a true finding?</p> <p>16 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Sutton, may I clarify that? 17 Are you asking about these hearings or are you 18 talking about the hearings in the DHS process?</p> <p>19 MR. SUTTON: When it comes before us on a true 20 finding.</p> <p>21 SECRETARY KEY: No, sir.</p> <p>22 MR. SUTTON: Well, I've said this before, I 23 don't know what DHS does or doesn't do, particularly 24 in this case. I totally echo the comments made by 25 Ms. Dean. And this was -- it's somewhat embarrassing</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Post?</p> <p>2 MS. POST: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Any other discussion?</p> <p>4 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Newton.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>6 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. So obviously we've had -- 7 in the Department we've had conversations about this 8 and certainly understanding that from the previous 9 case that you all have referenced and this one, and 10 the similarities -- similarities and differences. 11 But just know that while we understand your 12 frustration with the law and the process on the DHS 13 side of things, I mean I -- you know, in my 14 experiences we've dealt with that side of this during 15 times that my wife and I were in the childcare 16 business. It is difficult. And what makes it 17 different is that -- just know that once you're on 18 the Registry for childcare there is no option; there 19 is no board to review it. If you're on the Registry, 20 you cannot work in that pre-k setting.</p> <p>21 So take -- it takes encouragement that the law 22 does have at least this component where you all -- 23 you're not adjudicating it from a justice and a 24 judiciary standpoint, but you are looking at it from 25 a justice standpoint, lower-case j, if you will; that</p>

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<p>1 you can -- you have this opportunity to see and hear</p> <p>2 from an educator who has found themselves in this</p> <p>3 situation.</p> <p>4 Now I'll tell you that we'll certainly provide</p> <p>5 feedback to DHS. We do provide feedback to DHS when</p> <p>6 we run into these things because they do need to</p> <p>7 know, you know, what our board is faced with when</p> <p>8 these come up; doesn't come up often. But I think</p> <p>9 you see now that, you know, for as long as this</p> <p>10 educator's name is on the Registry it will come up</p> <p>11 every time she changes jobs, goes to a new district,</p> <p>12 or has to have a background check for renewal. And</p> <p>13 so I say that so that -- to express thanks to the</p> <p>14 team for providing that clarification of how this</p> <p>15 process works. And it helps us then give that</p> <p>16 feedback to DHS to say "we want y'all to see this and</p> <p>17 what it -- the impact it has on an educator that</p> <p>18 finds them-self in this situation."</p> <p>19 So, anyway, yes, frustration is okay. But also</p> <p>20 be encouraged that you have a chance to hear these</p> <p>21 cases and understand and at least temporarily make a</p> <p>22 -- the decision that you feel like is the right thing</p> <p>23 to do.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.</p> <p>25 MS. WOODS: I do have one final follow-up.</p>	<p>1 SECRETARY KEY: Yes.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All in favor?</p> <p>3 (MAJORITY CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>5 MS. WOODS: May I abstain, if possible?</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right.</p> <p>7 Congratulations, Ms. Williamson. I hope that</p> <p>8 you will be able to go forth and be able to minister</p> <p>9 to your children at home and also in that classroom.</p> <p>10 Thank you for being here.</p> <p>11 ATTY. BARR: May I have one brief minute?</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.</p> <p>13 ATTY. BARR: I just wanted to thank you for your</p> <p>14 comments today. I've represented Ms. Williamson for</p> <p>15 over a year-and-a-half and I'm very pleased with this</p> <p>16 decision. And I want to say Ashley is very happy and</p> <p>17 I think she feels at least very seen and able to give</p> <p>18 her side of the story in front of the Board. And I</p> <p>19 personally thank you for that and I know she does as</p> <p>20 well. And so I want to say that on her behalf.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you. Thank you,</p> <p>22 both.</p> <p>23 MS. DOUGLAS: And if I may, I would just let Ms.</p> <p>24 Barr know that I will have an order today for Ms.</p> <p>25 Newton to sign and have that emailed to you by this</p>
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<p>1 Is the Department allowed -- like permitted to</p> <p>2 make a recommendation or are your hands kind of tied</p> <p>3 at the "here's what the rules are and --</p> <p>4 SECRETARY KEY: The Department does not have any</p> <p>5 -- there's no authorization in the statute for us to</p> <p>6 make a recommendation.</p> <p>7 MS. WOODS: Okay.</p> <p>8 SECRETARY KEY: I mean, we represent --</p> <p>9 MS. WOODS: Unlike the PLSB hearings where you</p> <p>10 can make a recommendation?</p> <p>11 SECRETARY KEY: Correct.</p> <p>12 MS. WOODS: Okay. All right.</p> <p>13 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, that's differences between</p> <p>14 the PLSB action and a licensure action.</p> <p>15 MS. WOODS: Okay.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any other</p> <p>17 discussion?</p> <p>18 Okay. Ms. Dean.</p> <p>19 MS. DEAN: I move that we grant the waiver, the</p> <p>20 request for waiver for licensure for Ashley</p> <p>21 Williamson.</p> <p>22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Motion has been made.</p> <p>23 DR. HILL: Second.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Dr. Hill.</p> <p>25 Can we just do a voice vote, you think?</p>	<p>1 afternoon.</p> <p>2 ATTY. BARR: Thank you so much. And I</p> <p>3 appreciate everybody today.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you. Have a good day.</p> <p>5 ATTY. BARR: Thank you. Y'all too.</p> <p>6 V.2. CONSIDERATION TO REMOVE LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM</p> <p>7 LEVEL 5-INTENSIVE SUPPORT TO LEVEL 4-DIRECT SUPPORT</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Our next item is</p> <p>9 Consideration to Remove Little Rock School District</p> <p>10 from Level 5-Intensive Support to Level 4-Direct</p> <p>11 Support.</p> <p>12 Just one, okay. And we do have people that have</p> <p>13 -- one person has signed up for public comment on</p> <p>14 this item. So we'll need a motion to hear public</p> <p>15 comment, if that's the Board's desire.</p> <p>16 MS. WOODS: I'll move to hear public comment.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Woods has moved to</p> <p>18 hear public comment. Is there a second?</p> <p>19 MR. SUTTON: Second.</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Second by Mr. Sutton.</p> <p>21 All in favor?</p> <p>22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>24 Okay. Ms. Smith.</p> <p>25 MS. SMITH: Good morning. So I have a quick</p>

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<p>1 presentation that sticks to the exit criteria and  2 gives a little bit of a background on where we were  3 and where we are today.  4 It's distorted a little bit. Okay. Yeah, I'm  5 not sure what's distorted. It's still not going,  6 Dan. There we go.  7 All right. So on December 12, 2019, the State  8 Board of Education voted to reconstitute the Little  9 Rock School District; therefore, that also included  10 the district going back under an elected board of  11 directors. Little Rock School District held their  12 elections in the months of November and December, had  13 that all wrapped up, and they actually had their  14 first board meeting in December of 2020.  15 When the State Board reconstituted the Little  16 Rock School District they put three limitations on  17 the local board, and you see those there. One was  18 that the current Little Rock school board would not  19 make any changes to the superintendent; the second  20 was that the Little Rock school board would not  21 change the manner and selection of PPC; and the third  22 is the Little Rock school board would not institute  23 any litigation, other than just the routine contract  24 litigation.  25 Exit criteria that was established in</p>	<p>1 data that we pulled from our interviews and our site  2 visits.  3 <b>CRITERIA 1</b>  4 MS. SMITH: Okay. So the first criteria was  5 about the district implementing the PLC processes and  6 High Reliability Schools Level 1, 2 and 3. The  7 criteria that was set was really about foundational  8 pieces of having a professional learning community.  9 So as our folks went out into schools and interviewed  10 teachers, we had 98% of the 242 teachers that were  11 interviewed who can show evidence of collaborative  12 team times, whether that was through schedules,  13 whether that was through conversation, whether that  14 was through talking to the principal. So, 98% of  15 those that were interviewed showed that. Other  16 evidence that we have seen is that they have guiding  17 coalitions in each of their buildings. You can look  18 at their master schedules, which they provided as  19 evidence, as that being proof that they were doing  20 that. They have established norms. We saw every  21 school district's norms within their buildings, the  22 collective commitments at the building level,  23 missions and visions. And so there was overwhelming  24 evidence that that was occurring. Again, it's a very  25 foundational piece of the process.</p>
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<p>1 collaboration with the Department and the Little Rock  2 School District and the Office of Coordinated Support  3 and Service was around collaborative teams or the  4 professional learning communities, professional  5 feedback for educators in their evaluations,  6 literacy, a balanced budget, and an approved master  7 facility plan.  8 So it talks a little bit about how we did our  9 end-of-the-year review. First off, the district  10 throughout this entire year had digital folders in  11 which they were providing information and evidence to  12 meeting the different areas of criteria that our  13 office actually reviewed. Each Little Rock School  14 District had a visit by a member of the OCSS team.  15 We interviewed over -- we interviewed 242 current  16 Little Rock teachers in the month of May, specific --  17 asking questions specifically about the exit  18 criteria. We interviewed 16 administrators. We did  19 classroom visits at all of the buildings. And then  20 we had artifacts shared with us during our interviews  21 and our site visits. And at the end of those visits  22 I had an exit interview with Superintendent Mike  23 Poore. So that's how this whole process went about  24 for the final report.  25 So I want to tell you a little bit about the</p>	<p>1 Also, we asked about data utilized.  2 Collaborative team times and professional learning  3 communities really revolve around student data and  4 how they're progressing. And that is a more advanced  5 skill as you're getting into being an effective  6 professional learning community. So we asked the  7 questions about how data is utilized, and that's what  8 we asked the teachers. 66% were able to tell us,  9 share with us two or more examples of data that they  10 would talk about during their collaborative team  11 times, where 33% were able to maybe tell us one item  12 or a big test like NWEA. So this is an area of  13 growth that we want to continue to look at as the  14 district moves forward with professional learning  15 communities. When talking to the district about this  16 particular one, they're aware of it. In fact, they  17 already have professional development established for  18 common formative assessment scheduled for this fall.  19 They already have plans to have common formative  20 assessment, the Assessment Academy that's provided by  21 Solution Tree. It's an intensive six-day training on  22 common formative assessments and data use that they  23 plan to have with all of their districts -- all of  24 their schools over the next two years. So they have  25 a plan for that.</p>

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<p>1 This question here, has the district provided  2 essential standards for math and literacy -- and that  3 was another foundational expectation that was laid  4 out in the exit criteria. There was evidence by --  5 98% of the teachers that we asked they -- the ones  6 who taught literacy and math -- so you see the  7 numbers change a little bit there; they were able to  8 show us -- not just say yes, they were able to talk  9 to us about it, show us the documents, talk about how  10 that came about. I believe that when those were  11 established by the district they pulled in 180  12 teachers from their district to establish those and  13 had feedback throughout.</p> <p>14 So as you're moving forward with that process on  15 essential standards for the district, their next step  16 is about local common formative assessments at the  17 building level. So you have your big essential  18 standards that the districts have said these are non-  19 negotiable; these are important things for our  20 students; we want to get to that point with team time  21 where they're identifying within their lesson plans  22 other objectives and things that are important. And  23 at the building level they're making those common  24 formative assessments that are quick. So that's  25 where they're moving to.</p>	<p>1 MS. SMITH: As a former administrator, what  2 happens is your time gets eaten up and you quit  3 making it to your classrooms. The district had a  4 clear expectation that all their administrators,  5 assistant principals, and principals did at least  6 eight classroom feedback sessions a month, and that  7 was expected and they had a process in place for  8 administrators who didn't meet it. And what was  9 interesting is when we were actually interviewing  10 principals we had one principal tell the member of  11 the OCSS team, "I got written up," and we were like,  12 "We don't need to know that." But they were like,  13 you know, this was a clear expectation of "we wanted  14 our building administrators in classrooms with  15 teachers getting feedback."</p> <p>16 I will say one other thing about the feedback.  17 As we were looking at feedback, an area to grow in as  18 the district moves forward is making sure that our  19 feedback is of high quality. Some of the comments we  20 had were they wanted more than reflective feedback.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yeah.</p> <p>22 MS. SMITH: Okay. But that's just part of that  23 learning part, even as an administrator, that when  24 you have that reflective feedback you've got to have  25 that person come back to you so that you close the</p>
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<p>1 So for Criteria 1, I felt like there was  2 sufficient evidence that they met those foundational  3 levels of establishing a professional learning  4 community. In the written report that I provided to  5 you, you saw that there are some schools in the  6 Little Rock School District who's actually been  7 recognized; they're part of our pilot; they've  8 received certification in High Reliability Schools  9 Levels 1 and 2. You have two in the district that  10 have been certified in HRS 1 and 2. Of all the  11 buildings, they're all in different places. Some  12 started this process several years ago; some are  13 newer to it. Okay. But the district does have a  14 comprehensive district plan on continuing on and  15 moving forward with this.</p> <p>16 CRITERIA 2</p> <p>17 MS. SMITH: Criteria 2 -- so the district will  18 implement the TESS and LEADS system. So that's our  19 evaluation system for teachers and administrators,  20 and it's really about giving quality feedback to  21 teachers to make you better. All right. Asking 241  22 teachers, "Do you get feedback from your building  23 leadership," 92% of the teachers said yes, they do.  24 That's huge.</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Uh-huh.</p>	<p>1 loop. By just posing you a question to think about  2 and then never come back and close the loop with you,  3 you might not have got the point I was trying to  4 make. So it's that closure piece. So that's just an  5 area that the district I believe is aware of as well  6 and we're going to continue to work their  7 administrators to provide high quality feedback to  8 their teachers.</p> <p>9 Other evidence we used to determine this  10 criteria being met was we did look at EdReflect  11 reports. Many of the schools have Focus Walk tools  12 which they made out of Google Docs, in which the  13 building administrators, in collaboration with their  14 buildings, identified other things in their buildings  15 that they wanted to see when people walked through.  16 And they added literacy to that list. And so when  17 you looked at the elementary classrooms and you ask  18 teachers "are you receiving individual feedback  19 regarding the Science of Reading," 88% of elementary  20 teachers indicated yes of the ones that we  21 interviewed. Okay. You know, that's an area that's  22 newer, okay, as far as -- I feel like we've been  23 talking about Science of Reading and RISE here for  24 many, many -- many, many years. But it's still in  25 the classroom as far as implementation and the</p>

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<p>1 training and getting principals to a level in which</p> <p>2 they can provide feedback for it. That's a shift,</p> <p>3 because we're talking about a curriculum shift for</p> <p>4 administrators as well.</p> <p>5 DESE did go in -- our literacy team went in and</p> <p>6 worked specifically with the Little Rock School</p> <p>7 District's literacy team and building principals and</p> <p>8 district staff, and we did walk-thru's together with</p> <p>9 principals. And our staff gave feedback to</p> <p>10 principals and pointed things out, trying to assist</p> <p>11 them in growing in this area.</p> <p>12 CRITERIA 3</p> <p>13 MS. SMITH: Criteria 3, the district will</p> <p>14 implement -- the district adopted a reading</p> <p>15 curriculum that incorporates the principles of</p> <p>16 Science of Reading, I believe it was two years ago.</p> <p>17 We helped the district go through a process in which</p> <p>18 they selected new literacy material. Again, the</p> <p>19 State didn't pick it for them. Okay. We helped them</p> <p>20 go through a process and the teachers chose their</p> <p>21 curriculum and the materials. So 98% of our</p> <p>22 classrooms that we went through in elementary there</p> <p>23 was evidence that they were utilizing the curriculum</p> <p>24 that was adopted. So in elementary that was</p> <p>25 Heggerty, Foundations, and Wit and Wisdom. And we</p>	<p>1 another area that even the Department, Dr. Pride's</p> <p>2 group, is looking at that professional development</p> <p>3 statewide. So the district is right there with</p> <p>4 several of the initiatives that the State is doing as</p> <p>5 well. So, again, evidence there.</p> <p>6 Dyslexia -- those of you that were on the Board</p> <p>7 two-and-a-half years ago, I presented a dyslexia</p> <p>8 report and it was grim. You know, it was about where</p> <p>9 we were. The district has done a great job in</p> <p>10 bringing awareness to dyslexia services within the</p> <p>11 district. They've hired dyslexia specialists that</p> <p>12 are within the -- that's what they do. They're</p> <p>13 serving all grades. They have screening and</p> <p>14 assessment protocols in place now. Two years ago,</p> <p>15 they did not. It wasn't cohesive, it wasn't aligned.</p> <p>16 Is it perfect? No. None of the criteria I'm telling</p> <p>17 you about today are perfect. But I'm telling you</p> <p>18 that there's been progress made, satisfactory</p> <p>19 progress made. Right now you can see students from</p> <p>20 all grade levels receiving dyslexia intervention.</p> <p>21 93% of the teachers that we asked about -- and we</p> <p>22 didn't just go in and say, "Do you have a dyslexia</p> <p>23 process." We went in and said, "Hey, tell me about</p> <p>24 what you would do to identify kids with dyslexia.</p> <p>25 Who in your building" -- that's how we did these</p>
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<p>1 heard lots of opinions about it. We heard really</p> <p>2 good positive comments around Foundations and Heggerty</p> <p>3 and the implementation of that. We also heard</p> <p>4 teachers voice concerns and struggle over using Wit</p> <p>5 and Wisdom and the rigor of the text. Okay. So when</p> <p>6 we followed up with the district on that, they are</p> <p>7 aware of that. They already have -- I believe it was</p> <p>8 six -- or it might've been 11 -- I made notes -- 11</p> <p>9 employees who -- they are current district employees</p> <p>10 that they currently have trained to be Wit and Wisdom</p> <p>11 content leaders to provide additional support in the</p> <p>12 district. Okay. So they're recognizing that the</p> <p>13 rigor -- and what we're hearing from Little Rock</p> <p>14 about this specific curriculum is not something we</p> <p>15 haven't heard from other districts implementing all</p> <p>16 this at the same time, because it gets up to that</p> <p>17 rigor -- it's difficult. And so there's support</p> <p>18 that's being provided there.</p> <p>19 Another concern that we heard from teachers was</p> <p>20 we're not doing enough writing and there wasn't</p> <p>21 enough writing within the context of the curriculum</p> <p>22 that they had. The district has a plan for</p> <p>23 addressing that and looking at Writing Revolution as</p> <p>24 they're moving forward, looking at utilizing their</p> <p>25 ESSER funds to be able to provide that. And that's</p>	<p>1 evaluations, and then we marked our -- we marked</p> <p>2 based on the information we got. So of the 234 that</p> <p>3 we asked, 93% of those could tell us. Elementary was</p> <p>4 pretty solid in their response; high school was</p> <p>5 actually pretty solid; middle school might've been</p> <p>6 the group that wasn't as strong, but they still could</p> <p>7 tell us who -- okay -- and they could kind of tell us</p> <p>8 those initial things. One of the feedback that we</p> <p>9 got from a middle school teacher was "yes, we did</p> <p>10 have training, but there was so much hitting us at</p> <p>11 one time that we probably need to go back over it</p> <p>12 again." Okay. That's fair and that's honest.</p> <p>13 CRITERIA 4</p> <p>14 MS. SMITH: Criteria 4 was the approved budget</p> <p>15 that's not deficit spending. So we do see a negative</p> <p>16 balance for the FY21 school year; however, we feel</p> <p>17 like there is a reasonable justification why that</p> <p>18 there is a negative in -- this is in operating. They</p> <p>19 had one-time expenditures for the Southwest High</p> <p>20 School construction, and architect fees for the K-8</p> <p>21 McClellan that's being planned. Those negative --</p> <p>22 that negative balance there is covered by their fund</p> <p>23 balance, okay, and there are funds there. The</p> <p>24 district did go for a debt extension that failed this</p> <p>25 year. You may have read in the newspaper about, you</p>

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<p>1 know, aggressive plans for salary increase and 2 facilities and those types of things. A lot of that 3 falls on the debt extension and whether or not the 4 district passes that in the future, and it will 5 definitely impact what their budget looks like in the 6 future and what their facilities plans are.</p> <p>7 As far as ESSER funds, the district received 8 \$99,000,000 in federal ESSER funds to respond to the 9 impact of Covid-19. One of the areas that those 10 funds can be used for is budgetary shortfalls. So if 11 the district lost students, district summer programs, 12 all those kind of things that generally have come out 13 of operating can come out of ESSER right now. And 14 so, again, that would shore up that operating budget 15 for the district. And I've provided a summary that 16 was provided to me by the district and a kind of 17 spreadsheet that was kind of big picture on their 18 expected revenues for the next three years and their 19 expenditures, which you see there. So they have 20 provided what they look -- what it's going to look 21 like for the next three years.</p> <p>22 As far as the facilities plan, they do have an 23 approved facilities plan. I talked to the director 24 of Facilities, Dr. -- Tim Cain. It was in order. 25 They had no concerns about it. As far as successes</p>	<p>1 morning, walking through that process, talking about 2 that process -- you know, what closes, what stays 3 open, what do we need to do about students here. At 4 one point I'm out trying to find computers. What our 5 support was was really about addressing an emergency 6 situation, not your day-to-day instruction. Okay. I 7 feel like last year they -- working with Sheila 8 Whitlow, who works in the Little Rock School District 9 frequently, established some really good baseline 10 practices for the district to take and move forward 11 with. They stuck with those. They've implemented 12 the plans that were put in place and they've 13 implemented them successfully, and the main thing is 14 they've stayed with it. It's real easy to start 15 things and not stay with it. And I go back to just 16 the expectation of eight walk-thru's. It would've 17 been real easy at the beginning of the year when I 18 did my midyear report, "you've got it, it's great" -- 19 you know, you saw the numbers on that. It would be 20 easy to lighten up on some of that as stuff is going 21 on. They didn't. The district administration office 22 set expectations and they held folks to that.</p> <p>23 As far as teacher feedback -- let's move to 24 teachers -- you could tell that teachers had 25 confidence in their building principals. Many</p>
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<p>1 in the district, just this year they opened the 2 beautiful Southwest campus. If you haven't had a 3 chance to go out there, it's absolutely beautiful. 4 They had a successful opening with that. They're 5 also still in that process of reconfigurations for 6 grade 8. J.A. Fair opened this year -- and was 7 successful, wouldn't you say?</p> <p>8 SUPT. POORE: (nodding head up and down) 9 MS. SMITH: Again, they've got conversations 10 about McClellan. Forest Heights is a well- 11 established K-8 program, and they have now kind of 12 shifted with Hall -- looking at that being a feeder 13 pattern into Hall. Henderson, right now they're 14 having conversations about curriculum and instruction 15 staff moving there and probably establishing the 16 elementary virtual school.</p> <p>17 So all that being said, our visit at the end of 18 the year really was about the exit criteria that was 19 established for the district. And that's what we 20 went in and that's what we looked at and that's what 21 we gave our feedback. I'll tell you that as far as 22 the State support of the Little Rock School District, 23 it has transitioned over this year. At the beginning 24 of the year, I think Mike and I talked every single 25 morning at 7:00 about numbers and Covid -- every</p>	<p>1 comments were made about their buildings and the 2 cohesiveness of the building. I think the district 3 as a whole, there's still layers of communication 4 there that they're continuing to work through, as you 5 would with any large district. And I still think 6 there's this idea of how much direction is happening 7 from the State at the district level to teachers 8 versus this is a collaborative effort between the 9 buildings and the district office. So I think 10 there's just some uncertainty there.</p> <p>11 DESE RECOMMENDATION 12 MS. SMITH: So with that being said, we're here 13 today to respectfully request that the State Board 14 find that the district has met the criteria to exit 15 Level 5-Intensive Support; and that you remove the 16 district from Level 5 and place the district in Level 17 4 which would be directed support for one year with 18 monitoring by the Division and quarterly reports to 19 the State Board; and that you lift the limitations 20 that were placed on the district board of directors, 21 those three that we talked about earlier.</p> <p>22 So the reason why we're asking for moving to 23 Level 4 is that's what's kind of outlined in our 24 rules. All right. So, and the quarterly reporting 25 then occurs to the State Board, and that quarterly</p>

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<p>1 reporting can be a combination of the district 2 reporting and the Office of Coordinated Support and 3 Service or Public School Accountability's support 4 office, as far as our monitoring and how they're 5 maintaining.</p> <p>6 It also talks about that we're monitoring 7 previously identified exit criteria. So those five 8 areas that I talked about today, you know, this needs 9 to be a collaborative effort, and it's done through 10 what we've called the District Support Plan. And 11 that's outlined also in rules, okay, for a Level 4 12 district, that they have a District Support Plan that 13 is made in collaboration with the Department. And we 14 looked at the five criteria today. It wouldn't be 15 the Department -- just like it wasn't the Department 16 -- we collaborated before we established the criteria 17 that we were monitoring; the same thing would be done 18 here. So an example, for Criteria 1 on the PLC 19 processes it's not that I'm going through and still 20 I'm seeing that you have collaborative team times; 21 that's expected. What we want to see now is that you 22 did the things that you said you were going to do 23 with common formative assessment and the professional 24 development plans that you have there; and that when 25 we're going in and we're talking to teachers we're</p>	<p>1 MS. HATTER: I'm Vicki Hatter. I'm also the 2 president of the Little Rock School Board, which is 3 -- this is my first time standing before you guys 4 like as an elected official to serve on the Little 5 Rock School Board. It's different being on this end 6 of it, from still a parent and advocate, as well as 7 working -- tirelessly working to get us to this point 8 to have local control returned like for the entire 9 like six-and-a-half years, half of it being elected.</p> <p>10 So my question today is more about Level 4 and 11 what does that look like for our district to make 12 sure that we as a board have a clear understanding of 13 the process, understand what are the target goals. 14 And Ms. Stacy -- Ms. Smith had just outlined what 15 those criteria are. But my question is will that be 16 in writing to where we will know exactly what do we 17 need to do to move out of having levels period within 18 our district to where we can further stabilize our 19 district, strengthen our district; look at retaining 20 and at recruitment entirely across our district; 21 definitely with student achievement, as well as 22 professional development, getting in new teachers, 23 recognizing the ones that we still have, as well as 24 retaining them.</p> <p>25 So this is my public comment. I guess it's more</p>
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<p>1 seeing that they're making their own common formative 2 assessments; and that we're seeing progress in 3 student outcomes around essential standards. Like 4 that's the next piece; so moving forward with the 5 criteria that's actually established. When we're 6 looking at Criteria 2 for evaluations for teachers, 7 it's that feedback piece. We want to see that 8 administrators are giving the training and support 9 needed to be able to get quality feedback to teachers 10 that improves instruction.</p> <p>11 So I mean as we're going through all this, each 12 criteria then would need to be for the next year and 13 that would be collaboratively established.</p> <p>14 So we do have members here from the district, if 15 the Board has any questions. And I know that you had 16 some public comment folks as well.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Do we want to move 18 to public comment before we do questions? Is that 19 fine?</p> <p>20 PUBLIC COMMENT</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. We had one signed up 22 for public comment. Ms. Hatter, welcome.</p> <p>23 MS. HATTER: Hey, you all. How are you guys 24 doing?</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Good.</p>	<p>1 for -- more from a official standpoint of where I'm 2 at now to make sure that leading the board -- that we 3 all know exactly what our target measurements are and 4 what all -- what the SBE is looking for those 5 outcomes to make sure that we are monitoring our 6 district, making sure we meet them.</p> <p>7 So I'm going to pause right there. And just 8 from a community standpoint, having been under local 9 control for the last six-and-a-half years, you know, 10 we are still working on building that trust; we're 11 still working on repairing the trauma that is there. 12 And so even -- this is a win-win for us all. But 13 then we also know that we will need to continue to be 14 intentional about the work that we have to do, not 15 only as parents and making sure our students have 16 what they need, but just as a whole. And so I look 17 forward to continuing to work with my district 18 leaders and then my fellow board members and then you 19 all, making sure that we're on the same page to where 20 we are able to truly have a stable and sustained 21 district that is sustainable.</p> <p>22 So I appreciate you guys' time and I look 23 forward to hearing the rest. Thank you.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you, Ms. Hatter. Thank 25 you for your service on the board. We really</p>

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<p>1 appreciate what you and your board are doing. So</p> <p>2 thank you.</p> <p>3 MS. HATTER: Thank you.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Do we have any questions or</p> <p>5 comments from our board members?</p> <p>6 Ms. Woods.</p> <p>7 Oh, let's start with Ms. Post -- or you want to</p> <p>8 listen first? Okay.</p> <p>9 MS. POST: I just wanted to say as a teacher I</p> <p>10 wouldn't be here without that administrative support</p> <p>11 in my classroom. So if you focus on anything, please</p> <p>12 keep the administrators in the classrooms regularly.</p> <p>13 I think that might've been the critical piece.</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Very good. Thank you.</p> <p>15 Ms. Woods?</p> <p>16 MS. WOODS: No.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Mr. Sutton?</p> <p>18 MR. SUTTON: No.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore?</p> <p>20 DR. MOORE: Yes, I do. I have questions for</p> <p>21 Stacy from that.</p> <p>22 Thank you for presenting today and providing us</p> <p>23 all the information beforehand.</p> <p>24 MS. SMITH: Uh-huh.</p> <p>25 DR. MOORE: I do want to touch in a little</p>	<p>1 Student Succeeds Act at the federal level, and really</p> <p>2 a different focus of what accountability needed to</p> <p>3 look like -- we wanted to make it more about support.</p> <p>4 So when looking at how do we deal with returning a</p> <p>5 district to local control the concept of levels of</p> <p>6 support was just that, levels of support. The only</p> <p>7 level of support that is subject to, you know, this</p> <p>8 board is Level 5. Y'all make that determination. We</p> <p>9 put in the rules for this one-year of Level 4 so</p> <p>10 that, as president Hatter -- board president Hatter</p> <p>11 mentioned, is that feedback, you know, so that that</p> <p>12 board, whatever board it is -- whether it's Little</p> <p>13 Rock, whether -- you know, no matter what board we're</p> <p>14 talking about that there is an understanding of what</p> <p>15 do we need to continue to do. You know, "We've</p> <p>16 worked very hard to get out of -- and meet the exit</p> <p>17 criteria; how do we make sure we're continuing to</p> <p>18 progress" -- and that's the idea behind this that we</p> <p>19 put in the rules for one year of Level 4 support.</p> <p>20 Now we've had districts who have requested Level 4</p> <p>21 support; Marvell-Elaine I believe was one that</p> <p>22 actually requested to Ms. Coffman's group.</p> <p>23 So it is simply -- it is not a precursor to</p> <p>24 Level 5 or it is not a "just in case that we need to</p> <p>25 take over again." I mean, nothing like that. It is</p>
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<p>1 deeper on Level 4.</p> <p>2 MS. SMITH: Okay.</p> <p>3 DR. MOORE: Is that something that we will -- it</p> <p>4 says a one-year. Is that something we have to vote</p> <p>5 out of or is that -- what does that look like?</p> <p>6 MS. SMITH: So I would probably need to defer to</p> <p>7 Legal --</p> <p>8 SECRETARY KEY: Let me --</p> <p>9 MS. SMITH: -- about whether it's voted.</p> <p>10 SECRETARY KEY: Well, let me help you with that.</p> <p>11 MS. SMITH: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>12 SECRETARY KEY: So I want to take you back to a</p> <p>13 time where some of you weren't even on the Board yet,</p> <p>14 in 2015, 2016, and some of the other state takeover</p> <p>15 situations that we had. And we had Helena-West</p> <p>16 Helena, we had Lee County. And one of the interests</p> <p>17 of the Board at that time was when you saw that,</p> <p>18 okay, you released a district from state control and</p> <p>19 then almost immediately some of the same issues that</p> <p>20 were a problem were repeated. And so there was a</p> <p>21 desire to see more of a soft landing approach. And</p> <p>22 as -- in 20- -- late 2016, going into the 2017</p> <p>23 session, as we were revamping our accountability</p> <p>24 system -- keeping in mind that, you know, we had</p> <p>25 moved away from No Child Left Behind to the Every</p>	<p>1 simply to maintain that collaborative work between</p> <p>2 the Department and the district and the elected board</p> <p>3 so that a feedback loop is formalized and in place</p> <p>4 through this reporting structure.</p> <p>5 So hopefully that helps explain that notion of</p> <p>6 Level 4. This is the first time, I believe, that we</p> <p>7 have followed that section of the rule; so it is new.</p> <p>8 It's not new; it's been there for awhile, but it is</p> <p>9 new as far as application. So hopefully that helps,</p> <p>10 Dr. Moore, explain and provide some feedback -- and,</p> <p>11 Ms. Hatter, for your question about what that looks</p> <p>12 like.</p> <p>13 MS. SMITH: And that District Support Plan is a</p> <p>14 written plan, and not only are -- so the five</p> <p>15 criteria that were within our exit plan, according to</p> <p>16 rules, those five would be as part of the district</p> <p>17 plan. But also other areas that the district</p> <p>18 identifies as well that they want to include. And,</p> <p>19 you know, I would think that the District Support</p> <p>20 Plan would go to their -- your local board as well</p> <p>21 for approval, and so there should be very clear</p> <p>22 things on what the expectation is.</p> <p>23 I will say that in December, when the board</p> <p>24 started meeting, Superintendent Mike Poore made time</p> <p>25 every month to talk about the exit plan. They talked</p>



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<p>1 about specific items on the exit plan to give 2 feedback, and they maintained it. And so I do 3 believe it is the right work and I think the right 4 work was determined in a collaborative manner. 5 DR. MOORE: I do have some more questions along 6 the lines of budgetary and academics. 7 MS. SMITH: Uh-huh. 8 DR. MOORE: For budgetary purposes, despite 9 having a negative fund balance the district isn't in 10 any sort of fiscal distress? 11 MS. SMITH: No, ma'am. 12 DR. MOORE: Is that correct? Is there any 13 additional monitoring because of that, in the fiscal 14 -- 15 MS. SMITH: So they're not in fiscal distress, 16 so -- but all districts submit their budgets to the 17 Department that are reviewed. We do look for 18 indicators at different times that were areas of 19 concern. With Little Rock, their CFO Kelsey Bailey 20 -- you know, at the beginning of the year he 21 presented to Commissioner Key and leadership here at 22 the Department, with Superintendent Poore, what their 23 budget was and what their concerns were, especially 24 moving into a year of Covid. We've spoken frequently 25 about what are the uses of the ESSER funds, how could</p>	<p>1 MS. SMITH: Yes. So the district [sic] has a 2 process in place of monitoring all ESSER funds 3 throughout the state and that includes Little Rock. 4 DR. MOORE: Okay. 5 MS. SMITH: And kind of how Commissioner Key's 6 remarks were, you know, Level 4, Level 3, they're 7 not, you know, the scarlet letter, you know. It's 8 really about support. And our hope is we want Little 9 Rock successful. If Little Rock is successful, we're 10 successful. That's every district in the state. You 11 know, our caution -- and I think I wrote this in the 12 report -- is -- and this is for any district, not 13 just Little Rock -- obligating the ESSER funds to 14 things that are going to be ongoing -- you know, 15 salaries, you know -- you know, filling this piece 16 here because your operating budget -- and then giving 17 a raise that you didn't -- I mean looking at their 18 staffing ratios -- I think using Kelsey's words, not 19 my words -- I think he said before were fact, you 20 know. I mean I've picked that up and used that with 21 other districts, "you're on a diet." You know, we've 22 got to think of our ratios and our staffing and how 23 many kids and teachers. I mean those are those 24 efficiency models. And Little Rock is in that same 25 boat.</p>
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<p>1 they think about that differently. And on this 2 document that they've provided to you they actually 3 note where they're using ESSER funds for some of 4 their -- you know, to shore up that operating budget 5 piece. So as far as monitoring of the budget piece, 6 it'll still just be our ongoing conversations about 7 where are you, what's your expectation, looking to 8 see, you know, what they're projecting here, how 9 close are they, what are the adjustments or changes. 10 You know, budgets are one of those things that are 11 fluid at the moment in what you're doing. If they 12 don't get the debt extension, they'll have to make 13 some decisions there. And even on this document you 14 see where they had a hiring freeze or they had a 15 reduction in staff based on attrition and moving 16 folks, and that started this last year. 17 DR. MOORE: I think the concern could be that 18 the district had received, I mean, a windfall of 19 \$100,000,000 this year that wouldn't be there 20 otherwise, and I guess we don't know what the 21 district budget would look like without that. But 22 that money can -- I believe it's three years, and so, 23 you know, what the district looks like in three 24 years. Will the Department over that course of the 25 three years be monitoring those ESSER funds and --</p>	<p>1 DR. MOORE: Uh-huh. And I know there's a lot of 2 very hard decisions to be made. 3 As we look at the academic side of things -- and 4 as I said here today, and we've been back and forth 5 on this, a lot of the exit plan is in place; so we're 6 all measuring what is being done. But we don't know 7 the results, and we don't know the results because of 8 test scores this year but also because that wasn't 9 written into the exit plan. And as I look at the 10 district, you know, the last graduation rate was 80%, 11 five years; so we have 20% of students every year not 12 graduating. And that's concerning for all of us in 13 this room and we all want to work to -- for those 14 students for that to be better. What kind of 15 supports is the district doing -- and, you know, I 16 guess I'll go -- step back again. As I look at it 17 today, these are all teacher inputs and these are not 18 just teacher problems; they are bigger problems that 19 can't be solved from 8:00 to 3:00. I know the City 20 is here today; I know they're working on it and 21 things. And I guess this is less of a question and 22 more of just statements, but there's a lot of work to 23 be done and I'm glad that we're all doing this work. 24 But I want to keep that in mind and not just so we 25 feel good on those inputs, but the bigger picture.</p>

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<p>1 As a part of that Level 4, will y'all be coming 2 back to report to us any of the outputs as we see 3 later on?</p> <p>4 MS. SMITH: So I think that's a great question. 5 And I think as we are doing the quarterly reports for 6 the district we need to be able to start adding the 7 datapoints to that -- where are we seeing the 8 progress and the outcomes for students. So when 9 you're looking at common formative assessments that 10 are created within a district level, they should be 11 able to start pointing to that data that shows 12 student growth. And that's that next phase of 13 growing as a professional learning community. You 14 know, our state test scores, we are very much 15 expecting a drop in our test scores. We're not going 16 to -- we're going to assume the same thing is going 17 to be with Little Rock as well. Where are they in 18 the spring; how have they used their data to 19 intervene; and how have they used their ESSER funds 20 to address kids that we know had a loss of 21 engagement. And when you talk about those 20% of 22 kids that are not graduating, what are we doing.</p> <p>23 DR. MOORE: Uh-huh.</p> <p>24 MS. SMITH: You know, I do know that they have 25 created initiatives and partnerships with like</p>	<p>1 humbled to try to answer your question because I know 2 you're -- that's your forte'.</p> <p>3 You know, we've had, you know, diligence in 4 terms of still conducting NWEA assessments. We are 5 still, you know, committed to trying to monitor that. 6 I will tell you our results were less than impressive 7 during the course of the year, and I think Ms. Smith 8 is sharing that, you know, we're kind of looking -- 9 that's going to happen a little bit in the state.</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: Right.</p> <p>11 SUPT. POORE: You know, people were so 12 disengaged. So, you know, that's something for us to 13 work toward and continue to monitor. What we do 14 believe though is that -- I think I'm so encouraged 15 by what I see, the datasets that were gathered by the 16 Department through us. You know, we're doing the 17 right work which ultimately ends up, you know, 18 increasing that achievement for math and literacy. 19 And so, you know, we're -- we have high expectations 20 of what that's going to look like this coming year. 21 But we've also got to learn a lot even from just, you 22 know, the state testing that we'll get in here in 23 another month or two.</p> <p>24 DR. MOORE: As you think about entering into 25 August, the majority of your students will be in</p>
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<p>1 Graduation Alliance which did go out and identify 2 students. In fact, they were one of the first 3 districts in the state to use that, and the state 4 actually used it as part of our Engage Arkansas plan 5 to identify kids who had disengaged and pull them 6 back in. And, you know, what does that look like 7 with the funding piece. I mean, that's something 8 we're struggling with because they were ahead of us 9 on that program.</p> <p>10 You're right. There are still kids that are not 11 achieving and there are still kids that are dropping 12 out and we've got to close that gap, and I think 13 they're committed to that as well.</p> <p>14 DR. MOORE: Thank you. May I ask --</p> <p>15 MS. SMITH: Absolutely.</p> <p>16 DR. MOORE: -- the district to share a little 17 bit? I know it wasn't in the exit plan but -- in the 18 exit plan it was that they did NWEA. I would like to 19 hear --</p> <p>20 MS. SMITH: Absolutely.</p> <p>21 DR. MOORE: -- a little bit further as to what 22 the growth of students looked like this year and what 23 plans are after, you know, a year-and-a-half that's 24 been really difficult, looking into the fall.</p> <p>25 SUPT. POORE: Yeah. As a data expert, I'm</p>	<p>1 person; that's correct?</p> <p>2 SUPT. POORE: Well, you know, we're seeing a 3 shift even in the last two weeks of people now 4 signing up more for our digital school. So we've had 5 an increase of probably about 100 students in the 6 last three weeks to shift towards digital.</p> <p>7 We've also adjusted our plan to allow parents to 8 sign up for that digital platform all the way up to 9 the start of school. Initially we had set it up more 10 as a staffing thing, to say we're going to be hard- 11 line and have it all set to go by July 1. Now we've 12 adjusted it to say we're going to let people join in 13 even in -- when we get to the first day of school in 14 August. We're also going to make an adjustment to 15 allow parents to opt out of the virtual setting at 16 semester if they so choose.</p> <p>17 So we're trying to, you know, understand that 18 the pandemic numbers, Covid numbers, are rising 19 again. We need to be receptive to parents and at the 20 same time create the safest environments in our 21 school.</p> <p>22 As we finished the school year our elementary 23 numbers were approximately at about 80%; our middle 24 school numbers, probably just under 70%; our high 25 school numbers were under 60% for in person learning.</p>

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<p>1 DR. MOORE: Thank you. I don't have any more 2 questions unless there's anything else you'd want to 3 share specific to the exit plans, I'd be interested 4 to hear.</p> <p>5 SUPT. POORE: Would you mind, Ms. Newton, if I 6 --</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Just go right ahead. Okay.</p> <p>8 SUPT. POORE: Thank you, Ms. Moore, as well. 9 I want to, first off, just begin by sharing my 10 appreciation to the Commissioner. And, you know, I 11 always tell the story, and he would be disappointed 12 if I didn't say it, but on a spring day in April he 13 took me to -- it wasn't the Waffle House. Well, I 14 forget now. Well, we got to go out to --</p> <p>15 SECRETARY KEY: You need to remember that.</p> <p>16 SUPT. POORE: He took me to a fancy breakfast 17 place for dinner. And so he said, "Would you like to 18 come to Little Rock?" And, you know, that created a 19 partnership that I'm very proud of in terms of the 20 work that he and I have done together. We don't 21 always agree, but we have always found ways to find a 22 common ground to move forward and to work really 23 effectively, and that comes right along with, you 24 know, the Assistant Commissioners, in particular, you 25 know, Stacy the last two years, Ivy and Mike -- or</p>	<p>1 them continue to be in those roles. But I'll tell 2 you, when we really hit the ground running as a team 3 with the Department was when Hope, Randy and Darrien 4 were hired and started to work with Sheila and Brent 5 Miller. And I think both the Commissioner and I -- I 6 don't mean to speak for him, but I think we're both 7 really proud of how those teams worked together. And 8 guess what, our staffs quit worrying about the 9 Department. I can't say that blanket, 100%, but 10 everyone all of a sudden saw there was unity and it 11 was all for the right reasons. And the foundations 12 of the exit criteria are just what is supposed to be 13 effective schools are all about. And, again, Hope, 14 Randy, Darrien did an amazing job. We added Jeremy 15 Owoh who I see is on the screen and helped us this 16 year in terms of kind of almost replacing Sheila, 17 because we had -- the Commissioner yanked Sheila out. 18 You know, we were supposed to be Level 5 but he took 19 people away and a part of that was because we 20 actually already were on the track to be in a good 21 place; we were doing good work. So Jeremy did a good 22 job with that new team.</p> <p>23 You look at our board, and I'm really proud that 24 Ms. Hatter is here. I'm proud that our board 25 instantly adopted and said, "We accept these exit</p>
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<p>1 Mike Hernandez who was previously on this staff. 2 Huge. Sheila Whitlow whose name has been mentioned 3 before. Mark Gotcher was someone that was so helpful 4 when I first came in. But besides Sheila, you know, 5 who is very hands-on -- Brent Miller -- you also have 6 to give Greg Rogers and Lori Freno and Kiffany Pride 7 -- these folks on the Department, you know, they are 8 super helpful. And, you know, I think a lot of times 9 some of our community thinks, well, boy, that was 10 awful to be under state control. No, it really 11 wasn't; it was very helpful because we worked in 12 tandem. And we really kind of hit our ground running 13 probably in about the -- you may be disappointed in 14 this, but it's the truth -- we kind of hit our ground 15 and feet together on this whole exit plan when it was 16 probably in the last two years where, man, all 17 cylinders were going. But prior to that, one of the 18 things that often is dismissed is how many new 19 systems had to be put into this district -- you know, 20 all the e's -- eSchool, eFinance, new systems for HR, 21 going into virtual type platforms virtually across 22 the board. And so, you know, the team that was there 23 that first three years -- Kelsey Bailey, Marvin 24 Burton, Sadie Mitchell, Pam Smith, Veronica Perkins 25 -- you know, those folks have been there and some of</p>	<p>1 criteria." And I appreciate Ms. Hatter's question to 2 say "we want to follow-up; we don't want to just be 3 satisfied with Level 4. We want that distinction 4 gone too and we want to know exactly what we need to 5 do." That's been the mindset of our board of 6 education, which I think is I hope comforting to you 7 as you all give consideration to this release.</p> <p>8 Our new team, we have Keith McGee and Shay 9 Loring that have come onboard to be the Chief 10 Academic Officer and our curriculum person, which are 11 essential things. We're excited about what they'll 12 go do with even the feedback that you've heard today 13 to put it into our district improvement plan.</p> <p>14 The final comment I want to make is if you look 15 at this there's some things that are really pretty 16 amazing. During this whole time of five years, six 17 years -- and some of you have lived the term more 18 directly than others -- but our community never gave 19 up on us. Our community continued to invest in us 20 with volunteerism, volunteerism that was off the 21 charts in terms of support. That's faith-based 22 communities, that's fraternities, sororities, that's 23 the business leaders, parents, okay, that came and 24 stepped forward to go out and help us. It's the 25 business community that's now engaged at a whole</p>

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<p>1 different level of supporting the Little Rock 2 district. 3 And then, finally, most importantly, you look at 4 what this staff has been about. And, again, some 5 real challenges, nothing that just was -- just super 6 like all flat road; we had curves and turns and 7 extreme weather, if you want to call it that way. 8 But we had -- that staff has taken on this mindset 9 that we're going to work together and we're going to 10 do this right. You think about that point -- one of 11 the points that Ms. Moore was making about graduation 12 rate. You know, first and foremost, where are we 13 going to be on making sure that every kid is ready to 14 read in 3rd grade; how much does that impact the fact 15 of having kids engaged as a learner in middle school 16 and high school when things get a little more 17 complex. And if they're not engaged, guess what, 18 they go down a different route that causes 19 disturbances in our community and destruction in 20 lives of family. We know that the whole thing of us 21 moving forward on career development programs is 22 going to help us get to a place where our kids 23 really, you know, find value and passion and 24 excitement about where they're going. And that 25 doesn't just happen at the junior/senior year, but</p>	<p>1 work hard together. So we appreciate that. 2 I want to give Dr. Rankin and some of the others 3 a chance to question, or comments. 4 DR. RANKIN: Thank you. I do have just a couple 5 of questions; one is Department related and one is 6 district related. 7 I think for the Department I'm just curious -- 8 and forgive me if you said this -- what is the 9 timeline for Level 4? I see quarterly reports. Is 10 the hope that it's one year, two years, or is it do 11 you just -- not until -- 12 MS. SMITH: No. So Level 4 for one year. 13 DR. RANKIN: One year. 14 MS. SMITH: And you'll have four reports this 15 next year on how they're doing, how they're 16 progressing throughout the year. 17 DR. RANKIN: So at the end of the one year -- 18 MS. SMITH: So at the end of the one year there 19 are -- there is some legislation pieces about Level 4 20 that directly correlate with reading outcomes and 21 scores. And so that will be one of the factors that 22 we look at at the end of next year after ACT Aspire 23 testing -- you know, the percentage of students that 24 are ready. And the district could end up in a Level 25 3 or Level 4 based on legislation, but we won't know</p>
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<p>1 excitement and passion even down at the elementary 2 level with kids getting to do and create, and that's 3 awesome. 4 So we have a phrase that we use, and I hope that 5 you all feel this way too -- we've had it for all 6 five years that I've been here, it's called the Power 7 of Us. And I feel like this is a moment that's a 8 Power of Us with the effort of our staff, first and 9 foremost -- put them first and foremost, the 10 administrative team in Little Rock School District -- 11 but also the State Department who've been a real 12 Power of Us. And this is a momentous day for the 13 Little Rock district. Because you can argue all day 14 long about whether this control thing should've 15 happened or not happened. But the foundational 16 principles of what we're trying to do for school 17 improvement, it's just the right work and we've done 18 it well, and we've done it with all of you and we so 19 appreciate it. And thank you so much for allowing me 20 to have just a little bit of time. 21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Sure. We appreciate 22 you today, but over these last years putting in the 23 work your staff has done and the leadership has done, 24 and even the students. I mean everybody -- all of 25 you worked together and you get good results when you</p>	<p>1 that until the end of next year. 2 DR. RANKIN: Okay. Thank you for that 3 clarification. 4 And then for the district, I echo Dr. Moore's 5 thoughts and concerns a little bit about years four 6 and five that are coming up, funding-wise and budget- 7 wise. I know with the additional funding that's come 8 through years one, two, and three through fiscal year 9 2024 do look solid and they look good. And it says 10 in here that you are going to be addressing that 11 funding cliff; I'm sure those mechanisms are already 12 being put in place. Those conversations cannot be 13 held too soon, I know, regarding the drop-off of that 14 funding and just looking a little further out, five 15 to ten years, funding-wise. I would love if you 16 could just speak to that a little bit about what the 17 district's thoughts are on being able to address 18 that. 19 SUPT. POORE: Thank you. The use of ESSER funds 20 -- you know, when you look at \$100,000,000, that's a 21 huge number. And we have Dr. Mark Roberts and Dr. 22 Keith McGee that will work and monitor that, 23 alongside with our Chief Financial Officer Kelsey 24 Bailey. And, you know, as we use that for any staff 25 -- and this has kind of in some ways been a little</p>

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<p>1 bit of a -- when you look at it in past, sometimes  2 you create programs or you get grants; if you don't  3 track that appropriately and make sure that as the  4 years start to get closer to the funding drop, and to  5 either assimilate that into your regular budget, then  6 you're setting yourself up to have a problem.  7 DR. RANKIN: Uh-huh.  8 SUPT. POORE: So, you know, we're going to track  9 that extensively to make sure that some of the staff  10 that we're using with ESSER funds that we'll start to  11 incorporate that even into our budget next year. So  12 we won't just be waiting till the end of year-three,  13 that it'll cap -- and even at the start of next year  14 to make sure that we put that back into our budget as  15 we need to.  16 You see that there's some pretty positive  17 projections headed towards the future, so positive  18 that, you know, we believe that, you know, we're  19 going to be able to make a recommendation to our  20 board -- they'll get a report in August -- formal  21 recommendation in October for a salary increase.  22 That hasn't happened in the Little Rock School  23 District for a percent increase since 2014. For  24 classified employees it's been more than a decade.  25 So that's exciting to know.</p>	<p>1 give increased confidence of being able to continue  2 the road to improvement. And I just have to applaud  3 all of your efforts, your team, everyone that's been  4 with you, the collaboration with the Department.  5 And you hit on engagement. I cannot pass this  6 opportunity up to just say continue to do what you  7 can to encourage the arts in your district. Because  8 I know private arts instruction, music, dance can be  9 expensive and I want to be sure that all of our  10 communities are -- have that ticket to flourish and  11 excel and express themselves. Because I truly do see  12 that being a magnet for engagement and that could be  13 for a pocket of children out there, and students, the  14 reason they get up in the morning and come to school  15 and the reason that they graduate. So I just had to  16 say that plug while I could.  17 SUPT. POORE: Thank you so much.  18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean.  19 MS. DEAN: It's been a long journey. I've been  20 on the Board since July 2015, and it has been -- the  21 Little Rock School District has been a huge part of  22 my journey here on the Board. Having grown up in  23 Little Rock and attended Little Rock School District  24 and having four children attend -- I have two that  25 have graduated, it's been in every aspect of my life.</p>
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<p>1 And then also there's a sense of hopefully  2 confidence that what we're projecting here is really  3 sound. My new Chief Deputy of Finance and Operations  4 Kelsey Bailey is a guy that's very conservative in  5 his estimates and his work. I push him to that  6 sometimes, you know, because I want to utilize every  7 resource I can, but he is always on top to try to  8 make sure that we are doing the right things. We're  9 going to have to do some things and our board has  10 talked about, you know, how do we create a better  11 alignment within our school system to utilize our  12 resources most effectively. That's going to have to  13 be a discussion that's going to occur, and the  14 challenge of that is having it happen right at the  15 same time where hopefully our board is also looking  16 at going forward with an extension of debt to work on  17 having, you know, our resources dealt with.  18 So there's a lot of really pretty dramatic  19 things ahead for our board over the next four months  20 that will deal a lot with finances on top of just  21 approving our normal budget.  22 So I hope that answers your question, Ms.  23 Rankin.  24 DR. RANKIN: Yes. I do appreciate that because  25 I know that is key. Looking out into the future can</p>	<p>1 And I want to say to Mr. Poore and all of the  2 staff, Ms. Smith, thank you for navigating Little  3 Rock through this process. It has -- it's been a lot  4 for the community, but I'm so glad that we are at  5 this point today. And I can't -- Mr. Poore hit on  6 what -- the point that I really wanted to hit on,  7 which is even though we've been through a lot as a  8 community, the community has not stepped out of this  9 at all. The community has been there 100% of the  10 time, whether we agree on how we get this done.  11 People have been advocating for the students of  12 Little Rock the whole time. And we may have  13 differences in how we accomplish that, but it's been  14 a pleasure to watch the community, to watch our faith  15 leaders, just to see so many stakeholders in the city  16 of Little Rock, along with the Department -- to see  17 how everyone has worked together to insure that our  18 students are getting the best education that they  19 can.  20 And to brag on Mr. Poore and Little Rock School  21 District and the community of Little Rock, there has  22 been so much focus not just on the academic; the  23 academic is important. But I think something that we  24 need to really focus on is treating the whole child.  25 We talk about that a lot, and that is so much more</p>

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<p>1 of, you know, that school day. There's much more.  2 There's before school, there's after school, there's  3 that home life, there's the wraparound services that  4 they need. And, Mr. Poore, you are so good at that.  5 You are so good at insuring that our students here in  6 Little Rock have everything that they need to be  7 successful in so many different aspects of their  8 lives. And it's been -- it's just -- it's been good  9 to see the business community, the faith community,  10 the Department, so many people work together and  11 start to really mesh, like you said. It's been --  12 relationships are being formed and things of that  13 sort.  14 So I'm glad that we are here today. I'm  15 thankful for the progress that Little Rock is making.  16 I know that we have a lot of work ahead of us, but I  17 feel good about the progress that has been done and  18 the progress that I know that will continue as long  19 as we keep our students at the forefront and  20 understand that what we're doing we're doing because  21 of them. And that needs to be our focus, is our  22 students and making sure that they are getting the  23 best experience they can in Little Rock School  24 District.  25 So thank you to everyone. Dr. Barth, it's been</p>	<p>1 Mr. Poore, Dr. Barth, thank you -- all the support  2 staff. I just want to say kudos that we're here. I  3 joined the Board in 2016, and of course this has been  4 the last five years and it's been a topic of  5 conversation for us on a regular basis. But I'm  6 excited that we are here today and the first downs  7 have been made, and I know Mr. Poore is ready to  8 score touchdowns. And -- but it's a process, you  9 know, being fundamentally sound, taking care of the  10 ball, you know, not fumbling, not getting blindsided.  11 So I've been able to walk with him on this journey,  12 and realizing many times the challenges that take  13 place in the classroom are birthed by the challenges  14 that happen outside the classroom, particularly in  15 urban education, and that's a major, major challenge.  16 And sometimes our teachers are put in situations that  17 are very, very difficult for them to achieve because  18 of things that are happening outside the classroom --  19 and that's urban education throughout the United  20 States of America; that's not just Little Rock. And  21 we have to make sure that we're addressing those  22 issues, because if kids are not in school for  23 whatever reason -- extracurricular activities --you  24 know, I wouldn't be here today, you know, had it not  25 been for football, and so I believe in those. My</p>
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<p>1 a journey and it's -- I'm glad to see that you're  2 still in this work with the city of Little Rock.  3 So those are my comments. I'm just -- I'm glad  4 that we're at this point. But I really want to focus  5 and really point out that the family and community  6 engagement with Little Rock School District has just  7 blown me out of the water. I love to see how the  8 community has come together and I think that is going  9 to be the key to success. And I love what Dr. Rankin  10 said, with a lot of our students in Little Rock  11 School District the arts is so important. And for a  12 lot of children it's really important to -- like you  13 said, sometimes it's the only thing that gets them up  14 in the morning and gets them to school. So I think  15 it's so important for us to not just focus on the  16 academics; that's important, but let's focus on the  17 whole student and what they need to be whole as  18 people and the things that they need to just be  19 successful as citizens in this community and the  20 things that they need -- their mind, soul, spirit,  21 and body.  22 So thank you. Thank you, all.  23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Hill?  24 DR. HILL: Yes. I'd like to echo Charisse's  25 comments and everybody on the Board. Commissioner,</p>	<p>1 daughter is a dancer and the only time she was on  2 time was when it was time to dance. So, you know, it  3 wasn't academics that drew her to be on time and so I  4 understand that.  5 And so we realize where we are and I think we as  6 a board are here to do whatever we can to support  7 you, Mr. Poore, and your staff in making sure that  8 you continue to move the ball down the field and  9 ultimately of investing in human capital. Because a  10 banker said is that for the state of Arkansas -- he  11 told me this, he said, "For the State of Arkansas to  12 reach its full potential the Little Rock School  13 District has to," and -- because of the impact it has  14 on the whole state of Arkansas. And I never thought  15 about it like that, but when our -- the largest  16 public school in our capital city has to set the  17 example for education.  18 So I'm here to support you, Vicki, your staff,  19 whatever we can do to continue to move the ball  20 towards the goal line. Thank you so very much.  21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Very well said.  22 Go ahead.  23 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, had I known that Mr. Poore  24 preferred Waffle House we would've gone there instead  25 of Cracker Barrel -- some of those stories that you</p>

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<p>1 never get away from.</p> <p>2 I just want to say -- and I'm assuming that</p> <p>3 y'all are going to vote favorably for the</p> <p>4 recommendation of the Department. You know, with</p> <p>5 everything that can be said, we can look at progress</p> <p>6 and developments, positive developments in Little</p> <p>7 Rock School District -- and, you know, some of those</p> <p>8 have been mentioned here. I mean just the move to</p> <p>9 eSchool and eFinance at the outset was tremendous,</p> <p>10 and it's easy to forget because we've done it so long</p> <p>11 -- Kelsey, right -- now that we forget how hard that</p> <p>12 was at the beginning.</p> <p>13 But, you know, the question about the finance, I</p> <p>14 would remind the Board that at the outset of this</p> <p>15 effort the district was looking at a shortfall of</p> <p>16 about \$40,000,000, when you count all of the deseg</p> <p>17 funds and the magnet -- M-to-M transfer funds from</p> <p>18 other districts -- about \$40,000,000 that the</p> <p>19 district had to wean itself from. So they've had</p> <p>20 experience doing that; this leadership team has done</p> <p>21 that. So, you know, as -- I don't worry about the</p> <p>22 concerns over the ARP and the ESSER funds. I'm very</p> <p>23 confident that the leadership team and this board</p> <p>24 would be able to develop what needs to be done for</p> <p>25 that.</p>	<p>1 preparation of students for the economy of the</p> <p>2 future. The biggest thing: stability in leadership.</p> <p>3 And to me that's what Mr. Poore has brought, not just</p> <p>4 the stability of leadership but the development of</p> <p>5 leadership. And the team that he has in place there,</p> <p>6 you know, I think that's -- that has helped create</p> <p>7 the right tone for the work between -- the</p> <p>8 partnership between the Department and the district.</p> <p>9 It's Stacy coming onboard and building on what Dr.</p> <p>10 Hernandez and that team did; I mean to me that really</p> <p>11 got us across the finish line in a positive way.</p> <p>12 So I just want to express my happiness today</p> <p>13 that we are at this point, my happiness for Vicki</p> <p>14 Hatter and her fellow board members that they are --</p> <p>15 you know, that I think their hearts are in the right</p> <p>16 place, going in the right direction to make this</p> <p>17 district successful -- more successful for now and in</p> <p>18 the future.</p> <p>19 And I've said it before, Dr. Hill, I agree with</p> <p>20 that statement that was made to you that the success</p> <p>21 of education in Arkansas really hinges on the success</p> <p>22 of education in the capital city. And, you know,</p> <p>23 with all of the challenges that we've had over the</p> <p>24 last six-plus years I feel like today is a historical</p> <p>25 day for us to say we have made progress; progress</p>
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<p>1 Look at new middle school opportunities,</p> <p>2 Pinnacle View; new high school opportunities with</p> <p>3 Southwest High School and West School of Innovation;</p> <p>4 the strengthening of the TESS and LEADS system --</p> <p>5 feedback that we had from teachers from day-one of</p> <p>6 how they were needing to see better results from that</p> <p>7 and they desired that, and the district has embraced</p> <p>8 that; stronger school cultures through the</p> <p>9 professional learning communities process. And I</p> <p>10 always point to Cloverdale as a shining example of a</p> <p>11 transformation in school culture under the leadership</p> <p>12 of the principal and Ms. Braswell there and others</p> <p>13 that have done such a good job. And now you look at</p> <p>14 I think, you know, some that were in assistant</p> <p>15 principal roles there at the time are now advanced to</p> <p>16 principals and other levels of leadership, not just</p> <p>17 in Little Rock, in other districts, you know. And</p> <p>18 the strongest aspect that's going to drive future</p> <p>19 student growth and student achievement is reading and</p> <p>20 the adoption of the reading program and the</p> <p>21 strengthening of the dyslexia identification</p> <p>22 screening/intervention process is going to be huge.</p> <p>23 Ford NGL, I mean you look at Ford NGL as that thing</p> <p>24 that really can drive -- it's a partnership between</p> <p>25 all the area districts that's going to drive that</p>	<p>1 must continue; how can we help you? That's what it's</p> <p>2 about: how can the Department help Little Rock, help</p> <p>3 all the districts make sure we're moving together in</p> <p>4 the right direction.</p> <p>5 So I certainly hope that y'all vote favorably</p> <p>6 for -- and you know I don't ask that much when --</p> <p>7 I've been here now for six years; I really don't try</p> <p>8 to influence your votes. But I am today. Please</p> <p>9 vote yes.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Well, I don't think we need to</p> <p>11 drag this out any longer. We'd better take a motion</p> <p>12 then.</p> <p>13 Does anyone have a motion this morning?</p> <p>14 DR. HILL: I so move that we move Little Rock</p> <p>15 School District that has met the criteria for Level</p> <p>16 5, that we remove them from this level of support.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>18 SECRETARY KEY: And -- and --</p> <p>19 DR. HILL: Remove LRSD from Level 5-Intensive</p> <p>20 Support instead of -- and instead place in Level 4-</p> <p>21 Directed Support for one year, with monitoring by the</p> <p>22 Division and quarterly reporting to the State Board,</p> <p>23 pursuant to Section 8.10 of the Rules governing</p> <p>24 Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act;</p> <p>25 Lift the limitations placed on LRSD Board of</p>

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<p>1 Directors on December 12, 2019.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Is there a second?</p> <p>3 DR. HILL: You wanted the whole pie.</p> <p>4 SECRETARY KEY: The whole pie, Dr. Hill; the</p> <p>5 whole pie.</p> <p>6 MS. DEAN: I second that.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. All in favor?</p> <p>8 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>10 All right. This is a great day. This is a</p> <p>11 great day. Congratulations. The work that y'all</p> <p>12 have done has been amazing and we just stand ready to</p> <p>13 support you any way that we can going forth. So just</p> <p>14 go forth with smiles on your faces today, knowing</p> <p>15 that you did a great job.</p> <p>16 [APPLAUSE]</p> <p>17 V.3. ACT 1240 WAIVER REQUEST - LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Well, it happens</p> <p>19 that Little Rock is our next agenda item also. So we</p> <p>20 have a waiver request from the Little Rock School</p> <p>21 District. It says Ms. Hyatt, but I see Ms. Freno</p> <p>22 getting up.</p> <p>23 MS. FREN0: Lori Freno, Department of Education.</p> <p>24 Sad but true, we do have to give Mary Claire</p> <p>25 vacation --</p>	<p>1 that allowing students the opportunity to get one-</p> <p>2 and-a-half credits at the same time as the -- in that</p> <p>3 course was beneficial to students to open up their</p> <p>4 schedules later. It also allowed for us to -- the</p> <p>5 waiver -- the request for the waiver is really</p> <p>6 centered around allowing us to have the right person</p> <p>7 in that seat that is dedicated to starting freshmen</p> <p>8 that is interested in really laying that strong</p> <p>9 foundation in what high school will be for them. And</p> <p>10 we have a position at the -- in the district that is</p> <p>11 a teacher mentor position. This position also</p> <p>12 supports the teachers of that program and the</p> <p>13 district plans to utilize that position to directly</p> <p>14 support the freshmen seminar teachers, as well with</p> <p>15 the oral communications component if they don't have</p> <p>16 an oral communications license.</p> <p>17 So the waiver, even though there may be teachers</p> <p>18 in that freshmen seminar class that don't have an</p> <p>19 oral communications license, we do have a plan to</p> <p>20 directly support those teachers. They actually met</p> <p>21 at the end of June and started through -- went</p> <p>22 through the process of establishing the essential</p> <p>23 standards for that whole freshmen seminar course and</p> <p>24 making sure that the oral communications standards</p> <p>25 line up particularly within there and getting some</p>
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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>2 MS. FREN0: -- once in awhile, not often.</p> <p>3 This is an Act 1240 waiver request so-to-speak</p> <p>4 made by the Little Rock School District. It is for a</p> <p>5 waiver of Teacher Licensure for a specific program.</p> <p>6 It is -- they're requesting a five-year waiver. And</p> <p>7 Ms. Hope Worsham is here to answer any questions that</p> <p>8 the Board might have.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Worsham.</p> <p>10 MS. WORSHAM: Hello, Board. Hope Worsham,</p> <p>11 former Executive Director for the Little Rock School</p> <p>12 District of Curriculum Instruction.</p> <p>13 I just want to take a moment to say thank you</p> <p>14 for what just happened. It's been a long two years,</p> <p>15 but it's been worth it.</p> <p>16 So I am here to represent the district today in</p> <p>17 the request for the Act 1240 waiver. We are -- the</p> <p>18 district is moving forward with an academies model to</p> <p>19 implement at all of their high schools and we would</p> <p>20 like to embed oral -- personal communications into</p> <p>21 the freshmen seminar class. All 9th graders will be</p> <p>22 taking freshmen seminar starting next year in all</p> <p>23 high schools. And the standards within the freshmen</p> <p>24 seminar class lined up very closely with the</p> <p>25 professional communications standards, and we felt</p>	<p>1 support professional -- in professional</p> <p>2 communications already.</p> <p>3 Also, the embedded course is coming to you</p> <p>4 tomorrow for approval, so that's not quite finished.</p> <p>5 But that will be before you tomorrow to approve that</p> <p>6 embedded credit within that.</p> <p>7 So we did do a survey out to the -- out to our</p> <p>8 stakeholders. We had over 500 responses to that</p> <p>9 survey. 71% of those responses were in favor. Some</p> <p>10 of the biggest concerns they had were the support for</p> <p>11 oral communications obviously. And we do have a plan</p> <p>12 in place to make sure the teachers are supported,</p> <p>13 also making sure that students have a firm foundation</p> <p>14 in oral communications. And that was also -- that</p> <p>15 was our motivation for moving this direction, because</p> <p>16 we know that oral communications is very important.</p> <p>17 We don't want to diminish at all that that should be</p> <p>18 a standalone course. However, we feel like within</p> <p>19 the academies model, if that is done the way that we</p> <p>20 plan for that to be done, students need a firm</p> <p>21 foundation in 9th grade in oral speaking so that</p> <p>22 throughout their classes going forward they have that</p> <p>23 strong foundation to present themselves in a very</p> <p>24 confident manner.</p> <p>25 So I will answer any other questions you have at</p>



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<p>1 this time.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.</p> <p>3 Dr. Hill?</p> <p>4 DR. HILL: No questions.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean?</p> <p>6 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin?</p> <p>8 DR. RANKIN: I just want to commend you on</p> <p>9 starting this at the freshmen year, because if</p> <p>10 students can identify themselves as a communicator</p> <p>11 and a speaker and have that ability to articulate</p> <p>12 their ideas that early it just walks with them all</p> <p>13 the way through high school and beyond. So I just</p> <p>14 applaud your efforts on this and I really appreciate</p> <p>15 the work that's being done here.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore.</p> <p>17 DR. MOORE: I second that. And I credit my</p> <p>18 Central High School oral comm. teacher in 9th grade</p> <p>19 to my lifelong speaking. I seriously still remember</p> <p>20 it very well.</p> <p>21 I'm interested in the academies, if you don't</p> <p>22 mind speaking for just a minute why that shift</p> <p>23 occurred and what it looked like. And I am excited</p> <p>24 to hear about this course as well.</p> <p>25 MS. WORSHAM: Yeah. So, am I speaking?</p>	<p>1 So it's really about taking your high school,</p> <p>2 making that smaller learning community so students</p> <p>3 can get infused within that particular field of</p> <p>4 study. And then also their core content will be</p> <p>5 taught through that lens; so the core content</p> <p>6 teachers working together to teach through the lens.</p> <p>7 So things like the English courses that have been</p> <p>8 opened up at the Department this semester -- English</p> <p>9 courses, fabulous opportunity to implement those</p> <p>10 within each of those academies so that the 11th and</p> <p>11 12th graders are really getting the core content they</p> <p>12 need to be successful in the career pathway they're</p> <p>13 upon.</p> <p>14 DR. MOORE: Awesome. Thank you for sharing</p> <p>15 that.</p> <p>16 MS. WORSHAM: Thanks.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Sutton?</p> <p>18 MR. SUTTON: No.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Woods?</p> <p>20 MS. WOODS: No questions.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Post?</p> <p>22 MS. POST: (shaking head from side to side.)</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Well, I was impressed</p> <p>24 with not only the communication part but the</p> <p>25 different topics that they were going to address,</p>
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<p>1 Okay. So all of the -- so Little Rock, along</p> <p>2 with other -- North Little Rock, Pulaski County, and</p> <p>3 Jacksonville are following a model that is pretty</p> <p>4 well implemented in the Nashville School District.</p> <p>5 It's called Nashville Academies. And the idea is</p> <p>6 that within each high school you make smaller</p> <p>7 learning communities with a themed model of -- within</p> <p>8 that academy there's a theme; so maybe it's a medical</p> <p>9 academy, maybe it's geared towards social services,</p> <p>10 something like that. So each of our high schools has</p> <p>11 now identified the academies that they want to have</p> <p>12 within their high school and then working directly</p> <p>13 with -- Ms. Shemeka Montgomery is our CT Director,</p> <p>14 lining up all of the CTE courses so that within that</p> <p>15 academy students can exit with a completer status.</p> <p>16 And then the next steps are really working with the</p> <p>17 community, making sure there's internships in place</p> <p>18 for students. But there are opportunities to go on</p> <p>19 job shadowing and that eventually down the road there</p> <p>20 are -- by exiting that academy that guarantees the</p> <p>21 students something, either a credential that they can</p> <p>22 go straight into the workforce with or the</p> <p>23 preparation that they need to go to that next step</p> <p>24 after high school into the right training that they</p> <p>25 may need.</p>	<p>1 from managing conflict to resumes, just life skills</p> <p>2 that kids are going to need. And so this was very</p> <p>3 impressive to me.</p> <p>4 So if there's not any more discussion, we're</p> <p>5 ready for a motion.</p> <p>6 MS. DEAN: I move to grant the 1240 waiver for</p> <p>7 Little Rock School District.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. We have a motion by Ms.</p> <p>9 Dean.</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: I second.</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Dr. Moore.</p> <p>12 All in favor?</p> <p>13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>15 Congratulations.</p> <p>16 MS. WORSHAM: Thank you very much.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON (to Secretary Key): <small>Ms. Dean</small></p> <p>18 and Dr. Moore.</p> <p>19 V.4. REVIEW OF CUTTER-MORNING STAR SECOND LIEN BOND</p> <p>20 APPLICATION</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Our next item is the Review of</p> <p>22 Cutter-Morning Star Second Lien Bond Application.</p> <p>23 Ms. Sacrey.</p> <p>24 MS. SACREY: Hi. I'm Anita Sacrey. I'm the</p> <p>25 Coordinator for the Loans and Bonds Section at the</p>

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<p>1 Division.</p> <p>2 And we're presenting a second lien bond</p> <p>3 application by Cutter-Morning Star School District.</p> <p>4 The committee -- the loan committee reviewed this</p> <p>5 application at our regular meeting, which was May</p> <p>6 19th. And the committee had concerns about it</p> <p>7 because of the high debt ratio and the fact that it</p> <p>8 is a second lien bond; so it will not go before the</p> <p>9 voters. So with these concerns we asked for a</p> <p>10 meeting with the district, and we had that meeting on</p> <p>11 June 3rd on Zoom and we learned from the district</p> <p>12 that they do have a \$3,000,000 balance in their</p> <p>13 building fund. The second lien bond they're</p> <p>14 requesting is for \$2,070,000. So we were encouraged</p> <p>15 by the balance in their building fund. And the</p> <p>16 district also told us that they're going to be trying</p> <p>17 to raise funds to help cover -- what it is is putting</p> <p>18 turf in the football field. And so we were</p> <p>19 encouraged by that, but the committee was still</p> <p>20 concerned about the high debt ratio and with it being</p> <p>21 a second lien bond. So when the committee met again</p> <p>22 on June 16th to review this issue we voted to send it</p> <p>23 to the State Board without a recommendation so that</p> <p>24 y'all can review that.</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p>	<p>1 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>2 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Sutton, just to add a little</p> <p>3 bit more information, at one time there was a state</p> <p>4 law that placed a limit, and I believe it was 20%.</p> <p>5 But that was removed a number of years ago. So just</p> <p>6 for --</p> <p>7 MS. SACREY: Correct.</p> <p>8 SECRETARY KEY: -- just for reference.</p> <p>9 MR. SUTTON: Okay. Well, if they have</p> <p>10 \$3,000,000 in their building fund, are those funds</p> <p>11 already allocated to some other project?</p> <p>12 SECRETARY KEY: The district is here --</p> <p>13 MS. SACREY: They are here.</p> <p>14 SECRETARY KEY: -- to answer whatever questions</p> <p>15 you might have about it too. So --</p> <p>16 MR. SUTTON: Okay. I'll ask it.</p> <p>17 SECRETARY KEY: Okay.</p> <p>18 MS. SACREY: Okay.</p> <p>19 SUPT. ANDERSON: No, sir. We do not --</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Could you come to the</p> <p>21 microphone?</p> <p>22 SUPT. ANDERSON: Sorry. Nancy Anderson,</p> <p>23 Superintendent.</p> <p>24 No, sir. We have a few major -- I meant minor,</p> <p>25 sorry -- minor projects, like some --</p>
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<p>1 MS. SACREY: Are there any questions?</p> <p>2 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Sacrey, could you explain to</p> <p>3 the Board how debt ratio is defined?</p> <p>4 MS. SACREY: Oh, okay. It is the debt of the</p> <p>5 school district divided by the total property</p> <p>6 assessment of the district. So with a 42% debt ratio</p> <p>7 the district -- this is what the district would have</p> <p>8 if they went forward with these bonds.</p> <p>9 MR. SUTTON: What is -- well, what is a more</p> <p>10 reasonable ratio?</p> <p>11 MS. SACREY: Well, I can tell you that the state</p> <p>12 average is 10.25%.</p> <p>13 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>14 MS. SACREY: There are also three -- only three</p> <p>15 districts that are over 30%, Cutter-Morning Star</p> <p>16 being one. They are already the district with the</p> <p>17 highest debt ratio in the state.</p> <p>18 MR. SUTTON: Does the state keep an average on</p> <p>19 bonded debt per student as a barometer?</p> <p>20 MS. SACREY: No, sir. We don't track it that</p> <p>21 way.</p> <p>22 MR. SUTTON: Because it seems like to me, you</p> <p>23 know, almost \$20,000,000 in bonded debt for an ADM of</p> <p>24 662 seemed high, very high.</p> <p>25 MS. SACREY: Yes.</p>	<p>1 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>2 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- roofing projects.</p> <p>3 MR. SUTTON: Uh-huh.</p> <p>4 SUPT. ANDERSON: But we also have partnership</p> <p>5 funds with that. But that's the only one that we</p> <p>6 have. And we're also, you know, doing some things</p> <p>7 with ESSER, with air conditioning, things like that;</p> <p>8 we will use that. But, no, we do not have any large</p> <p>9 obligations for that money.</p> <p>10 We just finished a \$15,000,000 high school --</p> <p>11 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>12 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- project.</p> <p>13 And I do want to clarify on the -- it's not just</p> <p>14 a football field. Our football field, we've had a</p> <p>15 drainage problem from the Highway Department. If</p> <p>16 you've been on my campus you know this, they've</p> <p>17 drained all the water from Highway 70. It has</p> <p>18 completely ruined our football field. There are</p> <p>19 sinkholes, there's all this issue there. I met with</p> <p>20 the Commissioner of Arkansas Department of</p> <p>21 Transportation about two weeks ago. We finally came</p> <p>22 to agreement. I've been working on this for nine</p> <p>23 years to get this water problem -- Senator Clark has</p> <p>24 helped me with that. We finally got that problem</p> <p>25 resolved to get the water off of the field. We had</p>

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<p>1 light poles -- and I know Ms. Newton has been to my 2 field -- that continue to lean and fall and it's 3 dangerous. So we have some very serious situations 4 at our football field. Again, nine years I've been 5 trying to work to get the water part taken care of, 6 and we finally just came to a resolution about two, 7 three weeks ago when I met with the Commissioner of 8 Transportation. 9 So we're also doing asphalt for our buses, 10 because we built the new high school -- 11 MR. SUTTON: Uh-huh. 12 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- and it's separated from the 13 elementary. So we're trying to do asphalt to tie 14 into the high school. 15 Parking lots, we're trying to do parking lots in 16 between those buildings and doing some, you know, 17 sidewalks. And we've actually written a grant for 18 sidewalks; we're hoping that we'll secure that and 19 not have to use any of this. 20 On our baseball and softball fields, which we've 21 had for years, we have no lights. We always have to 22 go to Poyen and play our district tournaments, so we 23 don't have the opportunity to have that income. 24 And so there's a lot more than just a turf 25 field. I looked into what it would cost to upgrade</p>	<p>1 Girls' Club. So, he has a marketing plan that he has 2 brought to me on how we can raise this money. I mean 3 he got \$1,000,000 from one particular donor. I know 4 northwest Arkansas is different than Garland County; 5 I do realize that. 6 But those of you that know me know that I'm 7 going to work hard, you know, to get this fixed and 8 get it in the best shape we -- again, we have a 9 beautiful building there. We're -- we have had so 10 many kids move into our district. We know facilities 11 are important. We know student safety is important; 12 that's the number one priority. I can't put my kids 13 out there on a football field if I think they're 14 going to get hurt. 15 MR. SUTTON: Sure. 16 SUPT. ANDERSON: We're actually also doing 17 bleachers. If you've seen my press box -- and I 18 know, again, some of you have been here -- it is 19 dangerous. It has a winding staircase that goes up 20 like this; you hit your head on the speakers; you 21 have to lean -- it is dangerous. So we were actually 22 going to do bleachers for the last three years, and 23 we have to change out those wooden bleachers. The 24 last three years we've had people fall through the 25 bleachers. It's just not a safe place. And so I've</p>
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<p>1 and make our field safe and it was close to 2 \$1,000,000 just to do that because they have to take 3 everything out, they have to dig down, take all of 4 the dirt out, all of the under-stuff, and then come 5 back and start replacing it. So just to get it safe 6 for our players was going to cost close to 7 \$1,000,000. So that's when I started looking into, 8 you know, the turf field, because of maintenance. 9 MR. SUTTON: Uh-huh. 10 SUPT. ANDERSON: We're going to save on 11 maintenance -- 12 MR. SUTTON: Right. 13 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- and things like that. 14 I understand the debt. It's a lot. The numbers 15 are there. I get it. But we have refinanced some 16 bonds, so we have a lot more room to make our bond 17 payments; because we've saved enough in refinancing 18 the bonds over the last two years, because interest 19 rates were so low, to make that payment. 20 But our intent is that we're going to -- and you 21 all know how schools sell ads on the football field 22 and things like that. That's our intent. And I was 23 just let to hire a guy that's going to be working for 24 me and he is a marketing expert. He actually worked 25 in northwest Arkansas and was a CEO of the Boys' and</p>	<p>1 looked at other alternatives, replacing those 2 bleachers with metal bleachers instead of the wood. 3 I have -- but when you start looking at what lumber 4 costs and the prices now, you know, I'm going to 5 spend just as much just tearing it all out and re- 6 doing it. So, anyway -- 7 MR. SUTTON: Well -- 8 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- we've looked at options. 9 MR. SUTTON: Who is the district's financial 10 advisor? 11 SUPT. ANDERSON: Mr. Ray Beardsley. 12 MR. SUTTON: I'm sorry. Okay. 13 MR. BEARDSLEY: Hi. I'm Ray Beardsley with 14 First Security, Beardsley Public Finance. 15 MR. SUTTON: Okay. 16 MR. BEARDSLEY: And one thing I might mention, 17 that when we met with the board our concern always is 18 the debt the school district is incurring. And the 19 board shows instead of paying for the project that 20 they have over \$3,000,000 in the building fund and 21 they hope to add another half-a-million more when 22 this school year closes out. And they decided 23 instead of spending that money they would rather keep 24 that in reserve for rainy days or if they have a 25 problem making this payment --</p>

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<p>1 MR. SUTTON: Oh, I understand.</p> <p>2 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- or on the new high school</p> <p>3 that they built.</p> <p>4 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>5 MR. BEARDSLEY: So we looked at that option.</p> <p>6 Their payment on this bond we're estimating to be</p> <p>7 about \$130,000 a year. And they would rather</p> <p>8 obligate for that versus spending \$2,000,000 out of</p> <p>9 their building fund.</p> <p>10 MR. SUTTON: Right. Well, given the high debt</p> <p>11 ratio is the rating on these debentures -- or not</p> <p>12 debentures -- these bonds affected?</p> <p>13 MR. BEARDSLEY: That's a great question. In</p> <p>14 Arkansas, thank goodness, due to the Commissioner and</p> <p>15 the legislature getting passed the bill that</p> <p>16 obligates the state to the bonds if the school</p> <p>17 district doesn't make the payment, that helps us --</p> <p>18 MR. SUTTON: It doesn't fall on the district.</p> <p>19 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- to get a Triple A rating on</p> <p>20 all Arkansas school bonds. And we're very</p> <p>21 appreciative of that --</p> <p>22 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>23 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- for sure.</p> <p>24 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.</p> <p>25 MR. BEARDSLEY: So that wouldn't affect it. We</p>	<p>1 MR. BEARDSLEY: The debt per ADM is \$25,907.</p> <p>2 But as a comparison, debt mills is \$27,006 per ADM.</p> <p>3 So even though Cutter's is high, it is not the</p> <p>4 highest in that area --</p> <p>5 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>6 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- in the ADM.</p> <p>7 MR. SUTTON: I'm just -- to be honest with you,</p> <p>8 I'm used to seeing about half that. So --</p> <p>9 MR. BEARDSLEY: The average --</p> <p>10 MR. SUTTON: You're the professional, I'm not.</p> <p>11 MR. BEARDSLEY: They used to have -- as the</p> <p>12 Commissioner mentioned, they used to have a law that</p> <p>13 said you could -- I believe it was 28% and you could</p> <p>14 go five more than that if the State Board approved</p> <p>15 it. And we had many schools -- I know I did Genoa</p> <p>16 Central; when they needed to build a new high school</p> <p>17 we had to get State Board approval and then went -- I</p> <p>18 think it was 30% or 32% at the time. So it's not</p> <p>19 unheard of. And it's usually caused by schools that</p> <p>20 have very low mill value --</p> <p>21 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.</p> <p>22 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- such as Cutter.</p> <p>23 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.</p> <p>24 SUPT. ANDERSON: May I make another comment?</p> <p>25 MR. SUTTON: Uh-huh.</p>
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<p>1 do tell -- all of this is in the OS and the POS that</p> <p>2 goes out to the bidders so they are well aware of the</p> <p>3 amount of money they'll be obligated to. Yes, sir.</p> <p>4 MR. SUTTON: Does your firm happen to keep up</p> <p>5 with debt per student?</p> <p>6 MR. BEARDSLEY: We do at some levels. The debt</p> <p>7 for Cutter-Morning Star -- they have 660 kids and</p> <p>8 their per mill rate is so low that's why we -- it</p> <p>9 cost us so much. It's \$45,000 per mill is all they</p> <p>10 bring in --</p> <p>11 MR. SUTTON: Yeah.</p> <p>12 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- in the district.</p> <p>13 MR. SUTTON: Right.</p> <p>14 MR. BEARDSLEY: And with their total debt, their</p> <p>15 debt ratio would be 37.46%, and we're aware of that.</p> <p>16 I mean we take that into consideration.</p> <p>17 Does that answer your question?</p> <p>18 MR. SUTTON: Well, I was looking really for a</p> <p>19 barometer on an ADM number, such as -- and I was on a</p> <p>20 school board for almost 30 years.</p> <p>21 MR. BEARDSLEY: Yes, sir.</p> <p>22 MR. SUTTON: And we did second lien bonds as</p> <p>23 well --</p> <p>24 MR. BEARDSLEY: Sure.</p> <p>25 MR. SUTTON: -- as plus new issues. And the --</p>	<p>1 SUPT. ANDERSON: We did have a public meeting</p> <p>2 with our community about this and they were in full</p> <p>3 support of this because they understand that -- what</p> <p>4 we -- what our needs are. And so I did want to let</p> <p>5 you know that we did have a public meeting and talked</p> <p>6 to our community about this.</p> <p>7 And, you know, I don't know if you know much</p> <p>8 about Cutter but, you know, we were in fiscal</p> <p>9 distress and were going to shutdown at one time. But</p> <p>10 we've gone up ever since; our enrollment keeps</p> <p>11 increasing. Everything is going great. And I just</p> <p>12 want to be able to continue that. Like it looks like</p> <p>13 our school choice numbers are going to be a lot</p> <p>14 higher. It looks like we're going to be up 30 just</p> <p>15 from school choice because people are attracted to</p> <p>16 our district because we're small, we take care of our</p> <p>17 kids, we love our kids, and we're a little bit</p> <p>18 different.</p> <p>19 But I did want you to know we did have a</p> <p>20 community meeting and we talked about that and the</p> <p>21 community is very excited.</p> <p>22 With that said, I talked to you about some of</p> <p>23 the problems before. And when we talked about</p> <p>24 building this building we went to the voters for --</p> <p>25 and they were adamant about this high school and we</p>

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<p>1 passed an 8.4 mill. Our community supports us. They 2 want our school there. They want our school to grow. 3 They want the best for their kids. I mean that was I 4 think in '17 we passed that. It was unheard of at 5 that time. 6 MR. SUTTON: Yeah, that's good. 7 SUPT. ANDERSON: And so -- and it passed 8 handedly. And so, but that was because the community 9 supported it. The community supports this. We've 10 had that -- again, we've had that meeting. And as 11 Mr. Beardsley mentioned -- I just talked to my 12 bookkeeper, had her to send me a spreadsheet -- right 13 now we're sitting at \$2.2 million for ending balance. 14 We carry -- we need to meet the 20%. We usually 15 carry over between \$800,000 and \$900,000. So I know 16 it's period 13, we still have some expenditures that 17 we're going to be -- 18 MR. SUTTON: Right. 19 SUPT. ANDERSON: So we won't end with exactly 20 \$2,000,000, but I would say somewhere well over half- 21 a-million that we're going to end with. A little 22 more, so -- 23 MR. SUTTON: So just to reiterate something you 24 said, with the refinancing of existing issues, in 25 issuance of the \$2,000,000 in second lien bonds, the</p>	<p>1 MR. SUTTON: Okay. 2 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- because of the school bond 3 interest rates being low. We did one in August of 4 '21, and in February, and three in '20. So there's 5 been five bonds refunded in the last several years. 6 MR. SUTTON: Okay. 7 MR. BEARDSLEY: Last couple of years. 8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 9 MR. SUTTON: I think we all understand the need 10 for the improvements, you know, and you know your 11 numbers certainly better than I do. You know at the 12 end of the day it falls on you. Yeah. 13 MR. BEARDSLEY: And to the board I said, "We're 14 good here, but if we start losing kids you have to 15 cut staff." 16 MR. SUTTON: Yeah. 17 MR. BEARDSLEY: I mean I -- because -- so they 18 know that. 19 MR. SUTTON: They're pushing it. 20 MR. BEARDSLEY: But they -- we've got to be 21 careful. We've got money to tide us through if that 22 happens, that -- by the building fund. 23 MR. SUTTON: Yeah. Okay. 24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Woods? 25 MS. WOODS: No questions.</p>
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<p>1 annual debt service really doesn't change. Is that 2 correct? 3 SUPT. ANDERSON: That's correct. 4 MR. BEARDSLEY: No, the -- your -- the payment 5 for the district's bonds will increase by \$130,000. 6 MR. SUTTON: That's all. 7 MR. BEARDSLEY: And \$130,000 is the payment, is 8 our estimate. We won't know till of course we sell 9 it, but that's our estimate for the payment. And 10 they have over \$3,000,000 in the building fund, could 11 be closer to three-and-a-half once they close the 12 year out. So the board felt they were more 13 comfortable -- 14 MR. SUTTON: Right. 15 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- covering the payment than 16 spending the money and paying cash for it -- 17 MR. SUTTON: Right. 18 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- because we give them that 19 option, of course. 20 MR. SUTTON: When were the last bonds defeased? 21 MR. BEARDSLEY: When were the last bonds sold? 22 MR. SUTTON: No, well, refinanced. 23 MR. BEARDSLEY: We refinanced bonds in the last 24 three years for pretty much every school district in 25 Arkansas --</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Post? 2 MS. POST: (shaking head from side to side.) 3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore? 4 DR. MOORE: Yes. Thank y'all for being here to 5 share today. I'd like to hear a little bit more from 6 the state side, from the -- of the concerns, a little 7 bit more in-depth of the conversation that y'all had 8 when y'all met to discuss this. 9 MS. SACREY: Okay. When we met with the 10 district or -- 11 DR. MOORE: Yes. 12 MS. SACREY: Okay. Yeah, I think that the 13 biggest concern is the debt ratio being -- going to 14 be 42%, that being an outlier for, you know, all the 15 districts. And like I said, there's only three 16 districts that are even above 30%. So that part just 17 really I think stood out to us and the fact that it's 18 second lien not going to the voters. I would say 19 those two issues are what triggered us to bring it 20 before you today. 21 DR. MOORE: Okay. I actually -- this is my 22 ignorance, but I didn't understand that second lien 23 didn't go to voters -- 24 MS. SACREY: No. 25 DR. MOORE: -- and it goes to us only.</p>

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<p>1 MS. SACREY: Correct.</p> <p>2 DR. MOORE: So, and what would be their other</p> <p>3 options to finances? It would be their current fund</p> <p>4 balance or going to the voters to increase mills? Or</p> <p>5 what other things do have to take a vote by the local</p> <p>6 --</p> <p>7 MS. SACREY: It's better -- if they're going to</p> <p>8 increase mills or extend their existing -- you know,</p> <p>9 if their existing mills expire and they want to</p> <p>10 extend them those have to go before the voters.</p> <p>11 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>12 MS. SACREY: But a second lien does not.</p> <p>13 DR. MOORE: Okay. And they're saying because at</p> <p>14 the end of the day the State backs up -- you know, if</p> <p>15 the district failed to make payments the State would</p> <p>16 make payments, that's why they're able to secure</p> <p>17 something like this. Is that correct?</p> <p>18 MS. SACREY: Yes. The State would take funds</p> <p>19 from our -- what we normally pay to the district, you</p> <p>20 know, for the various categorical funds and direct</p> <p>21 those funds to make the bond payment, if the district</p> <p>22 did not pay.</p> <p>23 DR. MOORE: Has that ever happened before?</p> <p>24 MS. SACREY: No, it has not.</p> <p>25 DR. MOORE: Okay. And has -- you said that</p>	<p>1 MS. SACREY: They could reapply for second lien</p> <p>2 bonds and come back or they could find another way to</p> <p>3 finance this.</p> <p>4 DR. MOORE: Okay. And the current needs sound</p> <p>5 pretty pressing. But if they were to reapply say in</p> <p>6 a year would there be any difference, if their</p> <p>7 student enrollment increased or anything like that?</p> <p>8 MS. SACREY: Yeah, probably not since it -- the</p> <p>9 debt ratio would --</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: Still be there.</p> <p>11 MS. SACREY: -- still be there. Uh-huh.</p> <p>12 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>13 MR. BEARDSLEY: Can I explain one more thing to</p> <p>14 Dr. Moore?</p> <p>15 MS. SACREY: Please.</p> <p>16 MR. BEARDSLEY: On second liens, your school</p> <p>17 produces so much money from their debt mills. So,</p> <p>18 for example, Cutter-Morning Star is producing</p> <p>19 \$1,104,000 a year in revenue from their debt mills.</p> <p>20 And there you take the bond payment away and whatever</p> <p>21 is left can be a second lien bond done for that. If</p> <p>22 the school can afford to make the payment, then that</p> <p>23 money that's leftover from the debt mills then can be</p> <p>24 pledged to a second lien bond. If they have no money</p> <p>25 available, they cannot do a second lien bond. So</p>
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<p>1 there's only three over 30%. Remind me, I don't</p> <p>2 remember having to take a vote like this. Has this</p> <p>3 happened before where it's over --</p> <p>4 MS. SACREY: The ones that are over 30%, those</p> <p>5 have been -- those have gone through the committee --</p> <p>6 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>7 MS. SACREY: -- and were voted issues.</p> <p>8 DR. MOORE: Okay. Because usually --</p> <p>9 MS. SACREY: So --</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: -- it's just a consent agenda item,</p> <p>11 I guess --</p> <p>12 MS. SACREY: Well, exactly. Yes.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Right.</p> <p>14 DR. MOORE: -- and not having a hearing?</p> <p>15 MS. SACREY: Yes.</p> <p>16 DR. PFEFFER: And, Dr. Moore, I do think that in</p> <p>17 recent memory there was another district, maybe</p> <p>18 Pulaski County, a few years ago that came to you-all</p> <p>19 for the action taken.</p> <p>20 MS. SACREY: Yes, there was. And that was a</p> <p>21 second lien as well.</p> <p>22 DR. MOORE: And so if we were to say no today</p> <p>23 they would just have to go back and figure out how to</p> <p>24 finance this in other ways or could they come back</p> <p>25 again in two years to the state?</p>	<p>1 there has to be plenty of revenue left from the debt</p> <p>2 mills. And with Cutter, they've got more than plenty</p> <p>3 of money coming in from their debt mills that they're</p> <p>4 not pledged to on their existing bonds.</p> <p>5 MR. SUTTON: To that point, if they max -- if</p> <p>6 they wanted to max their second lien bond issuance</p> <p>7 based on excess revenues --</p> <p>8 MR. BEARDSLEY: Yes, sir.</p> <p>9 MR. SUTTON: -- how much could they technically</p> <p>10 borrow?</p> <p>11 MR. BEARDSLEY: Cutter could borrow probably</p> <p>12 about \$5,000,000 --</p> <p>13 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>14 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- before they're maxing.</p> <p>15 MR. SUTTON: Okay. So the point being that's</p> <p>16 sort of their wiggle room, if you will, on their debt</p> <p>17 coverage?</p> <p>18 MR. BEARDSLEY: And debt second lien bonds have</p> <p>19 been here forever, a long, long time.</p> <p>20 MR. SUTTON: Oh, I know.</p> <p>21 MR. BEARDSLEY: And second lien bonds don't</p> <p>22 require --</p> <p>23 MR. SUTTON: Right.</p> <p>24 MR. BEARDSLEY: -- normally they don't require</p> <p>25 voter approval and it's just an item for the State</p>

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<p>1 Board on the consent agenda usually.</p> <p>2 MR. SUTTON: Right.</p> <p>3 MR. BEARDSLEY: And then the refunding bonds is</p> <p>4 another bond we do that does not require State Board</p> <p>5 approval, and that's where we're refunding to get</p> <p>6 savings by lowering the interest rate.</p> <p>7 MR. SUTTON: Right.</p> <p>8 MR. BEARDSLEY: We do a lot of those, of course,</p> <p>9 for schools.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>11 MR. SUTTON: I think based on the fact of the</p> <p>12 building fund balance, which is very healthy at</p> <p>13 \$3,000,000, and their ending balance is in good</p> <p>14 shape, you know, except -- I think that probably</p> <p>15 mitigates in my mind the excess debt ratio. If</p> <p>16 everything were pretty much on the border I would</p> <p>17 have to say "you really don't need to do that." But</p> <p>18 given those two factors I would feel comfortable.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: That makes me thankful that</p> <p>20 you're on this board because you understand all this.</p> <p>21 All right. Dr. Rankin?</p> <p>22 DR. RANKIN: Yes. I have just a couple of</p> <p>23 questions.</p> <p>24 If the district does not make payments and the</p> <p>25 State steps in and makes the payments, ultimately</p>	<p>1 you're -- any time you're anywhere between 500 and</p> <p>2 600 ADM it gets harder for those smaller districts to</p> <p>3 operate just because of how the foundation funding is</p> <p>4 going and when -- and how everything -- what they</p> <p>5 need to operate.</p> <p>6 So those are some concerns that the committee</p> <p>7 had on that. And since it is such a high debt ratio,</p> <p>8 it is such a small district, all those, we thought it</p> <p>9 would be better to have it presented to the Board as</p> <p>10 an action item rather than a consent agenda. So that</p> <p>11 just kind of sums up what somebody here was saying.</p> <p>12 DR. RANKIN: Are you concerned at all about</p> <p>13 setting a precedent today?</p> <p>14 MR. ROGERS: No. No, not right now because I</p> <p>15 mean they are a small district. They are -- they had</p> <p>16 typically been growing in ADM. I think they were</p> <p>17 growing over the past few years around 20 to 30, so</p> <p>18 there's a little bit of nudge up in there. So we're</p> <p>19 not really concerned about setting that. It's just</p> <p>20 any time that -- you know, and I -- we keep hammering</p> <p>21 that that debt was a lot. But that debt ratio</p> <p>22 getting that high, and understanding what it was</p> <p>23 coming from, that -- and just the value of the land</p> <p>24 and the property value there, it's still something</p> <p>25 that was concerning to the committee. Because it is</p>
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<p>1 then does the district ever reimburse the State for</p> <p>2 those payments? Or did I see the State --</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Rogers is coming to your</p> <p>4 rescue.</p> <p>5 MR. ROGERS: I didn't mean to do that, but --</p> <p>6 Greg Rogers, Department of Education.</p> <p>7 No. What would happen is if they were unable to</p> <p>8 make their bond payment they would -- that is</p> <p>9 automatically classified as fiscal distress and we</p> <p>10 would have to withhold foundation funding payments</p> <p>11 from the school district in order to make that bond</p> <p>12 payment. So if that happens, then that's a bad</p> <p>13 situation obviously because then it gets into fiscal</p> <p>14 distress; we're not going to send foundation funding</p> <p>15 payments to the school, which is how the school</p> <p>16 operates. So we don't want to get into that.</p> <p>17 The reason that the -- some of the things --</p> <p>18 what Anita was saying, the reason we wanted this to</p> <p>19 be not as a consent item but an action item is for</p> <p>20 the same concerns I think that Mr. Sutton had, some</p> <p>21 of y'all had, that it is a high debt ratio,</p> <p>22 understanding that the value -- their URT value is</p> <p>23 low right now where they are. They are around 650</p> <p>24 ADM -- a little dip this year, which everybody did</p> <p>25 because of Covid. But that's kind of -- anywhere</p>	<p>1 -- they were already the highest debt ratio in the</p> <p>2 state and this just puts them a little bit higher.</p> <p>3 And at the time when we did talk about it it was for,</p> <p>4 you know, a football field -- which we love our</p> <p>5 football fields, don't get me wrong on that one. But</p> <p>6 it was still just some concerns that we had and so we</p> <p>7 wanted to bring them in and have the full discussion</p> <p>8 with them. And then even after that, the committee</p> <p>9 just felt like it was a big thing to take on just for</p> <p>10 us, just on the consent agenda; that y'all should</p> <p>11 talk about it as well.</p> <p>12 DR. RANKIN: Okay. And a follow-up question</p> <p>13 that -- I know it's for more than the turf, as you</p> <p>14 were explaining to us. Thank you for that. But turf</p> <p>15 does not last forever. Do you have a plan for -- or</p> <p>16 do you know the lifespan of the particular turf</p> <p>17 you're looking into and what your plan would be to</p> <p>18 replace it --</p> <p>19 SUPT. ANDERSON: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>20 DR. RANKIN: -- at some point in time?</p> <p>21 SUPT. ANDERSON: Our plan -- it's a minimum</p> <p>22 guarantee of 10 years on the turf, and our intent --</p> <p>23 because, as Mr. Beardsley just explained to you about</p> <p>24 the wiggle room and the payments, our plan was to</p> <p>25 actually -- we had an option on this second lien bond</p>

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<p>1 to do it for 10 years or 20. We did the 20 because  2 the interest rate was lower. But our plan is to pay  3 -- you know, after three months you can have call  4 dates on those; so our plan is to pay that off within  5 10 years and then we would have that revenue to  6 upgrade the football field, if needed. But it's not  7 -- obviously it's not that amount. And we're going  8 to save so much on maintenance on the field now -- as  9 you know, if you have a football field you have to  10 mow it, water it, you know, treat it, and we spend a  11 lot of money just doing that; replacing bleachers,  12 all of those kind of things; electricity that we have  13 to deal with. And, see, all that is included as well  14 in this project. All the electricity is going to be  15 redone, all the plumbing is going to be redone, all  16 of those kind of things. So I'm going to have to pay  17 for that anyway. But our plan is to pay that off  18 within 10 years, which would free up that money.  19 However, somebody that has a field just like ours --  20 I've done the research -- they're in their 14th year  21 using the same turf and have not had to have any  22 repairs. And so I was really impressed with the  23 company, and I've spent five years researching  24 companies. I've spent five years researching the  25 cushions that they use, the drainage, because we have</p>	<p>1 the 10-year even at, you know, 250, with the wiggle  2 room we had. But we opted for the 20-year because  3 the interest was lower and we can save money just by  4 the interest. But I've already talked to Mr.  5 Beardsley, you know, that we plan on paying that off  6 in 10, which would then free up that money.  7 DR. RANKIN: And I think my -- thank you for  8 that explanation.  9 SUPT. ANDERSON: Absolutely. Sure.  10 DR. RANKIN: And I think my final question, you  11 pinched my ears a little bit when you said y'all are  12 committed to raising money --  13 SUPT. ANDERSON: Yes, ma'am.  14 DR. RANKIN: -- and doing some fundraising. And  15 you mentioned the marketing expert that you're  16 bringing in. And I know there's, you know, a bit of  17 a difference between a marketing plan and an actual  18 development plan --  19 SUPT. ANDERSON: Yes, ma'am.  20 DR. RANKIN: -- that is focused on fundraising.  21 And so I think it might've given us all a little more  22 -- less angst if maybe we'd heard a dollar amount of  23 what your vision is or your goal of your commitment  24 to raising a certain percentage or a certain dollar  25 amount or what your concrete plan was to being able</p>
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<p>1 the drainage issue like I talked about earlier; the  2 concussion rates and all of that. And so I spent  3 time and I think this is the best product out there,  4 and so I think -- with the wear and tear on it. You  5 know, and it is not just for football; you know, we  6 do have a track team, we do have band, we do have a  7 lot of other activities. And right now we can't use  8 our field -- we have pee wee programs. We can't use  9 our field but once a week. And, again, if it rains,  10 you know, it has sink holes in it. And this would  11 allow our band -- our band practices in the parking  12 lot because they can't march on our field. We can't  13 do any community events on our field because we have  14 to keep everybody off of it, except for one time a  15 week and because it damages it so much.  16 But, yes, we've looked into the future. I'm  17 very much of a long-term planner. I'm at 25 years  18 I've got plans. I'm not going to be there that long,  19 but I've got plans. And so, yes, ma'am, we have  20 looked at that, the cost of replacing or redoing or  21 adding the foam, the gravel. I've talked to the  22 company about that. And it has -- like I said, it  23 had a 10-year warranty. And that was a big  24 discussion with my board, did we want to do a 20-year  25 or a 10-year -- which we felt like we could afford</p>	<p>1 to achieve that. Because it does sound like -- and I  2 do know that you have a very supportive community.  3 SUPT. ANDERSON: Yes, ma'am. Well, just to give  4 you a little bit of history -- when we built the  5 arena we put a big, nice video board in there which  6 was a half-a-million dollars. We have that committed  7 in payments already. We just moved into that  8 building. Between banks, car dealerships, things,  9 people want to help us; people we outsourced with  10 like, you know, food service companies. That board  11 is paid -- not paid in full, but we have the payments  12 coming in already. We just moved into that building.  13 As soon as we moved into that building people started  14 coming, they're like, "How do I get my name up  15 there?" "Come talk to me, we'll talk about that."  16 And so we've already talked to people. We haven't  17 got any commitment letters signed obviously, because  18 we wanted to make sure that -- you don't want to go  19 out and sell something you're not going to have. But  20 we have talked to numerous people and I have -- I  21 don't have it in writing but, you know, I probably  22 have over \$100,000 a year committed. I'm trying to  23 get that \$130,000 committed per year to make that  24 payment, and anything over that is gravy, you see.  25 But that's where we start saving that for additional</p>



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<p>1 payoff before, you know, 20 years.</p> <p>2 The committee that reviewed this has also</p> <p>3 committed \$1,000 apiece, per Greg.</p> <p>4 [LAUGHTER]</p> <p>5 MR. SUTTON: They all left.</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Greg's got his eyes popped up</p> <p>7 big.</p> <p>8 SUPT. ANDERSON: They committed that in the Zoom</p> <p>9 with me; right? Isn't that what y'all committed,</p> <p>10 \$1,000 apiece per year for 10 years?</p> <p>11 MR. ROGERS: [laughing]</p> <p>12 SUPT. ANDERSON: So, you know, that's how we</p> <p>13 have to do it. No amount is too small, so we will</p> <p>14 take anything that you will give. I'm serious. I</p> <p>15 mean I get -- and I really do have some -- and I'm</p> <p>16 going to be honest with you, if I didn't have the</p> <p>17 confidence in my AD and that I had to get out and do</p> <p>18 it -- because I had to do that video board. We had a</p> <p>19 company that was going to do it; they didn't produce.</p> <p>20 But I have those relationships with my community</p> <p>21 members and, you know, the Chamber and things like</p> <p>22 that. So I did -- I'm not being arrogant; I did most</p> <p>23 of that because I know I've got to pay for that video</p> <p>24 board. And I will do some of this. I mean I already</p> <p>25 have been, you know, bringing in people and showing</p>	<p>1 And, you know, we -- you know, we have good</p> <p>2 relationships, and most people do want to help us,</p> <p>3 you know, being a small school. And they know too</p> <p>4 the struggles we've had and they're just -- they're</p> <p>5 just proud that we are where we are. You know, it's</p> <p>6 kind of a -- one of those really good success</p> <p>7 stories, and not -- it's not because -- it's because</p> <p>8 of the community. The community wants that school</p> <p>9 there and they want it to grow and they are excited</p> <p>10 about the future. And they want their kids to play</p> <p>11 football and they want their kids to be safe; they</p> <p>12 want them to be in the band, and they want them to</p> <p>13 have all those opportunities that big schools have,</p> <p>14 you know. And they deserve it. They deserve that as</p> <p>15 much as anybody. And it's really hard for us that --</p> <p>16 I'm going to give you my pity story. But it's really</p> <p>17 hard for us being right next to Lakeside. You know,</p> <p>18 they have practice turf fields and, you know -- and</p> <p>19 their practice turf field, just so you know, was</p> <p>20 \$800,000. It's not even -- and it was \$800,000. So</p> <p>21 we're doing the whole complex -- and, you know, I've</p> <p>22 been working this deal with this company for, like I</p> <p>23 said, about five years trying to get their best --</p> <p>24 you know, best deal. But we do have to compete with</p> <p>25 the Lakesides and the Lake Hamiltons. And, you know,</p>
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<p>1 them different things that are going on and asking</p> <p>2 for commitments from them. But I do have the guy,</p> <p>3 you know, Mr. Huff, that came -- he came to me</p> <p>4 through Poyen, but he was actually in northwest</p> <p>5 Arkansas, and he came to me yesterday and sat down</p> <p>6 and showed me what he had done for the Boys' and</p> <p>7 Girls' Club. And, you know, that is completely</p> <p>8 funded by donations and different things like that,</p> <p>9 and he has a really good plan. My athletic director,</p> <p>10 the same thing. It's to this point -- and I'm proud</p> <p>11 and I'm happy about this, but we'll get a check in</p> <p>12 the mail and it'll say \$1,000 or \$5,000 and it'll</p> <p>13 just say Cutter-Morning Star Athletics. And I call</p> <p>14 my athletic director and I'm like, "Where does this</p> <p>15 go?" And he goes, "Oh, that was a donation, you</p> <p>16 know, for our basketball team." "Okay, great." But</p> <p>17 I mean it -- so they're out there working it.</p> <p>18 They're really -- because they want this. You know,</p> <p>19 they're young coaches, they're eager, they want great</p> <p>20 facilities, they want to keep their kids safe, and</p> <p>21 they know what -- they know their job. My head coach</p> <p>22 -- and I did not bring it because they told me not to</p> <p>23 do a PowerPoint presentation -- but he has a nice</p> <p>24 one, in color -- you know, brochure, ready to go, you</p> <p>25 know, with the different spots and what they cost.</p>	<p>1 I was a student athlete. We're about academics, and</p> <p>2 I tell everybody that. But I'm also going to tell</p> <p>3 you that's what keeps your kids in school --</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yeah.</p> <p>5 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- you know.</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: That's what we talked about</p> <p>7 while ago with the arts, that sometimes that's what</p> <p>8 kids come to school for.</p> <p>9 Ms. Dean, did you have a question?</p> <p>10 MS. DEAN: Actually, Mr. Rogers answered it. So</p> <p>11 my concern was with the ADM, if, you know, there's a</p> <p>12 decline --</p> <p>13 MR. DAN DAVIS: Microphone.</p> <p>14 MS. DEAN: Okay. Can you hear me now?</p> <p>15 MR. DAN DAVIS: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>16 MS. DEAN: Okay. My -- Mr. Rogers answered my</p> <p>17 question with the ADM. Because that is a concern of</p> <p>18 mine is if they're -- how -- what is your enrollment</p> <p>19 like. And since it's increasing, that makes me feel</p> <p>20 more comfortable knowing that it's actually</p> <p>21 increasing rather than decreasing. So, okay.</p> <p>22 SUPT. ANDERSON: And I wish I had the projection</p> <p>23 numbers for this year but like I said, we're up quite</p> <p>24 a few kids. And, you know, not -- I'm sure you've</p> <p>25 seen the Field of Dreams; you build it, they'll come.</p>

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<p>1 MS. DEAN: Right.</p> <p>2 SUPT. ANDERSON: And I'm telling you guys that's</p> <p>3 what happens. I have had employees want to come to</p> <p>4 our district because they hear the great things and</p> <p>5 just how we're growing and how our facilities are</p> <p>6 improving and academics and our programs. And so not</p> <p>7 just kids but employees.</p> <p>8 MS. DEAN: That's great.</p> <p>9 SUPT. ANDERSON: And so it -- they want to be in</p> <p>10 that nice, safe environment and my kids deserve that.</p> <p>11 They deserve it.</p> <p>12 MS. DEAN: That was going to be my next point is</p> <p>13 hopefully this will increase your enrollment with the</p> <p>14 new --</p> <p>15 SUPT. ANDERSON: I have no --</p> <p>16 MS. DEAN: -- if you were to get a new --</p> <p>17 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- doubt. Of course, I can't</p> <p>18 give you hard data --</p> <p>19 MS. DEAN: Right.</p> <p>20 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- on that. But I can tell you</p> <p>21 what our arena has done.</p> <p>22 MS. DEAN: Yeah.</p> <p>23 SUPT. ANDERSON: And there -- if we had housing</p> <p>24 in our district that would be great, because we just</p> <p>25 don't have housing. And so most of them are school</p>	<p>1 -- and probably a question I'd ask, and probably</p> <p>2 Friday night is probably your largest gathering of</p> <p>3 people and it's more than just a football field.</p> <p>4 It's a --</p> <p>5 SUPT. ANDERSON: You're exactly right.</p> <p>6 DR. HILL: It's a community gathering. So when</p> <p>7 you go and do the numbers and you see -- that is</p> <p>8 something that brings everybody together and is nice.</p> <p>9 There'll be other events that you can have in the</p> <p>10 stadium because of the field, the turf field that</p> <p>11 you'll be able to use. Do you have soccer?</p> <p>12 SUPT. ANDERSON: No, but we might if we had a</p> <p>13 turf field.</p> <p>14 DR. HILL: Yeah, I mean because --</p> <p>15 SUPT. ANDERSON: That's the reason we --</p> <p>16 DR. HILL: Exactly. No question. I mean, which</p> <p>17 that's a whole other demographic to recruit from, to</p> <p>18 grow your enrollment, having that field there. It</p> <p>19 can be soccer. Now it's not just one time a week,</p> <p>20 it's not the water issue; you have the turf field</p> <p>21 that everybody can play on. The band can go out</p> <p>22 there and --</p> <p>23 SUPT. ANDERSON: Yes, sir.</p> <p>24 DR. HILL: -- get their stuff together. So it's</p> <p>25 a great community engagement piece for the community</p>
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<p>1 choice that -- I have somebody call my office at</p> <p>2 least once a week, "Do you know anywhere we can rent,</p> <p>3 anywhere we can live?" If we had housing -- and I</p> <p>4 will say -- I've been on a board, the Chamber board</p> <p>5 for many years -- and if you watch the development of</p> <p>6 Hot Springs, there's nowhere else for them to go</p> <p>7 except out 70 because they've already built out 7,</p> <p>8 built out 70 and 270. And we -- I actually just got</p> <p>9 a new business in just about two months ago that --</p> <p>10 in a vacant building. And so there's nowhere else</p> <p>11 for it to go. I've contacted Dollar General for</p> <p>12 about 100 times trying to -- I've got them the</p> <p>13 perfect spot to put a Dollar General in.</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Well, it will probably happen.</p> <p>15 SUPT. ANDERSON: Yes. We need it. We've got a</p> <p>16 perfect spot for it. But I just can't get anybody in</p> <p>17 corporate to meet with me, and it would be a great</p> <p>18 place for it. But we're -- you know, it's going to</p> <p>19 develop. There's just no other way.</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yeah.</p> <p>21 SUPT. ANDERSON: There's no other way.</p> <p>22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Hill, our resident</p> <p>23 football expert -- we've had our banking expert,</p> <p>24 let's hear from our football expert.</p> <p>25 DR. HILL: Oh yeah. I think there's no question</p>	<p>1 to be together on, you know -- you all have a great</p> <p>2 football tradition there that, you know, that I</p> <p>3 follow; been picking y'all to win on many Friday</p> <p>4 nights, you know, for the competition because of the</p> <p>5 home field advantage that you oftentimes have,</p> <p>6 because you have great community support. And I</p> <p>7 think that these are the type of strategic</p> <p>8 investments that you make to strategically grow your</p> <p>9 institution. And based off, you know, the community</p> <p>10 engagement piece that you have you have my full</p> <p>11 support.</p> <p>12 SUPT. ANDERSON: Thank you. Thank you.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any other</p> <p>14 discussion from the Board?</p> <p>15 Okay.</p> <p>16 SUPT. ANDERSON: Well, I appreciate y'all's</p> <p>17 consideration and I'm going to do everything I can</p> <p>18 to, you know, make that district -- I'm committed</p> <p>19 there. I'm 10th year superintendent and I'm</p> <p>20 committed and I'm going to work hard. I'm a hard</p> <p>21 worker and I'm going to -- if I have to raise it,</p> <p>22 I'll -- I guess I will. But --</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>24 SUPT. ANDERSON: -- I'm going to try to let some</p> <p>25 other people do some of the work.</p>

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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>2 SUPT. ANDERSON: But we're excited about the</p> <p>3 opportunity. And I appreciate y'all listening to us</p> <p>4 and considering our second lien bonds. Thank you.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. We're ready</p> <p>6 for a motion.</p> <p>7 MR. SUTTON: Motion to approve.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. We have a motion to</p> <p>9 approve from Mr. Sutton.</p> <p>10 DR. HILL: Second.</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Second by Dr. Hill.</p> <p>12 All in favor?</p> <p>13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>15 Congratulations.</p> <p>16 SUPT. ANDERSON: Thank y'all.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>18 SUPT. ANDERSON: Thank you for your time.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>20 All right. From here we move into School Choice</p> <p>21 and there are quite a few of them, and I know lunch</p> <p>22 is here.</p> <p>23 But, Mr. Dugan, I see a couple of parents here.</p> <p>24 I don't want to put them off if they are waiting for</p> <p>25 -- are there a bunch in the lobby?</p>	<p>1 School Choice Appeals. Mr. Dugan.</p> <p>2 No hurry. We're fine.</p> <p>3 MR. DUGAN: Well, I know these folks have been</p> <p>4 waiting --</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes.</p> <p>6 MR. DUGAN: -- so I know they're in a hurry.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes.</p> <p>8 MR. DUGAN: And thank you for waiting,</p> <p>9 everybody. It's good to see everybody in person.</p> <p>10 Taylor Dugan with the Division of Elementary and</p> <p>11 Secondary Education.</p> <p>12 I know the first thing that I'd put on the</p> <p>13 agenda -- and I apologize; I've learned a lot about</p> <p>14 Boardbook recently. And so if I could just move to</p> <p>15 the case below it and then we can get on all the</p> <p>16 School Choice cases.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>18 RESIDENCY APPEAL</p> <p>19 a) RESIDENCY APPEAL: TEAGAN LANGSTON AND ABEL GONZALEZ</p> <p>20 MR. DUGAN: This one I put with the school</p> <p>21 choice cases because it's similar, but it's from a</p> <p>22 total separate statute, and it's going to be the one</p> <p>23 dealing with Ms. Langston here. And in this case</p> <p>24 there are no rules on the statute, there are no</p> <p>25 procedures.</p>
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<p>1 MR. DUGAN: (Nodding head up and down.)</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: So I guess just go ahead and</p> <p>3 break for lunch then and we'll come back after lunch</p> <p>4 or --</p> <p>5 MR. DUGAN: And I've offered -- I spoke with --</p> <p>6 I was just texting with one parent that I can offer a</p> <p>7 Zoom link because they have to get home for</p> <p>8 childcare. And so they'll probably be -- probably</p> <p>9 have some pop-up on the Zoom, if that's the case.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So go ahead and break</p> <p>11 for lunch, and then we'll come back as soon as we</p> <p>12 can.</p> <p>13 1:30 be okay then?</p> <p>14 Okay. All right. Let's break until 1:30.</p> <p>15 And I'm sorry y'all have waited all morning, but</p> <p>16 as quick as we can we'll be back.</p> <p>17 (LUNCH BREAK: 1:00 P.M. - 1:36 P.M.)</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Again, I want to thank</p> <p>19 everyone for being so patient. I know the morning</p> <p>20 agenda took a little bit longer than what we were</p> <p>21 anticipating, but we thank you for bearing with us</p> <p>22 and waiting and showing your patience. So we really</p> <p>23 appreciate it.</p> <p>24 V.5. SCHOOL CHOICE APPEALS</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: We're going to move on to our</p>	<p>1 I'm going to read off what the statute says;</p> <p>2 it's 6-18-307. It says, "The parent or guardian of</p> <p>3 any child or ward whose place of residence is at</p> <p>4 least 15 miles from the school and the resident</p> <p>5 district, and whose place of residence is within 7</p> <p>6 miles of a school in an adjoining district, may</p> <p>7 petition the Board of Directors of the resident</p> <p>8 district for a transfer to the adjoining district, if</p> <p>9 the adjoining district has agreed in writing to</p> <p>10 accept the transfer of the child."</p> <p>11 Ms. Langston has, you know, met as far as</p> <p>12 getting a written acceptance from the El Dorado</p> <p>13 School District. That's included in the packet. So</p> <p>14 the receiving district has agreed in writing to</p> <p>15 accept the children. She has filed a petition with</p> <p>16 the Smackover-Norphlet District -- that's her</p> <p>17 resident district -- asking for this petition. It</p> <p>18 had been denied by the Smackover-Norphlet District.</p> <p>19 She's 7.6 miles from the school district, the El</p> <p>20 Dorado School District, and she's over 15 miles going</p> <p>21 to the Smackover-Norphlet District.</p> <p>22 Now the school district -- Smackover is here</p> <p>23 today and also is Ms. Langston for the Board to ask</p> <p>24 questions.</p> <p>25 The rest of the statute goes on to say, "If the</p>

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<p>1 parents of -- or guardians of several children in a 2 particular area meet the requirements described in 3 the subsection, the parents or guardians may jointly 4 petition the Board of Directors of the resident 5 district for transfer of their children or wards to 6 the adjoining district." 7 There are two students here, so they do meet 8 that criteria right there. 9 "When any individual or joint petition is 10 authorized in subsection (a) of this section and is 11 filed with the Board of Directors of any school 12 district, the Board of Directors shall within 30 days 13 after the date of filing the petition either grant or 14 deny the transfer." 15 And they did do that, and so they do have a 16 right to appeal to the State Board of Education under 17 this statute where it says right there "if the Board 18 of Directors denies the petition the petitioners may 19 appeal to the State Board of Education." And so Ms. 20 Langston is here to appeal that decision of the 21 Smackover-Norphlet District. 22 Like I said earlier, there are no rules out 23 there for this; there are no procedures that we have 24 written. So I would treat it similar to our school 25 choice cases where one side gets 5 minutes and then,</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you. 2 MR. DUGAN: All right. And typically it starts 3 with the district, and so -- on the school choice. 4 So -- 5 MR. DAN DAVIS: Microphone. 6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Use the microphone. 7 MR. DUGAN: Oh, sorry. 8 So typically it starts with the school district 9 under a school choice one. So I guess we'll turn it 10 over. 11 MS. STRICKLAND: Hello. I'm Holly Strickland 12 with the Smackover-Norphlet School District and I'm 13 representing Mr. Jason Black, our superintendent. 14 Mr. and Mrs. Langston appeared before our school 15 board asking for a release, as they reside in our 16 district close to the county line. And they are 17 requesting that they attend the El Dorado School 18 District and I will let her share her reasonings why. 19 However, because of the deseg order it has limited us 20 in releasing our students to that district or taking 21 in students from a district with a deseg order. So 22 therefore, following the laws and the rules and regs, 23 it's put our board in a situation where sometimes we 24 don't agree with what we're having to recommend; 25 however, we're doing this, you know, to follow those</p>
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<p>1 you know, each side gets -- for an opening, and then 2 each side gets 20 minutes to present their case. But 3 if there's any questions, I'd love to answer them. 4 But if not, I'll turn it over to Ms. Langston and Mr. 5 Black of the Norphlet School District. 6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Dugan, do any of the 7 people that are going to testify need to be sworn in? 8 MR. DUGAN: You know, there's nothing in this 9 statute that says anything about it. But like I 10 said, we don't have any rules on it but I think that 11 would be good practice. 12 So, Ms. Langston I know and Mr. Black -- 13 MS. STRICKLAND: I'm representing Mr. Black. 14 MR. DUGAN: Oh, you're representing Mr. Black. 15 Thank you so much. 16 But, yeah, these would be the people that will 17 be speaking today, so I'd ask that they be sworn in. 18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 19 MS. LANGSTON: Hello. 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Raise your right hand. 21 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you're 22 about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth, 23 and nothing but the truth? 24 MS. LANGSTON: Yes, ma'am. 25 MS. STRICKLAND: Yes.</p>	<p>1 rules and regs. It's not that we don't want their 2 children to attend another district, which they are 3 asking for that. But we're asking that -- our board 4 has asked that we remain consistent in keeping all of 5 our students who do reside in our district. And 6 that's what they are -- they have requested, that we 7 just keep those students in our district because they 8 reside there. 9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you. 10 Ms. Langston. 11 MS. LANGSTON: Hello. 12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Hi. 13 MS. LANGSTON: I'm a little nervous. I'm not a 14 great public speaker. 15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: That's okay. We don't bite. 16 MS. LANGSTON: I do have everything here. I 17 hope y'all have received everything -- 18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes. 19 MS. LANGSTON: -- and looked it over. 20 We have gone before Smackover board two separate 21 times. The first time was a district transfer-to- 22 transfer, from board-to-board, and we were denied at 23 that time. During the meeting, also recorded in the 24 minutes that I have copies of, they did accept three 25 students from El Dorado right before -- right before</p>

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<p>1 us, and we were right after them; so I was kind of 2 bothered with that. But after being denied at that 3 first meeting I did my research; I had talked to 4 counsel. I reached out to Mr. Dugan and he's the one 5 who pointed me towards the statute that obviously had 6 never been used, because we're the first that he 7 knows of -- and his other colleagues.</p> <p>8 So if you have looked over it, you'll see how 9 close we are to the district line, not just the 10 school. The district line is literally a stone's 11 throw away from our property, from our fenced-in area 12 around our house. Whenever we bought our house in 13 2018 -- our daughter Teagan has already been enrolled 14 with El Dorado school since kindergarten; she will be 15 going into 4th grade this year. The only reason why 16 we knew anything about being in Smackover district 17 was when we went to enroll our kindergartner this 18 year. He would be going into the same exact building 19 as his sister this coming year.</p> <p>20 Sorry, I'm so nervous.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: That's okay. It's okay.</p> <p>22 MS. LANGSTON: So we live that close. And as 23 far as being 7 miles from an El Dorado school in 24 itself, as it says in the statute, we are 7.6 which 25 puts us just a little bit over. But to me, whenever</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.</p> <p>2 MS. LANGSTON: -- that we have to do when we get 3 off work.</p> <p>4 So I'm just asking for some relief because it's 5 not only going to put a burden on my daughter -- 6 she's sensitive, she's very bright, she has really 7 good friends, she's made relationships with her 8 teachers. She would be upset having to leave her 9 friends. And I know she's not the only one, but I'm 10 trying not to hurt her in that way. She -- 11 everything she knows is there. After school she goes 12 to Boys' and Girls' Club, which is less than a mile 13 from my work; it's like two blocks over. If anything 14 happens, I'm able to be right there. The school she 15 attends already in Smackover -- I mean in El Dorado 16 is a mile away from my work. Grandparents own the 17 Spud-Nut Shop in El Dorado, his parents; so they own 18 a business there in El Dorado. If I need any 19 assistant, they're right there. My mom works at a 20 gas station there; she's right there. I do have a 21 good support system for them, but it's all within the 22 boundaries of El Dorado. And as I said, she's been 23 going there since kindergarten, actually pre-k, but 24 if we're talking about districts and actual schools 25 she's been at that building --</p>
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<p>1 I'm teaching my kids how to count I don't teach them 2 1, 1-1/2, 2, 2-1/2; I teach them 1, 2, 3, 4, you 3 know. We do have a 1-year old as well, so we're 4 trying to work with that.</p> <p>5 So we are 7.6. Those are facts. We are also 6 18.8 from Smackover. A roundtrip for me every day is 7 about 21-1/2 miles. I work in the middle of El 8 Dorado at an accounting firm. He -- my fiancé, he 9 works at a saw mill in Urbana, Arkansas, which is 10 even further out. He drives about 30 minutes to work 11 every day. So I'm transportation for my children. I 12 spend time with them to and from work. Now if I have 13 to do a roundtrip -- I did all the calculations and 14 what it would be for me as far as travel, without 15 having to put them on a bus every day, and hopefully 16 be home by the time they got home -- because I get 17 off at 5:00. And then during tax season there's no 18 telling how long I'll have to work; it's just case- 19 to-case, day-to-day. So my travel from my house to 20 drop them off in Smackover, to hopefully make it back 21 to work by 8:00, when the doors in Smackover don't 22 even open till 7:30, I would be driving about 67 23 miles roundtrip -- and that's without having to stop 24 at the grocery store for milk, diapers, you know, the 25 typical parent things --</p>	<p>1 [TIMER BELL RINGS]</p> <p>2 MS. LANGSTON: -- since kindergarten.</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you. We'll see 4 if we have any questions from the Board.</p> <p>5 Dr. Hill?</p> <p>6 DR. HILL: No, ma'am. I have none.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean?</p> <p>8 MS. DEAN: In your packet you also mentioned -- 9 I think you also mentioned daycare and childcare as 10 something?</p> <p>11 MS. LANGSTON: Yes. Thank you.</p> <p>12 MS. DEAN: You're welcome.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Can you get a little bit 14 closer to the microphone, if you don't mind?</p> <p>15 MS. LANGSTON: Sorry.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: That's okay.</p> <p>17 MS. LANGSTON: We have a 1-year old son who is 18 in daycare which is right behind the Spud-Nut Shop 19 that the grandparents own. So as I said, they're 20 just right there. We were informed that Smackover 21 School District did have a daycare that our children 22 could attend or that our son could attend to keep 23 from having to make that extra trip before work to 24 drop him off. But at the last meeting that we went 25 to, that was denied, they actually informed the board</p>

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<p>1 that they were at capacity for those age of children.  2 And I will say on behalf of the petition, I  3 never received it back. And I sent it via email  4 April 29th, the petition, under the statute 6-18-307.  5 I did send it on April 29th. I never heard anything,  6 but the meeting wasn't until May 24th. Then, on May  7 24th, that we were denied, we told them that all they  8 would have to do was sign-off so that we can file it  9 with our lawyer, because he took the time to actually  10 draw up that petition for us. He said, "I'm going to  11 keep it and have my lawyer look over it." We never  12 received it back or our lawyer never heard anything  13 back. So as far as I knew, it was never signed or  14 never even acknowledged after that meeting.  15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.  16 MS. LANGSTON: I did get a copy of their packet  17 and I did notice that they wrote Denied on the  18 district-to-district transfer on the top of the paper  19 twice, once for each meeting. But I never received  20 the actual petition back.  21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right.  22 MS. DEAN: Thank you for being here and thank  23 you for being such an advocate for your children.  24 I'm going to show everybody, this is the packet  25 of stuff we received for the Langston/Gonzalez case.</p>	<p>1 can, we want to make sure that there aren't things  2 that are impeding that family from making sure that  3 that child gets the best education. My soapbox is  4 family and community engagement. This seems to be a  5 very engaged family, not just mom and dad but  6 grandparents as well. And I would be remiss to make  7 a decision that would impede your level of engagement  8 that you're in now. I think it would be an  9 inconvenience, an undue inconvenience for your family  10 to have to make the trek all the way to --  11 MS. LANGSTON: That's one other thing is  12 whenever I don't even get home until --  13 MS. DEAN: Right.  14 MS. LANGSTON: -- around 6:00 at night, and then  15 I have two that are starting school. Like I have to  16 spend time with homework, --  17 MS. DEAN: Right.  18 MS. LANGSTON: -- chores, cleaning up, dinner.  19 Because I would love to eat out every day, but it's  20 just not --  21 MS. DEAN: Right.  22 MS. LANGSTON: We can't afford that.  23 MS. DEAN: Right. So I understand for the issue  24 of following the law and -- but I think that's why we  25 have the privilege of being able to look at each case</p>
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<p>1 This mom is adamant that she wants her child in a  2 particular school.  3 And you've -- for me, you've made a very good  4 case when it talks about -- where you talk about how  5 close you are in proximity to El Dorado -- the fact  6 that your child has been there since kindergarten.  7 She's going into the 4th grade, I believe?  8 MS. LANGSTON: Yes, ma'am.  9 MS. DEAN: The amount of miles that you have to  10 go to get to work, the fact that dad works so far,  11 grandparents are here --  12 MS. LANGSTON: He also don't even get off till  13 about 8:00 or 9:00 at night --  14 MS. DEAN: Right.  15 MS. LANGSTON: -- and goes in at 9:00 in the  16 morning, so --  17 MS. DEAN: Right. So all of those circumstances  18 -- we know what the law states, and we understand  19 Norphlet has to be consistent and we appreciate that.  20 But that's why we have an opportunity as the State  21 Board to look at each case individually. And I think  22 -- like I said before, you've done a very good job of  23 making your case. I just -- this is how I look at  24 it: if we are here to make sure that each family,  25 each student gets the best education they possibly</p>	<p>1 separately. So for me, when the time comes I would  2 like to make the motion to grant the -- I don't even  3 know -- to grant the appeal.  4 But thank you for your level of engagement.  5 MS. LANGSTON: Thank you.  6 MS. DEAN: I appreciate you going to bat for  7 your --  8 MS. LANGSTON: I tried to be professional and --  9 MS. DEAN: -- for your family and for your kids.  10 So, thank you; appreciate it.  11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin?  12 DR. RANKIN: Yes. I just wanted to echo those  13 sentiments and say thank you for being here today.  14 And I'm certainly leaning toward not allowing .6  15 miles to stand in between you and the freedom of  16 where you want your children to attend school.  17 MS. LANGSTON: Thank you.  18 DR. RANKIN: And I know also I'm hearing a  19 pretty significant quality of life issue for your  20 family with the time involved and the logistics  21 there. So appreciate you being here today.  22 MS. LANGSTON: Thank you.  23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore?  24 DR. MOORE: I have questions for the Smackover  25 District.</p>

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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>2 DR. MOORE: Thank you. So I noticed in your</p> <p>3 board minutes that y'all have accepted students to</p> <p>4 transfer into your district from El Dorado. Is that</p> <p>5 correct?</p> <p>6 MS. STRICKLAND: Yes, we have.</p> <p>7 DR. MOORE: Okay. And do you accept students to</p> <p>8 transfer into your district from other surrounding</p> <p>9 districts in the area?</p> <p>10 MS. STRICKLAND: It's gone back-and-forth. Like</p> <p>11 I said, El Dorado is part of the desegregation order</p> <p>12 that limits us with our school choice. It's made it</p> <p>13 very difficult as administrators and boards in</p> <p>14 accepting and not accepting students. In my opinion,</p> <p>15 you should get to go to school where you want to</p> <p>16 attend school if you're willing to drive and commute</p> <p>17 -- communicate [sic] your children there. But that's</p> <p>18 my opinion. But there again, there's the laws and</p> <p>19 the rules and regs that we're trying to follow as a</p> <p>20 district to keep our district in sync. We do have --</p> <p>21 I will say this, that if we -- if this goes through</p> <p>22 it opens up the gate for more to come forward to try</p> <p>23 to pursue either leaving our district or coming into</p> <p>24 our district, which also affects, you know, the</p> <p>25 district. And so it makes it, like I said, very</p>	<p>1 this transfer here was -- do you -- is it -- does the</p> <p>2 board typically always deny transfers out of the</p> <p>3 district?</p> <p>4 MS. STRICKLAND: They have been denying for the</p> <p>5 past two years, denying any transfers of students who</p> <p>6 do live and reside within our district.</p> <p>7 DR. MOORE: Okay. Okay. But accepting anyone</p> <p>8 to come in?</p> <p>9 MS. STRICKLAND: Right.</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: Okay. Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>11 I think I have questions for Taylor now, if you</p> <p>12 don't mind.</p> <p>13 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>14 DR. MOORE: So, again, this is not a school --</p> <p>15 this is just a totally different thing --</p> <p>16 MR. DUGAN: Totally separate --</p> <p>17 DR. MOORE: -- and it's different from a board-</p> <p>18 to-board?</p> <p>19 MR. DUGAN: Correct.</p> <p>20 DR. MOORE: But in this case the El Dorado board</p> <p>21 has accepted it; right?</p> <p>22 MR. DUGAN: That is correct. So totally</p> <p>23 separate statute. Like Ms. Langston was saying, we</p> <p>24 were just kind of tearing through the Code together</p> <p>25 and, you know, ran across this. That is correct. So</p>
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<p>1 difficult with that desegregation order that we're</p> <p>2 bound to.</p> <p>3 DR. MOORE: So is Smackover in the desegregation</p> <p>4 order?</p> <p>5 MS. STRICKLAND: No.</p> <p>6 DR. MOORE: No. Just El Dorado?</p> <p>7 MS. STRICKLAND: Just El Dorado.</p> <p>8 DR. MOORE: And so it looks like in this meeting</p> <p>9 particularly y'all accepted three students into your</p> <p>10 district, but you prohibited students from leaving</p> <p>11 your district?</p> <p>12 MS. STRICKLAND: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.</p> <p>13 DR. MOORE: But y'all are under no order at all.</p> <p>14 And then --</p> <p>15 MS. STRICKLAND: No. We can take students.</p> <p>16 DR. MOORE: Okay. But this is not a school</p> <p>17 choice; this is a different --</p> <p>18 MS. STRICKLAND: Yes.</p> <p>19 DR. MOORE: -- avenue anyway.</p> <p>20 MS. STRICKLAND: Yes.</p> <p>21 DR. MOORE: Okay. And so, but you do have</p> <p>22 students under school choice orders that come in and</p> <p>23 out of other districts, not just El Dorado?</p> <p>24 MS. STRICKLAND: Not just El Dorado. Yes.</p> <p>25 DR. MOORE: Okay. And so the reason to deny</p>	<p>1 board-to-board transfer is 6-18- I think 316, and</p> <p>2 that one does not allow for an appeal to the State</p> <p>3 Board. That's at the district level; they can grant</p> <p>4 or deny it. This one does allow for an appeal to</p> <p>5 State Board but it's totally separate from school</p> <p>6 choice, no 3% cap --</p> <p>7 DR. MOORE: Right.</p> <p>8 MR. DUGAN: -- no Opportunity School Choice.</p> <p>9 Totally separate statute.</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: And so this has nothing -- so</p> <p>11 because of that, El Dorado's desegregation order has</p> <p>12 nothing to do with this since they accepted them into</p> <p>13 the district?</p> <p>14 MR. DUGAN: You know, with those deseg orders</p> <p>15 it's -- it can get tricky. There's another statute</p> <p>16 that says that not allowing -- you can't allow</p> <p>17 transfers if it violates the desegregation order. We</p> <p>18 let those school districts and their attorneys</p> <p>19 determine what violates those orders --</p> <p>20 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>21 MS. DUGAN: -- right there, down there.</p> <p>22 DR. MOORE: But we just know that they accepted</p> <p>23 this -- these two students?</p> <p>24 MR. DUGAN: Correct.</p> <p>25 DR. MOORE: One of which is already in the</p>

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<p>1 district anyway.</p> <p>2 MR. DUGAN: That is correct. Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>3 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>4 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.</p> <p>5 DR. MOORE: All right. I think that's all my</p> <p>6 questions. Thank you.</p> <p>7 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Sutton?</p> <p>9 MR. SUTTON: I have no questions.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Woods?</p> <p>11 MS. WOODS: I think you just answered my</p> <p>12 question, because my question was do you read</p> <p>13 anything in the deseg order to prohibit this</p> <p>14 transfer?</p> <p>15 MR. DUGAN: Just, you know --</p> <p>16 MS. WOODS: I was looking for it, but I --</p> <p>17 MR. DUGAN: Yeah. Well, I just want to</p> <p>18 reiterate -- no, we let those local attorneys and</p> <p>19 those school districts, Ms. Woods, interpret those as</p> <p>20 far as how they're going to allow those transfers.</p> <p>21 And so, yeah.</p> <p>22 MS. WOODS: So you just haven't -- okay.</p> <p>23 MR. DUGAN: Correct. I've looked at that</p> <p>24 consent decree, but we have to stay out of it.</p> <p>25 MS. WOODS: Okay. Fine.</p>	<p>1 MS. WOODS: Okay. By the way, you've done a</p> <p>2 great job. And I want you to just like take a breath</p> <p>3 because I know this is super intimidating. You've</p> <p>4 done such a great job --</p> <p>5 MS. LANGSTON: Thank you.</p> <p>6 MS. WOODS: -- so be proud of yourself.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Post.</p> <p>8 MS. POST: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other discussion from the</p> <p>10 Board?</p> <p>11 Okay. Have a motion?</p> <p>12 MS. DEAN: I move to grant the residency appeal</p> <p>13 for Langston/Gonzalez family.</p> <p>14 MS. LANGSTON: Thank you.</p> <p>15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. A motion by Ms. Dean.</p> <p>16 MS. WOODS: I'll second.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Ms. Woods.</p> <p>18 All in favor?</p> <p>19 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>21 MS. LANGSTON: Thank you.</p> <p>22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Congratulations.</p> <p>23 MS. LANGSTON: Thank you so much.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: See, there was no need to be</p> <p>25 nervous. All right.</p>
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<p>1 MS. LANGSTON: I did consult with Mr. Tucker</p> <p>2 before all of this and made sure --</p> <p>3 MS. WOODS: Is that your attorney?</p> <p>4 MS. LANGSTON: No. Mr. Tucker is the</p> <p>5 superintendent --</p> <p>6 MS. WOODS: Oh.</p> <p>7 MS. LANGSTON: -- of El Dorado. I did consult</p> <p>8 with him before starting all of this because I wanted</p> <p>9 to be knowledgeable about the information that I gave</p> <p>10 off and not go in blindly. And he did inform me that</p> <p>11 my children will not interfere with the deseg order.</p> <p>12 MS. WOODS: Okay. And is it just -- was -- were</p> <p>13 lines re-drawn? Is that how you figured out --</p> <p>14 MS. LANGSTON: Whenever -- I think it was Mount</p> <p>15 Holly School District merged with Smackover, we were</p> <p>16 part of Mount Holly. And they never actually re-</p> <p>17 looked at everything, I guess, to see distances --</p> <p>18 MS. WOODS: Okay.</p> <p>19 MS. LANGSTON: -- and stuff like that. I don't</p> <p>20 really know what went on there. But I did talk to</p> <p>21 people to make sure that I got accurate measurements</p> <p>22 from our house to the district line, which ended up</p> <p>23 being 76 meters, literally a stone's throw away from</p> <p>24 the district line. And actually our neighbor sits</p> <p>25 straddling the line of El Dorado and Smackover.</p>	<p>1 MS. LANGSTON: Y'all have a good day.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You too. Congratulations.</p> <p>3 SCHOOL CHOICE APPEAL PROCEDURES</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. All right. Mr.</p> <p>5 Dugan, we will move into the other school choice</p> <p>6 appeals. I think the first one is the Robbins</p> <p>7 family.</p> <p>8 MR. DUGAN: Yes, that's correct, Madam Chair. I</p> <p>9 skipped over that kind of little review of the rules</p> <p>10 and procedures just because I didn't want to confuse</p> <p>11 anyone, because that one was a little bit of a</p> <p>12 different case. So I'm just real briefly, Madam</p> <p>13 Chair -- the good news is all the cases that we have</p> <p>14 today, they're going to fall under the Public School</p> <p>15 Choice Act of 2015. So for today, we don't have to</p> <p>16 worry about Opportunity School Choice; we can just</p> <p>17 focus on that law.</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>19 MR. DUGAN: And so let me get to -- in the</p> <p>20 packet that I put was the school choice appeals. But</p> <p>21 the first thing is the hearing procedures, and so I'm</p> <p>22 just going to briefly go through those.</p> <p>23 "The following procedures shall apply to</p> <p>24 hearings conducted by the State Board of Education</p> <p>25 pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated 6-18-1907 and</p>



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<p>1 section 2.5 in these rules. All persons wishing to  2 testify before the State Board of Education shall be  3 first placed under oath by the chairperson of the  4 State Board. Each party shall have the opportunity  5 to present an opening statement of no longer than 5  6 minutes, beginning with the nonresident district. If  7 the resident district chooses to participate in the  8 hearing, they shall have like time to present an  9 opening statement after the nonresident district.  10 The chairperson of the State Board may, for good  11 cause shown and upon request of the party, allow  12 additional time to present their opening statements."  13 Typically, in practice, we've allowed the parents  14 also; you know, it says they're the resident district  15 and the resident -- nonresident district and resident  16 district, but we've also allowed for the parents to  17 speak also. "These parties shall be given 20 minutes  18 to present their cases, beginning with the  19 nonresident school district. If the resident  20 district chooses to participate in the hearing, they  21 shall have like time to present their case after the  22 nonresident district. The chairperson of the State  23 Board may, for good cause shown and upon request of  24 the party, allow additional time to present their  25 cases. State Board of Education at its discretion</p>	<p>1 So the majority of cases that we're going to see  2 today are going to be dealing with the 3% cap that  3 districts are under and that which allows, you know,  4 how many students they are allowed to leave their  5 district. And so typically what will happen is they  6 go over that cap, so therefore they have to deny  7 those School Choice transfers.  8 I do believe we will have two that deal with  9 capacity, where they might not have enough staff.  10 But for the majority we're going to be dealing with  11 3%, Ladies and Gentlemen.  12 And so with that, I know that might be brief. I  13 think once we kind of start getting into some we'll  14 be able to ask some more questions. But I know these  15 folks have been waiting and are ready to get their  16 hearings going.  17 Is there any questions from the Board?  18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Anyone have a question?  19 Okay. I think we're ready.  20 b) DAISY ROBBINS  21 MR. DUGAN: All right. And so the first one  22 we've got today, Madam Chair -- let me get back to my  23 agenda now -- is going to be Ms. Robbins, Daisy  24 Robbins. And so this one, Madam Chair, is going to  25 deal with the Malvern School District and also the</p>
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<p>1 shall have the authority to require any person  2 associated with the application to appear in person  3 before the State Board as a witness during the  4 hearing. State Board of Education may accept  5 testimony by affidavit, declaration, or deposition."  6 And in the notices that I sent out to the school  7 districts and the parents I did put a line in there  8 that "all of y'all need to be here." So that was  9 from under that part right there. So we have the  10 parents here and the school districts here for the  11 Board to ask questions.  12 "For the purpose of the record" -- we're not  13 going to worry about that one right now, but they  14 will be labeled so that Ms. Sharon can enter them in  15 the record.  16 "The nonresident school district shall have the  17 burden of proving -- to prove the basis for the  18 denial of the transfer." And so the State Board of  19 Education may sustain the rejection of the  20 nonresident district or grant the appeal. And  21 typically when the Board grants the appeal they  22 usually do it under the -- that social,  23 physiological, educational well-being for the child.  24 And like I said, this -- today we're only  25 dealing with the Public School Choice Act of 2015.</p>	<p>1 Glen Rose School District. So I know Mr. Jace  2 Roberts was here for the Malvern School District.  3 Is Jace back from lunch to proceed with this  4 matter?  5 MR. ROBERTS: Yeah, I'm here.  6 MR. DUGAN: And then is Mr. Holicer here for --  7 SUPT. HOLICER: Yes, I am.  8 MR. DUGAN: All right. And so going through our  9 procedures, Madam Chair, the nonresident district  10 gets 5 minutes to make their opening statement, and  11 then the resident district does. So the nonresident  12 district here is Glen Rose.  13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All who are going to  14 speak raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm  15 that the testimony you're about to give shall be the  16 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?  17 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)  18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.  19 All right. Mr. Roberts.  20 Let's see. Yeah, I said the resident district.  21 I got it backwards, didn't I?  22 MR. DUGAN: I know it's weird.  23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yeah. Sorry.  24 MR. DUGAN: It's the nonresident district.  25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p>

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<p>1 MR. DUGAN: So it's going to be --</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: So nonresident. Mr. Holicer.</p> <p>3 MR. DUGAN: Mr. Holicer, come on up, sir.</p> <p>4 SUPT. HOLICER: All right. Hello. And thank</p> <p>5 you very much for doing this for us.</p> <p>6 Glen Rose has no reason not to accept Daisy in</p> <p>7 this particular case, for any reason. Love to have</p> <p>8 them and are ready to help and do anything we can to</p> <p>9 educate the child.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Mr. Roberts.</p> <p>11 MR. ROBERTS: Jace Roberts, Chief of Staff for</p> <p>12 the Malvern School District.</p> <p>13 I'm here to answer any questions you guys have.</p> <p>14 This is a cap issue for us. We met our cap and this</p> <p>15 application was after the cap; pretty straightforward</p> <p>16 from that regard. Be glad to answer any questions</p> <p>17 later on, if you have them. Thank you.</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.</p> <p>19 All right. Mr. and Mrs. Robbins, I don't know</p> <p>20 if both of you are going to speak or --</p> <p>21 MRS. ROBBINS: This is Daisy and she attended</p> <p>22 Glen Rose pre-k last year; so she's already</p> <p>23 established that. She has friends.</p> <p>24 I'm really nervous and I don't really --</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: It's okay.</p>	<p>1 get her on the bus. So --</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Woods?</p> <p>3 MS. WOODS: How far are you from --</p> <p>4 MS. ROBBINS: We live, what, maybe 5 miles from</p> <p>5 her school; so it's not far.</p> <p>6 MS. WOODS: Okay. So you're just kind of like</p> <p>7 --</p> <p>8 MS. ROBBINS: From Glen Rose.</p> <p>9 MS. WOODS: From Glen Rose, okay.</p> <p>10 MS. ROBBINS: From Malvern it's probably the</p> <p>11 same. But she takes her every day, so --</p> <p>12 MS. WOODS: Understood.</p> <p>13 My other question was for Malvern. I'm sorry.</p> <p>14 Where were they on -- I know you said you met your</p> <p>15 cap and then they came in after. Do you know what</p> <p>16 number they were on the list?</p> <p>17 MR. ROBERTS: Give me a second; I'll have to</p> <p>18 count it -- 24.</p> <p>19 MS. WOODS: So the 24th after your cap?</p> <p>20 MR. ROBERTS: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>21 MS. WOODS: Okay. And I guess nobody else has</p> <p>22 appealed their denial?</p> <p>23 MR. ROBERTS: We have two more hearings today.</p> <p>24 MS. WOODS: Two more here. Okay. So we're on</p> <p>25 their -- okay. Thank you. That was all.</p>
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<p>1 MRS. ROBBINS: -- know where to start.</p> <p>2 So she's already had that background there at</p> <p>3 Glen Rose. And then on top of that, her family, her</p> <p>4 dad, her grandmothers, grandpas, multiple grandpas'</p> <p>5 family have graduated from there, and we would like</p> <p>6 her to have that experience.</p> <p>7 My main concern for her to attend Glen Rose is I</p> <p>8 am in school; so I start my third semester of nursing</p> <p>9 school the same time she starts school. And her</p> <p>10 grandmother is -- who holds everything together, she</p> <p>11 takes her to school, picks her up, and she lives less</p> <p>12 than two miles from the school. So if -- and she</p> <p>13 takes other kids, other grandchildren as well to Glen</p> <p>14 Rose that live in the district. So if she's not able</p> <p>15 to take Daisy to school, I won't be able to attend</p> <p>16 school because we have absolutely nobody else who can</p> <p>17 take her to school.</p> <p>18 So with that being said, that's my main concern.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. We'll see</p> <p>20 if we have any questions from the Board.</p> <p>21 Ms. Post?</p> <p>22 MS. POST: Yeah. I'm just wondering, does the</p> <p>23 school not offer any kind of bus transportation?</p> <p>24 MS. ROBBINS: They do. But with that, by the</p> <p>25 time I have to be at school there's nobody at home to</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Mr. Sutton?</p> <p>2 MR. SUTTON: No.</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Dr. Hill?</p> <p>4 DR. HILL: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean?</p> <p>6 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin?</p> <p>8 DR. RANKIN: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore?</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: Yes. So just to be clear, so she's</p> <p>11 never attended school in Malvern?</p> <p>12 MS. ROBBINS: No. She attended at Glen Rose,</p> <p>13 pre-k.</p> <p>14 DR. MOORE: At pre-k at the same elementary</p> <p>15 school?</p> <p>16 MS. ROBBINS: Yes, at the same one.</p> <p>17 DR. MOORE: Okay. And that was --</p> <p>18 MS. ROBBINS: Last year.</p> <p>19 DR. MOORE: -- last year; so she's in there in</p> <p>20 kindergarten?</p> <p>21 MS. ROBBINS: Yes.</p> <p>22 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>23 So for Taylor, I know we see this every year.</p> <p>24 Thank y'all. Thank you for being here today.</p> <p>25 I know we see this every year, but in this case</p>

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<p>1 we have a student who's not in the denominator for 2 their 3% cap because they weren't in the district 3 previously. Obviously, one student is not going to 4 change anything on that list. 5 MR. DUGAN: Yeah. 6 DR. MOORE: But it's always tricky when, you 7 know, that student hasn't even been a part of that 8 district anyway. But there's nothing in law that 9 says whether they've been in the resident district or 10 not; it's just where they reside? 11 MR. DUGAN: Correct. 12 DR. MOORE: Is that correct? 13 MR. DUGAN: Correct. Where they reside, goes 14 off the definition of residency, I think 6-18-202. 15 DR. MOORE: Okay. 16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean? 17 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side) 18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Anyone? 19 MR. ROBBINS: Can I -- can I say something? 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes. Yes, sir. 21 MR. ROBBINS: We live in the Malvern School 22 District, I know. But as soon as my wife graduates 23 nursing school and we get a little more established 24 we are going to move to Glen Rose, beside my parents. 25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p>	<p>1 MR. ROBBINS: -- that's another reason. 2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. That was very 3 helpful. Thank you. 4 Anyone else have a question or some discussion? 5 Okay. Our motion will be either to grant or 6 deny the appeal. Does anyone have a motion? 7 MR. SUTTON: I'll make a motion to grant the 8 appeal. 9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. We have a motion by Mr. 10 Sutton to grant the appeal. 11 Do we have a second? 12 DR. RANKIN: I'll second. 13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Second by Dr. Rankin. 14 All in favor? 15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES) 16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed? 17 Congratulations. 18 MS. ROBBINS: Thank you. 19 SUPT. HOLICER: Thank y'all very much. 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Good luck, Daisy, in 21 kindergarten. I hope you have a great year. 22 MS. ROBBINS: Can you say thank-you? 23 DAISY ROBBINS: Thank you. 24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You're welcome, baby. All 25 right.</p>
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<p>1 MR. ROBBINS: So this is just temporary. So I 2 would hate to pull her from her friends she knows 3 already, start another school, new friends, all that 4 stuff, and then when we move have to pull her again 5 and make her start over, you know. 6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. That's -- 7 MR. ROBBINS: This is -- our housing now is just 8 temporary, you know, until -- we're going to buy 9 land, you know, and either build a house or buy a 10 home or something, you know. 11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you. 12 MR. ROBBINS: So that's another reason, you 13 know. I don't -- my parents, they kept me in Glen 14 Rose kindergarten through 12th grade. I never had to 15 move or make new friends or something, and I want the 16 same thing for her, you know. 17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 18 MR. ROBBINS: I don't want to have to swap back 19 and forth -- 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure. 21 MR. ROBBINS: -- and make new friends, new 22 teachers. You know, it's -- 23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure. 24 MR. ROBBINS: So -- 25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.</p>	<p>1 MR. ROBBINS: Thank y'all. 2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You're welcome. 3 c) LUNA MARIN 4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. 5 MR. DUGAN: All right, Madam Chair. The next 6 one we have is also going to be with the Malvern 7 School District; they're the resident school 8 district. And the nonresident district is also Glen 9 Rose. This is another case dealing with the 3% cap. 10 The family is for the child of -- Luna Marin -- Ms. 11 Stroud here. And so starting with the nonresident 12 district, Mr. Holicer. 13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Did you say Ms. Stroud? Is 14 that what you said? 15 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am. It's Ms. Cynthia 16 Stroud. And so, if I could get Ms. Stroud sworn in? 17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes, please. 18 Ms. Stroud, raise your right hand please. Do 19 you swear or affirm that the testimony you're about 20 to give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and 21 nothing but the truth? 22 MS. STROUD: I do. 23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Mr. Holicer. 24 SUPT. HOLICER: Again, thank you. And my name - 25 - I didn't introduce myself -- Tim Holicer,</p>

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<p>1 Superintendent of Glen Rose.  2 But we have no reason not to have Luna on our  3 campus and treat her just like one of our own as  4 well. So we'd be glad to have her.  5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.  6 SUPT. HOLICER: And then if they -- and then  7 I'll let Ms. Stroud explain.  8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.  9 SUPT. HOLICER: There's a few little details.  10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.  11 SUPT. HOLICER: Thank you.  12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Roberts.  13 MR. ROBERTS: I have nothing more to add. But,  14 again, we'll be glad to answer any questions you guys  15 have.  16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you.  17 Ms. Stroud.  18 MS. STROUD: I'm a single grandparent and I  19 stepped up for my grandchild. I work a lot of long  20 hours. I have two adult children that live in the  21 Glen Rose School District. All of my grandchildren  22 attend there, except this one. It's very, very  23 difficult for me to pick her up in the afternoons  24 because my job is anywhere from an 8-, 10-, 12-hour  25 day and I don't have the ability to always have</p>	<p>1 DR. MOORE: And so that's hard in the middle of  2 a school year.  3 MS. STROUD: Yes, it is.  4 DR. MOORE: And so now this is the new year  5 moving forward --  6 MS. STROUD: Yes.  7 DR. MOORE: -- wanting to do this. Okay. Thank  8 you.  9 MS. STROUD: Thank you.  10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin?  11 DR. RANKIN: No questions.  12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean?  13 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side)  14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Hill?  15 DR. HILL: No.  16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Sutton?  17 MR. SUTTON: No questions.  18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Woods?  19 MS. WOODS: Sorry, yes.  20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You're okay.  21 MS. WOODS: Is this situation with your  22 grandchild going to be permanent and ongoing or --  23 MS. STROUD: As far as the guardianship?  24 MS. WOODS: Uh-huh.  25 MS. STROUD: Yes.</p>
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<p>1 someone to pick her up. So having her in the Glen  2 Rose School District with the other grandchildren  3 will help me in doing my job and being able to  4 provide for her; and knowing every day that "Uncle  5 Chris or, you know, Aunt Amanda is going to pick me  6 up today," and not have to worry about, you know, the  7 neighbors or coworkers trying to pick her up from  8 Malvern.  9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. I will see if any  10 board members have a question.  11 Dr. Moore?  12 DR. MOORE: Yes. So I think it stated in the  13 packet that your student attended Glen Rose --  14 MS. STROUD: Yes.  15 DR. MOORE: -- for kindergarten. Is that  16 correct?  17 MS. STROUD: For the first few weeks, yes.  18 DR. MOORE: Okay. And then was told they had to  19 go to Malvern?  20 MS. STROUD: Yes.  21 DR. MOORE: Okay. Okay. Was that -- do y'all  22 live closer to --  23 MS. STROUD: We really live in between.  24 DR. MOORE: In between. Okay.  25 MS. STROUD: Yeah.</p>	<p>1 MS. WOODS: It is. Okay.  2 And then for the school district, where again  3 were they on the waiting list -- on the list?  4 MR. ROBERTS: Let's see -- 15th, roughly.  5 MS. WOODS: Okay.  6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Post?  7 MS. POST: (shaking head from side to side)  8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any other  9 questions or discussion?  10 SECRETARY KEY: Ms. Newton, if I may, I just --  11 I don't -- I want to take the opportunity, it sounds  12 terrible that they would make a student transfer back  13 to the resident district after the school year  14 started. But I just want the Board to know since,  15 you know, we have a few new members who may not  16 realize this, but that is an issue that districts are  17 -- they have to pursue that. I mean that is like  18 subject to -- puts the superintendent's licensure at  19 risk if they do not. So I just want y'all to  20 understand that when that -- we hear stories about  21 that, the state law is very clear. That's why there  22 are processes like this that allow parents and  23 caregivers to approach y'all in the proper order.  24 But just want to make sure y'all are aware.  25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you for that.</p>

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<p>1 Any other discussion?</p> <p>2 Okay. Again, our motion is to grant or deny the</p> <p>3 appeal.</p> <p>4 MS. DEAN: I move to grant the appeal.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. A motion to grant the</p> <p>6 appeal by Ms. Dean.</p> <p>7 DR. MOORE: I'll second that.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Second by Dr. Moore.</p> <p>9 All in favor?</p> <p>10 (MAJORITY CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>12 MS. WOODS: Aye.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. One opposed. All</p> <p>14 right. Motion passed.</p> <p>15 Congratulations.</p> <p>16 MS. STROUD: Thank you.</p> <p>17 d) COREY VINES</p> <p>18 MR. DUGAN: The next one, which is V.5.d., Mr.</p> <p>19 Corey Vines, that one can be removed. That one ended</p> <p>20 up working itself out.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>22 e) DANIEL PIERCE BENJAMIN</p> <p>23 MR. DUGAN: So we can skip down to item e, which</p> <p>24 is Daniel Pierce Benjamin. And this is also another</p> <p>25 3% cap case, Ladies and Gentlemen. The resident</p>	<p>1 I'm here to help answer questions and we would</p> <p>2 certainly love to have our students stay with us and</p> <p>3 attend.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. The</p> <p>5 Benjamin family. All right.</p> <p>6 MRS. BENJAMIN: Okay. Hi.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Hi.</p> <p>8 MRS. BENJAMIN: My name is Alissa Benjamin. I'm</p> <p>9 Pierce's mother. He just completed his kindergarten</p> <p>10 year with Greenbrier Westside Elementary and we would</p> <p>11 love for him to stay there. He is -- had a really</p> <p>12 rough transition going into kindergarten. He is very</p> <p>13 nervous, does not like change. We spent months</p> <p>14 really struggling and helping him find his place, and</p> <p>15 at the end of the school year we had a completely</p> <p>16 different child. His mental health, his social</p> <p>17 health, he was thriving. He was looking forward to</p> <p>18 going to school, has friends; he's made close</p> <p>19 connections with the counselor, Ms. Page.</p> <p>20 Sorry, I'm trembling here.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: That's okay.</p> <p>22 MRS. BENJAMIN: But he is just loving school so</p> <p>23 much he wakes up every day happy to go. He was sad</p> <p>24 on the last day of school because he didn't want to</p> <p>25 hug his teachers goodbye, and to see that has really</p>
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<p>1 district is Guy Perkins and Dr. Joe Fisher is here.</p> <p>2 And then the nonresident district is Greenbrier</p> <p>3 School District and we have Dr. Spainhour here. And</p> <p>4 Ms. Benjamin is here, Ms. Alissa Benjamin is here --</p> <p>5 if you wouldn't mind coming up -- so we can get Ms.</p> <p>6 Benjamin sworn in.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Anyone that's going to give</p> <p>8 testimony raise your right hand. Do you swear --</p> <p>9 sorry, I forgot it, didn't it -- [turns microphone</p> <p>10 on]. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony</p> <p>11 you're about to give shall be the truth, the whole</p> <p>12 truth, and nothing but the truth?</p> <p>13 [ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY]</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>15 All right. So the nonresident district, Dr.</p> <p>16 Spainhour.</p> <p>17 SUPT. SPAINHOUR: Hi. My name is Scott</p> <p>18 Spainhour; I'm Superintendent at Greenbrier. We</p> <p>19 denied out of obligation. We have space. We would</p> <p>20 be more than happy to accommodate. Thank you.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Dr. Fisher from Guy</p> <p>22 Perkins.</p> <p>23 SUPT. FISHER: Hi, State Board. It's good to</p> <p>24 see you again.</p> <p>25 Dr. Joe Fisher, Guy Perkins School District.</p>	<p>1 just brightened my whole world.</p> <p>2 But he's not only thriving mentally and</p> <p>3 socially, but also academically. I believe his</p> <p>4 teachers -- his test scores, end-of-year testing 99%</p> <p>5 in every subject. He is thriving in every single</p> <p>6 level and I don't want to tell him "you have to go</p> <p>7 somewhere new, baby. You have to make new</p> <p>8 connections, new friends." It's really going to tear</p> <p>9 him apart. That kills me. But we would love for him</p> <p>10 to continue at Greenbrier. They have invested so</p> <p>11 much in him, and so have we at home.</p> <p>12 We when we moved didn't realize completely when</p> <p>13 we had purchased this land and built on it that it</p> <p>14 was just less than a mile outside of the Greenbrier</p> <p>15 school zone. And so once we had bought it or showed</p> <p>16 interest in it, we were kind of told "hey, you have</p> <p>17 the option for school choice; you're going to get it,</p> <p>18 go with your dreams." We did that in 2018, and</p> <p>19 really developed the land, built on it. We just</p> <p>20 built our guest home and moved into it. And I don't</p> <p>21 want to completely uproot him, especially when my</p> <p>22 husband and I -- we both travel through Greenbrier to</p> <p>23 work and I take him to school. So we would be</p> <p>24 backtracking, going to Guy and then coming back</p> <p>25 through to go through Greenbrier. We have a</p>

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<p>1 Greenbrier address, just the school zone does a wonky 2 little thing where it cuts down to our road for the 3 Guy Perkins zone. 4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. We'll see 5 if we have any questions. 6 MRS. BENJAMIN: Okay. 7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Ms. Post? 8 MS. POST: (shaking head from side to side) 9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Woods? 10 MS. WOODS: No. 11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Sutton? 12 MR. SUTTON: No questions. 13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Hill? 14 DR. HILL: No, ma'am. 15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean? 16 MS. DEAN: No. 17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin? 18 DR. RANKIN: No questions. 19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore? 20 DR. MOORE: No. 21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So I don't think we 22 have any questions. 23 MRS. BENJAMIN: Okay. Thank you. 24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Do we have any discussion? 25 Okay. If not, we're ready for a motion then to</p>	<p>1 our spacing. You know, in the past it was that if 2 you wanted your child -- and I'm a Little Rock School 3 District guy -- if I wanted to go to Central High 4 School, which I did -- go Tigers -- then we moved 5 into that area where we could attend Central High 6 School and graduate. That's no longer the case. But 7 the problem that comes up is that we lose housing and 8 those students are unable to move in that would like 9 to attend our school; then we have to get them 10 through School Choice. If you take our district of 11 Guy Perkins and if you were to pick it up and put it 12 down in any other spot, likely it would look like a 13 gym. Unfortunately/fortunately, we sit between two 14 excellent school districts of Quitman and Greenbrier 15 and it makes it very difficult for us to be 16 competitive in the things that they can make 17 brochures and send out to people and let them know 18 that they have. I will say this: we have an 19 excellent school. We're not on an academic watch 20 list, we're not on a fiscal support list, we're not 21 on a curriculum problem list; we are an excellent 22 district with excellent teachers and administrators 23 and I want that to be known by the State Board and 24 the people that are listening and to our parents who 25 are appealing. We have invited our students to come</p>
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<p>1 either grant or deny the appeal. 2 MR. DUGAN: And he gets rebuttal because he 3 still has -- 4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Do you have something else? 5 I'm sorry, I didn't give you -- I'm sorry. I didn't 6 give you a chance to -- 7 SUPT. FISHER: That's okay. 8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: -- say anything. 9 SUPT. FISHER: It's nice sitting next to Taylor. 10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes, he keeps me straight. 11 SUPT. FISHER: I too -- I want to empathize; I 12 have two children too who have made lots of 13 transitions, as a superintendent, principal, teacher, 14 into districts, and I know that can be a tough time. 15 They're resilient; they've done a fantastic job in 16 moving several times. 17 The law has flaws to it as we all know. Each 18 year we look at it and we determine that there are 19 things that are advantages to the students, which we 20 want, you know, parents and students to have choice. 21 But also there's disadvantages to the rest of the 22 students who remain in the district. 23 One concern that I have -- and it's not 24 specifically to this case -- and I'll say it once for 25 all of our cases is that we are losing our housing,</p>	<p>1 that did not make it on the list to come to summer 2 school this year. We have attained three of those 3 students who -- because they came, they experienced 4 it, they fell in love with it. 5 Our challenge is all to continue to look at ways 6 that we can support the school districts like Guy 7 Perkins who are doing what they're supposed to do, 8 who just unfortunately are stuck between two great 9 school districts, and trying to compete for its kids. 10 We would love to have our kindergarten -- we 11 love smart kindergartners; we'd love to put them all 12 in with the rest of our smart kindergartners. We 13 have great teachers there and we would love to have 14 all of our students there, including Benjamin. 15 So, thank you so much. 16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you, Dr. Fisher. And I 17 applaud you for your efforts of getting the news out 18 about your district -- you know, the summer school, 19 getting -- sometimes if they just get in there they 20 realize what they have there. So I appreciate your 21 efforts. 22 And just a question that I had for you, and I'd 23 forgotten it till you came up, is what is your 24 current enrollment going into this next year? 25 SUPT. FISHER: Our third-quarter I believe was</p>

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<p>1 273, coming into this school year. So September</p> <p>2 we'll be back asking for a waiver for under 350</p> <p>3 again.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: And this last year, as far as</p> <p>5 a virtual/non-virtual, how did that go?</p> <p>6 SUPT. FISHER: You know, we lost quite a few</p> <p>7 students to K-12 online, some that went -- we were</p> <p>8 able to gain some back, but we lost about 20 students</p> <p>9 with Covid. And, yeah, it was significant.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Right. And have you seen</p> <p>11 those come back for the next year yet or --</p> <p>12 SUPT. FISHER: We actually have been adding</p> <p>13 students because -- and thank you -- the digital</p> <p>14 learning plan was approved. We do have that option.</p> <p>15 And again, I'll say it for here for those folks that</p> <p>16 do not successfully, you know, receive an appeal, we</p> <p>17 have digital learning opportunities for those</p> <p>18 students, both at high school and elementary levels.</p> <p>19 So we hope that they will continue to come back.</p> <p>20 We are in our year of designation for Schools of</p> <p>21 Innovation at elementary school. We are also a PLC</p> <p>22 regional school this year. So we are headed in the</p> <p>23 right direction; we're just going to have to continue</p> <p>24 to tell our story and not let others tell our story.</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Absolutely.</p>	<p>1 We do this case-by-case. It is not rubberstamped.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Uh-huh.</p> <p>3 MS. DEAN: It is -- we look at each case, case-</p> <p>4 by-case. We look at the circumstances of each case.</p> <p>5 And you actually asked the question that I</p> <p>6 wanted to ask, which is what is your enrollment and</p> <p>7 is it declining. It has -- you just answered, you</p> <p>8 said it has declined?</p> <p>9 SUPT. FISHER: Yes.</p> <p>10 MS. DEAN: Yeah.</p> <p>11 SUPT. FISHER: It has been for the past three to</p> <p>12 four years.</p> <p>13 MS. DEAN: Yes. Yeah, okay.</p> <p>14 So you actually answered -- asked the question</p> <p>15 that I was wondering as well. But, yeah, I think</p> <p>16 it's important to know that we look at each case for</p> <p>17 each student, each family, and what's best for the</p> <p>18 family, the student, and for the district as well,</p> <p>19 because all of that is important. So thank you for</p> <p>20 making that point, Ms. Woods.</p> <p>21 Thank you.</p> <p>22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Dr. Moore, did you</p> <p>23 have a comment?</p> <p>24 DR. MOORE: Yeah, I just sort of -- along those</p> <p>25 lines, the law states the best educational, social or</p>
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<p>1 SUPT. FISHER: Thank you.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.</p> <p>3 Any other questions or discussion?</p> <p>4 MS. WOODS: I have a comment. Because I know we</p> <p>5 talked about this last year, about just the attitude</p> <p>6 of "just appeal to the Board and they will grant your</p> <p>7 waiver."</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Uh-huh.</p> <p>9 MS. WOODS: And I know like we have land in a</p> <p>10 different city, and so I understand where you're at.</p> <p>11 But a lot of times people are like "just appeal."</p> <p>12 And so I -- while I believe -- my personal opinion</p> <p>13 is, yes, you should be able to go where you want to</p> <p>14 go. I also -- we are also charged with upholding the</p> <p>15 rules and when do those rules actually apply, because</p> <p>16 it seems like if they just appeal we're going to</p> <p>17 grant it.</p> <p>18 So, just a comment. I don't know if we have</p> <p>19 moved anywhere from last year but I know that was the</p> <p>20 heartburn last year, this attitude of "just appeal</p> <p>21 and if you go through the motions, they'll do it."</p> <p>22 So I just wanted to get that out there.</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you, Ms. Woods.</p> <p>24 MS. DEAN: Ms. Newton, I also want to speak on</p> <p>25 that as well because I think we say this every year.</p>	<p>1 psychological interest of the student. And so, I</p> <p>2 mean, that is the law case.</p> <p>3 So going from there, I think this is another one</p> <p>4 where the student hasn't attended the resident</p> <p>5 district; so they're also not in the denominator of</p> <p>6 that cap, which I know one student is not going to</p> <p>7 change anything.</p> <p>8 That was my only point there.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other discussion?</p> <p>10 MS. DEAN: Let me just make a point.</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>12 MS. DEAN: Something --</p> <p>13 MR. DUGAN: Dr. Moore, they did attend</p> <p>14 kindergarten. I just wanted to make sure --</p> <p>15 DR. MOORE: Right. Right. Not at the -- not</p> <p>16 the -- not in the resident district.</p> <p>17 MR. DUGAN: Right.</p> <p>18 MS. DEAN: Okay. I am curious as to -- you said</p> <p>19 your student attended. How is that? How does that</p> <p>20 happen with --</p> <p>21 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. If you look in the</p> <p>22 packet, they school-choiced to --</p> <p>23 MS. DEAN: Okay.</p> <p>24 SECRETARY KEY: -- Greenbrier from Conway.</p> <p>25 MS. DEAN: That's right. Okay. All right.</p>

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<p>1 Thank you --</p> <p>2 SECRETARY KEY: I guess --</p> <p>3 MS. DEAN: -- for that clarification.</p> <p>4 SECRETARY KEY: Is that correct?</p> <p>5 MRS. BENJAMIN: Yes.</p> <p>6 SECRETARY KEY: Your packet says you school-</p> <p>7 choiced from Conway?</p> <p>8 MRS. BENJAMIN: Yes, that is correct. Because</p> <p>9 we knew we eventually wanted to be in the Greenbrier</p> <p>10 area. We did purchase that 17 areas and it was a</p> <p>11 Greenbrier address, and looking at it, first glance,</p> <p>12 we thought that it was the correct school district.</p> <p>13 Like I said, we missed it by less than a mile. And</p> <p>14 regardless, I know that you do make a good point that</p> <p>15 you do need to live where you're going to go; you</p> <p>16 need to look at that and be prepared. And so we have</p> <p>17 taken steps -- you know, we obviously want y'all to</p> <p>18 grant this so that we can live at our dream location.</p> <p>19 We've planted some peach trees and all kinds of</p> <p>20 stuff, and we just love it out there. But we --</p> <p>21 before, we were living in Conway and driving to</p> <p>22 Greenbrier to take care of this land for three years</p> <p>23 and loving it that way. So if we do have to buy a</p> <p>24 few minutes away, it's still within a more reasonable</p> <p>25 sense than Conway and we could get this correct</p>	<p>1 MRS. BENJAMIN: No, this was back -- so he just</p> <p>2 went to kindergarten last year.</p> <p>3 MS. DEAN: Right.</p> <p>4 MRS. BENJAMIN: So this was before all of that.</p> <p>5 MS. DEAN: Right.</p> <p>6 MRS. BENJAMIN: This was -- you know, we just</p> <p>7 built out there. We've owned it since 2018.</p> <p>8 MS. DEAN: Okay.</p> <p>9 MRS. BENJAMIN: So, uh-huh.</p> <p>10 MS. DEAN: So you looked at the land; they said</p> <p>11 you're actually within the Guy Perkins School</p> <p>12 District?</p> <p>13 MRS. BENJAMIN: Uh-huh.</p> <p>14 MS. DEAN: You school-choiced from --</p> <p>15 MRS. BENJAMIN: From Conway --</p> <p>16 MS. DEAN: -- Conway to Greenbrier?</p> <p>17 MRS. BENJAMIN: -- to Greenbrier.</p> <p>18 MS. DEAN: So he did kindergarten at Greenbrier?</p> <p>19 MRS. BENJAMIN: Yes, because we were living in</p> <p>20 Conway.</p> <p>21 MS. DEAN: Okay. And --</p> <p>22 MRS. BENJAMIN: And then we were hoping when we</p> <p>23 moved to our land --</p> <p>24 MS. DEAN: That's in Greenbrier?</p> <p>25 MRS. BENJAMIN: I know it's a whole mess.</p>
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<p>1 school that way. But we want to do it this way where</p> <p>2 we can live on the land and he has a pond and a</p> <p>3 stream to play in and salamanders to catch.</p> <p>4 So, but, yes, we did go through Conway to get</p> <p>5 there.</p> <p>6 MS. DEAN: And this might be in the packet as</p> <p>7 well, but kind of give me the -- because I read</p> <p>8 through it, but just kind of help me with the</p> <p>9 timeline. Because you did say that before y'all</p> <p>10 purchased the land that they let you know that you</p> <p>11 did not fall within the Greenbrier --</p> <p>12 MRS. BENJAMIN: Yes. Because we started looking</p> <p>13 at that once we were really invested in it and fell</p> <p>14 in love with it. And before everything had gone</p> <p>15 through, he said, "Yes, it is in the Guy Perkins</p> <p>16 School District." He said that, "I had the same</p> <p>17 plans as you; I was going to develop the land, build</p> <p>18 on it. And I have spoken" -- I guess back in like</p> <p>19 2016, 2017, he had spoken to some of the, I guess,</p> <p>20 superintendents or the superintendent at Guy, and he</p> <p>21 was like, "Yeah, you can go through school choice;</p> <p>22 you're so close to the zone I don't think they're</p> <p>23 going to deny it. You're right there at the edge."</p> <p>24 MS. DEAN: And that was -- was that after your</p> <p>25 child had already started attending --</p>	<p>1 MS. DEAN: Yes.</p> <p>2 MRS. BENJAMIN: But, yes.</p> <p>3 MS. DEAN: No, I'm just trying to make sure I</p> <p>4 get it correctly.</p> <p>5 MRS. BENJAMIN: No, that is all correct. Yes.</p> <p>6 MS. DEAN: Yeah.</p> <p>7 MRS. BENJAMIN: So we just moved out there, and</p> <p>8 so now we're hoping to keep him in Greenbrier since</p> <p>9 it works with our work schedules. And I don't know</p> <p>10 how we're going to make the transportation work with</p> <p>11 Guy.</p> <p>12 MS. DEAN: Okay.</p> <p>13 MRS. BENJAMIN: So, yes. Yeah.</p> <p>14 MS. DEAN: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>15 MRS. BENJAMIN: Uh-huh.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other questions or</p> <p>17 discussion?</p> <p>18 MS. WOODS: I just want to make -- I did not</p> <p>19 think that you didn't do your due diligence. I hope</p> <p>20 I didn't convey that to you.</p> <p>21 MRS. BENJAMIN: No. No.</p> <p>22 MS. WOODS: Okay. I just wanted to make sure.</p> <p>23 MRS. BENJAMIN: No. No.</p> <p>24 MS. WOODS: I apologize if I did.</p> <p>25 MRS. BENJAMIN: No. I just wanted to reiterate</p>



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<p>1 --</p> <p>2 MS. WOODS: You're good.</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Anyone else?</p> <p>4 Okay. We are looking for a motion to grant or</p> <p>5 deny the appeal.</p> <p>6 DR. RANKIN: I will move to grant the appeal.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. A move to grant the</p> <p>8 appeal by Dr. Rankin.</p> <p>9 DR. MOORE: I'll second that.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Second by Dr. Moore.</p> <p>11 All in favor?</p> <p>12 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>14 Okay. Congratulations.</p> <p>15 f) TAYLOR, HOYT, AND RALEIGH VICKERS</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Mr. Dugan.</p> <p>17 MR. DUGAN: Next one we're going to move down to</p> <p>18 is number F. This is the Vickers family. The</p> <p>19 resident district is going to be Guy Perkins and the</p> <p>20 nonresident district is going to be the Quitman</p> <p>21 School District. We have Superintendent Truxler</p> <p>22 here. Superintendent Dr. Fisher, you're still under</p> <p>23 oath, so you're good. And some of the Vickers</p> <p>24 family.</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p>	<p>1 I have Tim Barnes, who is our high school principal.</p> <p>2 And so we're here to answer any questions the Board</p> <p>3 would have.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you.</p> <p>5 Mr. Vickers.</p> <p>6 MR. VICKERS: Yes, ma'am. We've got three</p> <p>7 children that are in school in Guy, or were</p> <p>8 previously. This last year, we home-schooled because</p> <p>9 we were denied previously to move to Quitman. We've</p> <p>10 got a few concerns that we've had over the course of</p> <p>11 the years that we've had children going there. I'm</p> <p>12 not sure if you've read over the concerns that we</p> <p>13 have with our children, but I can just reiterate a</p> <p>14 few of them.</p> <p>15 Concerning my daughter Taylor, she did really</p> <p>16 well in kindergarten, like all of my children did</p> <p>17 through kindergarten. They did really well in Guy</p> <p>18 Perkins. As soon as they got out of kindergarten,</p> <p>19 the two that we had go from kindergarten into 1st</p> <p>20 grade, from there it dramatically went downhill.</p> <p>21 My son, we struggle with him a lot with reading.</p> <p>22 We noticed early on that he was having struggles. So</p> <p>23 whenever we would ask questions we kind of didn't</p> <p>24 really get much answer. At one point we were told</p> <p>25 that the reason why he's not excelling is because his</p>
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<p>1 MR. DUGAN: Madam Chair, if you wouldn't mind</p> <p>2 please swearing in Superintendent Truxler and our</p> <p>3 representative from the Vickers family.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Do you swear or</p> <p>5 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall</p> <p>6 be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the</p> <p>7 truth?</p> <p>8 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. All right. We'll</p> <p>10 do the nonresident district first. Welcome.</p> <p>11 SUPT. TRUXLER: Dennis Truxler, Superintendent</p> <p>12 of Quitman School District.</p> <p>13 Thank you, Dr. Fisher, for commenting that we're</p> <p>14 a great school district. We are. I appreciate that.</p> <p>15 At the March 18th school board meeting, the</p> <p>16 board approved the Vickers freedom of choice</p> <p>17 application for their children to attend Quitman, and</p> <p>18 of course they fell under the 3% rule with Guy</p> <p>19 Perkins. Dr. Fisher sent me a letter. So here we</p> <p>20 are. We would love to have the Vickers family if the</p> <p>21 State Board approves the appeal.</p> <p>22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>23 SUPT. TRUXLER: Thank you.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Fisher.</p> <p>25 SUPT. FISHER: We're here to answer questions.</p>	<p>1 classroom was a chatty class and that really didn't</p> <p>2 sit well with me.</p> <p>3 From the time that we were denied and decided to</p> <p>4 home-school, which was prior to Covid -- you know, it</p> <p>5 had nothing to do with the pandemic at all -- my wife</p> <p>6 has spent a lot of time with my kids. She's a stay-</p> <p>7 at-home mom with four children; she -- that's her</p> <p>8 full-time job. We noticed that my son wasn't just a</p> <p>9 little behind; he was very far behind and he was</p> <p>10 severely dyslexic, we come to find out then, and we</p> <p>11 spent well over \$2,000 in classes for my son online</p> <p>12 with a dyslexia specialist. And I have several</p> <p>13 friends that go to school -- or that have kids,</p> <p>14 children that go to school in Quitman and they were</p> <p>15 telling us about their dyslexia specialist that they</p> <p>16 have on staff. I talked with Mr. Truxler and they --</p> <p>17 he reiterated that, that there is people in play</p> <p>18 there that could help him get back to grade level.</p> <p>19 And right now, he's just back to grade level and</p> <p>20 that's been a full year of classes with a specialist.</p> <p>21 My daughter -- like going back to my daughter</p> <p>22 Taylor, she -- in 2nd grade there was just several</p> <p>23 things that happened. But one in particular that</p> <p>24 rubbed me the wrong way -- because I work a lot I</p> <p>25 don't get to see what all my wife has to deal with --</p>

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<p>1 I found out that there was a child in the classroom 2 writing death threats on the children's desks in 3 glue. You could barely see it but it was evident. 4 Well, my daughter comes home telling us about it and 5 we think we should've heard it by now if it was that 6 big of a deal. So whenever my wife had to go to the 7 school to try to get answers about that it was just 8 very vague; nothing was really said that sufficed 9 that, for me anyway.</p> <p>10 Back on to Hoyt, like I said, the dyslexia issue 11 was -- I mean I know that's nothing they could've 12 done to prevent that, but it's something I feel like 13 we should've known sooner or hopefully would've found 14 out sooner and probably could've got him advancing a 15 little faster.</p> <p>16 And with my daughter Raleigh, we adopted her 17 whenever -- we've had her since day-one, so she's 18 been with us. She's just obviously very advanced, 19 she catches on very well. I'm not sure what grade 20 level she's reading at, but I guarantee you she's at 21 least three grade levels ahead of where she should 22 be. We've had -- her teachers in kindergarten 23 suggested maybe bumping her grade level up just to 24 keep her on track, maybe to keep advancing her, not 25 hold her back. I'm not saying that's what we should</p>	<p>1 through that. We do have placements now for students 2 who have behavior issues. I will say I have a full- 3 time interventionist as well. She just completed her 4 credentials and we're looking forward to putting her 5 in place and helping our students grow as well. 6 We're also proud of our Makerspace and our STEM 7 project and our School of Innovation, things that we 8 are doing at elementary to help those students who 9 are bright, those students that need some enrichment. 10 We started summer school enrichment; we are going to 11 continue with the afterschool enrichment program -- 12 and thanks to some of the ESSER funding we're able to 13 do that and do that with due diligence. So we do 14 appreciate the state for helping us with that.</p> <p>15 We would love to have this family stay with us. 16 They are in our community, serve as a volunteer 17 fireman, they work hard, and they've got a very good 18 family. Again, I apologize that I have not heard 19 about any of these issues until I read that into the 20 State Board packet. So thank you.</p> <p>21 We would hope that you would give consideration 22 to them about the best spot. But please understand 23 our school district is not a bad school district. 24 Let's don't do it in the name of we're not doing 25 something right. If you're going to be about kids</p>
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<p>1 do, but whenever we were discussing that with the 2 school they said, "Well, let's not do it because we 3 don't want her to be lazy." None of my children are 4 lazy, by the way -- not to say that that hurt my 5 feelings or anything; I'm not like that. But I feel 6 like if there's room for any child to advance there's 7 no reason to hold the reins back.</p> <p>8 So that's where we stand. We would like to go 9 to Quitman. We've tried for three years in a row now 10 to try to school-choice from Guy to Quitman. There's 11 just so much to offer there and we feel like that's 12 where our children would best be suited.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Vickers. 14 MR. VICKERS: Thank you. 15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Fisher, I won't forget you 16 this time. 17 SUPT. FISHER: I want to thank Mr. Vickers for 18 coming today. 19 A lot of this information I didn't find out 20 until I read the letter that came to the board. And 21 so I did reach out to Ms. Vickers who has served so 22 faithfully on our PTO up until this past year and 23 visit with her, and much of what we talked about was 24 prior to my coming to the district. 25 I do empathize; no student should have to go</p>	<p>1 and choice for parents, do it about that. Thank you. 2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you, Dr. Fisher. 3 Okay. Questions, Ms. Post? 4 MS. POST: Not yet. 5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Ms. Woods? 6 MS. WOODS: Out of curiosity, with some of these 7 issues did you ever escalate them beyond the teacher? 8 Did you ever take them to any part of the 9 administration? 10 MR. VICKERS: Actually, my wife would've handled 11 all of that. I know that she had spoken with the 12 principal in the past. 13 MS. WOODS: Okay. 14 MR. VICKERS: You know, some of these things, 15 from my understanding, were before he was 16 superintendent at the school. 17 MRS. VICKERS: I did speak to the principal. 18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Can you come up here? 19 MRS. VICKERS: Sorry. 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Oh, I just -- I'll have to 21 swear you in. We -- raise your right hand please. 22 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you're 23 about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth, 24 and nothing but the truth? 25 MRS. VICKERS: Yes, ma'am.</p>

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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Go ahead.</p> <p>2 MRS. VICKERS: I did speak to the principal on</p> <p>3 several of these. The death threats, I did go up</p> <p>4 there and talk to them on that. The -- about the</p> <p>5 dyslexia, which at the time we didn't know it was</p> <p>6 dyslexia, but I did email his teacher and then I</p> <p>7 think I emailed -- I carbon-copied the principal as</p> <p>8 well with that one. And then the oldest daughter, I</p> <p>9 emailed her teacher at one point and then carbon -- I</p> <p>10 didn't get a response; so I carbon -- I sent it again</p> <p>11 and carbon-copied the principal, and it seems like I</p> <p>12 got a response. One of those was earlier, like in</p> <p>13 her 1st or 2nd grade year, and I don't remember</p> <p>14 exactly the response, but it was very vague and we</p> <p>15 never really got any answers. So --</p> <p>16 MS. WOODS: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Mr. Sutton?</p> <p>18 MR. SUTTON: This is a hard one. This is a hard</p> <p>19 one. You know, they -- this family or these students</p> <p>20 have been a part of the population that will, you</p> <p>21 know, reduce Guy Perkins. And as a parent, you know,</p> <p>22 we all do what we need to do for our children, and</p> <p>23 sometimes that means, you know, they have to move to</p> <p>24 a district that you want to be in instead of us</p> <p>25 granting releases. Everyone can -- anyone who wants</p>	<p>1 not plan on eLearning but my wife wanted to take the</p> <p>2 job on full-hand because we noticed an issue and we</p> <p>3 wanted to fix it ourselves, if no one else could.</p> <p>4 MR. SUTTON: Right. I understand that.</p> <p>5 MR. VICKERS: Thank you.</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you. All right.</p> <p>7 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Dugan?</p> <p>8 MR. DUGAN: Yes, sir.</p> <p>9 SECRETARY KEY: So this family was denied in '19</p> <p>10 and '20?</p> <p>11 MR. DUGAN: Yeah, I believe. So I think it's</p> <p>12 been three years.</p> <p>13 MR. VICKERS: Yes, three.</p> <p>14 MR. DUGAN: Three -- yes, sir -- or they've</p> <p>15 tried to --</p> <p>16 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. So I guess -- but they</p> <p>17 would've been eligible for -- upon that denial then</p> <p>18 they would've had preference, if you will --</p> <p>19 MR. DUGAN: Correct. It would have been --</p> <p>20 SECRETARY KEY: -- in the following year?</p> <p>21 MR. DUGAN: That's correct. Yes, sir.</p> <p>22 SECRETARY KEY: Okay.</p> <p>23 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.</p> <p>24 SECRETARY KEY: So if I read this correctly, did</p> <p>25 y'all apply for school choice in the following year?</p>
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<p>1 to transfer can have a legitimate reason, but we</p> <p>2 can't cannibalize a district, you know, just because</p> <p>3 things aren't going well. And I'm not -- you know,</p> <p>4 and I'm not saying you didn't handle it the way you</p> <p>5 ought to handle it. I get that. But I think this is</p> <p>6 a real tough one.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>8 MR. SUTTON: That's my comment.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right.</p> <p>10 MR. VICKERS: Can I make a comment?</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.</p> <p>12 MR. VICKERS: Just I'm not sure how it works</p> <p>13 with home-schooling now if our kids were -- I mean if</p> <p>14 we do not get granted we're going to home-school</p> <p>15 again. And that's not a spiteful mood; that's I want</p> <p>16 my kids to keep moving forward. And to see the</p> <p>17 progress they've made, we're not stopping. If that's</p> <p>18 going to be the best move at this point, we're</p> <p>19 definitely -- my wife will -- I'm going to have to</p> <p>20 find some help for her, but she's definitely going to</p> <p>21 be home-schooling again just to keep the progress</p> <p>22 going. And I'm not sure how that works with being</p> <p>23 home-schooled, if it's considered part of their, you</p> <p>24 know, number of children that are going to school</p> <p>25 there because, like I said, it was pre-Covid. We did</p>	<p>1 MRS. VICKERS: This will be our second year.</p> <p>2 SECRETARY KEY: Come on up to the microphone,</p> <p>3 please.</p> <p>4 MRS. VICKERS: So we applied and then got</p> <p>5 denied. I didn't know there was a hearing that we</p> <p>6 could do anything about it. I just didn't know. So</p> <p>7 we went back to Guy for that one year.</p> <p>8 SECRETARY KEY: And that was the 19-20 school</p> <p>9 year. Is that right?</p> <p>10 MRS. VICKERS: That sounds right. Yes, sir.</p> <p>11 SECRETARY KEY: Okay.</p> <p>12 MRS. VICKERS: And then this past year we home-</p> <p>13 schooled and applied again. So there's -- this is</p> <p>14 the second --</p> <p>15 SECRETARY KEY: Okay.</p> <p>16 MRS. VICKERS: -- time we've applied.</p> <p>17 SECRETARY KEY: So, Mr. Dugan, I guess my</p> <p>18 question is, whatever preference they had following</p> <p>19 the 19-20 application that was denied is just --</p> <p>20 becomes irrelevant if they don't pursue it the</p> <p>21 following year?</p> <p>22 MR. DUGAN: Well, I thought they had priority.</p> <p>23 SECRETARY KEY: I said preference. Priority,</p> <p>24 that's -- priority, yeah.</p> <p>25 MR. DUGAN: Priority.</p>

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<p>1 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah.</p> <p>2 MR. DUGAN: They did, they received priority for</p> <p>3 the following year. Yeah.</p> <p>4 SECRETARY KEY: But if they chose to home-school</p> <p>5 then that priority goes away. Is that --</p> <p>6 MR. DUGAN: I don't know.</p> <p>7 SECRETARY KEY: It's probably not -- it's</p> <p>8 probably not --</p> <p>9 Yeah, Lori --</p> <p>10 MS. FRENO: I think that's correct.</p> <p>11 MR. DUGAN: That's correct. Okay. Yeah.</p> <p>12 SECRETARY KEY: Okay.</p> <p>13 MR. DUGAN: Yes.</p> <p>14 SECRETARY KEY: I just wanted to make sure that</p> <p>15 their timeline -- you know, that we understand,</p> <p>16 because that was one of the -- in the previous</p> <p>17 application there was an issue about the priority for</p> <p>18 the next year in response from one of the districts.</p> <p>19 So just in case that --</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Freno is checking it out</p> <p>21 right now.</p> <p>22 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: I can see her wheels spinning</p> <p>24 back there. So she will --</p> <p>25 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. Okay.</p>	<p>1 they are denied we have three positions open in our</p> <p>2 virtual school with our resources available for them</p> <p>3 to access for dyslexia.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>5 SUPT. FISHER: And that could be something -- it</p> <p>6 could be off-campus, on-campus. But we will</p> <p>7 certainly work with this family.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right.</p> <p>9 Any other discussion while Ms. Dugan -- Mr.</p> <p>10 Dugan and Ms. Freno look?</p> <p>11 Okay. Why don't -- would you mind if we just</p> <p>12 took a 5-minute break? And then we'll -- that'll</p> <p>13 give them time to look that up and then we'll get</p> <p>14 right back.</p> <p>15 So let's take about a 5-minute break and we'll</p> <p>16 come back at 2:50.</p> <p>17 (BREAK: 2:45 P.M. - 2:52 P.M.)</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Mr. Dugan, did you</p> <p>19 figure out the answer to our question?</p> <p>20 MR. DUGAN: I won't take credit for all the</p> <p>21 lawyers back there; so, no. But we do have an answer</p> <p>22 for the Board.</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>24 MR. DUGAN: And that home-schooling, it would</p> <p>25 have voided that priority.</p>
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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: -- get us an answer. All</p> <p>2 right.</p> <p>3 SECRETARY KEY: We can come back to that.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: We'll come back to that in</p> <p>5 just a minute.</p> <p>6 Dr. Moore?</p> <p>7 DR. MOORE: No.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin?</p> <p>9 DR. RANKIN: No questions.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean?</p> <p>11 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Hill?</p> <p>13 DR. HILL: (shaking head from side to side)</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. We're going to give Ms.</p> <p>15 Freno a chance to look it up.</p> <p>16 Dr. Fisher, while we're waiting, can you tell me</p> <p>17 about how many applications that you denied this year</p> <p>18 based on your 3%?</p> <p>19 SUPT. FISHER: We have two in and 13 going out,</p> <p>20 which gave us a net of 11. And then we have an</p> <p>21 additional 20 students, several of which are in the</p> <p>22 same family that are listed beyond that time.</p> <p>23 This particular application came in in March, so</p> <p>24 it was a little bit later in the collection process.</p> <p>25 Ms. Newton, I do want to add we -- again, if</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>2 MR. DUGAN: That gap year voided that priority.</p> <p>3 So if they would've like reapplied that next year</p> <p>4 then they would've had that priority. But because of</p> <p>5 that home-schooling that -- so that priority wouldn't</p> <p>6 be an issue here --</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>8 MR. DUGAN: -- in this case.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you for that</p> <p>10 answer.</p> <p>11 MR. DUGAN: No, thank you for the time.</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any other</p> <p>13 discussion?</p> <p>14 MS. WOODS: To make sure I understand, if they</p> <p>15 were to choose to do the virtual schooling option</p> <p>16 this year and reapplied next year they would retain</p> <p>17 their priority?</p> <p>18 MR. DUGAN: Well, if they un-enrolled. So if</p> <p>19 they were doing the virtual option with Guy Perkins,</p> <p>20 then they would've been fine. But --</p> <p>21 MS. WOODS: No, but I'm talking about for this</p> <p>22 year; if they decided to do the virtual option and</p> <p>23 reapplied next year they would retain priority?</p> <p>24 MR. DUGAN: Yes. If they're with Guy Perkins --</p> <p>25 if they are with the Guy Perkins School District,</p>

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<p>1 yes, ma'am.</p> <p>2 MS. WOODS: Okay.</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. And you did have</p> <p>4 three spots open in your virtual school?</p> <p>5 SUPT. FISHER: (Nodding head up and down)</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right.</p> <p>7 Any other questions or discussion?</p> <p>8 All right. We are ready for a motion to either</p> <p>9 grant or deny the appeal.</p> <p>10 MS. WOODS: I just have a quick question. Do</p> <p>11 y'all understand what -- how -- what -- the dynamic</p> <p>12 that we just asked about?</p> <p>13 MR. VICKERS: I think we do understand that now.</p> <p>14 MRS. VICKERS: I do have a question on that.</p> <p>15 MS. WOODS: Sure.</p> <p>16 MRS. VICKERS: I mean, unfortunately, we will</p> <p>17 not -- we will not do the virtual school, and it has</p> <p>18 nothing specifically there. A lot of our home-</p> <p>19 schooling was paperwork. Hoyt, unfortunately, his</p> <p>20 dyslexia will be online continually. But I don't</p> <p>21 want them on the computer all day. Very much what we</p> <p>22 do is paperwork. They need to know computers and</p> <p>23 they will use it. But virtual work is in front of a</p> <p>24 screen all day and they're too young for that; so,</p> <p>25 unfortunately, that will not be an option again to</p>	<p>1 MRS. VICKERS: Okay.</p> <p>2 MS. WOODS: -- you understood.</p> <p>3 MRS. VICKERS: Thank you.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: The virtual option at -- what</p> <p>5 grade levels were your students again? I'm sorry.</p> <p>6 MRS. VICKERS: We'll be having 3, 5 and 6.</p> <p>7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: 3rd grade, 5th grade, and 6th</p> <p>8 grade.</p> <p>9 MRS. VICKERS: 3rd, 5th and 6th. Uh-huh.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So describe to us your</p> <p>11 virtual option, what it is.</p> <p>12 SUPT. FISHER: We're with Cathy Swan. You've</p> <p>13 seen that probably in the digital plans. And so that</p> <p>14 would be set up where they would have a classroom</p> <p>15 teacher that would be there online with them. My</p> <p>16 understanding is there's some flexibility with some</p> <p>17 seat time there, but that they would be afforded the</p> <p>18 opportunity to go through the Arkansas state</p> <p>19 curriculum that would be graded through our district</p> <p>20 and be given credit within our school district.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Which -- remind me again,</p> <p>22 which co-op did you go with -- or was it through a</p> <p>23 co-op?</p> <p>24 SUPT. FISHER: It was. What is the one that</p> <p>25 Pine Bluff --</p>
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<p>1 apply. We will not. We -- I can't put them in front</p> <p>2 of a screen all day, so they will not be doing that.</p> <p>3 MS. WOODS: Right. I just wanted to make sure.</p> <p>4 MRS. VICKERS: Yes.</p> <p>5 MS. WOODS: Because you had talked about not --</p> <p>6 that first time you were denied not knowing that</p> <p>7 there was --</p> <p>8 MRS. VICKERS: Oh, yes. Correct.</p> <p>9 MS. WOODS: And so I wanted to make sure --</p> <p>10 MRS. VICKERS: We do know.</p> <p>11 MS. WOODS: -- that here you know kind of where</p> <p>12 we can go and what your options are.</p> <p>13 MRS. VICKERS: Uh-huh.</p> <p>14 MS. WOODS: That was my only --</p> <p>15 MRS. VICKERS: So if we do home-school again and</p> <p>16 then apply next year would we still have that --</p> <p>17 MS. WOODS: No, you lose your priority is my</p> <p>18 understanding.</p> <p>19 MRS. VICKERS: No matter if we home-school or</p> <p>20 not?</p> <p>21 MS. WOODS: So, but --</p> <p>22 MRS. VICKERS: Okay.</p> <p>23 MS. WOODS: -- if you've done the virtual</p> <p>24 option, if that was a consideration, you would retain</p> <p>25 your priority. So I just wanted to make sure --</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Oh, APSRC. I see it now.</p> <p>2 Okay. They had a daily sync of Science of Reading</p> <p>3 with K-6. K-2 had a daily small group. Okay. And</p> <p>4 their K-6 was under 35-to-1.</p> <p>5 Okay. All right. Any other questions or</p> <p>6 comments?</p> <p>7 All right. We're ready for a motion to either</p> <p>8 grant or deny the appeal.</p> <p>9 DR. MOORE: I'll move to grant the appeal.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Motion to grant the</p> <p>11 appeal by Dr. Moore.</p> <p>12 DR. RANKIN: And I will second that.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Dr. Rankin.</p> <p>14 All in favor?</p> <p>15 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Those opposed?</p> <p>17 Congratulations.</p> <p>18 G) JUSTICE TAYLOR</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Mr. Dugan.</p> <p>20 MR. DUGAN: The next one, Madam Chair, G, that</p> <p>21 one worked itself out, so we can remove that one from</p> <p>22 the docket.</p> <p>23 h) KEAGAN, KAMRON AND KENNEDY GAMEL</p> <p>24 MR. DUGAN: Number H also, Madam Chair, that one</p> <p>25 has been worked out, so we can remove that one.</p>

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<p>1 i) ROWAN WILLIAMS  2 MR. DUGAN: Number I, Mr. Rowan Williams, that  3 one can also be removed.  4 Ms. -- Madam Chair, if I can make a suggestion,  5 we have three more with Guy Perkins. Would it be --  6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.  7 MR. DUGAN: -- easier since --  8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.  9 MR. DUGAN: -- they're already sworn in and  10 everything?  11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.  12 MR. DUGAN: And so the Sanders family we'll get  13 to very quickly, but get those guys out of here.  14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: That will let Dr. Fisher and  15 those other districts be able to move on.  16 MR. DUGAN: And so it would just be -- come back  17 to Ms. Sanders.  18 k) ASIA HOLT  19 MR. DUGAN: The next one would be Asia Holt;  20 this is K, for members of the Board. This is Ms.  21 Asia Holt. And the school district again would be --  22 the resident district is Guy Perkins and the  23 nonresident district is going to be Quitman School  24 District. And Superintendent Truxler and Dr. Fisher  25 are already sworn in.</p>	<p>1 3% cap.  2 Mr. Barnes is here and will be available for the  3 question-and-answer session.  4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. Thank you.  5 All right. Mr. Barnes.  6 MR. BARNES: Good afternoon. Tim Barnes, Guy  7 Perkins High School Principal.  8 Ms. Holt was --  9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Barnes, did you swear in  10 while ago? I'm sorry.  11 MR. BARNES: Yes, ma'am.  12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.  13 MR. BARNES: I did --  14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: -- Okay. Go ahead.  15 MR. BARNES: -- just because I knew he would get  16 me up here later on.  17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.  18 MR. BARNES: Either he or the Commissioner, one.  19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.  20 MR. BARNES: But she was a part of our T-Bird  21 Academy last year. She did very well the first three  22 nine weeks in the academy; fourth quarter, didn't do  23 so well. There were communications between our  24 coordinator for the academy and Mr. Holt and the  25 teachers. I think there was an issue where</p>
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<p>1 So family members for the Holts, would y'all  2 come up? Good morning, sir. And Ms. Newton is going  3 to swear you in, sir. Come on up here.  4 MR. HOLT: I've never done anything like this.  5 MR. DUGAN: No, you're okay.  6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Welcome, Mr. Holt. We're glad  7 you're here. Would you raise your right hand please?  8 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you're  9 about to give shall be the truth, the whole truth,  10 and nothing but the truth?  11 MR. HOLT: Yes, I do.  12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.  13 All right. We are ready for the -- let me get  14 it straight -- nonresident district. Mr. Truxler.  15 SUPT. TRUXLER: Thank you. At the April 19th  16 board meeting, the board of directors approved the  17 Holt application for freedom of choice, and again was  18 denied on the 3% by Dr. Fisher from Guy Perkins. We  19 would be proud to have the Holt family.  20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.  21 SUPT. TRUXLER: Thank you.  22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you.  23 Dr. Fisher.  24 SUPT. FISHER: We received this application on  25 April 14th and at that point in time we had met our</p>	<p>1 something -- Mr. Holt didn't -- he didn't get real  2 specific about that. But she was able to go through  3 the program for the whole year and do well in the  4 virtual option that we have.  5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So she was virtual last  6 year?  7 MR. BARNES: Yes.  8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.  9 MR. BARNES: And so -- and again to even coming  10 back, we do have that virtual option for grades 7  11 through 12 again at Guy Perkins. And we also have  12 some additional things we're doing onsite for  13 students that are coming back, that are more advanced  14 and more critical in those areas for those high  15 school students coming in, whether it be in the  16 academics or whether it be in the vocational  17 programs, et al. So we're doing a good job to get  18 that -- get the whole child and get those students  19 prepared for when they graduate, they're ready either  20 for the workforce or for the military, or if they go  21 into college level. So I think we're definitely on  22 the right track.  23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.  24 MR. BARNES: You know, that's the background for  25 this for this.</p>

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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you, Mr.  2 Barnes.  3 Mr. Holt.  4 MR. HOLT: I went to school at Guy, so I'm  5 familiar with Guy. I went to high school at Guy, and  6 I moved away, and then I come back with my other two  7 kids that are -- one's fixing to turn 25, one's  8 fixing to turn 27. So, you know, we've been kind of  9 dedicated to Guy. My other two kids wanted to go to  10 Quitman also. There's just things that Quitman  11 offered that Guy didn't -- well, a few things. I  12 couldn't do it because I didn't have a second car  13 then. I mean, you know, we live in Guy and, you  14 know, it's further to go and I didn't -- I just  15 didn't have -- wasn't able to take them, you know,  16 and I didn't.  17 Yes, Asia was virtual last year, and, yes, her  18 grades did go down a little bit last year. We were  19 able to bring them back up. But, of course, got  20 bored; she was on virtual all year, you know.  21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Right.  22 MR. HOLT: Towards the end of the year she  23 wanted to go, you know, go to summer. So, yeah, they  24 went down; we brought them back up.  25 As far as communication, that was with the</p>	<p>1 two graduated, to now, they have changed principals  2 and superintendents so many times the kids can't even  3 keep up with it -- and the teachers, you know, and  4 the coaches and everything. And Quitman is more  5 consistent; their teachers, the principals,  6 superintendents have been there for quite a while.  7 And that to me is important because the kids get a  8 bond with the teachers, they get a bond with the  9 superintendents, the principals, the counselors, and  10 it's like family. They don't have to go through  11 changes of everybody all the time. The kids are more  12 comfortable, you know, in a situation like that.  13 My daughter, of course, came from Florida,  14 bigger schools, and she came here. Yes, Guy is a  15 small hometown school and that's what it is. Yes,  16 they are trying to upgrade, you know, trying to get  17 up their -- just -- they just -- they can't compete  18 with Quitman and Greenbrier, all the other schools  19 around them. Guy don't even have a football team.  20 When I first moved -- we first moved back here in  21 2007 -- I lived in Siloam Springs, moved back here in  22 2007 -- they had talked about -- they'd even built a  23 city park behind the school and said that the city  24 was going to help them create a football field, a  25 soccer field, and everything. The goals were there,</p>
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<p>1 school too. We tried to communicate. Every time  2 we'd call the person that was over their virtual they  3 were like, "Well, I don't know who does that" or  4 "You're going to have to talk to this" -- when the  5 virtual first started, we went to the meeting at the  6 first of the year to get it started. The guy that  7 was supposed to be over it said if you would have any  8 questions in any part of the year, "you get a-hold of  9 me first." Well, okay. So there was times we had  10 questions and we called him up; you know, he said,  11 "Go talk to the teachers" or talk to such-and-such.  12 So we had to go through channels to try to get the  13 answers, which we shouldn't have had to. It  14 should've went through one person.  15 My -- let's back-up here. Asia came here in  16 2017. I got full custody of her. She was in Florida  17 with her mom, and she was taken away; we had to go to  18 court, I had to get custody. I was going to send her  19 to Quitman when she got here, I just didn't have the  20 transportation to get her there. But I wanted to get  21 her into Quitman. I don't have nothing against the  22 principal or superintendent now, because we'd gone  23 there when she first started in 2017. No. Yeah,  24 they weren't there; it was different ones.  25 And that's another issue I had is since my other</p>	<p>1 grass. They haven't done nothing to it. And I  2 understand that the school said that they can't  3 afford to create a football team because of  4 insurance. Well, if you can't do that, how can you  5 do your other stuff? Quitman is now in the process  6 of building a football field, a new one with a four  7 or five lane track around it. Guy, their track -- my  8 son -- I know this because my son was in track and  9 cross-country and every other sport, but they ran up  10 the side streets in Guy to run and do their running  11 and stuff. To me, that's not safe because there's  12 cars and everybody. I know they use the park  13 sometimes. They use the park because the park has a  14 track where people can walk and stuff; they use it.  15 Quitman is building that.  16 When we went to do the tour of Quitman -- we did  17 go take a tour of Quitman when we decided to do this,  18 and my daughter, she was excited. When we walked out  19 of there, she said, "Dad," she said, "This school  20 looks like a school that you see in movies." And it  21 is. I mean the set-up that they have when you walk  22 in just made you feel like, you know, it was a  23 school. And everybody -- the teachers would say hi  24 to the students and stop them and say, "How are you  25 doing today? Are you doing okay?" You know, it was</p>

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<p>1 like a family. And my daughter says that feeling is  2 not at Guy; it's just not there. They -- she said  3 when she -- she's excited about -- she loves school.  4 She is. She's usually an A-B student and -- but she  5 isn't excited to go to school because she said when  6 she gets there the environment just brings the mood  7 down. And when we went to go -- and we walked  8 through all of Quitman school, I mean, and it's  9 pretty cool, really is. They have a nursing class  10 that she might be interested in taking CPR. But they  11 have a nursing class, and it's big, and you walk into  12 it and, you know, it looks like a hospital. They  13 have everything they need. They have beds -- they  14 have four; brand-new CPR equipment and, you know,  15 they have everything. Their band class is -- she's  16 -- my daughter has been in band class and it's like  17 three or four times bigger. They have every  18 instrument that they need, you know, and everything.  19 They play when they -- Quitman has a football team  20 that they're rebuilding; but once they rebuild it,  21 the band plays for the football team at every game.  22 Another thing, I have family that lives there in  23 Quitman. My brother's wife has a bakery that is  24 right across from the school; so if there's anything  25 for some reason I can't go get her, my sister-in-law</p>	<p>1 To me, having a child, with what's going on in the  2 world that makes me feel safe for her. You know,  3 that makes me feel good that they have that for their  4 kids and it's in -- they have it in every classroom,  5 you know, so they don't even have to go anywhere. If  6 there's a shooting in school or whatever, it's right  7 there in the classroom, lunchroom, you know,  8 whatever, you know, and they just offer it. They do.  9 And I understand what they're saying that Guy is  10 trying to compete with the other schools. I  11 understand that, you know. But I've dealt with  12 schools with Guy too. And she only has -- she goes  13 in 10th grade. She doesn't want to do the virtual.  14 She got bored with it. She wants to interact. This  15 pandemic was -- yeah, at first she thought it was  16 cool, but at the end she was like, "Dad, I want to go  17 back to school, but I don't really want to go back to  18 Guy. Can we do something else?" So I talked to my  19 sister-in-law, my brother; I go talk to the principal  20 and superintendent at Quitman -- we know them real  21 well because their kids -- they've got three kids and  22 their kids went there. So we went and talked to them  23 and all that. And, you know, I don't want her to go  24 somewhere she don't want to go, that we don't feel  25 comfortable going to, and --</p>
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<p>1 can get her or she can just walk right across the  2 street to the bakery. They have a daughter, my  3 niece, that is in school too there; she's one grade  4 above Asia. She also drives, she has her own car.  5 So that's another, you know, way, if I can't go get  6 her from -- you know, she can take her to our house  7 or she can take her to their house. My other  8 daughter lives in Quitman too, maybe, what, a quarter  9 of a mile away or a half -- maybe an eighth to a  10 quarter of a mile away in town. So, you know, they  11 could -- she could go there if I'm running late or,  12 you know, whatever happens.  13 I also feel safer for her to go there because  14 Guy, when they had -- they added onto Guy two years  15 ago and they have like a hallway for tornadoes in  16 there. It's just a hallway and that's where  17 everybody piles up, you know, and they said it's  18 supposed to withstand an F1. I don't know. And  19 Quitman, they have shelters. They have -- here it is  20 back -- they had shelters put in every classroom and  21 cafeteria and gymnasium for -- they're metal  22 shelters; they're government grade metal shelters for  23 tornadoes and for in-school shootings. They're for  24 that too. They lock from the inside; they can -- you  25 know, they can lock it or unlock it from the inside.</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Holt.  2 We'll see if anyone has any questions. I need to  3 give Dr. Fisher a little bit of time, or Mr. Barnes.  4 Do either one of you have something you want to  5 say?  6 And then we will give you more opportunity in  7 just a minute.  8 MR. BARNES: Thank you, Madam Chairman.  9 Just a little bit of background on myself too,  10 where I come from, I've worked here at the State  11 Department for 14 years in Accreditation. I'm very  12 familiar -- probably visited 98% of the school  13 districts, except the ones that have probably been  14 built in the last few years, and know a ton of  15 superintendents and know enough of the principals.  16 And I'll tell you what I've told people when I did  17 the onsite visits and met with superintendents, and  18 even principals, you know, "I can't do anything about  19 what happened years ago; all I can tell you is here's  20 the line and this is where we go forward." And  21 that's what we're doing here.  22 As far as stability is concerned, probably --  23 Commissioner could probably tell you -- I'm not going  24 anywhere. I was very happy; I would've finished my  25 career here at this state agency. It's a wonderful</p>



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<p>1 agency, with wonderful people that work here. But</p> <p>2 I'm probably not going to go anywhere at Guy-Perkins;</p> <p>3 I'm there for the long-haul, and we are instituting</p> <p>4 some things.</p> <p>5 Academics, I can tell you that any course that's</p> <p>6 being offered at any school district in the state of</p> <p>7 Arkansas is offered at Guy-Perkins. Concurrent</p> <p>8 credit is offered. We have MOUs with Conway</p> <p>9 Vocational Center and with UACCM; so if nursing is</p> <p>10 something that she wants to do, she can do it at no</p> <p>11 cost. We have those agreements.</p> <p>12 As far as the communications part, to kind of go</p> <p>13 back with our virtual academy, the parents, as well</p> <p>14 as the school district, had to sign-off on basically</p> <p>15 an MOU too, an agreement for the parents and the</p> <p>16 students. And one of those things was that parents</p> <p>17 needed to have, if possible, daily communications</p> <p>18 with the teachers; every teacher has a T-Bird email</p> <p>19 account, every teacher you can get a-hold of by</p> <p>20 telephone; our coordinator, Coach Hale, same thing.</p> <p>21 So as far as communication goes, it's a -- it has to</p> <p>22 be a two-way street. And I can guarantee you that if</p> <p>23 that didn't happen and I was made aware of it, it</p> <p>24 would've only happened one time because it would've</p> <p>25 been taken care of that time. So at no time have I</p>	<p>1 and a lot of things that are going to happen next</p> <p>2 year and in the near future.</p> <p>3 So I know perception is reality. That's why we</p> <p>4 talk about telling our story, because a lot of times</p> <p>5 people go out and tell your story and that's not the</p> <p>6 story that's actually the true story. It's things</p> <p>7 that -- again, presently, if a person had known about</p> <p>8 it, or a teacher or administrator, they could deal</p> <p>9 with it. But I can't do it -- I can't deal with</p> <p>10 stuff that happened, something, you know, two or</p> <p>11 three years ago; that wasn't on my watch. But I</p> <p>12 guarantee you that things that do come up and have</p> <p>13 come up, they are dealt with and they are dealt with</p> <p>14 immediately, and especially when it comes to students</p> <p>15 and student safety.</p> <p>16 We have a Resource Officer that's there. We did</p> <p>17 have a tornado actually that came directly over our</p> <p>18 campus in the sky, but we had all of our students in</p> <p>19 our building. And it is constructed -- it's just not</p> <p>20 a basic hallway; it is constructed to be a shelter</p> <p>21 that is not only open for the school but it's open</p> <p>22 for the community. We probably had about 30 people</p> <p>23 that made it and were there. And we've opened it up</p> <p>24 several times when it's been bad weather, because we</p> <p>25 have people in the area that can get there and we</p>
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<p>1 been made aware at any time during the year that</p> <p>2 there was any type of communication problem between</p> <p>3 the Holt family and with any teacher or with Coach</p> <p>4 Hale on our virtual academy.</p> <p>5 So as we go through the process, I mean, we can</p> <p>6 talk about athletics and things, of course. We look</p> <p>7 at things with small schools, and we are looking at</p> <p>8 declaring to do some more sports at Guy-Perkins.</p> <p>9 But, again, you have to have the right person that's</p> <p>10 going to coach it. And if we're going to do</p> <p>11 something, my philosophy is you do it and you do it</p> <p>12 well or you don't do it at all. There's no reason to</p> <p>13 throw a biscuit over the wall and see if it sticks,</p> <p>14 you know. You're either going to do it or you're</p> <p>15 going to do it well. And so -- and that's been our</p> <p>16 philosophy.</p> <p>17 I wish that Mr. Holt and his family and Asia</p> <p>18 would've come up to the school for me to give them a</p> <p>19 tour and I would've gladly toured them with the</p> <p>20 campus and I would've told them some of the things</p> <p>21 that were going on this year, which was a hard year.</p> <p>22 I mean I tell people even having 33 years of</p> <p>23 experience I was year-one with a lot of people. But</p> <p>24 he would've been made aware of a lot of the things</p> <p>25 that are happening -- that happened this past year</p>	<p>1 open the school for the community.</p> <p>2 So we feel like we're doing an excellent job.</p> <p>3 But as you've heard this whole day, there's always</p> <p>4 room for improvement, and we're going to improve and</p> <p>5 we're going to get better -- and that's the</p> <p>6 challenge. That's the fun thing about being in</p> <p>7 education and being in that learning lab. I mean the</p> <p>8 only time that failure happens is if you don't try.</p> <p>9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes.</p> <p>10 MR. BARNES: If you don't try, that's 100%</p> <p>11 failure. But my motto -- and you can probably go to</p> <p>12 the students -- and I invite even you on that State</p> <p>13 Board to give me a holler when you're going up 65;</p> <p>14 just turn on 25 and come up and see me, and you talk</p> <p>15 to students that are there; you ask them, "What's Mr.</p> <p>16 Barnes' motto," and they'll tell you, "Failure is not</p> <p>17 an option." It's not. We had 23 students -- yeah,</p> <p>18 23 students in our summer school, most were credit</p> <p>19 recovery. We recovered 39-1/2 semester credit hours.</p> <p>20 We recovered probably over -- around 30 hours for our</p> <p>21 7th and 8th graders. I mean business. You're not</p> <p>22 going to fail, and we're going to give you the</p> <p>23 support and everything that you need to make sure</p> <p>24 you're going to be successful.</p> <p>25 And that's my job and that's my calling, Dr.</p>

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<p>1 Hill. That's what I'm going to do.</p> <p>2 And so we look forward to any of our families --</p> <p>3 we have picked up students this summer. We're</p> <p>4 probably at a plus-five with students coming to the</p> <p>5 high school, because they're aware. And I don't have</p> <p>6 a problem with telling other superintendents from</p> <p>7 other districts, "I'm going to come get our kids</p> <p>8 back. You've had them long enough. I'm going to</p> <p>9 come get them back." And they know it --</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>11 MR. BARNES: -- because we've done some things.</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Good. Thank you.</p> <p>13 MR. BARNES: Good for them. But we're ready.</p> <p>14 We're ready. We're ready for this family. We're</p> <p>15 ready to do whatever we can for this family, and any</p> <p>16 family that's in that community, to make sure their</p> <p>17 child is ready and prepared when they graduate.</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you, Mr. Barnes.</p> <p>19 MR. BARNES: Thank you. Thank you, Madam</p> <p>20 Chairman.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.</p> <p>22 SECRETARY KEY: Before you leave, Tim -- so just</p> <p>23 to say, you know, Mr. Barnes is principal, but he was</p> <p>24 here for -- how many years?</p> <p>25 MR. BARNES: Fourteen.</p>	<p>1 Good.</p> <p>2 MR. BARNES: I won't lose that part either. And</p> <p>3 like I said -- another thing is I serve on a local</p> <p>4 school board and I serve on a local city council.</p> <p>5 I'm just up for punishment every month, you know, the</p> <p>6 second or third month of every -- week of every</p> <p>7 month. So I understand. And I understand the</p> <p>8 situation that you guys are in as well, so -- on the</p> <p>9 State Board.</p> <p>10 But we will provide whatever support is</p> <p>11 necessary, again, for every student and for every</p> <p>12 family in our district to make sure that they're</p> <p>13 successful.</p> <p>14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you, Mr. Barnes.</p> <p>15 Student-focused, it'll draw them in every time.</p> <p>16 All right. Any more discussion from the Board?</p> <p>17 Anyone on this side?</p> <p>18 Over here?</p> <p>19 Anyone have a comment or a question?</p> <p>20 Okay. This is the Holt family. So we are ready</p> <p>21 for a motion to either grant or deny the appeal.</p> <p>22 Pleasure of the Board?</p> <p>23 DR. RANKIN: I'll make a motion to grant the</p> <p>24 appeal.</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Motion to grant it by</p>
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<p>1 SECRETARY KEY: Fourteen. So I had him for five</p> <p>2 or so, six or so. And so Mr. Barnes definitely</p> <p>3 understands the type of culture that, you know, we</p> <p>4 were trying to create here, and have created here,</p> <p>5 and has been instrumental in that, and we're just</p> <p>6 very proud that he got this opportunity.</p> <p>7 You said something that you would've been happy</p> <p>8 to take them on a tour. I'm sure that offer is still</p> <p>9 open --</p> <p>10 MR. BARNES: Oh, yes.</p> <p>11 SECRETARY KEY: -- and you'd be happy --</p> <p>12 MR. BARNES: Or any --</p> <p>13 SECRETARY KEY: -- to take the whole family or</p> <p>14 anybody else.</p> <p>15 MR. BARNES: Anybody. We've had -- and that's</p> <p>16 -- some of the inquiries that we've had, that's the</p> <p>17 first thing that we say is, "Come, let us give you a</p> <p>18 tour of the campus. Let's talk, have a serious talk</p> <p>19 about the academics and vocational opportunities."</p> <p>20 And I will say probably on my deathbed, if you were</p> <p>21 to ask me, I mean, what's the mission of the ADE,</p> <p>22 it's going to be "We're going to be the leader in</p> <p>23 student-focused learning in the United States." So</p> <p>24 I've got it and I won't lose it.</p> <p>25 SECRETARY KEY: You've still got it. Okay.</p>	<p>1 Dr. Rankin.</p> <p>2 DR. MOORE: I'll second that.</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Second by Dr. Moore.</p> <p>4 All in favor?</p> <p>5 (MAJORITY CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>7 MS. WOODS: Aye.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay, one opposed.</p> <p>9 All right. Congratulations, Mr. Holt.</p> <p>10 m) ABEL HEWITT</p> <p>11 MR. DUGAN: Next one, Madam Chair, we have, with</p> <p>12 the Guy-Perkins/Quitman School District, is going to</p> <p>13 be item V.5.m. and that's the family of Abel Hewitt.</p> <p>14 Mr. Truxler and Dr. Fisher are still under oath.</p> <p>15 And so if you would, all right, come on up,</p> <p>16 guys, and get sworn in.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You've had a long day, but we</p> <p>18 finally made it to you. So if you would, raise your</p> <p>19 right hand please. Do you swear or affirm that the</p> <p>20 testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,</p> <p>21 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?</p> <p>22 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. We'll hear from</p> <p>24 Quitman first, I believe. Okay.</p> <p>25 SUPT. TRUXLER: Again, the Board of Directors</p>

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<p>1 approved the Hewitt application at the April 19th 2 board meeting. And we would love to have the family. 3 Thank you. 4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. Guy- 5 Perkins, Dr. Fisher. 6 DR. FISHER: We received their application on 7 April 9th and we would love to have this 8 kindergartner start with us and learn with us. Thank 9 you. 10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Hewitt family. 11 MRS. HEWITT: Hello. Our son, he's five years 12 old and he's going to start -- 13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Would you mind stepping closer 14 -- 15 MRS. HEWITT: Sure. 16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: -- to the microphone? Thank 17 you. 18 MRS. HEWITT: Hi. Our son is five years old and 19 he's starting kindergarten this fall. We will be 20 purchasing some land in Quitman School District by 21 the end of the year. Our realtor is working on that. 22 He starts school obviously in the fall; so we want to 23 start him in Quitman before the end of the year, 24 instead of having him make new friends -- of course, 25 this is kindergarten, this is his first time going</p>	<p>1 diligence and making sure everything is good on our 2 end before we do that. 3 MS. WOODS: But you have started looking and -- 4 MRS. HEWITT: Yes, ma'am. 5 MS. WOODS: Okay. 6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 7 SECRETARY KEY: Just make sure if they say it's 8 in Quitman that it's in Quitman. 9 MR. HEWITT: I had learned that today. We've 10 learned a lot here today. 11 I do have a quick question for Guy though. So 12 this tornado shelter, anybody can come in there 13 during a storm? 14 DR. FISHER: Yes. 15 MR. HEWITT: Is it where the children are? 16 MR. BARNES: No, it's -- 17 MR. HEWITT: It is separated? 18 MR. BARNES: -- separated by our classrooms. 19 MR. HEWITT: Okay. 10-4. Thank you. 20 DR. FISHER: Animals too. 21 MR. BARNES: Yeah, pets. 22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Sutton? 23 MR. SUTTON: No questions. 24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Dr. Hill? 25 DR. HILL: No, ma'am.</p>
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<p>1 into public school. He's very nervous, but I think 2 he's going to do great. But I don't want to switch 3 him three months in, when we're definitely -- when 4 it's a definite thing. 5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. Anything 6 else? 7 Okay. All right. Let's see if we have any 8 questions or discussion over here. 9 Ms. Post? 10 MS. POST: (shaking head from side to side) 11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Woods? 12 MS. WOODS: When you say "definitely," do you 13 already have a plot of land picked out or it's just 14 like a dream to move to Quitman? 15 MRS. HEWITT: No, ma'am, it's not a dream; it's 16 a definite thing that we are doing. Our realtor is 17 finding us a plot of land. 18 MS. WOODS: Okay. So you don't have one 19 currently? 20 MR. HEWITT: We've looked at several but we 21 haven't decided -- 22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You'll have to come to the 23 microphone. I'm sorry. 24 MR. HEWITT: We've looked at several but we 25 haven't decided on one yet. We're doing our due-</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Dean? 2 MS. DEAN: (shaking head from side to side) 3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Rankin? 4 DR. RANKIN: No. 5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Dr. Moore? 6 DR. MOORE: No. 7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any other 8 questions or discussion? 9 All right. Well, we are ready for a motion to 10 grant or deny the appeal. 11 MR. SUTTON: Motion to grant. 12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Motion to grant the 13 appeal by Mr. Sutton. 14 DR. MOORE: I'll second. 15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Dr. Moore. 16 All in favor? 17 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES) 18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed? 19 Okay. Congratulations. That was a long time to 20 sit for that, wasn't it? 21 o) CONNOR POST 22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Mr. Dugan. All 23 right. 24 MR. DUGAN: Next one we have, Madam Chair, is 25 going to be O dealing with the Guy-Perkins School</p>

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<p>1 District. I thought I had it corrected, but not.  2 It's -- the Greenbrier School District is the  3 nonresident district, not the Midland School  4 District. But we have the Post family here. They --  5 she had supplied me some extra attachments last week  6 before -- after the -- I didn't have them posted; so  7 I'm going to pass those out to the Board and then  8 also give one for the court reporter.  9 But if I could, Madam Chair, get the Post family  10 sworn in.  11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. The Post family --  12 okay. If you're planning on giving any testimony,  13 come forward please. All right. Raise your right  14 hand. Do you swear or affirm that the testimony  15 you're about to give shall be the truth, the whole  16 truth, and nothing but the truth?  17 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)  18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.  19 All right. We will start with the nonresident  20 district, which is Mr. Spainhour, Greenbrier.  21 SUPT. GREENBRIER: Good afternoon. Of course,  22 we denied out of obligation. We'd be glad to have  23 them. They've been in our district for quite  24 sometime, so we'd love to keep them. Thank you.  25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Dr. Fisher.</p>	<p>1 since he was in kindergarten, and we made sure that  2 when we purchased this lot that everything lined up  3 with that because we did think our house would sell a  4 little quicker. Anyhow, so we didn't -- we sold our  5 house and we didn't have a place to go. But my  6 husband owns a shop in Guy-Perkins, so we built a  7 little apartment inside there until we could build on  8 our lot. But I wanted to do the right thing and  9 like, you know, put in the school choice just to let  10 them know, "Hey, Connor is actually here right now."  11 But I've also included things from our architect and  12 everything showing that our plans to build are  13 somewhere between September and January. We're just  14 trying to get the architect to make sure she can get  15 us the plans and that we can move forward. I've also  16 included something from our bank showing that we've  17 been in the works with this, that we're approved, and  18 it shows that 36 Ryan's Way, which is our address  19 where our lot is, that it is in Greenbrier School  20 District and it is still zoned for Eastside.  21 But anyhow, I just wanted to come before y'all  22 and just kind of show we're not -- you know, there's  23 nothing against Guy School District or anything like  24 that. We've just kind of fallen into a little gap  25 here --</p>
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<p>1 SUPT. FISHER: Just for the record, we received  2 this request on April 26th and we would certainly  3 love for Connor to come and attend with us.  4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. Ms. Post.  5 MS. POST: Hi, Board. I am Meredith Post; I'm  6 Connor's mom. In April of this year -- we have kind  7 of a crazy story. We had our house listed for like  8 three years and it never sold, nobody ever looked at  9 it. Well, with the housing market the way it turned  10 we had taken our house off the market, and somebody  11 just approached us and said, "We want to buy your  12 house." So -- and like I said, we'd taken it off the  13 market. We had another lot, you know, we had these  14 dreams of building and -- anyhow, I'd just put those  15 to bed. Well, someone approached us in April and  16 said, "We'd like to buy your house," so we said, "Of  17 course." But that left us in a bit of a situation  18 because at that point the rental property in  19 Greenbrier was taken up because so many people were  20 buying houses. So we have this lot and in this  21 paperwork it does show that we have had it since  22 2018. It is in the Greenbrier School District; it's  23 also in the same school that Connor goes to. Connor  24 is going into the 4th grade. He has attended the  25 Eastside School in the Greenbrier School District</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.  2 MRS. POST: -- that -- and I would really like  3 for Connor to be able to continue at Greenbrier  4 because he's been there for so long. I would hate  5 for him to go to another school for like six months.  6 I don't know what that would do to him. So thank you  7 for your consideration.  8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: I think this is exactly what  9 the appeal process is for, for these types of  10 situations that happen from time to time.  11 But do we have any questions or comments from  12 the Board?  13 Okay. Okay. All right. So we are ready for a  14 motion to grant or deny the appeal.  15 MS. DEAN: I move to -- I'm sorry --  16 MS. WOODS: I'll second that.  17 MS. DEAN: I'm sorry. Go ahead. Okay. I  18 didn't see you.  19 I move to grant the appeal.  20 MS. WOODS: I will second that one.  21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. You got that?  22 All in favor?  23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)  24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?  25 Mr. Dugan, I'm going to get you to take this</p>

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<p>1 back up since this has got personal information on 2 it. We're going to put it right back up here. 3 All right. Thank you. Thank you for being 4 here. 5 j) AUBREY SANDERS 6 MR. DUGAN: So we're going to go back to J, 7 Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you for letting me get 8 Guy-Perkins and Quitman situated. This is going to 9 be the school choice appeal of Aubrey Sanders. The 10 resident school district is the Malvern School 11 District. This is also a 3% -- a denial based on the 12 3% capacity. And the nonresident district is the 13 Magnet Cove School District. I know Mr. Roberts is 14 here. 15 So, a representative from the Sanders family? 16 All right. And the Magnet Cove School District? 17 Come on up. 18 Madam Chair, if I could get these folks sworn 19 in. 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Are you ready to 21 raise your right hand? Do you swear or affirm that 22 the testimony you're about to give shall be the 23 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? 24 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY) 25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you.</p>	<p>1 In May, I contacted Magnet School, as my children 2 would be going to Poyen School and I'd purchased a 3 home in Butterfield which is two miles to Magnet; 4 it's five miles to Malvern. When I purchased that 5 home I was told it was Magnet Cove, which made sense; 6 it was just a few miles down the road, two miles. 7 When I called the school in May to see if I had to do 8 anything special because my kids -- my child was 9 going from Poyen to there, that's when I found out 10 the school district was Malvern. And, of course, I 11 submitted a school choice and I was denied. That was 12 -- I think it was in May, and then we got a letter I 13 think in June. 14 So just a little bit about why I would like for 15 her to go to Magnet: it is a smaller school district 16 than Malvern, very similar to Poyen. A little bit 17 more further than that, I guess a little story behind 18 that is my son -- he is 18, he just graduated at 19 Poyen. Sorry, I get a little emotional. When he was 20 in kindergarten his father passed away in an 21 accident. He has ADHD; he started acting out 22 behaviorally, I guess, at school, so much that, you 23 know, he even went to a day treatment program. After 24 four years there, I moved towards Benton and Haskell 25 where we changed school districts and he was okay</p>
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<p>1 All right. So we will hear from the nonresident 2 district first. 3 SUPT. THOMAS: My name is Danny Thomas; I'm the 4 superintendent of the Magnet Cove School District. 5 And I want to thank the State Board for hearing Ms. 6 Sanders' appeal today. 7 I received a letter from the Malvern School 8 District superintendent, Mr. Golden, stating that 9 Aubrey's school choice application to Magnet Cove had 10 been denied based on Malvern reaching their 3% 11 student cap. And so, in accordance with law, we 12 cannot accept the student unless the State Board 13 granted this appeal. And we would love to welcome 14 Aubrey into our 2nd grade class at our elementary 15 school where Panther pride runs deep. And we would 16 love to have her if the State Board grants that 17 request. I'll be happy to answer any questions if 18 and when you ask those of me. 19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Mr. Roberts. 20 MR. ROBERTS: Nothing to add earlier, other 21 than, you know, we'd love the chance to provide an 22 education to the student. Thank you. 23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Welcome. 24 MRS. SANDERS: Hello. So my daughter is Aubrey 25 Sanders. She's going to be going into the 2nd grade.</p>	<p>1 there maybe the first year. But it just kind of -- 2 the same issues, a lot of behavioral things. He 3 blamed God for taking his father. 2014, we started 4 going to this church there in Poyen and right away I 5 knew there was something different. It was a smaller 6 community. He fell in love with the youth group. 7 And so a few months later, which is the end of that 8 school year, I did do school choice to move him to 9 Poyen School. So for those next six years he never 10 had any more issues. I will say in '14 he had an 11 encounter with God at a camp meeting and I do believe 12 God pulled that oppression off of him from that 13 sadness and all that. So I definitely give God the 14 glory for his turnaround. But I also know, you know, 15 a small school district, they loved on him. It was 16 home. 17 And so when I -- shortly after that, I actually 18 went through, I guess four years ago, a divorce. 19 It's never easy for any child, and my daughter was 3 20 at the time. And so I ended up, you know, renting a 21 home outside of Poyen and so we stayed in that school 22 district. She was there for pre-K, 1st -- pre-K -- 23 I'm sorry -- pre-K, kindergarten, and 1st, and then I 24 purchased my home in Butterfield which is where I am 25 now.</p>

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<p>1 And so, again, I'm -- my preference is Magnet 2 just because we do know people there; she has cheer 3 teammates that she -- that goes also to that school. 4 Malvern is a lot bigger school. She's not used to -- 5 she's very shy, so she's not really used to -- she 6 gets intimidated with a lot of people. And so I just 7 would have a preference of going to Magnet. Because 8 it's a smaller school district, similar to Poyen, so 9 it won't be a big adjustment for her, and since she 10 does already know people there is why we're asking to 11 go there. 12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you. 13 MRS. SANDERS: Okay. 14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any questions on 15 this side? 16 Okay. Over here, anyone have questions? 17 Do you have anything you want to add? 18 MR. ROBERTS: (shaking head from side to side) 19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Then we are ready 20 for a motion to either grant or deny the appeal. 21 MS. DEAN: I move to grant the appeal. 22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. We've got a motion by 23 Ms. Dean to grant the appeal. 24 Do we have a second? 25 DR. MOORE: I'll second that.</p>	<p>1 Villegas. 2 And so if I could, Madam Chair, get them sworn 3 in. 4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: If you're going to be giving 5 testimony -- Ms. Fensom, do you have video? 6 MS. FENSOM: Mr. Dugan, or Taylor, has me turned 7 off, so I can't turn it back on. 8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. We'll trust 9 that you're raising your right hand. All right. Do 10 you swear or affirm that the testimony you're about 11 to give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and 12 nothing but the truth? 13 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY) 14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Kellogg? 15 MR. KELLOGG: (Zoom audio distortion) 16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Okay. 17 MR. KELLOGG: No, ma'am. As far as a statement 18 from Prairie Grove, these two students have been in 19 school in Prairie Grove and we're certainly fine if 20 they stay. And we'll honor and respect the Board's 21 decision. Appreciate your service. Thank you. 22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. 23 Who was from Lincoln? 24 MR. DUGAN: Ms. Claybrook. 25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Claybrook.</p>
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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Second by Dr. Moore. 2 All in favor? 3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES) 4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed? 5 All right. Congratulations. 6 MRS. SANDERS: Thank you. 7 1) AVA AND TANNER VILLEGAS 8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right, Ladies and 9 Gentlemen, the next one is going to be -- I was just 10 texting with the resident district and the parent. 11 So if, Ms. Fensom, you can hear me, go ahead and 12 come off mute. And then also Mr. Kellogg can take 13 his off mute. 14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Which I'm -- where are you at? 15 MR. DUGAN: So this one is going to be number L. 16 This is Ava and Tanner Villegas. 17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 18 MR. DUGAN: And this is also another 3% cap, 19 Ladies and Gentlemen. The resident district is 20 Lincoln School District, and Ms. Claybrook is going 21 to be representing the Lincoln School District. And 22 then we also have the Prairie Grove School District 23 who Mr. David Kellogg is going to be representing. 24 And the parent is going to be Ms. Kendra Fensom and 25 she's going to be representing Ava and Tanner</p>	<p>1 MS. CLAYBROOK: Hi. I'm Jana Claybrook, the 2 Learning Services Director here at Lincoln School 3 District. 4 We denied the application based on the 3% cap. 5 And so we're awaiting your decision. 6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. 7 Ms. Fensom. 8 MS. FENSOM: Yes, ma'am. 9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Go ahead. 10 MS. FENSOM: Okay. Basically, I'm a single mom 11 of three kids and I have one coming in September, so 12 number four. Ava had started pre-K in Prairie Grove, 13 to where Tanner had done pre-K for two years in 14 Lincoln. He was denied the last -- the first part of 15 the second year and then was able to go. And then my 16 youngest son was denied last year. Basically, I've 17 been driving Fayetteville to Prairie Grove to make 18 sure that they've all got to where they need to be. 19 Well, we had to move to Lincoln in December, based on 20 -- because I got Section 8. 21 I just really don't want them bounced around. 22 Tanner, he doesn't transition very well mentally and 23 emotionally. They've made a lot of progress. They 24 know everybody. It's where my family grew up, 25 graduated from. Jackson, which is my baby, has</p>

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<p>1 already been accepted into Prairie Grove pre-K to 2 where Lincoln has not given me a confirmed spot. So 3 just -- I mean, they need -- they're finally getting 4 stability and consistency. They've progressed. All 5 my help is in Prairie Grove -- my dad, my sisters, 6 their grandmas. Like if I need help, they can ride 7 the bus there. Their sports, their friends -- they 8 also have their counselor there who they became very 9 close with throughout me and their dad splitting 10 three years ago. So just -- that's just -- you know, 11 everything is based in that school and I really don't 12 want to bounce them back and forth. My future plan 13 is to move back to Prairie Grove, but I mean I'm very 14 limited; section 8, you've got to find what you can 15 find. And so I'm just hoping that -- 16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Fensom, did you say that 17 you had applied last year and then were denied? 18 (MOMENT OF SILENCE) 19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Are you still there? 20 (MOMENT OF SILENCE) 21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: I think we have lost her. 22 MS. FENSOM: -- we can continue going on there 23 because -- 24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 25 MS. FENSOM: Can you hear me?</p>	<p>1 apologize, Madam Chair. They're all starting to run 2 together for me right now. 3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 4 MR. DUGAN: Yeah. So I was trying to look. 5 SECRETARY KEY: Basically, Mr. Dugan, though, 6 for pre-K there is no school choice -- 7 MR. DUGAN: Right. 8 SECRETARY KEY: -- procedure for pre-K? 9 MR. DUGAN: That's correct. 10 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. 11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: But I thought she said she had 12 a 1st grader and a 3rd grader? It's hard to 13 understand. 14 SECRETARY KEY: It was. At one point there was 15 pre-K mentioned. I just want the Board to know 16 there's no -- 17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Right. 18 SECRETARY KEY: -- there's no school choice, 19 public school choice for pre-K programs. 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Right. Okay. All right. 21 MS. FENSOM: And Tanner did attend pre-K at 22 Lincoln, and Jackson is on our pre-enrollment list 23 for Lincoln this year. 24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. We'll see 25 if we have any questions from the Board.</p>
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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Now I can. 2 MS. FENSOM: Oh my gosh. Okay. I don't know 3 what happened. 4 Last year, pre-K, we were denied for Jackson, 5 and then the year before that Anna was in the second 6 year for pre-K [Zoom audio distortion] and he was 7 denied. So I had to put them in a different school. 8 And now Tanner had kindergarten there last year, so 9 he would be going into 1st grade into Prairie Grove 10 and Ava will be going into 3rd grade at Prairie 11 Grove. 12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: So you have applied for school 13 choice last year? 14 MS. FENSOM: Yes. The school actually did it 15 for me last year because I didn't realize that I had 16 to do school choice since I had already transferred 17 the two older ones out of Fayetteville prior to that. 18 And we went ahead and put in, and then it was denied 19 I guess because their school choice was filled out 20 here in Lincoln. But Prairie Grove has already 21 accepted one, basically. 22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Dugan, do you -- did you 23 follow the history that maybe you can clear up, last 24 year, what she applied -- 25 MR. DUGAN: And now I can go back and look. I</p>	<p>1 Anyone over here have a question or a comment? 2 DR. MOORE: Yes. So the students who are in -- 3 how many students are in kindergarten and elementary 4 school? One of them? 5 MS. FENSOM: Two. 6 DR. MOORE: Okay. And they -- both attended 7 Prairie Grove last year? 8 MS. FENSOM: Yes, ma'am. Tanner was in 9 kindergarten last year and Ava was in 2nd grade. So 10 I would have 1st and 3rd this year. 11 DR. MOORE: Okay. So you're seeking to keep 12 them at the same school? 13 MS. FENSOM: Yes. And then my youngest son is 14 already confirmed to go to Prairie Grove, so they 15 would all be able to go to the same school this year 16 instead of me driving to two or three different 17 schools. 18 DR. MOORE: Okay. Did you do school choice from 19 a different district maybe? 20 MS. FENSOM: The last two years, so Ava -- I 21 left her dad in 2018; so since then, they were 22 transferred out of Fayetteville to that school -- 23 DR. MOORE: Okay. 24 MS. FENSOM: -- to Prairie Grove. And now we've 25 switched school districts, so I had to do school</p>

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<p>1 choice.</p> <p>2 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you for clarifying</p> <p>3 that.</p> <p>4 MS. FENSOM: Yeah.</p> <p>5 MS. CLAYBROOK: The school choice was not</p> <p>6 through Lincoln last year. It was Fayetteville to</p> <p>7 Prairie Grove.</p> <p>8 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>9 MS. FENSOM: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any other</p> <p>11 questions or comments?</p> <p>12 Ms. Woods.</p> <p>13 MS. WOODS: Just to make sure I understand -- so</p> <p>14 her kindergartner has already been pre-approved for</p> <p>15 Prairie Grove. And why was the other two not?</p> <p>16 DR. MOORE: Pre-K.</p> <p>17 MS. WOODS: Oh, for pre-K. Sorry. Okay. Thank</p> <p>18 you.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other questions or</p> <p>20 comments?</p> <p>21 So this school choice --</p> <p>22 MS. CLAYBROOK: This is -- can I ask a question,</p> <p>23 please?</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.</p> <p>25 MS. CLAYBROOK: Is Jackson confirmed in Prairie</p>	<p>1 a blessing. Thank you.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Have a great year.</p> <p>3 MS. FENSOM: You too. Bye.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>5 MR. DUGAN: Board, I think you've got two more</p> <p>6 left. I'm texting with the parent right now who's</p> <p>7 logging in. That's going to be for the Blevins case.</p> <p>8 And Mr. Curry was here earlier; I know I sent him the</p> <p>9 Zoom link and he was here representing Watson Chapel.</p> <p>10 n) HEFLIN</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Dugan, did we skip the</p> <p>12 Heflin family?</p> <p>13 MR. DUGAN: So, yes. That one worked itself</p> <p>14 out.</p> <p>15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>16 REVIEW OF RESIDENCY/SCHOOL CHOICE APPEALS ALREADY HEARD</p> <p>17 MR. DUGAN: Yeah. I'll go through them, all of</p> <p>18 them --</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>20 MR. DUGAN: -- to make sure we're not missing</p> <p>21 anybody.</p> <p>22 So the Board granted the residency appeal for</p> <p>23 the Gonzalez family, that's number A;</p> <p>24 Daisy Robbins, Board granted the appeal, that's</p> <p>25 B;</p>
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<p>1 Grove's pre-K?</p> <p>2 MS. FENSOM: Yes, ma'am. He has a spot, they</p> <p>3 told me probably two weeks ago.</p> <p>4 MS. CLAYBROOK: Okay. And, Mr. Kellogg, you can</p> <p>5 --</p> <p>6 MR. KELLOGG: I can what, Ma'am?</p> <p>7 MS. CLAYBROOK: You can testify or verify that</p> <p>8 --</p> <p>9 MR. KELLOGG: No, I can't verify that as we</p> <p>10 speak. I don't know.</p> <p>11 MS. CLAYBROOK: Okay.</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Any other questions or</p> <p>13 comments?</p> <p>14 All right. We are ready for a motion to grant</p> <p>15 or deny the appeal.</p> <p>16 MR. SUTTON: Motion to grant.</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Mr. Sutton made a motion to</p> <p>18 grant the appeal.</p> <p>19 DR. MOORE: Second.</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Dr. Moore.</p> <p>21 All in favor?</p> <p>22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>24 All right. Congratulations, Ms. Fensom.</p> <p>25 MS. FENSOM: Thank you guys so much. It's such</p>	<p>1 Number C, Board granted the appeal;</p> <p>2 The Vines family, that one had been worked out</p> <p>3 before, so that one can be removed;</p> <p>4 Daniel Pierce Benjamin, that one has been</p> <p>5 granted, that's number E;</p> <p>6 Number F, Vickers family, that one was granted,</p> <p>7 so that one is completed;</p> <p>8 Justice Taylor, that one was worked out, so that</p> <p>9 one could be removed;</p> <p>10 The Gamel family, that one also was worked out,</p> <p>11 so that one could be removed, that's number H -- or</p> <p>12 letter H, excuse me;</p> <p>13 Letter I, the Williams family, that one was</p> <p>14 worked out;</p> <p>15 J, that one was granted by the Board;</p> <p>16 K, that one was granted by the Board;</p> <p>17 L, that was the one we just heard and that one</p> <p>18 was granted;</p> <p>19 The Hewitt family, that one was granted by the</p> <p>20 Board, that's letter M;</p> <p>21 Connor Post, that one was O, that one was</p> <p>22 granted;</p> <p>23 Mr. Blevins, I can see he's already texting me</p> <p>24 back right now, so that's going to be one that's</p> <p>25 going to be on Zoom. That was the family that had</p>



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<p>1 some childcare but they were here earlier today.</p> <p>2 q) NICKOLAS GARNER</p> <p>3 MR. DUGAN: So if we could, we'll go ahead and</p> <p>4 could do the Adams [sic] family. I'm going to step</p> <p>5 out and call Mr. Blevins real quick and make sure</p> <p>6 he's okay. And we do have for the Garner family here</p> <p>7 to get sworn in. And we also have -- I saw Mr.</p> <p>8 Dorris for the White Hall School District here. And</p> <p>9 Mr. Curry was here earlier, but I know he had to</p> <p>10 leave. I did send him the Zoom link. I'm not seeing</p> <p>11 him up here. He is the nonresident district though,</p> <p>12 and they would be happy to take the child.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>14 MR. DUGAN: That's pretty much what they had to</p> <p>15 offer.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. So the</p> <p>17 nonresident district is the one that's not here then?</p> <p>18 MR. DUGAN: That's correct. Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>20 MR. DUGAN: And just wanted to deny on capacity.</p> <p>21 So, these last two are capacity, not 3%. Let me</p> <p>22 get back to the page here. So, yeah, this one is</p> <p>23 going to be for capacity.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So I'm confused. If</p> <p>25 the nonresident district will take them but they're</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Someone from the</p> <p>2 Garner family and then --</p> <p>3 SUPT. DORRIS: White Hall.</p> <p>4 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: -- White Hall. Okay. All</p> <p>5 right. So we're missing Watson Chapel.</p> <p>6 Okay. All right. Would you raise your right</p> <p>7 hand? I already have this memorized by now. Do you</p> <p>8 swear or affirm that the testimony you're about to</p> <p>9 give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing</p> <p>10 but the truth?</p> <p>11 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.</p> <p>13 All right. Let's see. We will hear from White</p> <p>14 Hall.</p> <p>15 SUPT. DORRIS: Dr. Coach Hill, we're going to</p> <p>16 make the 4th quarter.</p> <p>17 DR. HILL: Yes, sir. Finish strong.</p> <p>18 SUPT. DORRIS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>19 White Hall is in a unique situation. We had 246</p> <p>20 students to apply for school choice opportunity this</p> <p>21 year. We have four school districts in Jefferson</p> <p>22 County; two of them are opportunity schools, one is a</p> <p>23 choice school -- or two, counting us. We accepted</p> <p>24 174 students this past year in school choice and</p> <p>25 opportunity. Right now, in White Hall there is over</p>
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<p>1 over capacity, that's not making sense.</p> <p>2 MR. DUGAN: So the resident district is Watson</p> <p>3 Chapel School District and they're wanting to go to</p> <p>4 their nonresident district, which is White Hall. And</p> <p>5 the nonresident district is not going to take them</p> <p>6 because of capacity. The nonresident district is</p> <p>7 saying "we don't have capacity for this student."</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>9 MR. DUGAN: So the resident district, Watson</p> <p>10 Chapel, you know, since they're their resident</p> <p>11 district, they would have to -- so I misspoke; sorry.</p> <p>12 My text was going off on that other one. I was --</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: So the nonresident is over</p> <p>14 capacity?</p> <p>15 MR. DUGAN: Correct.</p> <p>16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>17 MR. DUGAN: Correct. So the nonresident</p> <p>18 district is the one that's over capacity, and that's</p> <p>19 the White Hall School District.</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>21 MS. DEAN: And what letter are we on now?</p> <p>22 MR. DUGAN: This one right here, this is --</p> <p>23 SUPT. DORRIS: Q, I believe.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Q, yeah.</p> <p>25 MR. DUGAN: Correct. Yeah.</p>	<p>1 100 homes being built. Right now, I'm afraid we're</p> <p>2 not going to have room without having to hire</p> <p>3 teachers. Matter of fact, I had to hire a teacher</p> <p>4 last week to take care of the Hardin community, which</p> <p>5 they've never had three teachers in a classroom. I</p> <p>6 am looking at -- right now, we're looking at one</p> <p>7 student more and we're going to have to hire a</p> <p>8 kindergarten teacher. Now with all that being said,</p> <p>9 you know, we're full at 174 students.</p> <p>10 The reason we're here, Nick was a student</p> <p>11 enrolled in White Hall as a school choice student on</p> <p>12 8/15 of 2016. So five years ago, he was a student at</p> <p>13 White Hall. He chose -- his family chose to go to</p> <p>14 virtual school this past year, so he went to virtual.</p> <p>15 His family decided they were going to withdraw from</p> <p>16 White Hall and go to Arkansas Virtual Academy charter</p> <p>17 school, so he withdrew from our school. And just to</p> <p>18 add to this, we started signing kids up; he signed up</p> <p>19 on March 8th at 12:54:10 p.m. We had 16 students to</p> <p>20 sign up in the 9th grade. Now he's going to be</p> <p>21 repeating the 9th grade. We approved seven of those</p> <p>22 kids and he was number nine on that list. Thank you.</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>24 MS. ADAM: So we did attend Watson Chapel School</p> <p>25 District. That's where we live. My child was not</p>

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<p>1 doing well in Watson Chapel. I could tell that he  2 was having problems. I asked for two years at Watson  3 Chapel for them to test him for an IEP for  4 disabilities and what-have-you -- and they finally  5 did, but it took two years and me pushing to get  6 that. When they finally got it in place, they didn't  7 want to implement it. So at the 4th grade we decided  8 that we needed to do something else, so we applied  9 for school choice and were approved at White Hall.  10 He has been in that district for five years. We did  11 start this past school district [sic] there. But due  12 to Covid -- and we live with my parents who are,  13 excuse me, in their 70s -- we decided that virtual  14 was a better option, and we did not realize at the  15 time that switching from in-person to virtual in the  16 same school district was an option. So we went to  17 Arkansas Virtual Academy. That was a very bad  18 decision. My child needs in-person attention. He  19 does have ADHD, and so having someone on him all the  20 time to redirect is required. And I work fulltime, I  21 can't do that. So we applied again to go back to  22 White Hall School District, but we were denied due to  23 capacity. He has been there for five years, his  24 friends are there, he's familiar with all of the  25 teachers. We need him to go back there.</p>	<p>1 where they know how to teach and know how to handle  2 students that have learning disabilities. I don't  3 know what to do if this is not approved. And I  4 appreciate you all taking the time to listen to us  5 and keep this child in your minds when you make the  6 decision. Thank you very much.  7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.  8 Mr. Dugan, since this is a little bit different,  9 would you kind of explain to us the capacity issue  10 since we do have new members on the Board?  11 MR. DUGAN: Yes, definitely. So a school  12 district through their -- and this is the law that  13 allows them to make a policy to set capacity. It has  14 to be at least 90% of the students, but it can be for  15 a grade, it can be for the program, it can be for the  16 class. And so in this one, if I understand correctly  17 -- is it 9th --  18 MR. DORRIS: It's 9th grade.  19 MR. DUGAN: 9th grade, that they've met capacity  20 in that grade. And so their board had passed a  21 policy for that, and so this one is dealing with  22 capacity.  23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. Thank you.  24 MR. DUGAN: You're welcome.  25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. All right.</p>
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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you.  2 MS. ADAM: Thank you.  3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Anything else?  4 MR. ADAMS: I would like to say something.  5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Sure.  6 MR. ADAM: I'm Michael Adam; I'm the  7 grandparent, father. My daughter Michelle and  8 Nickolas went through fits at Watson Chapel. It was  9 terrible. We have a history with there. My oldest  10 son, also with a learning disability, we moved him to  11 Pine Bluff and he graduated there. We moved Michelle  12 to Pine Bluff; she graduated there. We tried this at  13 Chapel; her older -- the older daughter went through  14 and was fine. But learning disabled children seem to  15 have a very difficult time. We -- she moved them to  16 White Hall and it was so much better; there was no  17 struggle, the teachers took care of it. I've  18 attended all the IEP meetings; I've done that. The  19 grandmother has also. She right now is not very  20 well-off; she's in hospice, and so that's part of  21 this situation. They tried to do what was best for  22 us and actually was very detrimental to the child.  23 He's failed 9th grade; he's going to have to do it  24 over. I don't think we should have to have the child  25 suffer any more. He ought to go back to White Hall</p>	<p>1 MS. WOODS: So, just so that I understand, if we  2 grant this do they even have to apply for a waiver  3 from a teaching --  4 MR. DUGAN: (Shaking head from side to side)  5 MS. WOODS: No?  6 MR. DUGAN: No.  7 MS. WOODS: Okay.  8 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.  9 MS. WOODS: Just so that I -- okay.  10 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.  11 DR. MOORE: I have a question.  12 MR. DUGAN: Yeah.  13 DR. MOORE: So are they not moving from Watson  14 Chapel -- because Watson Chapel doesn't fall under  15 opportunity school choice.  16 SUPT. DORRIS: I don't think so.  17 MR. DUGAN: They're Public School, aren't they?  18 Yeah, they're Public School Choice Act.  19 DR. MOORE: Okay. I guess -- I pulled it up;  20 they have one F school and four -- or two F schools  21 and three D schools the last time it was measured.  22 So do you have to come from the F school to be  23 opportunity school choice? Or is it the exact school  24 or the district? It's the school?  25 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, I believe -- and, Lori,</p>

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<p>1 shake your head -- it's an F-rated school or a Level 2 5 district, I think. 3 MS. FRENO: Correct. 4 DR. MOORE: Okay. So in this case it has to be 5 through the public school choice mechanism? 6 MR. DUGAN: (Nodding head up and down) 7 DR. MOORE: Does it ever occur in which a 8 student is rejected -- but I know numbers are always 9 changing. So when school starts and those numbers 10 change, does -- the student is then allowed into -- 11 MR. DUGAN: So we go by the enrollment from 12 October 1st, it is. And so we go from the preceding 13 year's October 1st numbers, and so that's what we go 14 off of. But -- 15 DR. MOORE: So capacity, that 90% capacity is 16 based on October. Huh. So there could be -- 17 MR. DUGAN: No adjustment -- 18 DR. MOORE: I mean it might go way up or way 19 down before August in that -- 20 MR. DUGAN: Yeah, it could change. 21 SECRETARY KEY: Mr. Dugan, let me -- the 22 capacity is determined by the district. We don't -- 23 I don't think we measure their capacity at any point 24 -- 25 MR. DUGAN: Right --</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: More than likely, they would 2 hire a teacher. 3 MS. WOODS: Or they would have to hire -- so 4 that was my question basically. If we override their 5 capacity, they're going to have to hire a teacher? 6 SECRETARY KEY: Possibly. But sometimes, there 7 is -- 8 MS. WOODS: Room. 9 SECRETARY KEY: -- room in there. But that's 10 not information that we -- 11 MS. WOODS: That we don't -- 12 SECRETARY KEY: -- necessarily have at the 13 moment. 14 MS. WOODS: But there is an -- there is that 15 possibility -- 16 SECRETARY KEY: Yes. 17 MS. WOODS: -- that they do have room? 18 SECRETARY KEY: Yes. There was one that I 19 believe was worked out earlier; the district gave you 20 the number of how many they had for the self- 21 contained class limitations and how many they 22 actually were going to have. I think that was one 23 that got worked out. 24 MR. DUGAN: That's going to be the next one we 25 hear.</p>
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<p>1 SECRETARY KEY: -- in the process. 2 MR. DUGAN: -- for the program and things like 3 that. Correct. 4 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah. 5 MR. DUGAN: Yeah. 6 SECRETARY KEY: So they establish what their 7 capacity is based on, you know, the standards that 8 they go by; so staffing, room configurations, space 9 requirements, all those things. But that's not 10 something that we go in and verify or they have to 11 submit to us. 12 DR. MOORE: Okay. And it's not a -- so that -- 13 what is that 90% then based off of? It's up to them? 14 SECRETARY KEY: It's their -- yeah, 90% of what 15 they deem their capacity. If -- 16 DR. MOORE: Okay. 17 SECRETARY KEY: Yes, okay, I'm looking for that 18 confirmation. 19 DR. MOORE: So they're not -- 20 SECRETARY KEY: But I think I described it 21 correctly. 22 MS. WOODS: So if I could clarify then, so 23 that's how they don't have to apply for a waiver, 24 because there's likely written a 10% from a state 25 rules perspective?</p>	<p>1 SECRETARY KEY: Oh, that's the next one. Okay. 2 MR. DUGAN: Yeah, right. So it hasn't been 3 worked out yet. 4 SECRETARY KEY: Man, I thought we -- I was 5 hoping. I was hoping we got that one worked out, so 6 -- no, I just saw Dr. Hester still sitting back 7 there. Never-mind. 8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Could you tell me 9 what the percent is where you're at in the 9th grade? 10 I know 90% is the capacity. What percent are you at? 11 SUPT. DORRIS: We're at -- we have 250 -- 12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Come to the microphone -- 13 SUPT. DORRIS: Okay. 14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: -- if you don't mind. 15 SUPT. DORRIS: We have 254 students in the 9th 16 grade. That equals out to operate at a little over 17 90%. We have two sections. 18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: So it's just barely over 90%? 19 SUPT. DORRIS: Yes, ma'am. 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. For the 21 parents, I know -- if you don't mind answering it -- 22 and if you don't want to answer, that's fine. Is 23 your child going to be receiving any resource or IEP, 24 any -- and you said he has a learning disability? 25 MS. ADAM: He does have an IEP and he gets</p>

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<p>1 indirect services.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Indirect. Okay. All right.</p> <p>3 Thank you.</p> <p>4 All right. Any questions over here?</p> <p>5 DR. RANKIN: I do have a question for the</p> <p>6 district. You said over 100 houses are being built</p> <p>7 --</p> <p>8 SUPT. DORRIS: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>9 DR. RANKIN: -- in the district. So you -- are</p> <p>10 you preparing -- I guess y'all are preparing for an</p> <p>11 influx of students coming into --</p> <p>12 SUPT. DORRIS: Matter of fact --</p> <p>13 DR. RANKIN: -- your school that will impact</p> <p>14 your --</p> <p>15 SUPT. DORRIS: -- they're being built as I</p> <p>16 speak.</p> <p>17 DR. RANKIN: So your capacity is about to be</p> <p>18 bumped up?</p> <p>19 SUPT. DORRIS: Oh, it's going to be bumped up</p> <p>20 and I don't know how far up. You know, like I said,</p> <p>21 at one of our elementary schools we've already had to</p> <p>22 hire one teacher, probably going to have to hire</p> <p>23 another one. Kids are coming in and registering</p> <p>24 every day. It's a small community. Hardin</p> <p>25 Elementary is growing leaps and bounds. And so if</p>	<p>1 and educational interests of the child; that's</p> <p>2 correct.</p> <p>3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>4 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p> <p>6 DR. MOORE: I do have a question, Taylor, if you</p> <p>7 don't mind -- Mr. Dugan. It looked like in the</p> <p>8 application there was some confusion over when the</p> <p>9 application was sent?</p> <p>10 MR. DUGAN: Yeah. This --</p> <p>11 DR. MOORE: Is that correct? But we can't --</p> <p>12 MR. DUGAN: You know, probably Ms. Adam could</p> <p>13 speak better for me. But, yeah, it's my</p> <p>14 understanding what happened here was it was</p> <p>15 originally sent to the nonresident district and then</p> <p>16 the White Hall School District sent it over to the</p> <p>17 Watson Chapel School District.</p> <p>18 My understanding is you also applied for school</p> <p>19 choice at Rison, but that was after the May 1st</p> <p>20 deadline. But those are the only three districts;</p> <p>21 correct?</p> <p>22 MS. ADAM: Correct.</p> <p>23 MR. DUGAN: Correct. So that's kind of --</p> <p>24 there's a little issue there with that.</p> <p>25 So Rison, don't worry about Rison; it was after</p>
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<p>1 you ever go down the highway, you'll notice off to</p> <p>2 the right there's over 100 homes going there and</p> <p>3 there's houses being built. You know, it's the first</p> <p>4 time ever -- and I grew up in White Hall, and so it's</p> <p>5 the first time I've ever seen it; a house can go on</p> <p>6 the market today and it sells by tomorrow, and people</p> <p>7 are wanting to get into White Hall. And we've got a</p> <p>8 good school, and I feel sorry for them but, you know,</p> <p>9 I've got to look out for what's best for White Hall</p> <p>10 School District as the superintendent. Because we --</p> <p>11 I hate to have to go hire a teacher. How can I</p> <p>12 explain to a school board that I'm hiring a teacher</p> <p>13 for one kid?</p> <p>14 I don't know if I should've said that or not.</p> <p>15 SECRETARY KEY: And to your earlier question,</p> <p>16 Ms. Woods, that's the point where a district could</p> <p>17 come and seek a waiver. Okay. So I think that was</p> <p>18 what you were asking earlier.</p> <p>19 MS. WOODS: Right.</p> <p>20 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. Yeah.</p> <p>21 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other discussion?</p> <p>22 Mr. Dugan, does the same principle apply here,</p> <p>23 that we can -- even if it's a capacity issue we can</p> <p>24 grant or deny the waiver -- or the appeal?</p> <p>25 MR. DUGAN: Yeah, based on social, physiological</p>	<p>1 May 1st. You know, did put the appeal before the</p> <p>2 Board because White Hall School District was kind</p> <p>3 enough to send that application to the resident</p> <p>4 district.</p> <p>5 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>6 MR. DUGAN: And so, they did not. But, yeah.</p> <p>7 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>8 MR. DUGAN: Yes, sir.</p> <p>9 DR. MOORE: And then just to clear up one more</p> <p>10 thing, so we've seen this twice today, but once you</p> <p>11 choice into a district you can stay.</p> <p>12 MR. DUGAN: So --</p> <p>13 DR. MOORE: But when you withdraw, you cannot go</p> <p>14 back to that district?</p> <p>15 MR. DUGAN: Exactly. Once you un-enroll that's</p> <p>16 when you have to reapply. But once you're in, you're</p> <p>17 in for the rest of -- you know, all the way to grade</p> <p>18 12.</p> <p>19 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>20 MS. DEAN: I'm inclined to grant the waiver</p> <p>21 because this student has been in the White Hall</p> <p>22 School District for years, and he's been doing well</p> <p>23 after he transferred out of Watson Chapel. And the</p> <p>24 only reason why you took him out was for the safety</p> <p>25 and well-being of your parents. And so he switched</p>

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<p>1 over to Virtual Academy, and not all students do well 2 in virtual. Trust me, I understand that. Each child 3 is different. And so not only is he having to deal 4 with the fact that he is going to have to repeat the 5 9th grade, but his grandmother is also in hospice. 6 And we have the opportunity -- the district has the 7 opportunity to ask for a waiver if they need to hire 8 another teacher. That is on the table, if I'm not 9 mistaken.</p> <p>10 So at the appropriate time I will make a motion 11 to grant the waiver --</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Any -- 13 MS. DEAN: -- for those reasons. 14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other discussion? 15 Okay. Ms. Dean, we're ready. 16 MS. DEAN: Okay. I move to grant the waiver for 17 --</p> <p>18 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Grant the appeal. 19 MS. DEAN: Oh, I'm sorry. Grant the appeal -- 20 excuse me -- grant the appeal for the Garner family. 21 DR. RANKIN: I'll second that. 22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Dr. Rankin. 23 All in favor? 24 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES) 25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p>	<p>1 sustainability. And I just didn't know if we have a 2 rainy-day fund. I mean I'm just --</p> <p>3 SECRETARY KEY: No, that's a good question, Dr. 4 Hill. And on an individual basis, no. But in the 5 aggregate -- okay, so Mr. Dorris talked about the 6 growth and the increase in number of students. So 7 what he will -- what that district will have access 8 to is growth funding. 9 DR. HILL: Okay.</p> <p>10 SECRETARY KEY: All right. So they're going to 11 get their foundation funding based on their prior 12 year ADM. But then at whatever point -- I forgot now 13 what it is in the school year -- but if they get -- 14 they will get growth funding for that current school 15 year based on the addition of students that they -- 16 the aggregate number of students. Okay. So it still 17 creates a point-in-time challenge for 18 superintendents, like Mr. Dorris, who have to weigh 19 that issue of do I hire a teacher, because at 20 semester I may get six more kids or I may lose three. 21 DR. HILL: That's exactly right. 22 SECRETARY KEY: And so -- but I'm hiring this 23 teacher for the whole year, so -- 24 DR. HILL: Oh, I know. 25 SECRETARY KEY: But there is a way.</p>
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<p>1 Congratulations. 2 MS. ADAM: Thank you. 3 MS. DEAN: You're welcome. 4 MS. ADAM: Thank y'all very much. 5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. 6 DR. HILL: Commissioner -- Secretary, I was 7 wondering, if you're in a situation -- you know, just 8 because I just wanted it for my own personal 9 reference -- in a situation like that, can the State 10 help a school district as far as a funding mechanism 11 when they have to hire one more teacher? Is there 12 anything -- you know, particularly when you're 13 dealing with an IEP student or a learning -- is there 14 -- if -- because to address -- you know, being an 15 administrator, you're looking at funding sources and, 16 you know -- and one teacher for one student, which is 17 the right -- if that was my child, I sure hope y'all 18 would vote the same way, you know. So I'm sensitive 19 to that. But being an administrator before, 20 understanding those budgets and understanding what 21 his concern is, you know, is there anything in the 22 future that legislatively that we can do? Because 23 certainly, as she mentioned, there's some personal 24 factors playing into play here, but also looking out 25 for the -- I mean that's a budget hit for his</p>	<p>1 Go ahead. 2 DR. PFEFFER: I was just thinking in high school 3 you've got six or seven teachers. 4 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, you're right. At high 5 school it's different because you've got, you know, 6 different classes. 7 DR. HILL: Yes, sir. Right. 8 SECRETARY KEY: And also -- but, you know, the 9 flexibility is there for that waiver that -- and 10 we've had districts that have come and asked for that 11 in the past. And that's certainly -- you know, but 12 as, you know, someone pointed out to me -- 13 DR. HILL: You may have to -- 14 SECRETARY KEY: -- just because you can ask for 15 a waiver doesn't mean you should ask for a waiver or 16 have -- or be forced to ask for a waiver. And that's 17 what this situation is. So, you know, if someone 18 without compelling -- a family without a compelling 19 reason came in and just said, "Hey, I want to go back 20 because I didn't like the decision, you know, I got," 21 then, you know, this board wouldn't be compelled to 22 grant that -- 23 DR. HILL: Correct. 24 SECRETARY KEY: -- you know, that appeal 25 request.</p>

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<p>1 DR. HILL: So does he apply for those or that's 2 just an automatic trigger because -- 3 SECRETARY KEY: No, that's -- we -- they submit 4 -- it's based on their certified data that they send 5 in. 6 DR. HILL: All right. Thank you. 7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you. 8 DR. HILL: It's a good problem to have. 9 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yeah. That's probably why the 10 districts that are wishing they had that right now. 11 DR. HILL: Yeah, yeah, a good problem to have. 12 SECRETARY KEY: He might not agree at this 13 particular time that -- 14 SUPT. DORRIS: (inaudible, not at the 15 microphone) 16 SECRETARY KEY: On the losing side. That's 17 correct. Yes. 18 p) LUCAS BLEVINS 19 MR. DUGAN: This should be our last one, Ladies 20 and Gentlemen. And I was texting Mr. Blevins. I 21 think we might be the one muting him. Can you try 22 turning off Mr. Blevins on mute? He's up there on 23 the screen; he can hear me. And we also have Dr. 24 Hester here. 25 SECRETARY KEY: What letter? What letter are we</p>	<p>1 MR. BLEVINS: Sure. 2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Do you swear or affirm that 3 the testimony you're about to give shall be the 4 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? 5 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY) 6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you. 7 All right. Dr. Hester, we'll start with you. 8 And I can see you saying "finally." 9 MS. COX: He offered me money earlier. 10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: I bet. I bet. I bet. 11 SUPT. HESTER: Yeah, but -- 12 MS. COX: He drug me up here just for fun, so -- 13 SUPT. HESTER: What Dr. Smith didn't tell you is 14 is she told me that was not enough money to get her 15 up here. 16 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Oh. 17 SUPT. HESTER: So she upped the ante on me and I 18 was priced out. 19 So I do want to thank you for the ultimate 20 compliment of saving the best for last. 21 And at Batesville, we have a blessed problem in 22 that we are busting out the walls and with record 23 enrollment. And we are -- we tried to address a bond 24 issue last spring, April 14th, and schools were 25 shutdown a year and three or four months ago from</p>
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<p>1 on? 2 MR. DUGAN: We are on P. 3 SECRETARY KEY: P. Thank you. 4 MR. DUGAN: Can you hear me, Mr. Blevins? 5 MR. BLEVINS: Yes. 6 MR. DUGAN: So this family appealed the denial 7 of their school choice application. The nonresident 8 district is Batesville School District. We have Dr. 9 Hester here representing the Batesville School 10 District. This application was denied based on a 11 lack of capacity. The resident district is Midland 12 School District. I did talk to Dr. Bryant yesterday; 13 he's on vacation, so he couldn't be here today. But 14 he -- that is the resident district, and if the 15 student had to stay at the resident district Midland 16 is happy to have them. He did relay that to me. 17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. 18 MR. DUGAN: So, but that's what Dr. Bryant 19 wanted me to relay to the Board. 20 So, Madam Chair, if I could -- I'm not sure if 21 Mr. Blevins has video capacity, but get Dr. Hester 22 and Mr. Blevins sworn in. 23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. Dr. Hester, 24 would you stand and raise your right hand? And, Mr. 25 Blevins, would you raise your right hand also?</p>	<p>1 now, and so we waited to see what all that meant. 2 The board has decided to up the election again on 3 September 14th for classrooms. And so we are facing 4 a severe shortage in space and are actually 5 purchasing modulars to try to make it through. And 6 we would love to have not only the Blevins family, 7 but the other four that we've had to deny with the 8 special needs. And we are just appealing on the fact 9 that -- or we are -- denied it on the fact of our 10 policies that are stated there local and the DESE 11 school choice. And I have Mrs. Christy Cox here with 12 me, our SPED director who's creating all these 13 problems. Because if you have a child with needs you 14 want -- if you're in driving distance, you want to 15 get to Batesville. And so we understand, but we are 16 in a dilemma of the quality and what we can do in our 17 space. 18 So Mrs. Cox can answer any of the issues on our 19 SPED programs as well. 20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Cox. 21 All right. Well, I can see your face now, Mr. 22 Blevins. Welcome. 23 MR. BLEVINS: Yes, I guess. But good evening. 24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Go ahead. 25 MR. BLEVINS: Yeah. I would just like to make</p>

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<p>1 two or three points here, if I could. We, as  2 parents, you know, would do anything for our son not  3 to be autistic. But, you know, since we can do  4 nothing about that, we want him to have the best  5 education to succeed. And -- but anyway, when we  6 filled out the application everybody told us, you  7 know, we would have no problems filling out the  8 application and just send it in and -- well, anyway,  9 I spoke on the phone with Mrs. Cox about that and  10 everything was real good until I mentioned him being  11 autistic. And then, you know, they denied it on the  12 basis of needing additional special education staff  13 -- or S-P-E-D staff is what was written in the  14 denial. And then on the application, you know, it  15 clearly states that a district may not deny an  16 application for school choice based on previous  17 academic achievement or handicapping conditions, and  18 that's the Public School Choice Act of 2015.  19 But anyway, he's not aggressive, he's not  20 disruptive, and, you know, and he seems like he's  21 really gathering information good. And we're hoping  22 that he will eventually, you know, be so that he can  23 be up-to-speed, if you know what I'm saying, and we  24 just want the best for him. And we've heard some  25 really good compliments of the school there in</p>	<p>1 SUPT. HESTER: (inaudible, not at the  2 microphone)  3 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: You'll have to come to the  4 microphone. I'm sorry.  5 SECRETARY KEY: Well, let me -- and I think I  6 know where he's going. But I think how I would  7 explain it -- and, Taylor, please -- I don't know  8 that we're in a place to say what is priority. But  9 the limitation on the district is if they know that  10 -- well, let's say, for instance, their program had  11 space that they could not deny --  12 MR. DUGAN: That is correct. Yes.  13 SECRETARY KEY: -- the student. If they knew  14 the student was autistic and they had space, they  15 could not deny based solely on that student's  16 disability. But the limitation is for -- it's very  17 broad, but it says classrooms, programs, all that.  18 Correct?  19 MR. DUGAN: That's correct, Secretary Key. And  20 that's what the argument is here, is that, yes, you  21 know, we have a student here that is special  22 education, which obviously, you know, brings in IDEA  23 and those types of issues, and also -- so we're  24 making an argument that it could be based on  25 discrimination. But then we also have the law here</p>
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<p>1 Batesville. One of our friends has an autistic son,  2 and he couldn't talk, he was nonverbal, and now he's  3 making sentences and done really good. And that's  4 what we're wanting to work with our son --  5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.  6 MR. BLEVINS: -- you know, at that school.  7 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Thank you.  8 Mr. Dugan, could you speak to the law that he  9 just stated?  10 MR. DUGAN: So what Mr. Blevins is referring to  11 is under 6-18-1903 and it is little-d-3 where it says  12 "a school district receiving transfers under this  13 subchapter shall not discriminate on the basis of  14 gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion,  15 or disability." And my understanding is the school  16 district is relying on 6-18-1903(c) -- little-c which  17 says, "this subchapter does not require a school  18 district to add teachers, staff, or classrooms, or in  19 any way to exceed the requirements of standards  20 established by existing law." So I think the --  21 obviously Dr. Hester can speak for himself, but I  22 think that's what's at the issue here.  23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So the one that takes  24 precedence is the capacity?  25 MS. COX: Good question.</p>	<p>1 that says that the district does not have to add  2 teachers, staff, classrooms, or in any way to exceed  3 the requirements or standards established by existing  4 law. So the school district, from what I've read --  5 you know, their argument is this is a classroom; we  6 would have to add -- we don't have capacity for the  7 student, we don't have a teacher for the student. So  8 that was their argument. But then this is -- well,  9 no. So it doesn't take precedent, you know. So it's  10 -- this one there just isn't a clear answer.  11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Dr. Moore.  12 DR. MOORE: May I ask a question on this one?  13 Because the application doesn't ask for information  14 about special education, in some cases that student  15 would just appear at school without the district  16 having prior knowledge. How do we take into account  17 that they got prior knowledge here?  18 MR. DUGAN: Yeah, I don't think I can answer  19 that one.  20 MS. COX: Initially, Mr. Blevins contacted -- or  21 his wife, one, contacted the special education  22 teacher at Eagle Mountain Elementary, I believe via  23 Facebook Messenger. And her response to the family  24 was, "Yes, contact Christy Cox at the Batesville  25 School District and she will be glad to work with you</p>

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<p>1 in this matter." So Mr. Blevins was very upfront  2 when he called me. I got excellent information from  3 him regarding his student's needs, and he did at that  4 time tell me that his son had autism. So that is how  5 we came to having the knowledge that he had autism.  6 DR. MOORE: Okay. It kind of puts it in a  7 catch-22 though --  8 MS. COX: Yeah.  9 DR. MOORE: -- because I mean if they didn't say  10 anything, then --  11 MS. COX: Right.  12 DR. MOORE: -- there wouldn't have been --  13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Cox, is that one  14 elementary school the one that's over capacity or are  15 all elementary schools?  16 MS. COX: If I may address that, yes. We have  17 three elementary campuses in the Batesville School  18 District. Eagle Mountain is over capacity by one;  19 West Elementary is over capacity by one; and Sulphur  20 Rock Elementary is over capacity by one. So I'm  21 already in the position where I will have to do  22 waivers for all three of those campuses should all of  23 those students come to campus, and we will do that  24 before October 1st, I think is the deadline for those  25 waivers.</p>	<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Mr. Blevins, do you  2 have anything else you would like to add?  3 MR. BLEVINS: No, that's pretty much it, you  4 know. Just based on their comments, I think I've  5 covered everything that I need to say.  6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. All right. Just want  7 to make sure you had your opportunity.  8 Anything else --  9 MR. BLEVINS: Thank you.  10 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: -- from the district?  11 SUPT. HESTER: Again, Mr. Blevins, I apologize  12 that we're in that predicament. Hopefully as the  13 district we'll take care of that in the future with  14 our facilities so we don't have to have -- go through  15 this for anyone. And I thank you for fighting for  16 your kid.  17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes. All right.  18 MS. WOODS: I agree. Are y'all at capacity for  19 everything, not just for SPED? I thought I picked  20 that up.  21 SUPT. HESTER: I'm sorry?  22 MS. WOODS: Are you at capacity for everything  23 or just for SPED?  24 SUPT. HESTER: For SPED especially, but --  25 because, again, the reputation and the needs they're</p>
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<p>1 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: At what point would you  2 consider hiring another teacher if at all three of  3 the campuses you're already plus-three?  4 MS. COX: Correct.  5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: What would be a capacity of a  6 normal special ed. classroom?  7 MS. COX: It would depend. If it's a resource  8 classroom -- which the students are not in that  9 classroom all day every day, they ebb and flow, come  10 and go -- so that's 24. For a self-contained  11 classroom, it could either be 1 to 6, 1 to 10, or 1  12 to 15. So we have to look at the needs of the  13 students. That part of the law is very broad with  14 regard to the needs of the students. So we really  15 just have to look each year at the needs of the  16 students in that classroom.  17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Thank you.  18 MS. COX: Thank you.  19 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Let's see what  20 questions we have. Over here, anyone? Dr. Moore?  21 DR. MOORE: Not right now.  22 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Over here, anyone have  23 a question or comment?  24 Ms. Post?  25 MS. POST: Not yet.</p>	<p>1 meeting. But we are -- again, we had to order  2 modular units at two of the elementaries and our  3 junior high are at capacity. That's where we're  4 having to put modulars in now. We already have  5 modulars in place for the high school.  6 MS. WOODS: Okay.  7 SUPT. HESTER: So it's just all over. And  8 you've got room -- you know, if you've got certain  9 classes you can maybe stick one or two in there. But  10 it's -- in this case for our SPED needs and the space  11 required and the waivers that are required with what  12 we have, we're running into this capacity issue.  13 MS. WOODS: Thank you.  14 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any other questions, comments?  15 DR. MOORE: Have we run into cases like this  16 before where the student self-disclosed, I guess?  17 MR. DUGAN: You know, I would defer to Ms.  18 Salas-Ford because she handles special education --  19 she does special education way better than I do -- to  20 see if she's run into cases when she's doing that  21 type of work. But I haven't seen any.  22 SECRETARY KEY: Do you mean school choice cases  23 --  24 DR. MOORE: Yeah, in school choice cases.  25 SECRETARY KEY: -- like this?</p>



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<p>1 DR. MOORE: Yeah.</p> <p>2 SECRETARY KEY: I recall that we have in the</p> <p>3 past. It's been occasional. It has not been -- you</p> <p>4 know, maybe one or two in the last several years.</p> <p>5 DR. MOORE: Uh-huh. Okay.</p> <p>6 SECRETARY KEY: And I don't remember the</p> <p>7 decision, if that's your next question. I don't</p> <p>8 remember.</p> <p>9 DR. MOORE: No, I'm just -- I'm just stuck</p> <p>10 because I see both laws, but I also see that -- I</p> <p>11 mean you would not allow the choice based on race,</p> <p>12 gender, special education.</p> <p>13 MR. DUGAN: I wish I had clear answers for y'all</p> <p>14 on this issue; it's just --</p> <p>15 MS. DEAN: I have a question of the district.</p> <p>16 Had the parent not disclosed it and they just showed</p> <p>17 up on the first day of school, and then at some point</p> <p>18 you learned of his special needs, what would y'all</p> <p>19 have done?</p> <p>20 MS. COX: I don't have an answer for that.</p> <p>21 Ideally, for a student coming from pre-K into</p> <p>22 elementary they, he or she, would've had an IEP</p> <p>23 through Early Childhood Special Education. So we</p> <p>24 would've had a transition process --</p> <p>25 MS. DEAN: Right.</p>	<p>1 discrimination.</p> <p>2 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: It almost feels like what</p> <p>3 we're doing right now though. Okay. All right.</p> <p>4 MR. SUTTON: Can I ask a question?</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Yes.</p> <p>6 MR. SUTTON: Were it not for limits that define</p> <p>7 capacity by the Department, will there be capacity?</p> <p>8 MR. DUGAN: So the districts get to define that</p> <p>9 capacity.</p> <p>10 MR. SUTTON: Okay.</p> <p>11 MR. DUGAN: They just have to have minimum 90%.</p> <p>12 That's what -- that's in the law. The law says that</p> <p>13 they may include a claim of lack of capacity by a</p> <p>14 school district only if the school district has</p> <p>15 reached at least 90% of the maximum authorized</p> <p>16 student population in a program, class, grade level,</p> <p>17 or school building. So it's the district that gets</p> <p>18 to set those levels there for the capacity. But I</p> <p>19 think in this hearing, like Dr. Hester was saying, if</p> <p>20 they had capacity, you know, they would take the</p> <p>21 student.</p> <p>22 I won't speak for you, but that's what I heard</p> <p>23 Dr. Hester --</p> <p>24 SUPT. HESTER: Absolutely.</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Ms. Woods.</p>
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<p>1 MS. COX: -- through that. Then we would've</p> <p>2 known the issues for the student during that</p> <p>3 transition process. We did not have that meeting. I</p> <p>4 don't know who did the Early Childhood Special</p> <p>5 Education services for Mr. Blevins' son, but they did</p> <p>6 not transition them to the Batesville School</p> <p>7 District.</p> <p>8 MS. DEAN: Thank you.</p> <p>9 MS. COX: But now that just happens all the</p> <p>10 time. We have a student move in the district, mom</p> <p>11 did not call to let us know Down Syndrome, needed</p> <p>12 paraprofessional support, but lived right in our</p> <p>13 district. But that year it was not an issue of</p> <p>14 capacity; we had plenty of room that year, so --</p> <p>15 MS. DEAN: Okay.</p> <p>16 MS. WOODS: So but for the disability you would</p> <p>17 just figure it out, essentially?</p> <p>18 MS. COX: Basically, yes.</p> <p>19 MS. WOODS: Okay.</p> <p>20 MS. SALAS-FORD: And if I can add -- Courtney</p> <p>21 Salas-Ford for the Department -- the reason we took</p> <p>22 that question off the application was because of</p> <p>23 those allegations that decisions were being made</p> <p>24 because of a disability, which of course would be in</p> <p>25 violation of state and federal law that prohibits</p>	<p>1 MS. WOODS: I'm just going to say I feel like</p> <p>2 these questions kind of just summed it up that but</p> <p>3 for the disability they would have made it work. So</p> <p>4 I feel like, in my opinion -- I will motion to</p> <p>5 approve the waiver.</p> <p>6 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Is that a motion?</p> <p>7 MS. WOODS: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Ms. Woods has made</p> <p>9 a motion to grant the appeal.</p> <p>10 Do we have a second?</p> <p>11 MS. DEAN: Second.</p> <p>12 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Seconded by Ms. Dean.</p> <p>13 All in favor?</p> <p>14 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>15 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>16 Congratulations, Mr. Blevins. Thank you for</p> <p>17 advocating for your child.</p> <p>18 MR. BLEVINS: Thank you very much.</p> <p>19 DR. MOORE: May I ask you a question?</p> <p>20 MR. DUGAN: Sure.</p> <p>21 DR. MOORE: On two of the ones that we didn't</p> <p>22 see today it said that they were resolved outside?</p> <p>23 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am.</p> <p>24 DR. MOORE: But they both were students who were</p> <p>25 attending schools that had four-day weeks.</p>

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<p>1 MR. DUGAN: Yeah, I know.</p> <p>2 DR. MOORE: And a family wanted a fifth day?</p> <p>3 n) HEFLIN</p> <p>4 MR. DUGAN: So if -- the Heflin family, what</p> <p>5 happened was that one was -- they were appealing from</p> <p>6 the Atkins School District based on that four-day</p> <p>7 workweek -- four-day school week. Excuse me. And</p> <p>8 what ended up happening was they moved into the</p> <p>9 Hector School District.</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>11 MR. DUGAN: So that one worked out.</p> <p>12 r) WILLIAM BIRDSONG</p> <p>13 MR. DUGAN: Now that other one that you're</p> <p>14 mentioning, Dr. Moore, so the -- they have a new</p> <p>15 superintendent over at Ozark Mountain. And so</p> <p>16 previously it had been denied, but they're having a</p> <p>17 board meeting on July 15th and the superintendent is</p> <p>18 recommending that the transfer be granted. Now</p> <p>19 obviously the superintendent doesn't control what his</p> <p>20 board does. But I was going to ask if the Board can</p> <p>21 make a motion to table that one until a later date,</p> <p>22 just because Valley Springs will accept the student</p> <p>23 and, like I said, the superintendent is going to his</p> <p>24 board July 15th. And so I spoke with the</p> <p>25 superintendent and I spoke with the parent and that's</p>	<p>1 DR. MOORE: But on the -- just a quick question</p> <p>2 for the Department. We've talked about this before.</p> <p>3 But on the school districts that have four-day weeks,</p> <p>4 are they required to provide any childcare on that</p> <p>5 fifth day?</p> <p>6 SECRETARY KEY: There's no requirement for that,</p> <p>7 no.</p> <p>8 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>9 SECRETARY KEY: Yeah, I don't --</p> <p>10 DR. MOORE: I feel pretty strongly that we</p> <p>11 should make sure that if we see any cases of choice</p> <p>12 that those get worked out.</p> <p>13 SECRETARY KEY: There are -- and I'm going to</p> <p>14 scan the crowd here to make sure. But I think some</p> <p>15 of those four-day do offer programs on the fifth day,</p> <p>16 but not all of them. I mean it's just a strict four-</p> <p>17 day school week, and then -- so it kind of depends on</p> <p>18 the district.</p> <p>19 DR. MOORE: Okay. I will talk to legislators</p> <p>20 about that.</p> <p>21 MR. DUGAN: So you might be seeing that, Dr.</p> <p>22 Moore, but we might not.</p> <p>23 DR. MOORE: Okay.</p> <p>24 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>25 DR. RANKIN: Well, now I'm curious how many</p>
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<p>1 what I told them I was going to present to the Board</p> <p>2 today, because they wanted to see what happened with</p> <p>3 that. So they didn't just miss their appeal, but</p> <p>4 that might end up working itself out.</p> <p>5 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So we want to table</p> <p>6 item R, the Birdsong family. Is that correct?</p> <p>7 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am, that is correct.</p> <p>8 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. So we need a motion to</p> <p>9 table the Birdsong family.</p> <p>10 DR. RANKIN: So moved.</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>12 MS. DEAN: Second.</p> <p>13 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay. Let's see. Dr. Rankin,</p> <p>14 and then seconded by Ms. Dean.</p> <p>15 All in favor?</p> <p>16 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)</p> <p>17 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Any opposed?</p> <p>18 Okay.</p> <p>19 s) WYATT ROSS</p> <p>20 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: What about the Ross family,</p> <p>21 item S?</p> <p>22 MR. DUGAN: It worked itself out.</p> <p>23 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: Okay.</p> <p>24 MR. DUGAN: Yes, ma'am, it did.</p> <p>25 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right.</p>	<p>1 districts are on a four-day?</p> <p>2 SECRETARY KEY: I don't know if we have it.</p> <p>3 It's a growing number for this past year or the</p> <p>4 previous year. But we can get that information.</p> <p>5 It's still no more than four or five, I think, if I</p> <p>6 remember correctly. But there are some that are</p> <p>7 exploring it.</p> <p>8 Dr. Pfeffer, do you remember how many we have?</p> <p>9 DR. PFEFFER: I don't remember.</p> <p>10 SECRETARY KEY: Okay. We can get that for you.</p> <p>11 CHAIRMAN NEWTON: All right. Okay. We are</p> <p>12 supposed to go back to our Consent Agenda, but I need</p> <p>13 to know does anybody need a break before we go back</p> <p>14 to those three items?</p> <p>15 Yes, okay. We're going to take a 10-minute</p> <p>16 break, all right, and then we'll be back.</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19 (The Action Agenda was concluded at 4:28 p.m.)</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>

## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS     )  
COUNTY OF SALINE     ) ss.

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 July 8, 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: July 17, 2021.

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

V.1. ASHLEY WILLIAMSON  
EXHIBIT ONE (1)

Sharon K. HILL, CCR  
(501) 680-0888

V.1. - ASHLEY WILLIAMSON  
EXHIBIT TWO (2)

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