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

1  
2 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Good morning. The June 13,  
3 2023 meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel is  
4 called to order. I'd like to welcome everyone to the  
5 Department of Education, and ask that you please  
6 silence all of your electronic devices. The goal is  
7 to facilitate a fair and responsible hearing; so,  
8 therefore, I ask that each person speaking please  
9 state your name and title for the record. I ask that  
10 you continue to speak clearly into the microphone  
11 throughout your presentation for the benefit of the  
12 Panel, this audience, and the viewing audience. This  
13 meeting is being live-streamed and recorded, and a  
14 transcript of the meeting will be posted on the DESE  
15 website.

16 All right. Good morning, everyone. And good  
17 morning to our Panel Members.

18 MR. DAVIS: Good morning.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Let's get  
20 started.

## CONSENT AGENDA

21  
22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: We have a consent agenda  
23 before you today. If there are no questions, then  
24 I'll accept a motion to pass the consent agenda.

25 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So moved.

1 MR. BALDWIN: I'll make a motion to approve the  
2 consent agenda.

3 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Okay. I have a motion from  
4 Dr. Wright-McMurray and a second from Mr. Baldwin to  
5 approve the consent agenda. All those in favor?

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed?

8 Motion passes.

9 ACTION AGENDA

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Ms. Wagner.

11 MS. WAGNER: Good morning, everyone.

12 Chauncy, is this on? Okay. Can everybody hear  
13 me?

14 All right. I'm Shastady Wagner with DESE Legal.  
15 So we have two amendment requests for you guys  
16 today.

17 MS. NEWTON: I can't hear. Is anybody else  
18 having problems?

19 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. We can't hear.

20 MR. BALDWIN: Yeah.

21 MS. WAGNER: How about now?

22 MR. DAVIS: Yeah.

23 MR. BALDWIN: That's good.

24 MS. WAGNER: Better? All right. So we'll start  
25 again.

1 I'm Shastady Wagner with DESE Legal.

2 We have two amendment requests this morning, one  
3 from ResponsiveEd Arkansas for Premier High School of  
4 Arkansas and the other one from the Arkansas Virtual  
5 Arts Academy -- or, sorry, Arkansas Virtual Academy  
6 (ARVA). We have too many charters, guys. No, I'm  
7 just kidding.

8 So let's get into -- since we do have two  
9 hearings we're going to go through the hearing  
10 procedures, as we have come to know them by heart.

11 So anybody who plans to provide testimony the  
12 Chair will swear in. They will get 20 minutes to  
13 present. We have gotten no opposition to either one  
14 of these amendment requests; so after they present  
15 the Panel will then ask them their questions. If I  
16 have any legal reviews to do, we'll do it at that  
17 point in time. And then after that you guys will  
18 take your vote. So, otherwise, I think we're ready  
19 to go.

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Thank you, Ms.  
21 Wagner.

22 MS. WAGNER: Just don't forget to swear them in.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Got it.

24 1) CONSIDERATION OF PREMIER HIGH SCHOOL OF ARKANSAS AMENDMENT  
25 REQUEST

1                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Summons, do you want to  
2 come and present the item? And then we'll swear in  
3 our participants.

4                   MS. SUMMONS: Good morning. Dorie Summons, DESE  
5 Charter Director.

6                   Premier High School of Arkansas has requested to  
7 increase the charter enrollment cap to 950 students.  
8 The current enrollment cap is 875 students. Ms.  
9 Rhonda Bradford, the Superintendent, is in  
10 attendance, and Mr. Dennis Felton will be presenting  
11 on behalf of Premier.

12                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. All those  
13 presenting on behalf of Premier if you'd please stand  
14 and 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 COFFMAN: Thank you.

19                   All right. Mr. Felton, let's -- I think you've  
20 got a presentation?

21                   MR. FELTON: I do.

22                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Good morning. You're  
23 recognized.

24                   MR. FELTON: Good morning. Dennis Felton, State  
25 Director of Premier High Schools and Virtual

1 Learning. Thanks for having me this morning.

2 So just to reintroduce our team that we have  
3 this morning, we do have our superintendent Ms.  
4 Rhonda Bradford joining us; Mr. Curtis Shack, our  
5 executive director of Student Information Systems;  
6 Ms. Katie Stephens, our Chief Financial Officer in  
7 Arkansas; Mr. Aaron Duvall, our CTE Director; and  
8 then Mr. Darius Young, Premier High School Online  
9 Campus Director and District Testing Coordinator.

10 So today I just want to make a correction. I  
11 know we said 850 to 950, but it's actually 875 to 975  
12 on the enrollment cap increase. So I just want to  
13 note that slight correction.

14 Today, we're seeking to increase the overall  
15 district enrollment cap from 875 to 975, and then to  
16 also amend the current enrollment cap of each school  
17 to reflect enrollment trends and meet the demands of  
18 various schools within the charter.

19 At Premier we're still aiming to provide hope  
20 for students through a caring, mastery-based, blended  
21 learning option that promotes a free society and  
22 cultivate moral and academic excellence.

23 We continue to serve a unique student population  
24 across the state of Arkansas -- students who are  
25 seeking a smaller, personalized learning environment;

1 students who are at-risk or have already dropped out  
2 of high school; students who have schedules outside  
3 of school, which means that maybe they're working or  
4 maybe they have parenting duties outside of school;  
5 and those students that also are involved with the  
6 juvenile justice system.

7 So why do we continue to expand and exist? In  
8 Arkansas, we want to continue to provide an  
9 innovative academic program to Arkansas communities  
10 that provides a unique educational opportunity with  
11 an emphasis on the disengaged students. We want to  
12 ultimately be able to decrease the dropout rate and  
13 increase the graduation rate in communities where  
14 there are Premier High Schools. To be responsive to  
15 parent's and student's flexibility and needs in  
16 communities. And just to continue to replicate best  
17 practices in personalized learning in Arkansas. And  
18 just a side note, Premier High School serves all.

19 Currently, we're located in Little Rock, North  
20 Little Rock, Springdale, Fort Smith, Texarkana, and  
21 Online.

22 If you look at our district structure, we still  
23 have Premier High Schools of Arkansas, which entails  
24 Little Rock, Fort Smith, Texarkana, and Online. And  
25 then we have our district Premier High School of



1 North Little Rock and Premier High School of  
2 Springdale.

3 You can see our enrollment breakdown --  
4 enrollment cap breakdown by school. And you can see  
5 where in Little Rock we're at 24% capacity; Fort  
6 Smith, 22; Texarkana, 61; Premier Online, 90 -- which  
7 gives us a total current enrollment of 396, with a  
8 current cap of 875 students.

9 The proposed enrollment will decrease brick-and-  
10 mortars to reflect the enrollment trends. And so  
11 we're looking at making our Little Rock campus cap  
12 175, as well as our Fort Smith campus cap 175; we're  
13 looking at increasing our Texarkana cap to 125 from  
14 75, and then increasing our Premier Online to 500, an  
15 increase of 250, which gives us a new total  
16 enrollment cap for the charter of 975, which is a 100  
17 student increase.

18 So looking at our expansion -- remember, we  
19 opened up Premier High School Little Rock -- we're  
20 celebrating our 10th anniversary coming up this fall.  
21 We opened up North Little Rock in 2019; Springdale,  
22 2021; Fort Smith, Texarkana, and Online in 2022.  
23 Premier High School is currently serving over 600  
24 students in Arkansas.

25 So looking at the numbers that I just kind of

1 pulled from this year, this year we're excited; we  
2 awarded 129 high school diplomas to students that  
3 possibly may not even have earned those diplomas or  
4 has those diplomas before Premier High School.  
5 Forty-two of those students were dropout recovery  
6 graduates; 35 were early graduates; we had 23  
7 industry-based certifications earned; 65 students  
8 earned credit through JAG; 34 work-based learning  
9 hours completed; 32 community service learning hours  
10 completed; and over 1800 attendees across six  
11 graduations.

12 So, once again, just kind of talking about the  
13 year in review, at Little Rock we had 14 students  
14 graduated; we implemented the JAG program this year,  
15 as well as the drone program, digital marketing, and  
16 partnered with the cosmetology school. We also  
17 participated in the PEER grant in which we received  
18 additional incentives to help our students with our  
19 student attendance incentives, our student  
20 performance incentives, and also had teachers engage  
21 in the teacher leader portion which allowed them to  
22 gain not only leadership skills, but become a leader  
23 in their building as well as set goals with like NWEA  
24 MAP to be able to receive funding for students  
25 meeting those goals.

1           In Fort Smith, we graduated 20 students. We're  
2 excited about the opening school for this year and  
3 being able to partner with the Fort Smith Public  
4 Schools, as well as the PEAK Center.

5           I think I lost my PowerPoint. There you go.

6           Texarkana graduated six students and we partner  
7 with University of Arkansas Hope/Texarkana, as well  
8 as looking forward to implementing JAG next year.

9           Our Premier High School Online, we graduated 37  
10 students this year.

11           Premier High School Springdale graduated 21  
12 students and we implemented work-based learning  
13 program there as well. And we're excited about  
14 implementing the EAST Initiative at that campus this  
15 fall.

16           Our North Little Rock campus graduated 31  
17 students. Once again, we're excited about the  
18 participation with partners like Little Rock Metro,  
19 as well as our JAG implementation. And they also  
20 participate in PEER grant.

21           Some of the small wins throughout the course of  
22 the year:

23           We've seen some gains in student engagement and  
24 attendance onsite, as well as we're excited about  
25 NWEA MAP growth and participation.

1           We worked hard and I feel like our principals,  
2           our teachers, they worked hard this year to make sure  
3           that we got all of our students the communication  
4           about testing. And also they worked hard to put  
5           incentives together. And it was really cool to see  
6           those campus directors come together, and teachers,  
7           and collaborate with students and be able to design  
8           incentives that the students were looking forward to.  
9           And so we're excited to really see the accountability  
10          portion come behind as far as how many students are  
11          actually participating.

12          We're excited about the PEER grant. It has not  
13          only empowered our teachers, helped us with  
14          recruitment and retention efforts, but also has let  
15          us some goals on things like NWEA MAP and then our  
16          schools achieve those goals and being able to do --  
17          to receive funding to do those cool things for kids  
18          that we've talked about.

19          We're also excited about our community partners  
20          in those student incentives.

21          Our CTE partnerships that Mr. Duvall continues  
22          to work and build, as well as our higher ed.  
23          partnerships.

24          So some testimonial things that I've kind of  
25          spent some time talking to some of our students over

1 the past several weeks, just getting some stories  
2 about -- and I'm always curious about their  
3 experience at Premier High School. And so I met a  
4 young lady in Little Rock, Saniya Lewis, who actually  
5 received a scholarship to begin college in  
6 Greenville, North Carolina, who's excited about  
7 going there and having the opportunity to go to a  
8 smaller college, like Premier High School was for her  
9 in high school.

10 Hunter Cleveland -- excited to talk to hunter  
11 about his endeavors at the PEAK Center, and he's  
12 excited. I think Hunter, if I'm not mistaken, Mr.  
13 Duvall, he's basically met graduation requirements  
14 and he wants to remain with us to be able to continue  
15 the work he's been doing with the PEAK Center; so  
16 really excited to finishing up the industry-based  
17 certification.

18 At Texarkana, very unique graduation;  
19 salutatorian and valedictorian were not present at  
20 the graduation because they're actually -- one is in  
21 the Marine Corps (he's in San Diego, California), and  
22 actually graduates this Friday, and so we're excited  
23 about that. And then the other one is already  
24 enrolled in basic training in the Air Force.

25 And so we have a student, Eric Walter, Premier

1 Online -- he actually spent four years with us in the  
2 Premier model. And so I was very curious of his  
3 experience of being a student and had experience in  
4 the building, and then having experience as an online  
5 student.

6 And so just sharing some stories -- I have  
7 Ill'yana Porter there; she's actually a mom.  
8 Ill'yana is actually 20 years old, going on 21, and  
9 kind of left high school several years ago. And, of  
10 course, she's working full-time, she has a -- she's a  
11 full-time parent, and didn't think it would be  
12 possible. And so we're excited to have stories like  
13 that where she felt hope and felt she could get it  
14 done and it had the flexibility that she needed. And  
15 we continue to see parents and students and getting  
16 feedback.

17 And so looking at the demand, we're excited this  
18 year; Premier High School Online is serving  
19 approximately 240 students this year; 34 students  
20 graduated in May. And, currently, we have over 40  
21 applications looking forward for the next school year  
22 and approximately 150 students returning.

23 Premier High School Texarkana -- once again,  
24 Texarkana has been very responsive to the Premier  
25 High School model. We service up to 50, 55 students

1 this year. Currently, we have 30 seats available and  
2 have over 15 applications received for the next  
3 school year.

4 What are we learning? Students and parents are  
5 seeking flexible alternate educational options across  
6 the state. Student engagement and parental  
7 engagement is challenging, but it's rewarding. And  
8 when there's a healthy rapport and effective  
9 communication we can make things happen. We continue  
10 to stress mutual accountability, effective  
11 communication, and flexibility. And reminding our-  
12 self that education is not a one-size fits all; it  
13 must be personalized.

14 So looking at kind of some of the long-term  
15 goals that we have -- in 2025, we're potentially  
16 looking at we can put all our Premier High Schools  
17 under one charter, and then looking at adding two  
18 additional Premier High Schools. In 2026, also  
19 looking at operating eight Premier High Schools, and  
20 then potentially, by 2028, operating 10 Premier High  
21 Schools. And then, of course, I've kind of got I  
22 guess a guesstimate enrollment cap there based on the  
23 brick-and-mortar trends that we're looking at,  
24 keeping those at about 150, 175, and then with the  
25 virtual school as well.

1 Long-term, we want to continue to partner with  
2 community agencies, local school districts, higher  
3 ed. institutions, local and nonprofit organizations.  
4 We want to continue to strive to meet all of our  
5 charter goals that are outlined in our charter  
6 agreement with the state of Arkansas. And then, most  
7 importantly, we want to insure we're providing  
8 quality assurance and adequate support for our  
9 schools located through Arkansas.

10 So who does it benefit? We like to think  
11 parents, students. Additional seats will allow  
12 parents and students seeking this unique personalized  
13 Premier High School model. Students who reside in  
14 close proximity to Premier High School have the  
15 opportunity to continue to engage in this innovative  
16 environment. And then, Arkansas students who are  
17 seeking a personalized learning environment, we would  
18 have seats available to engage in those endeavors.

19 Kind of to remind you, we started this journey  
20 10 years ago and graduated 10 kids, and we're excited  
21 that we had over 100 high school diplomas awarded  
22 this year.

23 Once again, we are here just seeking to increase  
24 our overall charter enrollment cap by 100 students,  
25 and then to make the necessary adjustments with our



1 building enrollment caps to meet the various demands  
2 of our schools.

3 At Premier High School students continue to be  
4 at the forefront of our minds and continue to  
5 determine the success of our schools, and we're  
6 aiming to continue to be responsive to the needs of  
7 Arkansas communities.

8 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Thank you.

9 Panel Members, questions? Dr. Wright-McMurray,  
10 would you like to start?

11 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Thank you for your  
12 presentation and giving us a little bit more  
13 background on your plan for increasing your cap. I  
14 do have a couple of questions.

15 So, first, how did we get to the 975? What --  
16 how did you come up with that number that you wanted  
17 to increase the number to -- from 875 to 975?

18 MR. FELTON: So I was looking at -- I'm just  
19 going to pull this slide back up. I was looking at,  
20 historically, enrollment trends, and maybe I was I'm  
21 going to say fatty, trying to get more lean. And I  
22 looked at some of our enrollment caps -- I want to go  
23 back one more slide and kind of look at Little Rock,  
24 Fort Smith; they've got larger enrollment caps. And  
25 then, of course, since Fort Smith is new, I was

1 looking at schools like Little Rock and North Little  
2 Rock and looking at three- to five-year trends of  
3 enrollment, and it seemed like the magic number was  
4 somewhere around 130 to 140 consistently. And so I  
5 was like, well, it seems like it would be better  
6 practice to look at the seats that I have, instead of  
7 just, okay, I'm going to add more seats to what I  
8 have, and that way we get better at filling our  
9 capacity. And so making the necessary adjustments  
10 with brick-and-mortar, that way it'll look -- it's  
11 more aligned to kind of the size of the campus  
12 instead of just adding more seats. So my  
13 anticipation is that when we merge all of them  
14 together we're going to be very close to filling  
15 capacity with these adjustments. And you'll see us  
16 do similar adjustments when we merge all of them  
17 together as well.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. And so on one of  
19 your slides it looked like that, to me, the larger  
20 push was like for your Online; so I think you had  
21 like 600 is one of the numbers?

22 MR. FELTON: 500.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: 500. So those students  
24 that will be in that space, can you speak a little  
25 bit more about what will be the options for them if

1 they do need to engage in a brick-and-mortar type of  
2 environment -- like they run into issues or concerns,  
3 what does that look like for those additional  
4 students?

5 MR. FELTON: So I think we're fortunate.  
6 Premier High School is expanding the brick-and-mortar  
7 and in return that puts I guess brick-and-mortar  
8 campuses in close proximity to some of the virtual  
9 students. Now, of course, I think it's obvious in  
10 places like northeast Arkansas, where we're seeking  
11 to continue to grow we don't have brick-and-mortar  
12 campuses. But I like to think that we have a  
13 hardworking, caring virtual staff that engages with  
14 those students, and as much as we can we connect the  
15 brick-and-mortars with the virtual students. And I  
16 can give a lot of stories, but a lot of students, in  
17 particular that like live in central Arkansas, have  
18 opportunities; they can engage in things that we have  
19 going on brick-and-mortar if you're a student that  
20 stays in Fort Smith or in the Fort Smith area, the  
21 Fayetteville, the Springdale area. And then -- and I  
22 started to add some of these pictures to it, but it  
23 was amazing to watch Mr. Young; he put together a  
24 graduation --

25 MS. NEWTON: (inaudible)

1                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Go ahead.

2                   MR. FELTON: It was amazing to watch a  
3 graduation a few weeks ago and see over 500 families  
4 pouring to Little Rock, Arkansas, from all over this  
5 state, to watch I think 36 kids receive their high  
6 school diploma. And I don't know, it's pretty cool  
7 -- and at the same time, I think as we grow the way  
8 we plan to, brick-and-mortar, we'll continue to fill  
9 that gap of students having -- in close proximity can  
10 engage. But Covid taught us a lot, when we think  
11 about it. I mean, Covid taught us a whole lot about  
12 what we can do in the virtual world. And I joke  
13 about it because to this day I feel like we're still  
14 spending the majority of our time in these virtual  
15 meetings. And so students have access to a lot of  
16 high-quality things, virtual as well. And then I  
17 think as we continue to build these relationships and  
18 partnerships with the CTE centers, the higher ed.  
19 institutions, the other nonprofit agencies, that also  
20 kind of bridges the gap as well.

21                  DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So for the increase to 50,  
22 if they start to run into issues or concerns the plan  
23 for them to be able to engage with somebody in a  
24 brick-and-mortar face-to-face option is available for  
25 them?

1 MR. FELTON: I want to be careful when I'm  
2 saying that, because if I have a student that lives  
3 let's say 40 miles north of Jonesboro, which would  
4 put them over 200 miles close to the next Premier,  
5 but virtually we can tap in with those students. Now  
6 I've got some students that live within close  
7 proximity to Premier High School, 10 to 15 minutes,  
8 and typically those are the students that you're  
9 seeing that are engaged in face-to-face, onsite, in-  
10 person.

11 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. And just a couple  
12 more questions.

13 So I just wanted to get -- so your Fort Smith  
14 and UA-Hope/Texarkana campuses, you're working with  
15 them to implement a JAG program or you've already  
16 implemented a JAG program?

17 MR. FELTON: That is correct.

18 Mr. Duvall, will you join me?

19 MR. DAVIS: And while he's joining, can I ask  
20 Dr. Wright-McMurray to speak into the microphone?  
21 We're getting bits and pieces online.

22 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

23 MR. DAVIS: Thank you.

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Sorry.

25 MR. DAVIS: That's okay. I just don't -- I'm

1           sure there will be other questions and I don't want  
2           us to have to repeat those questions and the answers.

3           DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

4           MR. DAVIS: Thank you.

5           MR. FELTON: The reason I'm bringing Mr. Duvall  
6           up, he does a lot of great work in this area and he's  
7           the expert. And so I wanted to kind of let him share  
8           with you all his plans with JAG.

9           DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

10          MR. DUVALL: All right. Thank you. I don't  
11          know about expert, but Aaron Duvall, CTE Director for  
12          ResponsiveEd Arkansas.

13          And so, you know, we were able to implement JAG  
14          in Little Rock and North Little Rock, and just a huge  
15          success in both of those schools. A lot of kids  
16          really benefitted from the work-based learning part  
17          of it. We were able to teach the soft skills that  
18          they so desperately needed. And our plan going  
19          forward is we would love to be able to implement,  
20          either next year or the year after, a JAG program in  
21          all of our campuses.

22          DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

23          MR. DUVALL: And so with two this year -- and  
24          Springdale is already doing our internship, kind of a  
25          work-based learning thing as opposed to JAG -- we're

1 looking at trying to add JAG in Texarkana and Fort  
2 Smith in the future.

3 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

4 MR. DUVALL: We've even taken a look at what  
5 would that look like, a JAG program, in the virtual  
6 school. So that's even on the table as well, as  
7 we're trying to explore those opportunities.

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. All right. Thank  
9 you.

10 MR. DUVALL: You're welcome.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Davis, do you have  
12 questions?

13 MR. DAVIS: I do. And thanks for the  
14 presentation. Just a couple of quick questions.

15 You currently are not exceeding, nor are you  
16 turning students away. So you're currently not --  
17 you're currently not bumping up against your  
18 enrollment cap at the moment. Correct?

19 MR. FELTON: That is correct for the overall  
20 charter.

21 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

22 MR. FELTON: But we are approaching the  
23 enrollment caps for various buildings, like the  
24 Texarkana and the Online.

25 MR. DAVIS: Okay. And I'm just sort of looking

1 at my other screen here. You anticipate in the  
2 Texarkana building -- you've gotten 15 applications  
3 for 23-24, with 40 students returning. Right? And  
4 so there is potentially -- with 30 seats available.  
5 So there is a little bit of a bump there. But in  
6 most of your other instances, that doesn't appear to  
7 be the case in which there is -- you're turning away  
8 any sort of students because of demand. I guess I'm  
9 just -- I'm asking for affirmation in regards to  
10 that. We have yet to reach a point in which we're  
11 turning away students because of unavailable seats.  
12 Is that correct?

13 MR. FELTON: That is correct.

14 MR. DAVIS: Okay. And the second question I  
15 have is you do plan on coming back next year to  
16 combine charters for the 24-25 academic year. Is  
17 that correct, as well?

18 MR. FELTON: We may be looking at the 25-26.

19 MR. DAVIS: Okay. 25-26, okay. So you can see  
20 where my questions are going. It's just around --  
21 I'm having a hard time wrapping my head around the  
22 need to do this now. And I'm not quite sure if I've  
23 heard some sort of real concrete answer on why now is  
24 the time to do something like this. Can you speak to  
25 that? And then, I have no more questions.



1           MR. FELTON: I do. And if I'm able to, I  
2 probably want to pose a question to the Panel. One  
3 of the things we've tried to figure out, we do have a  
4 charter enrollment cap and previously we have been  
5 required to identify a building cap that reflects  
6 that charter enrollment cap. If it is the will of  
7 the Panel that we are able to enroll students and  
8 adjust those caps as needed until we reach the  
9 overall enrollment cap, then that may allow us to  
10 move it around without even being here present and be  
11 able to make the necessary adjustments. But we were  
12 under the assumption that we had to adhere to those  
13 building caps that we specifically designated. And  
14 so with that being said, our fear was I only have a  
15 few seats left in virtual and then I would get to a  
16 point where I will be turning around students in  
17 virtual until I can get to this meeting. My fear  
18 was, in Texarkana, since I only have a few seats  
19 left, I will be turning kids around until I was able  
20 to get to this meeting to get that clearance.

21           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Davis, we have been --  
22 the Charter Office has been working with ResponsiveEd  
23 to move their building caps more in line with the  
24 number of students they're able to serve in those  
25 buildings. And I was very excited to see the

1 reduction in those sites to more represent the  
2 capacity you have in that building, more realistic  
3 numbers. But then I think to your point is your  
4 other numbers at Texarkana and Online are beginning  
5 to get close to your building cap. And so we do  
6 encourage charters to have a building cap for their  
7 own clarity to their public, because that let's them  
8 know if you have to move into a lottery situation  
9 it's all very clear and transparent about the number  
10 of students that are eligible to come to that  
11 building.

12 Mr. Baldwin --

13 MR. DAVIS: Thanks for the clarity.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Baldwin, do you have  
15 questions?

16 MR. BALDWIN: Yes, Madam Chair, I just have a  
17 couple. And I appreciate that clarification because  
18 one of my questions was to ask if you were de-  
19 emphasizing the programs in Little Rock and Fort  
20 Smith to focus on Texarkana and the online. But I  
21 think the answer to that question is that you're  
22 adjusting your enrollment cap for each one to the  
23 building sites. And so that answered my question.

24 The next question I had was your emphasis on the  
25 online program -- in your old enrollment caps, the

1 online program made up about 20% of your total cap,  
2 and with this change it's going to be right at 51%.  
3 And so I was wondering if that was an intentional,  
4 you know, look out into the future with this. And  
5 talk to us about that percentage of online versus in  
6 classroom. And would you see that percentage being  
7 at that level of greater or do you think that will  
8 adjust down over time?

9 MR. FELTON: I think, Mr. Baldwin, it's kind of  
10 like you said, we're learning a lot with this as  
11 well. I've made comments I guess over probably the  
12 past year that Premier has been in existence 10  
13 years. And I think what has happened is as we expand  
14 across the state and get in new communities people  
15 are continuing to be educated on what we have and  
16 what we offer. And when you think about the brick-  
17 and-mortars, we have five. And I'm not knocking  
18 those five brick-and-mortars; they're great schools  
19 and they're in great communities. But, y'all, I can  
20 get back in some of those places that don't have  
21 Premier High School. And we can look at the data on  
22 how many kids are leaving high school in the state of  
23 Arkansas. And so I think what you're seeing, Mr.  
24 Baldwin, is just a response to the students and  
25 families in this state that are seeking this tight of

1 model, that don't have access to it. I think what  
2 you're seeing is a larger pool of students, because  
3 it is statewide. And I joke with Mr. Young at times  
4 because as he registers kids I'm the person that's  
5 sitting there over Google, "I've never heard of this  
6 town in Arkansas." And so I think about a lot of  
7 those students like that, that stay in those towns  
8 that none of us know about, none of us think about.  
9 And I think that's what you're seeing in the demand  
10 and online, only because the net is statewide. And  
11 we have a lot of students who don't have access to  
12 this type of school in their community, so they're  
13 excited. It's kind of exciting, as well, to see  
14 those students and parents have those opportunities.

15 Now from a strategic planning perspective, we  
16 want to continue to build our brick-and-mortars. We  
17 want to continue to have good high-quality brick-and-  
18 mortars because we know we'll continue to serve  
19 students in our brick-and-mortars; we'll continue to  
20 build those brick-and-mortars because, you know, it  
21 serves a need and does great work. At the same time,  
22 you know, the virtual has seen a demand that I really  
23 believe is because of the large net that it casts.

24 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. Thank you for the answer.

25 My last question would be -- and I guess you

1 probably have turned in a proforma budget showing the  
2 change in enrollment cap. And especially as the  
3 virtual goes to a higher percentage I guess there  
4 would be a fairly decent change in maybe the bottom  
5 line. And so let me just ask that: have you done a  
6 budget? And talk to us a little bit about what that  
7 shows as you make these changes.

8 MR. FELTON: Katie, do you want to join me? I  
9 can talk through it, as well.

10 MS. STEPHENS: Good morning. Katie Stephens,  
11 Director of Finance for Arkansas.

12 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Katie, speak right into the  
13 microphone please.

14 MS. STEPHENS: I'm not tall.

15 The proforma that is submitted has a total ADM  
16 of 638 students. That reflects our third-quarter ADM  
17 currently for our brick-and-mortar campuses and an  
18 increase to 400 virtual students. Overall, we are  
19 projecting a surplus of \$378,000 at the end of the  
20 year with those changes.

21 Did you have any specific questions?

22 MR. BALDWIN: Well, I wanted to make sure that  
23 the financial impact was positive and not negative.  
24 I guess that was one part of my question.

25 MS. STEPHENS: Yes, sir.

1 MR. BALDWIN: Can you tell us how the bottom  
2 line number is different than the current bottom line  
3 number? Is it an improvement? I mean maybe a little  
4 bit more detail on where you're at now.

5 MS. STEPHENS: Yes, it is. It is an increase  
6 that aligns with the increase in the ADM. We expect  
7 a continuing surplus each year of about 12%, and our  
8 goal is to have about three months in reserve always.  
9 And so this aligns with that.

10 MR. BALDWIN: Well, thank you. That's -- that  
11 was all my questions, Madam Chair.

12 MS. STEPHENS: All right.

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Mr. Baldwin.  
14 Ms. Newton, do you have questions?

15 MS. NEWTON: Yes. I'm having so many audio  
16 issues -- you know, it's in and out -- and most of it  
17 I think I'm getting. In alignment with all of the  
18 others in terms of the enrollment cap and all that, I  
19 think my questions have been answered. But I think  
20 it's maybe not the duty of this panel, but I'd be  
21 interested in knowing -- and I realize you may not  
22 have that right -- available now -- the economic  
23 impact of serving this group of students and what  
24 difference it makes as a result, and them being more  
25 productive in terms of employment, being ready for

1 credentials and certifications in different careers.  
2 So at some point I guess it would be helpful for you  
3 to have that information and share it with those  
4 maybe policymakers that would look at this and --  
5 [A few moments of silence as Zoom screen/audio freezes]

6 MS. NEWTON: Did anybody hear anything?

7 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Yes. It froze up for just a  
8 second.

9 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Ms. Newton.

11 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

12 MR. FELTON: I just -- I agree with her. Part  
13 of what we're trying to do is get better at telling  
14 our story. I did bring somebody up like Mr. Duvall,  
15 who crunches a lot of data for us as well on the CTE  
16 and the outcomes. And so I agree with you, Ms.  
17 Newton, that we do want to have this data prepared  
18 and presented amongst those that do make the  
19 policies, and that way we can kind of better tell our  
20 story, the impact we're actually having in some of  
21 these communities beyond just I mean how many kids  
22 are graduating, because it's bigger than that.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Any other  
24 questions from the Panel?

25 Well, just a couple of glows. The Charter

1 Office has been out visiting all of the Premier  
2 schools and they've seen remarkable improvement since  
3 Covid. We're starting to see more kids onsite, which  
4 is always exciting, in the brick-and-mortar -- and of  
5 course understanding that the online is reaching  
6 those communities where a brick-and-mortar is not  
7 available in the immediate area.

8 I personally am very happy to see the enrollment  
9 caps adjusted to more -- to better represent what's  
10 really happening in the schools and what can happen  
11 in those schools. So, personally, I think those  
12 numbers are right in line with where they should be.

13 The other thing that I think is exciting is  
14 having a long-range plan and, while we're not voting  
15 on that today, just knowing that at some point the  
16 plan will be to roll these charters together once  
17 your grant cycles end and to be thinking long-term  
18 about where you want to expand as the need arises  
19 across the state.

20 I think just to kind of -- in closing, if you  
21 would just go back to your mission and just remind  
22 the Panel about the students that you serve; so just  
23 thinking about who's enrolling in Premier High  
24 Schools.

25 MR. FELTON: I was going to see if they put my



1           PowerPoint --

2           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN:  You don't have to read it  
3           word-for-word.

4           MR. FELTON:  Oh, okay.

5           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN:  Speak it from your heart.

6           MR. FELTON:  So I get excited about this, is  
7           because I like to think that Premier High School  
8           serves all.  We have students that come with us that  
9           are not being successful in traditional school.  A  
10          lot of those students have lost hope.  A lot of those  
11          families have lost hope.  A lot of those families  
12          have -- feel like public schools fail them.  And to  
13          see the fire that ignites in that kid that has been  
14          retained, to see the fire ignite in that student  
15          who's had a kid in high school, who was called all  
16          type of things by the other high schools, to see the  
17          excitement in their family and kid that has been told  
18          they cannot and will not, that's the exciting part.

19          Me and Ms. Bradford spent the month of May  
20          attending eight graduations; six of them were Premier  
21          High Schools.  And every single graduation probably  
22          had a ratio of one-to-60 or one-to-70 of those  
23          students in the smaller schools.  And so I like to  
24          think that we serve a marginalized population that's  
25          somewhat forgotten in public education.  And Premier

1 ignites that fire; they find those students and they  
2 get them back going. And then, as Ms. Newton says,  
3 these are the same citizens that we're counting on to  
4 be productive citizens. These are the same people  
5 that we're counting on to be voters. These are the  
6 same people that we're counting on to be leaders.  
7 And so, it's important the work that we do because to  
8 me, all kids matter. It's not about Premier. It's  
9 not about it being a charter school. It's about  
10 kids. Ironically, it's named Premier High School,  
11 it's branded that way, but we're serving public  
12 school kids in Arkansas, and we just want to make a  
13 difference in those kids' lives.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Thank you.  
15 Panel, I'll accept a motion.

16 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I move approval.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I have a motion from Dr.  
18 Wright-McMurray to approve the cap increase and  
19 number adjustments.

20 Ms. Newton --

21 MR. BALDWIN: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: -- did you second that?

23 Mr. Baldwin, did you second?

24 MR. BALDWIN: I did.

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Okay. All right. I have a

1 motion by Ms. -- Dr. Wright-McMurray, and a second by  
2 Mr. Baldwin to approve the amendment request. All  
3 those in favor?

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed?

6 Motion passes. Congratulations.

7 MR. FELTON: Thank y'all.

8 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: If you will give us just a  
9 moment, we'll need to fill out our voting sheets.

10 I also believe on preliminary data we're seeing  
11 an increase in the number of students that  
12 participated in the state assessment; so we're very  
13 hopeful. Don't forget corrections.

14 All right. Mr. Baldwin, if you'd like to go  
15 first.

16 MR. BALDWIN: Yes, thank you. I am in favor of  
17 the amendment request. I think this request is well  
18 considered and reflects strong strategic thought and  
19 is favorable for students.

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you.

21 Mr. Davis.

22 MR. DAVIS: I approve the motion in order to  
23 align enrollment growth with trends and readjust  
24 building enrollments.

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you.

1 Dr. Wright-McMurray.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I voted for. I support  
3 the amendment request to increase the enrollment cap  
4 from 875 to 975. Premier charter has a well thought-  
5 out plan to implement the expansion and place the  
6 charter in a position for continued growth into the  
7 future.

8 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you.

9 Ms. Newton.

10 MS. NEWTON: I supported the motion. The  
11 request for increased enrollment addresses future  
12 goals to increase student enrollment.

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Thank you,  
14 everyone.

15 Congratulations.

16 MR. FELTON: Thank you.

17 2) CONSIDERATION OF ARKANSAS VIRTUAL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL  
18 AMENDMENT REQUEST

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Summons.

20 MS. SUMMONS: Our second amendment for this  
21 morning, Arkansas Virtual Academy charter school is  
22 requesting to reinstate the waiver of Arkansas Code  
23 6-17-2403 concerning the minimum teacher compensation  
24 schedule. Ms. Amy Johnson, the superintendent is  
25 here and available for questions.

1           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. If you will stand  
2 and raise your right hand, please? Do you swear or  
3 affirm that the testimony you're about to give shall  
4 be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
5 truth?

6           MS. JOHNSON: I do.

7           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. You're  
8 recognized. You're becoming a week -- you're  
9 becoming a monthly staple here.

10          MS. JOHNSON: Let's hope not.

11          Amy Johnson, Head of School at Arkansas Virtual  
12 Academy.

13          And, Madam Chair, Members of the Panel, just a  
14 quick apology for a little bit of zig and zag on this  
15 waiver issue. I was here last month asking for this  
16 waiver to be rescinded. You'll see no formal  
17 presentation from me today. I think this is fairly  
18 clear-cut. We do not currently utilize 80% of the  
19 salary line, and so we -- in order to participate in  
20 the state monies for the salary increase, we would  
21 need a waiver of that. As the board became aware  
22 that the waiver was time-lined at 12 months, they  
23 made the decision that they would rather reinstate  
24 their waiver and handle their increases within our  
25 own budget, as we have done for the past 20 some-odd

1 years. And so we were able to move this back to the  
2 Charter Panel before it was seen in front of the  
3 State Board for reinstatement.

4 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Dr. Wright-  
5 McMurray, any questions?

6 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I guess just for my  
7 clarification, so as you're implementing -- or, I'm  
8 sorry -- as you're reinstating the waiver, will it  
9 allow you to -- so will you be in alignment with the  
10 LEARNS Act or -- I'm trying to figure that out.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I think Ms. Wagner needs to  
12 help us with that.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. Sorry. I was just  
14 trying to get a better sense of how that's going to  
15 be impacted.

16 MS. JOHNSON: I just wanted you to get to come  
17 up.

18 MS. WAGNER: Well, thank you.

19 I'm Shastady Wagner, Legal.

20 So it actually will allow ARVA to make their own  
21 determination on what their salary schedule will be.  
22 They will not be required to meet a minimum. No,  
23 ma'am.

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Is that it?

1 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And then that -- but  
2 you'll still be able to move forward and -- so I  
3 guess it's not going to negatively impact you?

4 MS. JOHNSON: That's a great question. I think  
5 that the only way that it would negatively impact us  
6 is if the board was in a position that they chose not  
7 to meet the minimum, which could affect our ability  
8 to attract teachers. But we actually just had a  
9 board meeting last night and they voted to meet the  
10 minimum salary --

11 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

12 MS. JOHNSON: -- and actually put in a small  
13 salary schedule, which we haven't had in the past.  
14 So they're pretty proactive to stay competitive for  
15 the recruitment and retainment of teachers.

16 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Davis?

18 MR. DAVIS: And I know we went through a number  
19 of different salary schedules last meeting. Remind  
20 me again, we did approve the salary schedule or we  
21 did look at -- I think -- no, we did not. Okay.

22 MS. JOHNSON: I provided an example last time we  
23 were here for you to be able to look at, but the  
24 board had not approved it at that time. It was a  
25 draft.

1           MR. DAVIS: And when might you think the board  
2 would approve something like that?

3           MS. JOHNSON: Well, it depends on the vote of  
4 the Panel today. A waiver of teacher salary actually  
5 means that we would not have to have a formalized  
6 salary schedule. But the vote of our board last  
7 night implemented just a slight salary schedule that  
8 creates a small step increase for years of experience  
9 with ARVA. One of the things that we found in our  
10 history is that moving to a virtual platform is a  
11 very leveling experience for our teachers; it's a  
12 very different environment. And so not only does the  
13 training to bring those teachers up to speed cost  
14 time, but, more importantly, it costs student  
15 outcomes. When we have teachers that have been with  
16 us for an extended time, we know that they have a  
17 more positive and consistent experience with our  
18 students. So that was the board's intent. So the  
19 salary that I put forward as an example last month  
20 has step increases for each -- for every five-year  
21 sort of commitment and continuation with the school.

22           MR. DAVIS: Will the board vote on that salary  
23 scale that you put forward?

24           MS. JOHNSON: They -- yes, they voted on the  
25 scale last night, as implemented by salaries that



1 were approved for the coming year. So, they looked  
2 at that salary schedule and then they also looked at  
3 teacher-by-teacher what that looked like for each  
4 staff member based on their years of experience and a  
5 year-over-year salary comparison.

6 MR. DAVIS: Okay. And that salary scale met the  
7 minimum requirement that was identified by Arkansas  
8 LEARNS?

9 MS. JOHNSON: Yes. The base salary in that  
10 salary schedule is 50k.

11 MR. DAVIS: Okay. All right. No other  
12 questions. Well, and I guess it might be a question  
13 for Legal. If we were to approve something like  
14 this, I'm assuming that others could come forward and  
15 ask for this same type of approval. Is that correct?

16 MS. WAGNER: That is correct. Yes, they could  
17 come and ask for that, but that would necessitate not  
18 being qualifying for the additional funding. So --

19 MR. DAVIS: Okay. No other questions from me  
20 right now.

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Baldwin?

22 MR. BALDWIN: I have no questions.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Newton?

24 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Newton, do you have any

1 questions?

2 MS. NEWTON: I'll ask you, Ms. Coffman, how much  
3 of a gray area is this in terms of any other  
4 districts or any other charters or the challenge to  
5 the Virtual Academy doing this?

6 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: So I think this decision is  
7 very individualized based on the situation and  
8 conditions of how they've been previously paying  
9 staff that sets them up to meet the minimum salary  
10 expectation. I think that's what you're saying is  
11 you're going to be able to do that this way; this is  
12 the best way for your school. Does that help, MS.  
13 Newton?

14 MS. NEWTON: I heard most of what you said. So  
15 the charter -- the Department of Education does not  
16 challenge -- doesn't have a challenge with this or a  
17 question on how it might be played out with the other  
18 charters? This is something that could be standard,  
19 especially since it does meet the LEARNS requirement  
20 on minimum. But how does this move forward?

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I don't know that there's  
22 anything standard. This is the best situation for  
23 ARVA --

24 MS. NEWTON: I see.

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: -- and their employees at

1 this time.

2 All right. Any other questions?

3 I'll accept a motion.

4 MR. BALDWIN: I'll make a motion to approve as  
5 submitted.

6 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Second?

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I have a motion from Mr.  
9 Baldwin and a second from Dr. Wright-McMurray to  
10 accept the amendment as presented. All those in  
11 favor?

12 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed?

14 All right. Thank you.

15 We'll take a moment and let our panel members  
16 submit their voting sheets.

17 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Baldwin, would you like  
19 to read your statement?

20 MR. BALDWIN: Yes. Thank you. I voted for the  
21 request. And I believe that this will meet the  
22 salary needs of the school as established by the  
23 board and the ranges they've established, and also  
24 will meet the minimum standards of the Arkansas  
25 LEARNS Act.

1 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you.

2 Mr. Davis.

3 MR. DAVIS: I support the amendment in order for  
4 A-V-A to meet the salary needs of the school.

5 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you.

6 Ms. Newton.

7 MS. NEWTON: I'm having problems with my voting  
8 sheet, but I vote for the amendment.

9 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. We'll have  
10 someone fill that in for you.

11 Dr. Wright-McMurray.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I voted for. I support  
13 the request to reinstate the waiver. ARVA charter  
14 salary schedule intent is to meet the expectations of  
15 the LEARNS Act minimum teacher salary, as well as  
16 meet needs of the charter.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Well, thank you  
18 everyone. That concludes our meeting for the day.

19 CLOSING COMMENTS

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: This is my last Charter  
21 Panel, so I want to say thank you to everyone. I  
22 appreciate you so much and it's been a lot of fun. I  
23 think we've done a lot of good things for schools.

24 With that, I'll accept a motion to adjourn.

25 MS. NEWTON: Well, can we say thank you to Ms.

1 Coffman?

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Yeah, back it up a little  
3 bit. You can't just say you're out of here.

4 MS. NEWTON: Not that quickly. But, you know, I  
5 want to say it's been a pleasure working with you,  
6 and certainly you've made my understanding of the  
7 process -- you've enlightened me in so many different  
8 ways. Your professionalism is above anything that we  
9 could've ever expected. And thank you for walking  
10 and holding my hand through much of this and having  
11 the confidence that [Zoom sound cuts out] available  
12 any time that I've had a question to assist in  
13 matters of the Charter Authorizing Panel, but also  
14 those other things that if I wanted to know something  
15 or needed to know something you've always been there.  
16 You are a treasure and I've appreciated having the  
17 association with you during this process.

18 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Ms. Newton.

19 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I definitely echo the  
20 sentiment. I know I came very green to the Panel  
21 from the understanding of how charters all work and  
22 the expectations, and you've been very patient in  
23 allowing me the opportunity to grow with my knowledge  
24 and my confidence of being able to ask my questions,  
25 even though sometimes I might not know exactly how to

1 word them, but you give me the chance to kind of work  
2 through that. And then, just outside of that you've  
3 always been a pleasure to work with, always very  
4 supportive, and I just love the way that you lead  
5 your team and I can see it reflected in them, how  
6 they reflect back to you, your leadership and  
7 support. So you definitely will be missed here at  
8 ADE.

9 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Dr. Wright-  
10 McMurray.

11 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Yeah.

12 MR. BALDWIN: I have to admit that you have  
13 intimidated me a few times, especially at the  
14 beginning when Madam Chair would show up with her big  
15 binders and regulations, and I had no idea what was  
16 in those books. But she is a gracious and kind and  
17 thoughtful leader. And I still don't know what's in  
18 the books, but I know that you do and that gives me  
19 comfort, and I think we make good decisions because  
20 of that. So thank you for your leadership and thank  
21 you for caring for the students, the kids of  
22 Arkansas, in your distinguished career. And I just  
23 -- I hate that you're retiring, but I'm also proud  
24 that you are. And you'll have a great time and have  
25 more freedom than you can have otherwise. So just

1 thank you for everything.

2 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Mr. Baldwin.

3 MR. DAVIS: Yeah, Deb, you know, I like to think  
4 -- you know, the saying goes "get to where you can do  
5 the most good for the most people, as quickly as you  
6 can" -- and you have done that over a number of  
7 years. Your legacy in Arkansas education and what  
8 you have done for numerous, countless families,  
9 students and communities cannot be overstated. So,  
10 one, I thank you on behalf of the State of Arkansas,  
11 just for the tremendous, outstanding work that you've  
12 done. You have seen education in Arkansas, since  
13 I've been involved with it -- and it's -- I've been  
14 here a little minute; Ms. Newton has as well. But  
15 you have always provided thoughtful insight, a steady  
16 hand, and, as Mr. Baldwin indicated, knowledge beyond  
17 reproach which is always very comforting when you've  
18 involved with something and you know that Deb Coffman  
19 is going to be involved as well. And you -- I don't  
20 know how, but you have this recognition of talent in  
21 providing and bringing a very strong team always to  
22 the table to support us. And as a true educator  
23 does, you have a way of allowing us to kind of show  
24 our limited knowledge at things but make us feel as  
25 if, you know, the questions we're asking are

1 critically important. And how you provide the  
2 information only invites us to want to know more and  
3 ask more questions in a way that I think moves  
4 education forward in Arkansas. So I can't personally  
5 thank you enough to just your spirit and how you  
6 approach it and what you've done for the State of  
7 Arkansas. So, thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Well, thank you so much.

9 I do want to say thank you to Sharon Hill who is  
10 always here to take our transcript. Dr. Matthew  
11 Sutherlin; Feather Linn, our great director; Dorie  
12 Summons; and Thomas Coy, who's been on our charter  
13 team; and, of course, we couldn't do it without  
14 Shastady -- she keeps us on the straight and narrow.  
15 So it's been a good run. Great team.

16 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: And I'll accept a motion to  
17 adjourn.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So moved.

19 MS. NEWTON: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. All those in  
21 favor?

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Motion passes.

24 Thank you, everyone. Have a great day.

25 (The meeting was concluded at 10:02 a.m.)



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

STATE OF ARKANSAS     )  
                                   ) ss.  
 COUNTY OF SALINE     )

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Charter Authorizing Panel, in Little Rock, Arkansas, on June 13, 2023; that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have no contract with any parties within this action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial agency, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties to the action.

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: June 20, 2022.

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