

CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

SEPTEMBER 17, 2024
9:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

DR. MATTHEW SUTHERLIN, Chairperson - Coordinator of
Standards Systems Support and Charter
MR. PHIL BALDWIN, Retired Bank Executive
MR. FREDDIE SCOTT - Family and Community Engagement, School
Choice and Parent Empowerment
DR. TINA MOORE, ADHE - Director of Workforce Development
MR. KIM DAVIS, Walton Family Foundation - Senior Advisor
MS. TOYCE NEWTON, Former State Board of Education Member
DR. SONJA WRIGHT-McMURRAY, Associate Director -
Division of Career and Technical Education

NON-VOTING PARTICIPANTS:

MS. DORIE SUMMONS, DESE Charter Schools Director
MS. JERRI CLARK, School Health Services Director
MR. STEPHEN REYNOLDS, Attorney Specialist - Elementary
and Secondary Education

LOCATION:

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

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P R O C E E D I N G S

I. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Good morning. The September 17th, 2024 meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel is called order. I'd like to welcome everyone to the Department of Education and ask that you please silence all of your electronic devices. The goal is to facilitate a fair and responsible hearing, so therefore I ask each person speaking to please state your name and title for the record. I ask that you continue to speak clearly into the microphone throughout your presentation for the benefit of the Panel, this audience and the viewing audience. This meeting is being live streamed and recorded, and a transcript of the meeting will be posted on the DESE website.

Good morning, everybody. Everybody doing good this morning?

MR. DAVIS: Good morning, doing well.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Well, we have a consent agenda item before us today. If there are -- actually, two consent agenda items before us today. If there are no questions, then I'll accept a motion to pass the consent agenda.

1 MR. BALDWIN: So moved.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Second.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I have a motion by Mr. Baldwin
4 and a second by Dr. Sonja Wright-McMurray. All
5 those in favor?

6 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any opposed?

8 All right. The motion passes.

9 **III. ACTION AGENDA**

10 **III.1. CONSIDERATION OF SOMERSET ACADEMY ARKANSAS OPEN**

11 **ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION REQUEST**

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Mr. Reynolds, if
13 you would come forward to review the procedures.

14 Good morning.

15 MR. REYNOLDS: Good morning.

16 All right, good morning. Stephen Reynolds,
17 staff attorney with the Department.

18 Dr. Sutherlin, you'll want to swear in everyone
19 except for attorneys that will be giving testimony.
20 The applicants will then have 20 minutes to present.
21 Any opposition to the charters will have 20 minutes
22 to present. To my knowledge, there's no opposition
23 for any of the applicants on the agenda. All parties
24 please state your name before you speak even if you
25 talked before, so we can have a clear record. Any

1 community members or community partners that are here
2 to speak on behalf of the applicants, will need to
3 speak during the 20 minutes. Any elected officials
4 that are here can speak before the hearing, during
5 the 20 minutes or at the conclusion of all the
6 testimony; that's up to the official and the
7 applicant how they want to proceed. Following the
8 charter's presentations, we'll go through legal
9 concerns and waivers if any. And you can -- guys can
10 address any remaining concerns outside of legal or
11 ask any other questions. That's all I have got.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you.

13 And I would like to reiterate, as you come up to
14 the mic, if you will get very close to that mic, it
15 makes it a lot easier for those that are online to
16 hear.

17 All right. So those who are going to be
18 speaking on behalf of the charter, if you'd stand and
19 raise your right hand. All right. Do you swear that
20 the testimony you're about to give is the truth, the
21 whole truth and nothing but the truth?

22 (ALL ANSWER AFFIRMATIVELY)

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. You may begin.

24 MR. GERMAN: Hello everyone. I'm Todd German,
25 the chair of Somerset. First, right off, thanks for

1 having us today. And of particular importance is how
2 much we appreciate the cooperation we've had from
3 your staff, your legal department and the Resource
4 Center of Arkansas. We have worked with dozens of
5 different authorizers and, not blowing smoke, this is
6 the absolute best experience that we ever have.
7 Their -- the cooperation, the feedback is amazing.
8 It's a true partnership and we look forward to that
9 in the future.

10 We're going to do -- we have a few presentations
11 today. It's pretty comprehensive. We're going to
12 try to keep it quick and then get to questions which
13 is usually the most important part of it.

14 Quick introductions. I'm the chair. We have
15 the whole founding board -- and I say founding board
16 because eventually we will, as the school gets
17 established, bring some more local people in. But
18 right now we have to -- you got to get going. I have
19 Matt Cox; you're going to hear from him in just a
20 moment. Taylor Smith. And a neat thing, we just
21 heard from the -- Governor DeSantis just appointed
22 Taylor to the Florida Development Finance Corporation
23 which is a pretty big deal. And we have Chantal
24 Morales; she is a current principal, and she is on
25 the board here too.

1 Let me -- I'm going to bring up Matt Cox. He
2 can introduce himself. And we want to address right
3 off the bat why we're here; you know, why Arkansas
4 and why it's important to us rather than -- because
5 we are a big corporation, but Arkansas has a real
6 place in our heart. So Matt Cox.

7 MR. COX: Hey, good morning. Matt Cox. As Todd
8 mentioned, I'm also a board member. Happy -- so
9 happy to be here today. Thank you for having us. I
10 live in Arkansas, moved here about 15 months ago from
11 San Antonio, Texas which is where I became part of
12 the local Somerset board there in San Antonio about
13 eight years ago now. Have loved the school. My
14 daughter just graduated from there right before we
15 left San Antonio. So when we got here, she was able
16 to -- she started NWACC there in northwest Arkansas.
17 Now she's at the University of Arkansas, so woo pig.

18 But, you know, I was sitting here thinking just
19 a minute ago, like, Todd and I were in the Menger
20 Hotel in San Antonio when I told him I was moving to
21 Arkansas. And, you know, that's significant -- or
22 it's a neat story because, one, that's where Teddy
23 Roosevelt gathered his Rough Riders. But it's also
24 more importantly where Bill Clinton was photographed
25 eating mango ice cream in 1994. So what a fun story

1 that that's where we were when I told Todd that I was
2 going to be moving to Arkansas. But, you know, we
3 looked at each other and was like we've got to
4 Somerset to Arkansas. It's such a great school.
5 Like I said, my daughter graduated from there. I
6 have two little children as well. I had one in
7 preschool at Somerset and hopefully looking forward
8 to getting my 5- and 6-year-old back into a Somerset
9 school again soon. So we're so thankful to be here.
10 It's personal for me. It's -- I have a passion for
11 education, and I look forward to seeing what we can
12 do here. Thank you.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

14 MR. GERMAN: Thanks, Matt.

15 Todd German again. And again, I have a personal
16 connection besides the, you know, we have a long-time
17 relationship with Commissioner Oliva from Florida.
18 But for me, I just spent the week in Bentonville with
19 my daughter and granddaughter and my daughter went to
20 Pea Ridge High School, she graduated there and she's
21 a practicing physician in Bentonville now. I have a
22 little 3-year-old granddaughter who did her first
23 bike race, the OZ Foundation, one of the Walton's
24 mountain bike things.

25 So let's get right to our presentations. I want

1 to bring up Shannie Sadesky. She is -- was the first
2 employee -- I'll say it the right way. I used to say
3 she's the oldest employee, but that's not true. The
4 very first employee of Somerset, what, 25 years ago?

5 MS. SADESKY: Twenty-seven.

6 MR. GERMAN: Twenty-seven years ago. So she's
7 got to -- she's going to do the PowerPoint. And I
8 think our PowerPoint -- we've printed it for you. We
9 weren't satisfied with what we sent in, so we --
10 we've been working until about two minutes ago.

11 MS. SADESKY: Hi, everybody. Thank you. My
12 name is Shannine Sadesky. I'm one of the members of
13 the school development and operations teams for
14 Somerset as we continue to grow. And as Todd said, I
15 was the very first employee ever hired for Somerset
16 in 1997, way back when charter schools were first
17 becoming a thing that that parents were interested in
18 doing. And we did it in Miramar, Florida, and the
19 school was a tiny little 50 student school in the
20 middle of a bunch of growing development
21 neighborhoods where a lot of families were just
22 really not wanting to send their kids to very
23 overcrowded public schools. They were worried about
24 safety. They kind of wanted that personal touch
25 where they could, you know, see the staff members at

1 dismissal and be able to come and talk to the
2 principal. So we wanted to create that like old
3 neighborhood school, one room schoolhouse kind of
4 feel. And as we've continued to grow, we've really
5 tried to stay in the roots of that and really be that
6 neighborhood school, that community school that
7 mirrors the community around it and really takes
8 those needs into consideration and brings the
9 community in to be a part of what makes our school a
10 success.

11 So, obviously, since that time we've grown
12 immensely. We now have 75 schools in four states, in
13 Arizona, Nevada, Texas and Florida, and we have a
14 virtual school as well. And a lot of this, you know,
15 you'll see on this handout that we gave you. Our
16 mission from the beginning -- a little bit what I
17 said is, you know, we want it to be that neighborhood
18 school feel, but we want to really provide a
19 high-quality product, obviously, as does every
20 school. But we're really proud to say, you know, at
21 the beginning a lot of people were very skeptical
22 about the way we were doing school. It was very
23 project based, data oriented and, you know, our -- I
24 can tell you as a teacher at that time my students
25 did not want to leave. And as I continued on as a

1 principal for 17 years, opening a number -- I would
2 say nine or ten start up Somerset schools, we
3 continue to have that feel where the kids don't want
4 to go home because they're having so much fun in
5 school and that makes me really proud as an educator.
6 So we want to bring that high-quality education. And
7 we have some different members of the team that are
8 going to go into a little bit more detail about how
9 we do that.

10 But our second year we achieved the highest SAT
11 scores in this state in mathematics. So I think
12 that's pretty impressive from such humble beginnings.
13 And we've continued to have a lot of those different
14 accolades as some of the most outstanding schools
15 across the nation.

16 Safety is obviously very important. We're going
17 to get into that in a little bit, but, you know,
18 rather than read you our vision and mission as each
19 of us come up and talk, we're going to tell you about
20 how we bring in the empowering students. We want our
21 students to enrich their communities. And ideally,
22 we want to provide that type of education that's
23 tailored to the community and really prepares our
24 students to be able to help their community thrive,
25 you know, and want to stay here and want to make it a

1 better place.

2 We, obviously, also want to create global
3 learners because we know that everybody is not going
4 to stay in their local community, and we have all of
5 that most cutting-edge things to prepare our kids for
6 that. So we're also really proud to say that, you
7 know -- again when we started, nobody really knew
8 what charter schools were. And we decided that, you
9 know, we wanted to show that we were a high-quality
10 school and a high-quality school system. So we were
11 the very first -- in 2009, the very first school to
12 be -- it was SACS CASI back then -- but SACS AdvancED
13 accredited. We got that stamp of approval for our
14 schools, and we've continued to renew that every year
15 for our entire network. So another point of pride.

16 We've -- have numerous Blue Ribbon schools you
17 can see on the next slide. One of our schools is --
18 has just been nominated for the third time for a Blue
19 Ribbon school. We have others twice. There are two
20 more actually that aren't on this handout that we
21 gave you. So as you know, becoming a Blue Ribbon
22 school is really a difficult thing to do. It takes a
23 lot of hard work from the school. We're so proud of
24 that. We also have a lot of schools that were
25 recognized in U.S. News & World Report in *Newsweek*

1 magazine as top schools in the United States.

2 When I opened a Somerset Academy, Miramar, which
3 was the expansion of that very first 50 student
4 school, that school in the second year of its opening
5 achieved the highest performing school in the state
6 of Florida for Title I -- it was an elementary school
7 and a middle school -- for closing the achievement
8 gap in reading and math; and that's something that
9 we've continued to do because that same school just
10 received -- there's a study that talked about the
11 success of charter schools where it talked about how
12 dynamically our charter schools are doing in closing
13 that achievement gap. And I think that's really
14 important in any community that we come to, to be
15 able to work with all types of students no matter
16 what and continue to close that achievement gap no
17 matter the challenge.

18 So additionally, one of our schools just was
19 awarded the second highest performing elementary
20 school in the state. You know, I could go on and on.
21 You know, the No. one elementary charter school in
22 the state of Florida. So we have some outstanding
23 results, and we hope to bring that to Arkansas.

24 We also are -- have a number of STEM programs.
25 We're STEM accredited along with our general

1 accreditation status.

2 One of the things that I think is very
3 reassuring when we're coming to a new place as well
4 is that we can provide the adequate funding and
5 resources that we're going to need to be able to do
6 to make sure that we're going to be sustainable and
7 we're going to be able to be scalable and to continue
8 to give the opportunity of Somerset Academy to more
9 and more communities as we get our foot in and
10 established in the state. And so we are constantly
11 seeking grants and funding sources. We were recently
12 the recipients of the CMO -- it's the CSP CMO Grant
13 for replication and expansion of high-quality
14 schools. We received just over \$53 million for that
15 which gives us about 1.5 million for each school that
16 we open for those costs to make sure that we have all
17 of the resources, technology and things that we need
18 for the -- for our students to succeed. We've also
19 annually pretty much -- I think since I've started --
20 been the recipients of the CSP grants for the school
21 start-up grants which really is a game changer when
22 you're doing a school from, you know, brick and
23 mortar, from the ground up. We've also received a
24 number of Walton grants. We've gotten recently -- I
25 think CTE is so important, you know, not every

1 student is going to go to college. Recently, one of
2 our schools received a 1.5 -- about -- actually, just
3 over \$1.3 million CAP Grant which is a workforce
4 capitalization incentive grant, which is for programs
5 like EMTs, early childhood education, computer and --
6 computers and technology, those types of programs for
7 students that want to go into those careers. Digital
8 design, television production -- and Sarah Fye, who
9 is sitting behind me, is going to talk a little bit
10 more about that. So we have constantly funding
11 sources going on in addition to our network, you
12 know, being very well established in terms of our
13 reserves, in terms of having an annual surplus of
14 over \$9 million. So in the event that schools might
15 need additional funding, the funding is there and
16 we're going to be able to make it the best school we
17 can.

18 So we do have a really quick video, just it's
19 about 30 seconds. Just so you can kind of see our
20 schools in action and get a little snapshot of what
21 you might see here in Arkansas. And thank you.

22 "At Somerset Academy, we believe that every
23 child deserves a high-quality education that empowers
24 them to succeed in life.

25 Somerset's dedicated teachers provide a safe and

1 nurturing learning environment where students are
2 encouraged to explore, create and learn. Our
3 innovative curriculum emphasizes critical thinking
4 and problem-solving skills, empowering students to
5 become confident and independent learners join
6 Somerset's community of learners today and experience
7 the Somerset difference. Visit
8 somersetacademyschools.com to learn more."

9 MS. SADESKY: Thank you so much. Thank you for
10 listening.

11 I'm going to introduce Ms. Sarah Fye. She is a
12 phenomenal educator. Her skills and curriculum,
13 assessment and data are -- blow my mind every time I
14 talk to her. So she's going to tell you a little bit
15 about the academics.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

18 DR. FYE: Hello everyone, thank you for having
19 me here. I am Dr. Sarah Fye, and I serve as the
20 director of strategic planning and academic
21 achievement for Somerset Academy Schools.

22 I'm really pleased to be in front of you today
23 to talk a bit about the programming we offer, the
24 curriculum and who we are. As you have in front of
25 you, just an overview of some of the programs, and

1 you've seen of course in our application -- I'm going
2 to go a little faster. They're nudging me to please
3 go a little faster. So, of course, we'll be able to
4 address any questions. Talking about what we offer,
5 of course, core academic programming is of utmost
6 importance. We are a very strong science of reading
7 school. In fact, part -- or school system, I should
8 say. In fact, part of what we put into our CMO
9 grant, which is what Shannie referenced, the large
10 federal grant that we received to expand and
11 replicate our schools was on the premise that we are
12 providing a strong early literacy program and that is
13 in -- with the foundation of the science of reading
14 that is critical to everything we do with our
15 schools.

16 Moving into middle and high school, of course,
17 we offer a wide variety of programming for college
18 and career readiness. We actually, just this year
19 now in '24-'25, opened our first fully vocational
20 school; it's called Somerset Career Academy in St.
21 Lucie, Florida which is our first fully vocational
22 program; which we're very excited about; which is the
23 other side of our CMO grant; which was about the
24 excellent high schools that we built. So we really
25 are a full -- we are fully committed to every aspect

1 of our students' education.

2 And to address a little bit of what Shannie said
3 about who we are and the communities we serve, we
4 have this motto in Somerset, we say global mindset,
5 local impact. We have this mindset that we want our
6 students to be given the world. We want our students
7 to have global perspectives and global thinking. We
8 want critical thinking. We want them to have diverse
9 perspectives and think of things from every single
10 angle. But we also want them to remember that where
11 we come from is who we serve. And so we have a big
12 commitment to the communities that we're in.

13 So even with our CTE programming, for example,
14 not every Somerset will have the exact same programs.
15 We have some schools where we've known that -- for
16 example, in Homestead, Florida, we have some culinary
17 programs; in Saint Lucie, we have welding. We have a
18 variety of things that we know are serving that
19 community.

20 So for Somerset in Arkansas, we have two very
21 different locations that we've talked about,
22 Bentonville and here in Little Rock. So we've done
23 some research into what we think would be most
24 applicable here. And, of course, we've taken into
25 consideration the Commissioner's memo about the high

1 earning, high demand CTE programming; so we're
2 looking into those pathways as well. We were looking
3 into health sciences, building -- excuse me --
4 business finance, technology and communications,
5 hospitality and human services. And, of course,
6 that's what -- we've done the research kind of here
7 before we've stepped into the community fully and
8 we're looking into what will fit this community and
9 these schools, these families once we're fully
10 enmeshed here.

11 Okay. We've mentioned -- Shannie briefly
12 mentioned a study and that -- we did put this in our
13 application as well. We were floored that we were
14 part of a study done by Stanford University for the
15 -- what they call the CREDO Study, the Center for
16 Research and Educational Outcomes. And we were
17 compared to charter schools and educational programs
18 all over the United States. And Somerset was
19 particularly significant in closing those achievement
20 gaps for students from low economic backgrounds. And
21 so we've mentioned that several times when we talk
22 about the demographics and what we expect to serve
23 here; and we're going to --

24 MR. DAVIS: No. Actually --

25 DR. FYE: I know. I apologize.

1 MR. DAVIS: Actually, if I may?

2 DR. FYE: Yes.

3 MR. DAVIS: I actually -- I want you to continue

4 --

5 DR. FYE: Okay.

6 MR. DAVIS: -- because for me -- yeah. Yeah. I

7 appreciate -- I appreciate trying to --

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

9 MR. DAVIS: -- stick within the timeline, but to
10 me, what you're talking about is the critical point.

11 DR. FYE: Thank you.

12 MR. DAVIS: I would have cut the video. I want
13 to hear from you.

14 DR. FYE: Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that.

15 So talking about the communities that we serve,
16 we're very proud that when we go into any of our
17 communities, we are a reflection of that community.
18 And so on one of your slides here that we've printed
19 out for you, you can see the breakdown of who we are
20 as an organization. Our schools are 83 percent
21 minority; our schools are 58 percent free lunch or
22 reduced lunch; these are -- more than 50 percent of
23 our schools are Title I schools. We have worked --
24 our culture is real; our culture is working. We have
25 a very aggressive data culture in our schools where

1 we have our stakeholders involved in every single
2 step of our data conversations, at the very top, all
3 the way to, you know, as a network talking with our
4 principals and our president and our vice president.
5 All the way to, does every child have their data
6 folder? Are they taking it home? Are they talking
7 to their families? Do we understand what your goals
8 are and how are we working to achieve those goals?

9 So in Arkansas, that would look like looking at
10 your ATLAS scores. How does this look? Explaining
11 to our families, having these community enrichment
12 events where our families and our community members
13 know how we're performing, know why we're putting the
14 programs into our schools that we are and what we
15 should be doing every day, every week to achieve
16 those goals. We call it aggressive but attainable
17 targets that we put for our students and our teachers
18 and everyone.

19 MR. DAVIS: Thank you.

20 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

21 I'll let somebody else talk because I know
22 there's a lot to say.

23 MR. DAVIS: Yeah.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

25 MR. GERMAN: Adri's going to wrap up our

1 presentation and then we'll go to questions.

2 She has some --

3 MS. LIMA: There's a a quick slide on safety if
4 we want to just talk --

5 MR. GERMAN: Oh. And, unfortunately, our -- as
6 it relates to school safety, we have a couple of our
7 security experts here. Our main security guy for --
8 nationally is a guy named Willie Tagle; and
9 unfortunately, he's on a plane right now. But for
10 his -- he was the chief of police for the Miami-Dade
11 School System Police Department. Which you think how
12 could -- it's one of the bigger police departments in
13 America, just the school system. So we were lucky to
14 have him. He's been with us a number of years and it
15 even gets to the point where we have -- one of our
16 schools is in Parkland and we actually have the
17 school that replaced Parkland. And it is probably
18 the highest security school in America. And, you
19 know, deservedly so. So we are -- and we're
20 currently working with a couple of national
21 manufacturers on some new technology to do almost
22 like life alert buttons the when I fall, and I can't
23 get up. I think they used them in the last Georgia
24 tragedy, but we're taking that a whole other step
25 forward. So we -- I think we're at the cutting edge

1 of security and we can address any questions you
2 might have later.

3 But I'll let Adri take over.

4 Do you want to introduce yourself?

5 MS. LIMA: Hi, how are you? I'm Adri Lima with
6 Academica. I've had the pleasure of working with
7 Somerset since 2005 in various capacities, but mainly
8 marketing and assisting with start-up, assisting with
9 application writing; and then once we have approvals
10 we help with on the ground -- boots on the ground
11 marketing. On our side, we are really happy that
12 we've expanded our team to help support Academica
13 with experts in digital marketing, social and then
14 individuals who are -- work directly with the
15 Somerset team when they are traveling to new
16 territories to help with marketing; and also training
17 the individuals who are local to help them with the
18 Somerset brand and the marketing and how they present
19 the program.

20 So what we're looking at here is a slide just
21 kind of talking again on what Todd and Matt kind of
22 discussed with regard to why Arkansas. And I think
23 we kind of went in detail over why it was a special
24 place really for them and for us, you know, exciting
25 to have offices there eventually with other networks

1 as well.

2 So Somerset submitted an application that to
3 clarify, I guess, the format. So it's a Somerset
4 Academy of Arkansas application requesting two
5 campuses, a campus in Little Rock and a campus in
6 Bentonville. Each of these campuses would house
7 three schools: an elementary school, a middle school
8 and a high school. And that's for our various
9 reasons. Safety being one. Programmatically, it
10 makes better sense Somerset feels to have a K-5 and
11 then middle/high kind of operates sometimes as one,
12 but you kind of -- that way the middle school
13 students are getting this real, like, high school and
14 college prep feeling from middle school. But each of
15 those campuses would be considered three schools if
16 that makes sense. So total request really is six
17 schools. And I can clarify it later if we need.

18 And the next slide is just kind of going into
19 the requested enrollment. The first year would open
20 grades K through 3, 6 and 9. So we would be opening
21 one grade level -- at least one grade level from each
22 charter -- or each school ID number in year one. And
23 then they add a year -- sorry. They add a grade
24 every year.

25 So with regard to community engagement, Somerset

1 hosted a virtual meeting which was noted -- sorry.
2 It was placed in the newspaper, and we put ads for
3 that. And so the virtual meeting with parent
4 interest, we did a presentation; Shannie led the
5 presentation on Somerset, similar to what you're
6 seeing today. And we had 23 people log in. One of
7 the people -- one of the logins was a group of people
8 sitting in an office, so we're not sure how many of
9 those. But there were about, you know, let's say 30
10 or more.

11 We also ran a digital campaign. I thought what
12 was really interesting about this were the results
13 that we had in just one week. Of course, focus
14 targeting -- one targeting the Bentonville area and
15 one targeting Little Rock. Pretty broad because
16 there is no facility at this time, but we got 159
17 parent leads forms in the Bentonville area and 100 in
18 Little Rock. And again I want to stress that was
19 just in the span of one week with a pretty, you know
20 -- social media wise, a pretty low budget. And so
21 once we're ready to ramp that up, we're really
22 excited that we got that amount of leads with just
23 those seven days. So we really think that there's a
24 very clear interest in the program and a need for a
25 new program and obviously one with the history and

1 the accolades that Somerset is bringing.

2 And then with regard to teacher and
3 administrative recruitment, so on one piece,
4 Somerset, of course -- and if Shannie wants to touch
5 on this -- but Somerset, you know, has clearly a
6 large pool of experienced educators and teachers.
7 And part of going into a new territory -- do you want
8 to take over or -- okay. Part of going into a new
9 territory for Somerset really is bringing in
10 individuals who are experienced in the Somerset way.
11 Of course, these people help the local community, the
12 local teachers, the local administrators kind of
13 learn that. But it is important for Somerset to come
14 in with a couple of individuals who are already
15 experienced in that model. And so these individuals
16 would host recruitment fairs. Again, a lot of it is
17 going to be advertised digitally in local newspapers.
18 We know in Bentonville and the surrounding areas,
19 they do, like, First Fridays, there's Third
20 Thursdays, there's fall festivals and summer
21 festivals, similar events here in Little Rock. And
22 so we would kind of -- Somerset would kind of deploy
23 -- with the help of our office -- individuals from
24 Somerset to kind of man tables, you know, walk doors
25 submit, you know, send flyers and stuff to local

1 businesses, local preschools, so that we make sure
2 that we have a showing at all of these events. And
3 so that parents know that we're here and we're coming
4 and that we're excited to employ individuals from
5 each respective area.

6 And that's what I have. And I will -- I'll let
7 Shannie or Todd close.

8 MS. SADESKY: Let's do it together.

9 I think what Adri said is really important. We
10 have a 97 percent graduation rate. We want to keep
11 it going. We love what we do. And I love being a
12 part of the recruitment team as well in all the ways
13 that Adri said because, you know, having actually
14 been working for and with the organization for 27
15 years, obviously, I haven't gone anywhere because I
16 love it; and I really believe in what we do; and I
17 want other people to have the same opportunities, you
18 know that I've had, so many of us have had being a
19 part of such a great education system that has
20 competitive salaries, you know, competitive benefits,
21 you know, the opportunity to teach in a fun and
22 creative way while still teaching the same standards;
23 and just adding, you know, an -- a school that brings
24 pride their community, you know, I think that's a
25 huge thing.

1 So I actually recently just went to Bentonville
2 and this -- yesterday was my first day in Little
3 Rock. I have a very good friend that just moved
4 here. So I plan on coming back to visit her. I'm
5 trying to recruit her and her five grandchildren to
6 come to our schools. She was going to be here today,
7 but I didn't let her know in time. But I loved
8 Bentonville. I love the community. I wish that
9 everyone was as nice -- and I -- I'm sorry. I love
10 Florida, but man, people here are so nice and
11 hospitable. It was really wonderful having been
12 originally from Pennsylvania, I felt a little back at
13 home. So thank you. It was a great opportunity to
14 be here, and we really look forward to just bringing
15 something great. So thanks for your time today.
16 I'll let Todd close.

17 MR. GERMAN: Todd again. So that concludes our
18 presentation. Now, the -- actually, I like to
19 question part. So please -- and we'll do -- because
20 we -- if there's a question that we can't answer
21 today, then we should be out of this business. So
22 please give us questions and I'll help be the --

23 MR. DAVIS: No pressure. I know that's a little
24 bit much.

25 MR. GERMAN: Well, I will stand by that. We

1 will --

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

3 MR. GERMAN: We will get -- might not be the
4 right answer, but -- I'll kind of be the ringleader.
5 And as you guys have questions, I'll try to pull up
6 an expert in that field and we'll just go like --

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

8 MR. GERMAN: -- we did before.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: We have our legal review next
10 --

11 MR. GERMAN: Oh, okay.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- and then and then we'll do
13 questions. Yeah.

14 MR. REYNOLDS: Stephen Reynolds, staff attorney
15 from the Department. Before we get to the fund
16 question part, we have to do the dry legal part. All
17 right.

18 So I'm just going to go through all of the
19 waivers that the charter has asked for. I'll go by
20 topic, list the statutes and rules and standards, and
21 then my notes and legal concerns for each topic.

22 Waiver topic No. one, this is board of
23 directors. The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas
24 Code 6-13-608, 6-13-611, 6-13-612(c), 6-13-613,
25 6-13-615, 6-13-616(a), 6-13-617, 6-13-618,

1 6-13-619(a), (c) and (d) (4), 6-13-625, 6-13-622(b),
2 6-13-630, 6-13-631, 6-13-634, 6-13-635, 6-13-1303,
3 6-14-101, et seq. and the Department's rules
4 governing school board zones and rezoning. I have no
5 legal concerns with any of those waivers.

6 Waiver topic No. two -- I promise this one will
7 be less long -- the superintendent and principal.
8 And charter seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-13-109,
9 6-17-302, 6-17-427 and the Standard for Accreditation
10 4-B.2, 4-C.1 and 4-C.2. I have no legal concerns
11 with this.

12 Waiver topic No. three is facilities and flag
13 display. The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas
14 Code Annotated 6-13-105, 6-16-105 -- excuse me --
15 6-16-106, 6-21-117 (2) through (5). I have no legal
16 concerns with that waiver. Oh, excuse me. In
17 addition, the Charter is seeking to waive Standard
18 for Accreditation 6-A.1 and 6-A.2.

19 Waiver topic No. four is personnel policies.
20 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
21 6-17-2301(c) -- 617-2301(c) (1) and (d) (2);
22 additionally, 6-17-2302, 6-17-2303, 6-17-2304,
23 6-17-2305, 6-17-23 -- 203, 6-17-205, 6-17-209,
24 6-17-301, 6-17-208, 6-17-210, 6-17-202, 6-17-201(a)
25 and (c) and the Standard for Accreditation 3-A.2

1 (only to the extent that the classified salary
2 schedule must be published on the school's website)
3 and the Department's rule governing documents posted
4 a school district and education service cooperative
5 websites Sections 5.01.4, 5.01.5, 6.01, 6.02 (and
6 only to the extent that the classified administrator
7 salary information is required to be published on the
8 school's website). And I have no legal concerns with
9 that waiver.

10 Waiver topic No. five is the school counselor
11 and student services and the charter is seeking to
12 waive Arkansas Code 6-18-706, Standard 4-E.1 and
13 Standard 4-E.2. I have no legal concerns with that
14 waiver.

15 Waiver topic No. six is a required instruction,
16 K through 12. The charter is seeking to waive
17 Standard 1-A.1.3. And I have no legal concerns with
18 that waiver.

19 Waiver topic No. seven is teacher licensure.
20 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
21 6-15-1004, 6-17-309, 6-17-401, 6-17-418, 6-17-902,
22 6-17-908, 6-17-919, Standard 4-D.1 and the
23 Department's rules governing educator licensure, just
24 Section 7. And I have no legal concerns with that
25 waiver.

1 Waiver topic No. eight is library media
2 services. The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas
3 Code 6-25-103, 6-25-104, the Standard for
4 Accreditation 2-D.1 and 4-F.1 and 4-F.2. And I have
5 no legal concerns with that waiver.

6 Weaker topic No. nine is the class size and
7 teaching load. The charter is seeking to waive
8 Arkansas Code 6-17-812, the Standard for
9 Accreditations -- Standards for Accreditation 1-A.5
10 and 1-A.6 and the Department's rules governing class
11 size and teaching load. I have no legal concerns
12 with that waiver.

13 Waiver topic No. ten is alternative learning
14 environment or ALE. The charter is seeking to waive
15 Arkansas Code 6-15-1005(b)(5), 6-18-503(a)(1)(C)(i),
16 6-48-102, 6-48-103, the Standard for Accreditation
17 2-I.1 and the Department's rules governing student
18 special needs funding, just Section 4.

19 Waver topic No. 11 is report cards. The charter
20 is seeking to waive -- seeking a waiver for Arkansas
21 Code 6-15-903(a)(2). I have no legal concerns with
22 that waiver.

23 Waiver topic No. 11 (sic) is the planning
24 period, duty free lunch period and non-instructional
25 duties. The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas

1 Code 6-17-111, 6-17-114, 6-17-117. And I have no
2 legal concerns with that waiver.

3 And lastly, the charter is seeking to waive --
4 or it's -- waiver topic No. 13, gifted and talented.
5 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
6 6-20-2208(c) (6), 6-42-109, the standard for
7 accreditation 2-G.1 and the Department's rules
8 governing gifted and talented program approval
9 standards. I have no legal concerns with waiver.

10 And just a couple of general things. One, the
11 charter was very easy to work with. They knew
12 exactly what waivers they wanted and specified
13 waivers to exactly what they needed. So I just
14 wanted to return the appreciation. Also, when it
15 comes to the vote, my understanding is that because
16 of the federal grant situation, each school is going
17 to need its own LEA number to receive the grants.

18 And if somebody could come up and confirm that
19 on the record. And if that's the case, the Panel is
20 going to have to take six separate votes --

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

22 MR. REYNOLDS: -- to approve each school.
23 And that's all I've got.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you.

25 MR. GERMAN: Do you want Daniel to --

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

2 MR. SHOURDS: Hi. Daniel Shourds, Somerset
3 principal and part of our Somerset leadership and
4 part of our Somerset CMO team who wrote the grant.
5 For -- part of the federal program is each school is
6 allocated up to 1.5 million. So having six separate
7 school IDs would allow us to try to get additional
8 funding for each school.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you very
10 much.

11 All right. We'll start with Dr.
12 Wright-McMurray.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Good morning and thank you
14 for your presentation and coming in to speak with us
15 this morning.

16 First, I have a couple of questions on the
17 waivers and just probably clarification pieces on a
18 few of them. Under -- and I don't have all the codes
19 figured out. But personnel policies -- just for my
20 understanding -- the salary schedule, does that plan
21 to comply with what is in the LEARNS Act?

22 MR. GERMAN: I can handle that.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

24 MR. GERMAN: That one was a bit of a -- I think
25 the change happened after we had started this, so we

1 were very aware that it's now 50,000 and we're -- we
2 have adjusted that. And if we need any detail, we
3 have Richard Moreno from Building Hope who actually
4 wrote the budget; and he has adjusted. He's on Zoom.
5 But we -- we're aware of that and we have adjusted
6 our budget to handle it.

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

8 MR. GERMAN: And it -- I'm sure it's going to be
9 tough for every school in Arkansas to --

10 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

11 MR. GERMAN: -- make that work, but we are very
12 aware of it. And we've adjusted it.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. And then my second
14 question, under the waivers, if I could just get a
15 little bit more clarification on your plan for school
16 counseling. It looks as if -- that you're asking for
17 a waiver to be able to hire someone that potentially
18 would not be certified, and then you're also asking
19 for adjustments on the ratios. So just wanted to get
20 a little bit more information on what that's going to
21 look like.

22 MS. SALAZAR: Great. Good morning. Liliana
23 Salazar, national director for special education and
24 student support for Academica. Thank you for that
25 question and thank you for this opportunity.

1 The person that we will be hiring will be
2 certified. We are ensuring that we do have a
3 certified counselor. They -- and we do follow the
4 National Association of School Counseling Standards.
5 The way that we will be implementing the program is
6 based on those counseling responsibilities.
7 Therefore, working directly with students to ensure
8 that their mental health needs are being met.

9 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So what I hear you saying
10 is that you do plan to hire someone that is certified
11 --

12 MS. SALAZAR: Yes.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- as school counselor,
14 and you do plan to follow the recommended guidelines
15 for ratios?

16 MS. SALAZAR: Yes, we do plan on following them.
17 Yes. Yes, that is correct. That's correct.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. I was just
19 wondering cause it looks like in the waiver you were
20 asking to not have those things considered, so I was
21 just wondering the discrepancy.

22 MR. GERMAN: Daniel, come on back.

23 MR. SHOURDS: I think -- so -- to several of our
24 waivers, the -- hi. Daniel Shourds, Somerset.

25 So several of our waivers, you know, we -- the

1 plan is to have a certified person to try to get the
2 recommended waivers. A lot of our times we, you know
3 -- going into a new area, we hire the local people,
4 we make sure, you know, there's someone that's close
5 to that process, that we help support them get
6 whatever additional certifications they need. So we
7 had the waiver in place in case, you know, that's a
8 process, but we -- our goal is always to have fully
9 certified people follow the same recommendations for
10 all those things. But we requested the waiver in
11 case it's not from the beginning, we're not able to
12 start off with that, that we have to build on to that
13 to be able to have a fully-certified counselor. If
14 we can find a fully certified counselor from the
15 get-go, that would be our ideal situation. But in
16 case we're not able to, then we would work towards
17 that.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So just to build on Dr.
20 Wright-McMurray's question, we do have a number of
21 licensure exceptions that are available to you,
22 including emergency teaching permit, ALPs. ALPs are
23 additional licensure plans which allow for someone
24 who already has a license to then add counseling to
25 their license. Now, counseling is different in that

1 it can be an initial license here in the state of
2 Arkansas. So that means that you could have somebody
3 who doesn't have a license and that would be where
4 you would need the waiver is when you're actually
5 having somebody who's going through a first-time
6 initial license application process. But you could,
7 if you had somebody who is already licensed here in
8 the state, do an ALP instead of doing the waiver.

9 MR. SHOURDS: Good deal.

10 MS. SALAZAR: No -- and we greatly appreciate
11 that because counseling is a very big national
12 critical shortage area right now. So thank you for
13 Arkansas doing that.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

15 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. That's why I was
16 kind of looking down there, like, to give Matthew a
17 chance. Did you want to add something else on that?

18 MR. GERMAN: No, I was just --

19 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

20 And then, your -- my next question is related to
21 teacher licensure -- licensure. I can never say that
22 word correctly. So what is your plan to recruit
23 certified teachers? And then, if you could also,
24 what is your plan to recruit certified teachers in
25 the area of career technical education?

1 MR. SHOURDS: What was the second part of that?

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: What is your plan to
3 recruit certified teachers? And then, what is your
4 plan specifically to recruit certified teachers in
5 the area of career technical education? Because
6 that's my next question.

7 MR. SHOURDS: CTE. So -- Daniel Shourds,
8 Somerset. I'm also part of our strategic planning
9 for recruitment and retention for Somerset. All of
10 our leaders serve in different capacities in that.

11 So we do several different things for -- to get
12 fully certified teachers. You know, we host job fair
13 events, you know, to get local talent -- people who
14 are certified. We post things, you know, on
15 different job websites like Indeed and things like
16 that, so that the local people have a chance to see
17 what jobs we have available.

18 The leadership team is highly responsible for,
19 you know, interviewing and hiring those people. We
20 have lots of programs in place also to help teachers
21 get certified. So things like teacher assistance,
22 you may start with the school; we want to work
23 towards teacher -- having teacher certification. Our
24 goal is always to have teachers certified in all
25 areas.

1 Often with CTE, we get, you know, career
2 changers, people who come to education from other
3 fields and we obviously want to maximize their
4 experience. And so sometimes we need to help get --
5 work them through the certification process as well.
6 You know, if we have an expert in hospitality, an
7 expert in welding, we definitely want those people
8 teaching our students and then we help them get the
9 certifications that they need.

10 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So -- just so -- I think
11 you said you started another school in Florida that
12 was CTE focused?

13 MR. SHOURDS: Yeah.

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And so if you had
15 individuals that came into your school, that came
16 from industry, they didn't have the pedagogy or the
17 background on teaching, what are some of the things
18 you guys were able to do to get them ready for
19 classroom instruction and management?

20 MR. SHOURDS: So I had, you know -- two
21 situations. At my school we had a teacher who was an
22 art teacher who had digital design. She didn't have
23 the teaching, you know, the CTE part of the
24 certification. So we helped her with, you know, get
25 -- take the test, the study, to give her time, give

1 her practice tests. So she was able to, you know,
2 add the certification and then the students were able
3 to get the CTE credit. Our school in St. Lucie
4 County is a career technical ed school, you know,
5 starting up with new people coming from out of field.
6 The principal there would go with the same process
7 of, you know, making sure that they're, you know,
8 taking the -- getting the CTE courses that they have
9 to take so that they can take the test and then be
10 able to test the students so that they can add the
11 certifications to their -- if they can have the --
12 whatever the certification is they need.

13 DR. FYE: And if I may add -- hi. Dr. Sarah Fye
14 again.

15 And we also have tuition reimbursement as a
16 benefit for our employees. We have partnerships that
17 we've built with local organizations and
18 universities. For example, whether it's in culinary,
19 we're working with different organizations. We've
20 already looked into FFA and some of the other
21 programs here in Arkansas to build those partnerships
22 and those relationships to add that additional layer
23 of support.

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. Thanks.

25 Just a couple more.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. And so then, you
3 might not want to -- yeah. Okay.

4 DR. FYE: I'll stay up here.

5 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: That's okay. Okay.

6 So I did appreciate that you mentioned in your
7 slides that you guys are looking at H2 Pathways.

8 DR. FYE: Yes.

9 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And it looks like that you
10 have an idea of some pathways that you want to offer
11 from what you listed in your PowerPoint. And you
12 mentioned in your presentation that you've done some
13 research on which pathways that you would like to
14 offer. Can you give us a little bit more detail on
15 what that research looked like? How are you
16 identifying your pathways based off of the schools?
17 Because two different areas, Bentonville is very
18 different --

19 DR. FYE: Very different.

20 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- than what's going to be
21 relevant for Little Rock.

22 DR. FYE: Yes.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So what are you putting in
24 place to make sure that you are definitely meeting
25 the needs of not just the community, but the students

1 so that they can have good opportunities?

2 DR. FYE: Okay. So those are different
3 questions, but we may have additional answers. Some
4 of the market research that was done --

5 I think -- were you jumping in to say something?
6 Okay.

7 I can tell you the educational research. So
8 looking into what organizations already are in
9 existence, for example, with the agricultural
10 programs, with FFA, and so what partnerships already
11 exist, just doing some research on what the local
12 universities are offering and kind of mapping what is
13 already in existence to see what the interest is. As
14 I said earlier as well, we do want to make sure that
15 once we're in that community, that we're addressing
16 those needs. So I do think that's a flexible thing,
17 but that was based on that initial research looking
18 into those organizations and what's already popular
19 and what's already in demand. Because in the H2
20 pathways, as you mentioned, those are based on -- I
21 believe my understanding was that those are where the
22 industry is growing and not only showing high wages,
23 but because that industry is showing a need.

24 And then I will move.

25 MR. CAMPBELL: Ken Campbell, Academica in

1 support of Somerset.

2 Basically, we -- if we go forward, we're going
3 to look at the community -- the area and part of that
4 is the piece that Dr. Fye just talked about. And
5 part of that is working with large employers in that
6 area to find out what sort of positions they're
7 looking for to fill, what sort of workers they're
8 looking to hire and to match students' interests into
9 some of those careers. Another tool that we use as
10 we look at -- the Department of Labor puts out a lot
11 of data regarding growth industries and wages, and
12 what those are. And it breaks it down using, like,
13 census data so you can really kind of pinpoint in
14 those local areas. So wherever we are, that's what
15 we're going to look to see, what are the -- what do
16 the families want? What do the kids want to do for
17 work? What do the employers want? Who are they
18 looking for and work to find -- to develop programs
19 that will sort of match the two.

20 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. Have you had a
21 chance to have any conversations with the Division of
22 Career Technical Education at the state level on any
23 of those items?

24 MR. CAMPBELL: That would be -- I have not
25 personally.

1 DR. FYE: Not as of yet.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

3 DR. FYE: I don't believe so.

4 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I would strongly encourage
5 that. It probably could save you quite a bit of
6 legwork in making those connections and getting an
7 understanding of what has -- not saying that we have
8 it all figured out --

9 DR. FYE: No.

10 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- but when working on --

11 DR. FYE: But the website was extremely helpful.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- quite a bit of it.

13 DR. FYE: Yes.

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And so it probably would
15 save you quite a bit of steps.

16 DR. FYE: Thank you.

17 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I'm trying to get that --

18 DR. FYE: And I think we look forward to
19 building those relationships and learning more.

20 MR. GERMAN: One more answer to your question.

21 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Sure.

22 MR. GERMAN: Todd German, Somerset.

23 From the layman's standpoint, one of the things
24 that's really impressed me about our organization is
25 that we really look at things from all over the

1 place. And two examples I can think of is in Key
2 West we have a school. We hired my old boss, he was
3 the president of the bank, retired Coast Guard
4 commander , worked for Eli Lilly, master's from
5 Cornell and he wasn't certified to teach. And he is
6 now. And he teaches art history and our business
7 class. And can you imagine having your kid go to
8 school every day and learn from a Cornell MBA who was
9 the president of a bank and worked for Eli Lilly. On
10 the absolute opposite end of the spectrum, we have
11 our own college that -- one of our affiliates, Doral,
12 has Doral College and we do --

13 Go ahead. That's okay.

14 Well, we -- we are huge on dual enrollment.
15 We've graduated -- Somerset graduated a couple 100
16 kids with AA degrees last year out of high school.
17 They actually graduated the week before they
18 graduated high school. They have no college debt.
19 Well, because of the critical need for teachers,
20 we've now amped it up and we have a certified
21 four-year degree. And our very first degree is in
22 education, so we now have kids that went to
23 kindergarten that are teaching for Somerset. And I
24 think -- I mean, to me, how do you beat that? It's
25 pretty neat. Now, we can't get all our teachers that

1 way yet, but we're working on it.

2 Taylor, do you have something? If she'll allow
3 us.

4 MR. SMITH: If you'll allow one more?

5 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Go ahead.

6 MR. SMITH: So I'm really interested as a board
7 member -- Taylor Smith, one of the board members -- a
8 volunteer board member.

9 My brother is a retired chemical engineer,
10 Vanderbilt grad, worked at Johnson & Johnson for 30
11 plus years. He's becoming a chemical engineer -- no.
12 Well, it's a chemistry substitute because he doesn't
13 have the ability to go back and be certified, but he
14 wants to help on the CTE side because he ran the
15 commercialization of contact lens manufacturing and
16 wants to give back. So he -- he's found a pathway
17 with a school -- one of our schools that were opening
18 in Volusia County, a CTE focused school that's going
19 to be located on a community college campus. And it
20 led us to learn that the AEDC, the Arkansas
21 equivalent of what we have in Florida -- which I'm
22 involved with in Florida for work -- that there are
23 200 companies working with the AEDC that we've
24 already started looking at your manufacturing
25 companies.

1 And it's really fun for some of us on the
2 volunteer side to amplify the staff because we work
3 in the space. We're all short on labor. We can't
4 get our labor provided at -- you know, in our day
5 jobs, nationally. And so this is a real passion for
6 me as a board member. So I just commit to you that
7 if we're approved, I'll be part of the process also
8 volunteering to mine and to the AEDC and the other
9 organizations, as well as the Department of Ed, and
10 say what, what do you feel? Where's the pulse?

11 In Volusia County, SpaceX and Blue Origin are
12 about 90 minutes away. It's all about space. But
13 it's about 3D printing the rocket to go to Mars. You
14 know, high school kids can learn how to run the
15 machine to print the rocket. They don't have to be a
16 astrophysicist or an engineer. So finding the career
17 academy -- the career options that they can move
18 right into, some students, and continue lifelong
19 learning. But be employed at a high school is also a
20 passion of mine. The right and relevant jobs for
21 Arkansas I think we can marry up if we're allowed the
22 opportunity. So thank you.

23 MR. GERMAN: Did that answer your question?

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: You did. Yeah.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. Mr. Scott?

1 MR. SCOTT: Thank you for your presentation. I
2 want to preface things by saying I am delighted to
3 see that there's a quality organization looking to
4 expand and to a certain extent, I can -- it resonates
5 with my life experiences because I got my feet wet
6 and education teaching school to -- in -- middle
7 school in Homestead, Florida. And I think you can
8 relate to my experiences being a beginning teacher
9 there and also -- but actually teaching at Killian
10 High School. So I understand Miami-Dade as well.
11 And I compared notes with Secretary Oliva in regards
12 to that as well.

13 One of the things that -- of interest to me is
14 your rationale for the two locations, but more
15 importantly, how do you -- a lot of -- in start-ups
16 is the recruiting aspect of it. So broadly speaking
17 -- I understand Little Rock and we certainly
18 understand the data associated with Little Rock. But
19 when it comes to recruitment -- true recruitment --
20 and having parents to say yes, I'm going to enroll my
21 child or children at this location, where does that
22 go relative to Little Rock in particular? It varies
23 by zip code, so if you could just help me -- just
24 clarify your interest there, I appreciate it.

25 MR. GERMAN: I can help. And then if one of

1 them wants to jump in, but -- Todd German, Somerset.

2 One of the things we'll do, and we do it
3 anywhere we open a school, you know, the absolute
4 most important component is the principal and the
5 school leader. And we will, ideally, hire that
6 person a year before the school opens. And then, it
7 is his or her job to build the school and with that
8 build their staff. And I've seen them hold job
9 fairs, knock on doors. They have to learn to know
10 the community. Sometimes we hire from within the
11 community as well, but that is primarily responsible
12 (sic) of the principal and then our job is to support
13 them in every way possible and give them anything
14 they need to bring teachers in. But they have to
15 learn the community, learn, you know, learn the
16 terrain and then work from there.

17 I mean, does that -- do you want to know it more
18 than that or how --

19 Oh, I'm sorry for -- well, the students, who can
20 -- who wants to speak on --

21 MR. SCOTT: Yeah. So just to clarify --

22 MR. GERMAN: I thought you were saying how we
23 going to hire teachers.

24 MR. SCOTT: No. No, sir.

25 MR. GERMAN: Oh, I'm sorry. I apologize.

1 MR. SCOTT: A big part of it is that you have a
2 facility; right?

3 MR. GERMAN: Okay.

4 MR. SCOTT: So a facility will have a particular
5 -- a specific address --

6 MR. GERMAN: Right.

7 MR. SCOTT: -- zip code, etcetera. So when you
8 look at Little Rock which is broad and you're pulling
9 from various --

10 MR. GERMAN: Oh, okay.

11 MR. SCOTT: -- including --

12 MR. GERMAN: I have --

13 MR. SCOTT: -- North Little Rock --

14 MR. GERMAN: Right.

15 MR. SCOTT: -- where exactly would you --

16 MR. GERMAN: Right now we do not know. We --
17 that's kind of a chicken or egg. Want to get
18 approved first, but we are currently -- like, in the
19 Bentonville area, we have a number of locations that
20 we're in negotiations with. We wanted to sort of get
21 through today and we will do the same type of study.
22 We'll -- for -- part of it's what's available. You
23 know, we have to find where that is and it's, again,
24 very different geographic -- geography and
25 Bentonville is extremely difficult because the cost

1 of everything has gone crazy. I think there's a lot
2 more opportunities in Little Rock, so we will start
3 looking, you know, working with real -- with real
4 estate agents and, like, looking at the basically the
5 map and where the need is. You know, we don't want
6 to go right next to a high school. But there are --
7 I think of -- I always remember Sam Walton had a
8 little plane and he would fly around and go, "There."
9 And sometimes that is -- it's as simple as that.
10 Looking where -- where is that education desert that
11 we can fill the hole in. I hope that helps a little
12 bit. It's not a pure science.

13 MR. SCOTT: Well, I appreciate hearing that.
14 You did specify some of the data that spoke to some
15 of the failing schools in the Little Rock area. So
16 love the fact that you have experience in being able
17 to handle challenged communities and bring your
18 wealth of experience to the table too.

19 MR. GERMAN: You know, one of the -- one --
20 something I have in my pocket -- and I think this
21 could really go to that in that opening schools is
22 hard. We've never closed one. But they do not
23 necessarily succeed right from the beginning. I --
24 I'd love to stand up here and say we're going hit it
25 out of the park immediately, but we are prepared for

1 that. You know, just in Florida, we have about a
2 \$330 million annual budget. We have \$107 million in
3 cash and reserves. That's a hundred 37 -- a hundred
4 and 30-something days of operating. But that cash
5 allows us to subsidize. We have some schools that
6 have never -- and I say, profit -- we are nonprofit,
7 but it's -- a school is a business. They have to
8 either make money or lose money. We have schools
9 that have never -- we've had to subsidize forever,
10 and we probably always will and that is something
11 we're okay with. We have other schools that run in
12 insane surpluses and then they use -- we use that to
13 help other schools. You know, it's not just cash.
14 Some of our successful schools will send -- like,
15 when we do this, we will send teachers up here to
16 support the staff. That -- and they -- there's no
17 way you can ever pay for that. We just take it all
18 over. We really look at it as one big family. Yes,
19 it's segregated by state, but we, as a big nonprofit,
20 we're allowed to -- we find ways to work that out,
21 but it always at the advantage and we will not fail.

22 MR. SCOTT: Thank you. Of interest also, your
23 response --

24 DR. FYE: Thank you. Sarah Fye, with Somerset,
25 of course.

1 I think -- I also wanted to tag on to what Todd
2 was saying with regard to it is very different when
3 we come into a new market such as in Arkansas. We
4 have a very strong presence in some locations,
5 obviously, in Florida. You mentioned Homestead. I
6 think there's one zip code in Homestead where we have
7 five schools, so we're very well-known already. But
8 we also have within our organizations some community
9 engagement plans where we look at -- when we're going
10 into, for example, here in Little Rock, we do have a
11 very specific age group that we're targeting. So
12 we're looking at preschools; we're looking at houses
13 of worship; we're looking at -- I know I've looked at
14 affiliations with the Air Force Base, with the
15 Central Arkansas Library Association. There are a
16 number of mom groups and family organizations that
17 are really targeted towards reaching out into the
18 community. And so partnering with them, building
19 those relationships, I think are going to be
20 foundational to once we do have that zip code, how
21 are we going to become a part of this organization?

22 I like to make a little joke that if you're --
23 you've ever met someone from Miami, you think of
24 Miami as this big town, but you find out it is the
25 biggest small town in the world because you have a

1 conversation and you build a relationship and you
2 realize the connection you have. And that's what it
3 takes. It takes us being here and making those
4 connections and finding our footing in the community
5 so that we know how to serve the community.

6 MR. SCOTT: Thank you.

7 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

8 DR. MOORE: Mr. Scott?

9 MR. SCOTT: Yes?

10 DR. MOORE: May I ask you a question that's
11 related to yours --

12 MR. SCOTT: Absolutely.

13 DR. MOORE: -- instead of just regurgitating it
14 later on?

15 So you say that you're not sure yet where you'll
16 have a facility. Is there any preference when you
17 look at the poverty of the zip codes, cause that's
18 very different throughout Little Rock. Is there any
19 preference that you're looking to target a higher
20 poverty area or you just agnostic on that and looking
21 to see where facilities might be available?

22 DR. FYE: I can't speak to the --

23 MS. NEWTON: Excuse me. If I may?

24 DR. FYE: Yes, please.

25 MS. NEWTON: I was looking -- thinking when Mr.

1 Scott was talking and always about access.

2 DR. FYE: Access, yes.

3 MS. NEWTON: And if -- even -- I don't know what
4 the demographics of the cities that you serve. But
5 in Arkansas -- Bentonville, you're just a --

6 DR. FYE: Very different community.

7 MS. NEWTON: -- stone -- but you're only a
8 stone's throw from a rural community.

9 DR. FYE: Yes.

10 MS. NEWTON: And so access, I looked at the
11 possible -- I looked at the piece in the proposal
12 that said there's no transportation provided. So all
13 those things connected together are concerns for --

14 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

15 MS. NEWTON: I see your history. And I'm
16 impressed. And I think you have a good organization.
17 But access is --

18 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

19 MS. NEWTON: -- one of the things that -- so I'm
20 -- the metropolis in Arkansas, is Bentonville and
21 Fayetteville if you can imagine that compared to some
22 other big, small cities. So when you have an
23 innovative approach and when you come to this Panel
24 and to the state, we don't want to eliminate a
25 population of possibilities of students --

1 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

2 MS. NEWTON: -- that have problem access -- and
3 I don't know -- I know that there's a waiver for
4 that. I don't quite understand it. I'm just, you
5 know, looking at the possible -- looking at the fact
6 that all young people should have access -- or
7 families should have access to --

8 DR. FYE: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. NEWTON: -- quality schools.

10 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

11 MS. NEWTON: But -- so I wanted to kind stir
12 that in because I think, like I say, with the recruit
13 becomes, what -- and I noticed in the Bentonville
14 area, you have some very small towns.

15 DR. FYE: Yes. And --

16 MS. NEWTON: So to look at that as a challenge
17 and as possibly an eliminator in terms of that being
18 a possibility for them to be a part of the Somerset
19 family.

20 DR. FYE: Yes.

21 MS. NEWTON: So in line with your question, in
22 line with Mr. Scott's question, I didn't know if I'd
23 lose it before I got to this --

24 DR. FYE: No, it's -- I appreciate it. So there
25 were several questions there. Let me make sure I try

1 to address as many as possible. So yes, we do have
2 -- you know, we have an open enrollment policy. So
3 we do not necessarily -- you know, we have -- of
4 course, we put ourselves out there. We have targets
5 that we go and try to get this area, that area. But
6 we are open to whichever families we do attract which
7 is fantastic.

8 We do have, luckily, as part of our CMO grant
9 that we mentioned earlier, we have already put into
10 our budget's transportation. We have buses allocated
11 through that, so that is not in the budget for the
12 school necessarily that you would see, but we do have
13 that allocation through grant funds. So we are going
14 to build our transportation plan once the needs
15 assessment is complete, once we have the actual
16 location.

17 MS. NEWTON: But I understood that you were
18 asking for a waiver. That's --

19 DR. FYE: I believe they -- yeah. Because --
20 you want to -- thank you.

21 MR. CAMPBELL: Ken Campbell, again. Thank you
22 for your question. The reason for the waiver, it
23 sort of goes into what Todd was saying about the
24 chicken and the egg. It's a determination of we find
25 the location and once we find the location and we

1 bring the families in, where do those families live
2 and what is the need for that transportation? And so
3 there is the funding for the transportation, but
4 before we can say, oh, yeah, we're going to have X
5 number of bus routes, this many buses, these are the
6 times, I need to know where that school is. I need
7 to know where those families are. I need to know how
8 I need to draw those bus routes to figure out how
9 many buses I need, get my bus drivers, get everything
10 squared away and stuff like that. So the waiver was
11 more just a matter of the flexibility of, you know,
12 we're not going to have a bus on day one because I
13 don't know where my students are going to need the
14 bus on day one. Hopefully, that answers the -- your
15 concern.

16 DR. FYE: And there's actually an 18-month lead
17 time on our buses.

18 MR. CAMPBELL: Yeah. Buses are -- buses take a
19 little bit to put together. Hopefully, that answers
20 your concern.

21 MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

22 MR. CAMPBELL: You're welcome.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Chairman Sutherlin, when
24 -- I have question.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

1 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So -- and, I guess, I just
2 need to know how does that work with having the
3 waiver on paper saying you're waiving the requirement
4 of transportation, but then when you come back and
5 then you add transportation -- but you have the
6 waiver -- how does that work? And I just need to
7 know, how does that work with having expectations of
8 what that should look like, how it should be
9 operated, if there's a waiver on file for that
10 school?

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So they can come back and
12 rescind the waiver.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And so if they were to obtain
15 buses and actually provide transportation, they could
16 actually come back and just say to us, we want to
17 rescind this waiver and then it would no longer be
18 part of their waivers.

19 MS. NEWTON: Well, that to -- to add your
20 question --

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

22 MS. NEWTON: It's not if, but when as far as I'm
23 concerned, as it relates to this. So I would like
24 for the waiver not to exist maybe or not to grant the
25 waiver if there is an absolute plan because it rises

1 and falls on having again access.

2 MR. GERMAN: Yeah. Again, it a the chicken or
3 the egg. The way we understand -- the way -- our
4 intention for any of these waivers is that it doesn't
5 mean we're never going to do it; it means we don't
6 have to do it -- we're not obligated to do it from
7 day one. We have -- I don't think any of our schools
8 started out with buses. And we have some -- and many
9 of our schools still have no buses. Others have
10 fleets of buses. Buses are -- we found they're
11 something that you add as necessary, as enrollment
12 grows. But there's -- if -- we can't have a fleet of
13 buses from day one --

14 MS. NEWTON: And --

15 MR. GERMAN: -- and then find out --

16 MS. NEWTON: -- I --

17 MR. GERMAN: -- we don't need them.

18 MS. NEWTON: -- appreciate that.

19 MR. GERMAN: So that's --

20 MS. NEWTON: I appreciate that. But I also
21 appreciate the opportunity that you have to say we
22 have a plan, and this is -- our plan is as needed, it
23 will be provided. Because it's the difference --

24 MR. GERMAN: Yes. Well, that --

25 MS. NEWTON: -- between --

1 MR. GERMAN: I mean --

2 MS. NEWTON: -- whether or not you could --

3 MR. GERMAN: -- if you need to amend it that as
4 needed, it will be provided, of course, you have our
5 word that that -- and also that's -- it would be
6 foolish for us not to.

7 MS. NEWTON: Well, optimistically, I say to you
8 as a parent that yes, I'll be able to get my child
9 there until; but in actuality, oftentimes there are
10 many barriers and many circumstances that prevent
11 that from happening. So then that's your problem.
12 And then that's their problem. And then,
13 subsequently, it's our problem. So that's -- I'd
14 like to -- I'd be comfortable knowing that there is a
15 plan for transportation from day one because --

16 MR. GERMAN: Yeah. It's just difficult because
17 we don't -- as we were -- to our point, we don't know
18 exactly where we're going to be located. You know,
19 we're -- this is different than -- if I was a
20 mom-and-pop operator and I wanted to make this little
21 building that I own into a school, I know exactly
22 where it's going to be. Our scale is going to be --
23 we're doing this for big scale. I mean, this will be
24 1,000 children. I don't --

25 MS. NEWTON: Well --

1 MR. GERMAN: -- know where it's going to be.

2 And --

3 MS. NEWTON: -- would you consider smaller scale
4 then because of --

5 MR. GERMAN: Well --

6 MS. NEWTON: -- as critical as transportation is
7 and, you know --

8 MR. GERMAN: Well --

9 MS. NEWTON: -- being contingent upon me making
10 a decision is the assumption that I have that that's
11 going to be provided. Transportation is critical. It
12 is not --

13 MR. GERMAN: It gets -- off of this particular
14 application, but I can tell you when we met with the
15 Commissioner about a year ago, he expressed a huge --
16 when, you know, we -- I can't say he asked us, but he
17 said we -- there's an opportunity in Arkansas to work
18 with us. And the -- he explained the need in many of
19 the rural communities to put schools. And that is
20 virtually impossible to do from day one. As we build
21 scale, that will get us the ability to spread out and
22 handle smaller schools. And each one of them will be
23 -- there may be one that -- we've talked -- I went to
24 the Charter School Association meeting a couple of
25 months ago and I talked to a number of small mom and

1 pops that they struggled mightily with
2 transportation. And part of it is to -- I've talked
3 to some of them, helped me to consolidate them and
4 give them the wherewithal, maybe partner with them.
5 It -- it's going to be a process.

6 MS. NEWTON: Is it --

7 MR. GERMAN: But for this particular
8 application, it's -- we need to have a large school
9 and if it's -- depending on the location, will depend
10 on the buses.

11 MS. NEWTON: Well, then, is it more feasible to
12 assume that your plan might be to start in the larger
13 areas first?

14 MR. GERMAN: Yes.

15 MS. NEWTON: Because it -- you know, because
16 like I say, transportation is critical. I'm from an
17 area that is very rural and without transportation.
18 Even if I wanted to access a different learning
19 environment for my child, it could not happen. I'd
20 likely come to you saying that, yes, I -- it can
21 happen. I've talked to two or three ladies in the
22 area -- somebody down -- a parent down the street.
23 We got it worked out when actually we don't --

24 MR. GERMAN: I have got it.

25 MS. NEWTON: -- or we did before the tires --

1 MR. GERMAN: And I would say -- I think -- I say
2 -- I think we're almost on the same page here.
3 That's why we did specifically pick Little Rock in
4 Bentonville, so we had big population centers with
5 very different needs, but they had enough children to
6 be able to make a school of scale. And then with
7 that, we can bring down -- bring in more support
8 services. And that will allow us to -- as with --
9 the Commissioner said -- I mean, I -- I've talked to
10 our board and our people. We're trying to find a way
11 to go down south and it's going to be a challenge. I
12 have no -- you want to plan for that? I have none,
13 but we've got a handshake with the Commissioner that
14 we're going to try to find a way to help him and it's
15 --

16 MS. NEWTON: So --

17 MR. GERMAN: -- you know --

18 MS. NEWTON: -- can we assume as a board then,
19 if your application is approved, that you're going to
20 start where you can, fully provide transportation and
21 then go from that point because like I say, it's an
22 absolute deal breaker. We're dealing with high rates
23 of absenteeism that were probably here before, but no
24 -- more emphasized now because of COVID and those
25 things. So we're fighting a battle with getting

1 young people to school that can meet the bus on the
2 corner. So I -- I just -- that's my concern and
3 certainly --

4 MR. GERMAN: I can promise you --

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Baldwin?

6 MR. GERMAN: -- we will endeavor to --

7 MR. BALDWIN: Let me jump in --

8 MR. GERMAN: Okay.

9 MR. BALDWIN: -- and ask a question because I
10 live in a small town too, so I share Toyce's concern.
11 But I also understand the, you know, the process of
12 starting something up from scratch where you, you
13 know, right now you guys don't even have the
14 building.

15 MR. GERMAN: Right.

16 MR. BALDWIN: You know, you're looking at the
17 future to do all this. I think the concern that the
18 Panel has is that a waiver will be, if granted, will
19 be for the life of your charter.

20 MR. GERMAN: Understood.

21 MR. BALDWIN: And so you'll, you know, so, you
22 know, if you all didn't want to provide buses, you
23 wouldn't have to and we couldn't, you know, really
24 challenge that if you grant waiver. And it sounds
25 like in the end, we're going to be in the same spot.

1 It sounds like you guys want buses, that you
2 understand the importance of that buses.

3 MR. GERMAN: Right. If buses help us grow the
4 school --

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

6 MR. GERMAN: -- we get buses.

7 MR. BALDWIN: Which is responsive to our
8 concerns. So, I guess, what I have is a legal
9 question. Can we approve a short-term waiver for a
10 couple of years to get you guys --

11 MR. GERMAN: That would be fine.

12 MR. BALDWIN: -- you can get going, you know,
13 and then with the expectation that once you get
14 through the start-up stage and you get your, you know
15 --

16 MR. GERMAN: I --

17 MR. BALDWIN: -- size --

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Reynolds.

19 MR. GERMAN: Yes, go ahead.

20 MR. REYNOLDS: Stephen Reynolds, staff attorney
21 for the Department.

22 Yes, that's something that the CAP could grant.
23 They could grant a -- basically it's, you know, a
24 short-term waiver that's -- doesn't -- doesn't go for
25 the life of the charter. So generally, the waivers

1 -- when you grant the waivers, they're for the life
2 of the charter, but the CAP can say, you know, we're
3 going to put conditions on the grant of this waiver.
4 You know, our Charter Office will monitor -- you
5 know, they monitor each charter school and they'll
6 basically kind of check in with them, see how they're
7 doing, how they're working on getting the
8 transportation together.

9 As a technical matter --

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: That's what I was --

11 MR. REYNOLDS: -- went over --

12 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. Before you get there, is --
13 another opportunity -- I'm assuming where you're
14 going is, you know, looking at what we have here. So
15 is another opportunity for us -- do we have the
16 ability to call them back in --

17 MR. REYNOLDS: Yes.

18 MR. DAVIS: -- if we want to?

19 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah.

20 MR. DAVIS: So --

21 MR. REYNOLDS: -- you guys -- so the law allows
22 that the CAP can call any charter back in for any
23 reason.

24 MR. DAVIS: And then have questions in regards
25 to --

1 MR. REYNOLDS: Correct.

2 MR. DAVIS: -- the waiver and then --

3 MR. REYNOLDS: Correct.

4 MR. DAVIS: -- address it at that time?

5 MR. REYNOLDS: Correct. Yes.

6 MR. DAVIS: So as opposed to sort of doing it

7 now, we do have the ability, if we feel as --

8 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

9 MR. DAVIS: -- if, you know, this is not moving
10 in a direction that the Panel feels comfortable,
11 calling them in, seeing their plan, asking their plan
12 and then making the adjustments at that --

13 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah.

14 MR. DAVIS: -- time?

15 MR. REYNOLDS: That's something you can do. And
16 it's my understanding that it's something we've
17 routinely done in the past.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I have a question about
19 that.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

21 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So what is -- what
22 is the trigger or who is the trigger to remind us
23 that they would need to come back and have that
24 conversation about transportation?

25 MR. REYNOLDS: So you could do it a couple of

1 different ways. You could do it on a time basis.
2 Say, you know, come back in a year, tell us how
3 you're doing or you can direct the Charter Office to
4 check in with them and then notify, you know, the
5 Chair, whoever on the CAP has the question when they
6 -- when they've noticed something that's amiss, I
7 guess.

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. Because what I hear
9 the charter saying -- the counselor in me, what I
10 hear you saying -- is that your intent is to provide
11 transportation once you identify your population of
12 students that would be served by the school. So is
13 there a time frame that we can identify at this point
14 that that you would have an idea of when that is? Is
15 that within ten days of the school opening? I mean,
16 what does that look like to make that determination?
17 Because based upon when students are required to
18 enroll, I would think you would then know your
19 population and where they are coming from and then
20 you would be able to say, okay, we know we need to
21 come back and provide --

22 MR. GERMAN: I mean, I would --

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- come back and rescind
24 the waiver because we know we're going to have to
25 provide transportation for these folks.

1 MR. GERMAN: I would truly think -- Todd German.
2 We're truly thinking this is a yearly thing, not
3 -- we're not talking weeks or anything. And again,
4 as you saw, we're -- ideally, we will open these up
5 with kind of cadres of students so that they can grow
6 with the school. If we get 1,000 kids the first day
7 of school, we are buying a fleet of buses. That
8 probably isn't what's going to happen, and we're
9 going to grow the school organically. The school is
10 not going to -- you know, it's going to be -- it's
11 going to take a while to grow the school. And as we
12 do grow the school, the transportation needs will
13 become evident and that is how every other school we
14 have that has buses has done it. They -- I've been
15 -- I've approved every bus we've ever bought, and I
16 do it begrudgingly because buses are a whole other
17 department.

18 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

19 MR. GERMAN: And they break, and they have bus
20 drivers and all the rest. But one bus becomes two,
21 becomes five. And the principals are very good and
22 that's -- it is another chicken or the egg. The
23 buses drive growth, but they're also -- the growth
24 demands the bus.

25 MS. NEWTON: But then, my question becomes, why

1 not take the waiver out and work in the -- in the way
2 that you're talking about it, as needed that you'll
3 make the evaluation. But I think sometimes -- and
4 that -- this may not be completely even, but I think
5 buses are as important as meals in the process in
6 terms of --

7 MR. GERMAN: And during COVID, we used our
8 buses, we turned them around and delivered meals.

9 MS. NEWTON: Well, you know -- and we talked
10 buses. I don't know what the opportunity is for
11 contractors to provide transportation or -- you know
12 --

13 MR. GERMAN: We --

14 MS. NEWTON: -- everything is not a bus.

15 MR. GERMAN: And there are different -- we can
16 give bus passes. We may -- this may be a hybrid
17 thing where we start with giving bus passes to the
18 children and we prevent -- you know, there was a --
19 one of the ladies I talked to with a rural charter
20 school -- they were working -- they almost had a
21 little Uber set up. I mean, there's a lot of other
22 hybrid transportation things we will -- we can do
23 before you -- we buy \$150,000 --

24 MS. NEWTON: Right.

25 MR. GERMAN: -- bus.

1 MS. NEWTON: So transportation --

2 MR. GERMAN: Yeah.

3 MS. NEWTON: -- is relative to what
4 transportation is. So -- you know, somebody might --

5 MR. GERMAN: Absolutely.

6 MS. NEWTON: -- spark an entrepreneurial spirit
7 to do that. But I -- I'm not comfortable having the
8 waiver if the intent is to -- well, first of all to
9 have the waiver and that's it. But I'm more
10 comfortable with developing a plan and so we're going
11 to build our plane while we're flying it. I would
12 think that a waiver wouldn't be necessary because you
13 commit to the Panel to come back to the questions
14 have been asked earlier. I just --

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So for the waiver, it will be
16 necessary for their standards for accreditation. So
17 they would end up flagging which would have -- impact
18 their accreditation in terms of -- because they
19 couldn't say -- because they have to put in a
20 statement of assurance each year and they have to say
21 that they're providing all of these things.

22 So if they're not providing those things and
23 they sign off and that, that then puts them in a
24 state where they're not going to be accredited fully
25 which puts them in in a detriment as opposed to, you

1 know, being fully accredited for the year. So we --
2 in the past -- and it's not -- it's not really an
3 uncommon waiver to give that we've done for charters
4 where, you know, maybe even we put it in the notes
5 for that waiver to say that they have a plan in place
6 and that we'll revisit this within one year. We can
7 do something like that.

8 MS. NEWTON: And I did -- but I just don't see a
9 plan.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

11 MS. NEWTON: I -- we're talking about a plan. I
12 don't see a plan and I think that vague -- the
13 vagueness of that all is not questioning the
14 integrity or the history of it. But I'd like to see
15 it in something in black and white --

16 MR. GERMAN: Yeah.

17 MS. NEWTON: -- as opposed to having just a
18 basic theory that we will, as time goes on, and we
19 have something more concrete.

20 MR. GERMAN: I obviously can't give you a
21 written plan today.

22 MS. NEWTON: I understand.

23 MR. GERMAN: But we -- I would say, two options
24 -- I -- or maybe alternatives -- I would have --
25 solutions -- is that I'm completely fine to come back

1 either to the state or to this body every year. And
2 then we -- if it falls off the radar, we do have the
3 nuclear option of every five years you have to
4 reapprove us. And if we've -- if we've not
5 fulfilled our word, I've got to -- we've got to
6 stand in front of you and acknowledge that. That's
7 -- I say that's the absolute worst case is that five
8 years from now you're saying what about those
9 promises you made?

10 MS. NEWTON: Yeah, but worst case for who?

11 MR. GERMAN: Well, I'm just saying -- I'm just
12 -- I think we're going to work -- I assume the
13 Chairman has some idea of a way to get around -- get
14 through this.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

16 MR. BALDWIN: So are you -- are you all -- are
17 you all willing to come back in a year?

18 MR. GERMAN: Next year? Absolutely.

19 MR. BALDWIN: And you're going to know a lot
20 more. You're going to probably --

21 MR. GERMAN: Of course.

22 MR. BALDWIN: -- have your location identified
23 and come back to us and basically go through your
24 transportation plan that you develop between now --

25 MR. GERMAN: Absolutely.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

2 MR. BALDWIN: Okay.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And that and that could be an
4 option.

5 MR. GERMAN: And by then we will have -- we will
6 have a location; we'll have a better idea. We said
7 we may have a -- we have schools in -- near the
8 cities where the buses would be ludicrous because
9 everybody can walk, and other ones absolutely have to
10 have buses, or we wouldn't have any kids. And we
11 just --

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

13 MR. GERMAN: I just don't know yet.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

15 MR. BALDWIN: So we can just make that an --

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. Whenever we do our
17 approval, we can decide, okay, in a year we're going
18 to come back and report out. And that's totally --

19 MR. GERMAN: Yeah. Again, we're not being
20 argumentative. I just --

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

22 MR. GERMAN: I can't promise something that's --

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I understand.

24 MR. GERMAN: -- that feels impossible.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

1 Mr. Reynolds, could you point to where the
2 actual transportation waiver is within the --

3 MR. REYNOLDS: So in -- the Arkansas code is
4 6-19-101, et seq. It's the whole subchapter. And
5 then in the standards it's 6-A.1.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So is it in the list of
7 waivers, though, for the final legal review? Is
8 there --

9 MR. REYNOLDS: That was -- that was going to be
10 my --

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

12 MR. REYNOLDS: -- technical thing. So I didn't
13 see it in the final legal review. So I went back and
14 looked at their waivers section and their
15 application. I didn't find it there either.

16 So just -- if I can get somebody to confirm on
17 the record that they want to add Arkansas Code
18 6-19-101 et seq. and standard for accreditation
19 6-A.1. And I helpfully wrote it down for whoever
20 wants to come up and say that.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

22 MR. CAMPBELL: I will -- Ken Campbell again.
23 Sorry. I remember writing it, so I'm not sure why it
24 was not included. But to waive the 5-19-101 et
25 sequential, Standard 6 --

1 MR. REYNOLDS: A.

2 MR. CAMPBELL: -- 6-A.1 for those reasons that
3 we were talking about the start up and I believe we
4 discussed it prior, that's why I don't know why it
5 wasn't included. I --

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

7 MR. CAMPBELL: -- recall writing it --

8 MR. REYNOLDS: It was a clerical error, I'm
9 guessing.

10 MR. CAMPBELL: Probably.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

12 MR. CAMPBELL: Because there are supposed to be
13 14 of these. So --

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. I just wanted to make
15 sure we got it on the record so that we --

16 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- make sure that the waiver
18 was --

19 MR. CAMPBELL: Was that on the record --

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

21 MR. CAMPBELL: -- officially?

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Mr. Davis?

23 DR. MOORE: Mr. Scott may still be going.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Are you still going, Mr.
25 Scott?

1 MR. SCOTT: Just a couple.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I apologize.

3 MR. SCOTT: I guess again to the conversation
4 about transportation, it gets back to the original
5 question about location and facilities, and I
6 understand you -- you're continuing to look. But do
7 you have -- I'm liking this process to -- the
8 business plan; you've done your market analysis and
9 your strategies you are working through then. So you
10 have your operational budget, organizational budget,
11 all of it, all the way through. So when it comes to
12 establishing facility options, what would you
13 consider options as far as locations that may have --

14 MR. GERMAN: Yeah.

15 MR. SCOTT: -- bearing also on the --

16 MR. GERMAN: And this --

17 MR. SCOTT: -- transportation.

18 MR GERMAN: It will more than likely be a
19 two-step process. In that if we find the location
20 where we decide that we want to build a school,
21 obviously, that -- that's a long a long glide path.
22 We will more than likely find a temporary location.
23 We have operated in everything from storefronts to
24 church -- we have -- we run a dozen schools for the
25 archdiocese that we, you know -- we've partnered with

1 Boys and Girls Club. It will be -- it can run the
2 whole gambit. We've done movie theaters which
3 actually worked out a lot better than you think. But
4 there will -- I'm sure it will more than likely be a
5 two-part process unless we find -- we've even bought
6 schools before. And, you know, there's some things
7 that are turnkey; most likely this won't be turnkey.
8 But we'll more than likely rent a modest facility and
9 then get moving and then start working on the and
10 permanent location down the road, something with the
11 scale to be able to expand.

12 And, again, that goes with our three different
13 schools. It may start as a K-12. Ultimately, it
14 will probably be three separate schools in the same
15 vicinity. Does that answer your question?

16 MR. SCOTT: It does --

17 MR. GERMAN: I mean, exactly where, I just don't
18 know yet because we haven't -- in Bentonville we have
19 a better idea. In Little Rock, I personally don't
20 have as good an idea, but we're actively starting to
21 work on it. We kind of wanted -- we wanted to get
22 approved and know that it was going to happen.

23 MR. SCOTT: Just to clarify, you just said may
24 start K-12 and then break out? I know --

25 MR. GERMAN: The application is for kindergarten

1 through 12th grade; and in some of our other schools,
2 they have started as smaller campuses and then as
3 each school continues to grow, we may outgrow it and
4 then split off the elementary to its own campus next
5 door or something like that. I'm just saying the
6 schools -- schools can grow over time. Over decades
7 sometimes, yes.

8 MR. SCOTT: I certainly understand that. I
9 believe one of the questions before us was you needed
10 separate LEAs?

11 Yeah. Well, I'm -- I'm using layman's terms.
12 I'm sorry. It effectively is -- we have -- we have
13 an elementary school, a middle school, and a high
14 school separately for the application. It will
15 probably be on the same -- all the same location to
16 begin with and then as it grows, like anything, it
17 will -- it will -- we'll start splitting it off and
18 segregating the little kids from the big kids to the
19 bigger kids.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. And so
21 essentially, what I'm hearing is that you're going to
22 have an umbrella LEA that will be --

23 MR. GERMAN: Yes.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- for the entire campus and
25 then you will have individual LEAs underneath that --

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MR. GERM: Correct.

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And so --

MR. GERMAN: And we worked with your staff.

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

MR. GERMAN: We were back-and-forth --

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

MR. GERMAN: -- multiple times on the best way
to do this.

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. And so that sounds -- I
mean, that sounds logical to me.

MR. GERMAN: Yeah.

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So --

MR. GERMAN: I wasn't trying to -- to complicate
the matter. It was --

MR. SCOTT: So, that being said, would that
campus LEA be a district LEA --

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So --

MR. SCOTT: -- or is it --

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

MR. SCOTT: Which one is the district LEA?

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. The campus LEA would be
the district LEA and that would be the 7,000 number;
and then each individual school would have its own
LEA underneath that 7,000 number. So, you know,
whatever their prefix is: 7,002; right?

1 MR. SCOTT: Right.

2 So that being said, one of the areas of interest
3 to me is in the world of family and community
4 engagement. So there -- I believe you spoke to your
5 ability to service Title I --

6 MR. GERMAN: Oh, absolutely.

7 MR. SCOTT: -- to take advantage of those
8 funding areas. So there is a requirement under Title
9 I, Part A to fund extra for each school level what's
10 called an engagement facilitator, so you have someone
11 that receives funding --

12 DR. FYE: Yes.

13 MR. SCOTT: -- over and beyond that -- for that
14 role and engagement. At the district level there's
15 oversight over all of that called the engagement
16 coordinator.

17 DR. FYE: Yes.

18 MR. SCOTT: So I just want to make sure you were
19 understanding that particular area.

20 DR. FYE: Yes. Thank you. Sarah Fye again.
21 Yes, and in some of our schools we have, you know --
22 depending on what the local requirements are for
23 those Title I funds, we have parent liaisons or
24 different -- called different things but, I think,
25 serve in the same capacity. So we'd be able to

1 support that. We also have a number of schools that
2 have 21st Century Community Learning Center grants
3 running and we're very proud of that. We've done --
4 if I may say so because I have been a part of it,
5 done tremendous things with that, as well. So we're
6 very familiar with those kinds of programs and how to
7 run them responsibly and make sure that we're getting
8 the most community support as possible.

9 MR. SCOTT: So that being said, as you look at
10 your budget there's just extra funding associated
11 with that school-level engagement facilitator that
12 should be represented in the budget. That's all.

13 DR. FYE: Thank you. I know that when the
14 budgets are prepared, it's with the assumption of
15 none of that additional funding because we do believe
16 our schools should be able to sustain themselves
17 based on that; but we know there is additional grant
18 --

19 MR. SCOTT: Okay.

20 DR. FYE: -- opportunities for our schools.

21 MR. SCOTT: So I'm feeling better in the sense
22 that as a start-up -- I love the fact that you are
23 talking about community partners.

24 DR. FYE: Yes.

25 MR. SCOTT: Do you have any that are named? Any

1 that you can specify that you have an agreement with
2 or willing to partner with you, or is that still a
3 little early?

4 DR. FYE: I think that we are exploring those.
5 I can't speak -- I know that Todd has done some more
6 exploration and, of course, Matt is a more -- a local
7 resident. So I know that we will be tapping some of
8 those organizations to support and to be a partner
9 with, but I cannot speak to formal agreements yet.
10 Correct?

11 No.

12 MR. SCOTT: All right. So that's a part -- we
13 talked earlier about the counselor and a part of
14 LEARNS, obviously, deals with student success plans
15 --

16 DR. FYE: Yes, the student success plans.

17 MR. SCOTT: -- and the role that the counselor
18 plays in that.

19 DR. FYE: Yes.

20 MR. SCOTT: There's also an element of community
21 service learning.

22 DR. FYE: Yes.

23 MR. SCOTT: So -- especially for the high
24 schools that you're in a position to actually work
25 with business partners to provide some avenue that

1 they can have some volunteer hours --

2 Yes. We've looked into that already.

3 MR. SCOTT: -- and I think you've already spoken
4 to that.

5 DR. FYE: Yes.

6 MR. SCOTT: Your scenario is that they're not
7 just spending time volunteering doing --

8 DR. FYE: Right.

9 MR. SCOTT: -- whatever, but it's aligned --

10 DR. FYE: It's providing them --

11 MR. SCOTT: -- with their career aspirations.

12 DR. FYE: -- with career shadowing and those
13 explorations as well.

14 MR. SCOTT: Yes.

15 DR. FYE: Yes, sir. We have looked into that.

16 MR. SCOTT: All right.

17 DR. FYE: Yes.

18 MR. SCOTT: Thank you.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Davis?

20 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. Clearly, you all have done a
21 really good job in regards to education. What are
22 you going to do about Florida State football team?
23 No, I'm just kidding. I'm just kidding. I'm just
24 joking.

25 DR. FYE: I am going to not take that personally

1 because my water bottle -- you can --

2 MR. DAVIS: No.

3 DR. FYE: I actually went to school there, Mr.
4 Davis.

5 MR. DAVIS: Okay. All right.

6 DR. FYE: It is a sore subject.

7 MR. DAVIS: Just give me a little bit about
8 moving in community. Obviously, very Florida
9 representative here, but you're also in Texas.
10 You're also in, I think, Arizona, as well, and
11 Nevada.

12 DR. FYE: Nevada.

13 MR. DAVIS: And Arizona. Talk to me about how
14 you moved into those communities; what you've
15 learned. I'm really interested in that aspect, and
16 then from a staffing perspective. I know you talked
17 about -- I heard a little bit about, you know,
18 teachers potentially coming in and assisting. Are
19 you attempting to source teachers from your current
20 pool? Is there a pipeline of leadership for your
21 teachers, maybe someone in the Florida school kind of
22 leading here? Are you looking to the local community
23 to find that leader? So talk to me just a little bit
24 about how you move into the community and then the
25 sourcing of the staffing and what that might look

1 like.

2 DR. FYE: I'll definitely have Todd or somebody
3 else come up to help me, but yeah. I think the first
4 answer is, yes and -- right? It is definitely a, yes
5 and -- because we are building our own leaders and
6 we're actively looking in those communities.

7 MR. GERMAN: You had a couple different
8 questions. One of them is how we got to the other
9 places and that is different each time. I know
10 specifically, like, for -- they call it Nevada, not
11 Nevada. They'll yell at you. But in Vegas -- Vegas
12 was before the crash in the early 2000s, and their
13 schools were absolutely -- they had tents set up and,
14 so we made a huge push there because they -- they
15 begged us to come and help because sometimes it takes
16 the scale to be able to do it. Pheonix and San
17 Antonio some of it was purely the -- two of the
18 fastest growing communities in -- in the country.
19 And, you know, going to -- it's easier to go in a
20 place that's growing than a place that's -- that's
21 not. So that -- that basically is what the impetus
22 was, and we have -- we're -- our sister affiliates
23 have schools all over the place. Specifically to how
24 are we going to bring a principal here is something
25 that they get tired of me talking in the board

1 meetings, but I -- to be a Somerset school, I ideally
2 like to have one of our Somerset -- a seasoned
3 Somerset principal come here and -- and lead it; and
4 they will more than likely get their staff, you know,
5 from the local population. We may have some we --
6 we're -- we've been talking specifically about giving
7 bonuses and the incentives to get people to -- to
8 move to all the areas that we have because it -- they
9 bring their expertise with them. You know, that --
10 and then it's kind of the hiring like everybody else.
11 We will still advertise locally and let the principal
12 position be known because you never know what kind of
13 rock star is just waiting for something to happen.

14 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. Go ahead.

15 MS. SADESKY: Just to add to that because I --
16 along with all the team here, I've really done this
17 quite a few times. When we go into a new community,
18 you know, it -- we have to give it all we've got. I
19 mean, I've done everything, you know, with -- with my
20 team from ride around in ice cream trucks to, like,
21 you know, go to local parks; local summer camps; you
22 know, visit churches; speak at local churches.
23 That's, like, a really great place to meet community
24 and that's how we not only recruit and bring in and
25 get to know students that may be interested in what

1 we have to offer, but also trying to find teachers.
2 Word of mouth is a very powerful thing, so the more
3 people that we get to know in the community, you know
4 -- and we often times invite them. "Hey, come see
5 our schools in these different states." When -- I
6 think one of the things, too -- and it's a phrase I
7 think we've used for a couple of decades - we are not
8 a rowboat in the ocean. We are the fleet of ships
9 that comes to help that rowboat in the ocean. So any
10 time we go into a new community, you know, especially
11 for a lot of the mom-and-pop charters, you do
12 struggle to survive because you don't have that
13 network of support. And so when we opened in Arizona
14 we saw immediately, you know, even though we were
15 partnering with a local church and going to community
16 events, that school needed a lot more support. The
17 students were way below where they needed to be --
18 the ones that were coming to us. You know, we really
19 had our work cut out for us. There were huge issues
20 with absenteeism, you know. There were issues with
21 motivating the students to even want to learn, to
22 even want to be in school. Transient communities;
23 some migrant. So, you know, we had to really figure
24 out, what are we going to do? Well, we found our
25 schools; our principals; our leaders; you know, our

1 talented teachers and curriculum coaches and reading
2 coaches in our schools in our pools and the other
3 states, as well, and we said, okay. This person --
4 these people have done an incredible job in these
5 different arenas where we have this need, for
6 instance, in Arizona. We are going to fly them in
7 every single week and they're going to come in and
8 they're going to work with the students. They're
9 going to work on training the teachers. They're
10 going to work on the community engagement, on
11 building those relationships, on taking the time
12 along, obviously, with the school leader to talk to
13 the families about, you know, what do you need? What
14 -- how can we help you, you know, help your child and
15 make your child a successful, you know, student and
16 to thrive academically?

17 So those are some of the steps, but having that
18 huge pool of educators and people that have had to
19 deal with these problems more than once and more than
20 one new community that know how to tackle these
21 problems and also know who to call/who to ask for to
22 help to get that extra support, you know, because one
23 person can't know everything, you know, so you need
24 all of those great minds to come in and solve the
25 issues, you know.

1 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. Thanks for that.

2 MS. SADESKY: Sure.

3 MR. DAVIS: Nothing else.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

5 Mr. Baldwin?

6 MR. BALDWIN: All right. Thank you all for
7 coming. Yeah. This has been an enjoyable discussion
8 -- good discussion and I appreciate how prepared you
9 all are for that. Let me ask a couple, just, more
10 general questions about Somerset. And, I guess, as
11 you all were describing your organization you call it
12 the fleet of ships which is interesting and kind of a
13 neat way to say it.

14 You know, one of the thoughts I -- that has come
15 through my mind would be to talk about your strategic
16 plan. Say, let's look out ten years and you all are
17 now here talking to us in Arkansas. Where else do
18 you think you'll go and, you know, how big do you
19 want to be? And it's really -- what this is: It's a
20 resource allocation question --

21 MR. GERMAN: Yeah.

22 MR. BALDWIN: -- because I'm trying to decide if
23 you're going to kind of go off to some other state
24 and -- or will you kind of be here for a while?

25 MR. GERMAN: Your question is incredibly timely

1 because it's a conversation we had last night
2 because, I think, right to your point I'm going to be
3 -- this is not the polished answer. This is the
4 brutal answer to you. We were talking about having
5 -- that we need a much better strategic plan meeting
6 and it's easy to get over your skis and stretched out
7 and with this -- hoping we get approved today -- this
8 will be a very great -- I want to focus more on
9 Arkansas rather than continue to grow with no real
10 direction, you know. There are -- we have affiliate
11 groups that are going all over the place, but there
12 are limited resources. There's only so many of us,
13 but Arkansas specific, this is going to be one of our
14 main focuses. You know, with our other -- where
15 we're going to go, I can't tell you. We are going to
16 grow. There's a lot of people that want us, but this
17 will give us the scale and we do have some -- we have
18 real ties here. It's much easier to focus on
19 Arkansas, and part of our -- you heard the snickers
20 when you said, "Strategic plan." It was absolutely
21 what we talked about last night and you've -- my
22 focus is going to be getting these up and running
23 before we get doing too much other stuff. And we do
24 have -- we have massive resources but there's never
25 enough. There's never enough days in the -- in the

1 year.

2 MR. SHOURDS: I'll just add -- Daniel Shourds,
3 Somerset.

4 I remember, maybe, five or six years ago Todd
5 said in a board meeting, "We need to pause our
6 growth," you know. "We're growing fast in Florida.
7 We need to give her a chance to build new leaders."
8 So, you know, I think we've had a good pause at
9 opening schools with our CMO for our expenditure
10 grant. It's mostly in areas that we already exist.
11 In Florida; in Texas; in Nevada. So we don't have a
12 lot of new areas on our list of schools that were
13 approved by the grant. We do have a lot of new
14 states, so we really could focus in on, you know, the
15 states that we are focused on here.

16 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. Thank you. I appreciate --
17 that answer. With the two campuses that you're
18 looking at here in Arkansas, Northwest Arkansas and
19 Little Rock, is there one campus that's a priority
20 over the other, or are they both equal? Kind of tell
21 us how you --

22 MR. GERMAN: That would be --

23 MR. BALDWIN: -- picked those two.

24 MR. GERMAN: I think they will absolutely be
25 equal, you know. We -- some of it will be which one

1 we find the location for first and we'll get going on
2 that, but they'll -- they're both standalone, so
3 there's no priority of one over the other. If
4 anything, I believe -- I think Little Rock may be --
5 could be a little heavier lift, so I think we'll
6 probably get more resources to Little Rock to make
7 sure. It's going to need a little bit more intensive
8 -- intensive work. Just my gut's telling me that.
9 So I would -- I would almost think Little Rock,
10 probably. Plus, it's -- this is the state capital,
11 so that would be -- no clear answer, but I think that
12 is how it will work.

13 MR. BALDWIN: And then a follow-up to that --
14 and I did pay attention when you said you've never
15 closed a school, but have you had -- with all the
16 schools that you have, have you had one that was
17 close that was, maybe, what you would call --

18 MR. GERMAN: There's one --

19 MR. BALDWIN: -- failing?

20 MR. GERMAN: -- that I've -- I've argued to
21 close because I've been so disappointed with its
22 performance, and it was argued to not do it. It's a
23 great school. We've had -- sometimes we struggle
24 with our leaders and we're working through that like
25 any large -- any large organization, but we've

1 absolutely made a commitment to -- to not close it
2 because it serves a very -- it serves a great need in
3 the community and it's sort of our internal problem
4 that it has not succeeded as well as it -- as it has.
5 But, again, it -- they owe us. They're probably six
6 million dollars in the hole to Somerset that we'll
7 never get back, but that's -- that's just how it
8 goes, you know. That's part of being -- you know,
9 not every -- not every franchise works but the other
10 ones do; and it's been a great -- but it's also a
11 fantastic tool for all of our other principals and
12 teachers and stuff. So --

13 MR. BALDWIN: Sometimes --

14 MR. GERMAN: That's my brutal honest answer.

15 MR. BALDWIN: -- the challenges are more
16 instructional than the successes.

17 MR. GERMAN: Those are -- those are less of a --
18 this one has had -- it's one of our only ones that
19 has not blown it out of the park every time and
20 that's frustrating, as well. No, it wasn't -- the
21 financials totally aside, academic has been the
22 challenge with this one school and we continue to
23 struggle with it, but we are -- I have promises that
24 -- it's actually been an A and an F -- the same
25 school -- so you can see the frustration there.

1 Consecutive years. So I'm probably exaggerating, but
2 it's -- they all know the school I'm talking about,
3 so that's -- that's my brutal honest answer.
4 Otherwise, no, and we're not going to close. We're
5 not in the business to close schools. Honestly, we
6 want to serve every child in America which we can't
7 do, but we can work on it.

8 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. And one final question.
9 And I'm looking at your big application that you gave
10 me. I'm looking at the timeline that you're
11 expecting to find and hire a school principal -- and
12 I guess it's two school principals. One in Northwest
13 Arkansas; one in Little Rock. So by this time next
14 year, it looks like, about, you know, you'll have
15 that --

16 MR. GERMAN: Yes.

17 MR. BALDWIN: -- identified. So the question
18 is: within that process, What is the authority and
19 autonomy of a local board and a local principal? And
20 I'm not even sure if the local board is something
21 with you all because I know you -- different process,
22 so explain that to us. What will the governing board
23 over the two Arkansas schools look like -- or the
24 advisory board?

25 MR. GERMAN: Well, right now you're looking at

1 the board. The four of us are the -- are the
2 founding -- we kind of like to call it a founding
3 board because, yeah, we're -- we already know. So as
4 this one gets established, we'll start bringing in
5 local leaders. As we -- I mean, to me, the most
6 important -- board members are very important, and I
7 am -- I don't bring board members on lightly because
8 one rogue board member can destroy an organization.
9 So we -- we like to -- I like to have people attend
10 board meetings for a while, for one, to see if
11 they're going to show up which, amazingly -- it's
12 amazing how many just don't even show up that often.
13 And then to see if you -- if you dance well together,
14 and as we do that -- and their commitment to the
15 school and to the community; and then we'll
16 organically build the board up and then as that
17 happens, we'll step away.

18 MR. BALDWIN: Okay.

19 MR. GERMAN: We'll always be affiliated with --
20 with Somerset. We've learned to -- we like to keep
21 that identity.

22 Taylor.

23 MR. SMITH: Taylor Smith, one of the board
24 members. We're both on the Arizona board. Todd and
25 I. We're on the big board and the Arizona board.

1 That may be a good analog. We founded it; opened the
2 school. It's been five years -- six years. How long
3 has Arizona been open? We're still on the board. So
4 we go to Arizona regularly, Todd and I do. I think
5 that my philosophy, subject to the chairman: We
6 won't leave until this board is fully empowered and
7 happening and working to where they say, "We don't
8 need you guys. We'd like you to leave; be on the big
9 board." But we'll stay as long as it takes. I come
10 volunteer. I pay my own way to go to Arizona and
11 it's just something I love to do as a passion.
12 That's the same -- Todd and I volunteer completely
13 and as do the other board members in this capacity.
14 But I think -- I want to tell you the Arizona story
15 as we've not left. It's been five years. It's a
16 small school. It doesn't break even and, you know,
17 we struggle with formation and location and a high
18 population of migrant worker children that are
19 transitioning every quarter, but we're not leaving.
20 And so, I think, financially we sit on the Arizona
21 board and Arizona needs a loan to break even. Then
22 we go to the big board. You were asking -- the other
23 question was a financial, I think, policy connection.

24 MR. BALDWIN: Yeah. And really, it was also a
25 board authority question. So I'm a banker. So we

1 have a big board that's the governing board that
2 makes the legal decisions and then we have advisory
3 boards in each bank market --

4 MR. SMITH: Uh-huh.

5 MR. BALDWIN: -- and they're more for public
6 relations. They don't really make any decisions
7 which is fine. It works for us. But it sounds like
8 -- that your boards are not advisory, that all your
9 boards are -- have a form of governance. Maybe not
10 as much as the big board, but they have decision-
11 making.

12 MR. SMITH: Yeah. Arizona requires it, so it's
13 a legal entity in Arizona.

14 MR. GERMAN: Yes. They're -- they're real legal
15 boards and they do make decisions.

16 MR. SMITH: And the finances go -- the board
17 just says -- the big board meets and says, "Okay,
18 Arkansas. We want to lend \$500,000 to make the
19 budget for next year," and that's what happens at the
20 board level and then it happens for the banking side.

21 MR. BALDWIN: So that sounds good to me. So
22 then the question is the principal -- the authority
23 of the principal. You all talked about how different
24 schools have different curriculum --

25 MR. GERMAN: Uh-huh.

1 MR. BALDWIN: -- and you'll table that to the
2 local -- the local needs. So does the principal make
3 that decision or --

4 MR. GERMAN: Great question. And probably one
5 of the -- one of the most wonderful things about our
6 -- our system is that the principals have an
7 incredible amount of autonomy, especially if they're
8 performing. If they perform -- they -- they run
9 their own budget, and they do their curriculum. I
10 mean, we have the mandated curriculum. If we get
11 into curriculum stuff Sarah will jump in. But for
12 the most part, they -- you walk in our schools, and
13 it is -- they're as different as -- as you can
14 imagine, but they have consistency in that the
15 principal has found a way to succeed and as long as
16 they're succeeding and meeting all the guidelines, we
17 -- we leave them alone because our -- our student
18 populations are incredibly diverse. We have schools
19 in the richest neighborhoods/the poorest
20 neighborhoods -- anything you can think of -- and
21 each school has their own identity. It's really
22 neat.

23 Go ahead.

24 DR. FYE: Yes. Sarah Fye again.

25 Absolutely. Our principals have their autonomy.

1 They -- they hire their staff. They put in programs
2 that they feel strongly about. It's interesting
3 because I sometimes have trouble describing what my
4 job is because my job is not to tell the principal,
5 "You need to do this. You need to do that." It's a
6 support role, but everything we do is data driven.
7 So if the principal wants to bring in a program, we
8 might talk about, well, what is the data to support
9 that? What success have we seen, and where have we
10 seen this work and not work? Principals will call me
11 and say, you know, "I got a recommendation from a
12 vendor to implement this program this way," and I'll
13 say, "Let's pause that." I'm going to look at which
14 schools are using this program. I'm going to look at
15 the demographics of that school and see where it's
16 working/where it's not working before we, you know,
17 together make a decision that we're going to
18 implement this program this way." Have the data
19 chats. We have a very -- as you've seen, a very
20 strong board chair who will tell us, you know, if
21 things are not working after interim assessments;
22 after what have you, they need to be alerted because,
23 yes, there is autonomy but at the end of the day they
24 do have to report to our board and there is a strong
25 statement if things are not going well.

1 MS. SADESKY: Having been a Somerset principal
2 for 17 years, I can tell you that, you know, the
3 really great thing about it is that autonomy, but you
4 are still accountable. So when we hire new
5 principals, we make sure that they are assigned a
6 mentor. That not -- you know, not everybody is used
7 to that type of environment. For instance, if we
8 recruited a local principal -- not someone from
9 within -- and, you know, they were used to the way a
10 traditional public school ran or a private school
11 ran, it's very different than how it is to be a
12 principal at our school. Having done a lot of
13 start-up schools, you know, you're making every
14 single decision from the furniture you buy to, you
15 know, the -- the textbooks, obviously, in alignment
16 with what's required, but additional supplemental
17 programs; how you run your
18 before/afterschool/Saturday tutoring programs; how
19 you create your master schedule. It can look very
20 different from one school to another, and you do have
21 that autonomy, but at the end of the day you do still
22 have to report to the board, and you have to report
23 to how you're doing, how your financials are doing
24 and, obviously, how you're doing academically. We
25 have to provide data on the academics to make sure

1 our students are showing progress. We do -- with our
2 support team, they come in and make sure, you know,
3 we're not seeing the academic progress, for instance,
4 isn't where it needs to be, in March, when it's
5 almost the end of the school year. That's not going
6 to help anybody. So the principal is accountable to
7 those people coming in, and there's that checks and
8 balances and those people report back to the board at
9 the board meetings, additionally, in terms of, you
10 know, the financials. We do have a person at our ESP
11 who, you know, meets with the principal on a regular
12 basis. "This is your budget. This is where you need
13 to be." If a principal says, "Hey, I want to," you
14 know, "use more money for this or that. I need more
15 resources." Helps them explore where they can get
16 more resources. There are grant specialists that
17 come in and say, "This is how you can use your grant
18 money," you know. "You said you need this. This
19 grant will allow for that." We can do amendments.
20 So there's a ton of support people helping that
21 principal, but that principal does have a lot of
22 autonomy. Does that answer your question?

23 MR. BALDWIN: Yes, it does. Thank you. Thank
24 you.

25 MR. SCOTT: Could I -- I just love to just add

1 to that discussion around governance and boards.
2 Here in Arkansas, in particular, there's a
3 responsibility typically to hold accountable a person
4 for academics for finance and for operations.

5 MS. SADESKY: Correct.

6 MR. SCOTT: So who will be the single point-of-
7 contact that the board would hold accountable for
8 those areas?

9 MS. SADESKY: The principal.

10 MR. SCOTT: The principals --

11 MS. SADESKY: Uh-huh.

12 MR. SCOTT: -- for each school?

13 MS. SADESKY: Yes.

14 MR. SCOTT: Not a superintendent.

15 MS. SADESKY: Correct. The principal. Do you
16 want -- Adrian will speak to that.

17 MS. LIMA: Just on the superintendent. I'm
18 sorry. Adri Lima.

19 We did -- there are some areas where we do have
20 -- like, in Texas, for example, where Somerset has a
21 large presence. And so they do have a superintendent
22 role that kind of oversees the individual principals.
23 And so that may happen once the schools scale and
24 once they have, you know, all the schools establish.
25 Maybe -- perhaps there is -- and we state that in the

1 document -- that they may look into, perhaps, having
2 a superintendent, but, really, we find that a
3 principal at each school is really the best person.
4 That's the person that knows what they're doing on
5 each site. And so you know, I think the Somerset
6 board provides that additional oversight; and so
7 there might not be a superintendent. So really,
8 every principal -- every site has its own principal
9 who kind of runs the show.

10 MR. GERMAN: Todd German.

11 To clarify, also, in that. I mean, personally,
12 I think the board -- I don't believe in
13 superintendents for our model and our founder,
14 Fernando Zulueta, is vehemently against that model.
15 We like the principal to be the most -- they're god
16 in their little world as long as they do things
17 right. In Texas, what Adri was mentioning is we do
18 have a superintendent because the state requires it.
19 He's also a principal, so he happens to be the
20 superintendent of our -- of all our schools in -- in
21 Texas and he's a very strong principal. So he does
22 -- he is technically in charge of them, but they're
23 -- he has his own giant school and then the other
24 ones have that too, but we --

25 MR. SCOTT: Right.

1 MR. GERMAN: Yes. Yeah. And we have a
2 president who's also a principal. You know, we want
3 principal to be the pinnacle of our organization. We
4 don't build a district. That's not -- that's not our
5 model and it's frustrating to some people, but we
6 want -- to put it in -- I want little kids around the
7 administrators every day and as soon as that happens,
8 you lose something. They need to have children --
9 they need to interact with children every day, not be
10 in some district office somewhere. That's not a
11 knock on the districts, but it's -- our model is to
12 be around children. So --

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I guess --

14 MR. SCOTT: This is my last --

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Go ahead.

16 MR. SCOTT: Last question around the board since
17 the professional development requirements of -- here
18 in Arkansas for the boards.

19 MR. GERMAN: I assume they -- I mean, we're up
20 to -- we do our required training in every state and
21 every board, and most of us have extensive board
22 experience on -- like all of you, we all volunteer.
23 We're serial masochistic volunteers and we're
24 probably on ten different boards all the time, so we
25 keep -- we make sure we keep up with our stuff. I

1 probably shouldn't say "masochistic".

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Ms. Newton?

3 MS. NEWTON: No.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Dr. Moore?

5 DR. MOORE: Yes. And most of my questions were
6 answered. I did have a little bit more and it goes
7 to Dr. Wrigh-McMurray's question regarding waiver
8 five about the waiver for nurses and counselors and
9 the ratio. If you could, speak a little more to
10 that. It's more the ratio I'm concerned with and to
11 layer that question, as well: how will the CNA
12 operate under the RN? And maybe that is customary
13 and that happens a lot, but I'm just wondering how
14 they administer medication as a CNA. So those are my
15 questions. Oh. Well, and before you answer, I do
16 want to say before voting I think we probably should
17 have all gone to Miramar Beach and checked out that
18 school. It's going to be really hard to make a
19 decision without seeing Miramar Beach or Key West.

20 MR. SMITH: Or Canary Island.

21 DR. MOORE: Okay. Yes.

22 MS. LIMA: Adriana Lima. Just on the topic of
23 the school nurse -- and, so, I think -- I believe
24 that what's written in there is that the school will
25 have -- is it LNA?

1 DR. MOORE: CNA.

2 MS. LIMA: LPN. Sorry. An LPN operating under
3 the supervision of an RN.

4 DR. MOORE: And it says, "CNA or LPN," and a CNA
5 is just, like, a couple-week training, so --

6 MS. LIMA: Okay.

7 DR. MOORE: -- that's why --

8 MS. LIMA: So it'll be --

9 DR. MOORE: -- I was concerned.

10 MS. LIMA: Okay. So I think that the
11 commitment, then, would be for it to be an LRN.

12 MS. SADESKY: LPN.

13 MS. LIMA: LPN. Sorry. I don't have my notes
14 in front of me. I'm sorry. LPN operating under the
15 supervision of the -- of an RN. Yeah.

16 MR. CAMPBELL: Ken Campbell.
17 If it's admissible to the Panel, we can put on the
18 record that, yeah, we'll take the CNA part out and
19 it'll be the LPN.

20 DR. MOORE: Okay. That would make me feel a lot
21 more comfortable.

22 MR. CAMPBELL: No problem with that.

23 DR. MOORE: And then on that same waiver, if you
24 could speak to the ratio matter.

25 MR. CAMPBELL: The ratio matter was more --

1 DR. MOORE: That and the counseling.

2 MR. CAMPBELL: It goes into the -- the whole, we
3 don't know who we have until we have it, and the idea
4 that we're going to -- once you hit that certain
5 number, you have to get that second person -- doesn't
6 always work like that in the real world. So it's
7 more to provide the flexibility of just in case
8 because those moments can fluctuate depending on when
9 the surveys have been done to find out the numbers to
10 determine how many nurses and counselors, etcetera,
11 you may need. Ideally, we want to go by what are the
12 ratios prescribed in statute and standard and we'll
13 -- the waiver is more just of a in case something
14 happens, you know. If we hire one nurse and then we
15 have 1,000 students show up, what do we do, you know?
16 It gives us a little bit of time to be able to flex
17 -- the flexibility in order to match the people to
18 the need.

19 DR. MOORE: Okay, because in Arkansas, unless
20 something has changed, 450 to one is the counseling
21 ratio.

22 MR. CAMPBELL: Uh-huh.

23 DR. MOOE: So, I mean, it's a very low threshold
24 ratio already, so that just concerns me that it would
25 be anything more than 450 because --

1 MR. CAMPBELL: No, I --

2 DR. MOORE: -- that's already such a low --

3 MR. CAMPBELL: We don't foresee it --

4 DR. MOORE: -- expectation.

5 MR. CAMPBELL: We don't foresee it being like
6 that. It was more of a not knowing what we have yet
7 to cover all the bases to make sure that we have as
8 much flexibility as possible to be responsive to the
9 needs of the students and the families.

10 DR. MOORE: So could that be one that, maybe, we
11 add into the bus -- the transportation plan that we
12 follow-up on that?

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: It could, but I would also
14 like to put out there that there is a possibility for
15 a long-term sub for a counselor meaning that you
16 could have someone placed in there where you wouldn't
17 necessarily need the waiver. You would just get a
18 licensure exception, and that individual could come
19 in as a long-term sub so that you would have someone
20 to cover until -- and that's for two consecutive
21 semesters, so that means for a year -- you know, a
22 school year you would be able to employ this
23 individual without certification. And that's --
24 that's something you can get through our licensure
25 division.

1 DR. MOORE: All right.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Does that help?

3 MR. GERMAN: Yeah. Thank you.

4 If that's a solution that would be amenable that
5 --

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

7 MR. GERMAN: -- of course that's what we'd like
8 to do.

9 DR. MOORE: Okay.

10 MR. GERMAN: How -- are you -- I think this is
11 certainly not a big sticking point, you know. Again,
12 this can --

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

14 MR. GERMAN: Most of these waivers -- I know
15 when the poor attorney had to go through all this,
16 most of them are simply hedging bets so that we -- we
17 intend to probably hit all of them eventually just
18 when you're starting up. The way we read it we can't
19 do all of that from day one, so that was our
20 intention with most of the waivers. So, what would
21 -- whatever we have to do to address that seems very
22 reasonable.

23 DR. MOORE: Okay. So, whether that be like Dr.
24 Sutherlin --

25 MR. GERMAN: Do you want to strike that or do we

1 -- the waiver that he's talking -- I mean, the
2 exception that you were talking about sounds very
3 reasonable.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. I mean, they would have
5 to have a bachelor's degree, but, you know, upon that
6 they can be granted a long-term sub.

7 MS. SALAZAR: May I say something?

8 MR. GERMAN: Yeah, of course.

9 MS. SALAZAR: Lilly Salazar, Academica.

10 I definitely agree with you -- understand the
11 concern regarding the counselor. It is -- and I
12 appreciate the options that we have. We definitely
13 want to have a counselor. The issue is that we
14 sometimes struggle finding counselors. I know that
15 there are options available, so we would like to keep
16 the waiver in place if it's possible but
17 understanding that Somerset has a huge commitment to
18 counseling and to mental health and meeting the needs
19 of families; and that will be a priority. That's
20 basically, like, 90 percent of my job is just working
21 with all of the families and the mental health
22 options. I absolutely agree with you. I just don't
23 want to be in a situation where I might not be able
24 to find someone immediately but know that that is a
25 priority for us.

1 DR. MOORE: Okay. And based upon your track
2 record in other states, I trust fully that you intend
3 to do that; but since we set precedent, that's why
4 I'm concerned --

5 MS. SALAZAR: Yeah.

6 DR. MOORE: -- to do something that's an
7 Evergreen waiver that's going to be there. So,
8 maybe, to revisit it would be a good option, as well,
9 just for that safety net on our end because we want
10 to have that same expectation of all schools.

11 MS. SALAZAR: Absolutely. And, also, other
12 things that we look through within our -- within our
13 -- within our -- all of our schools is that we just
14 don't only look at counseling. We've also hired
15 licensed mental health clinicians, school social
16 workers, school psychologists. So, we are very open
17 to looking at different individuals that have that
18 mental health expertise that we can bring into our
19 schools if we just can't find a counselor.

20 DR. MOORE: All right. Thank you, and then on
21 those same notes. In your application, it mentioned
22 career exploration and career readiness exploration
23 would be done by the counselor, and often times --
24 and Dr. McMurray could speak to this even more.
25 Career and technical education has specific classes

1 for that --

2 DR. FYE: Yes.

3 DR. MOORE: -- and courses and it's really the
4 responsibility of all teachers --

5 DR. FYE: Correct.

6 DR. MOORE: -- especially with the LEARNS Act
7 and especially with student success plans.

8 DR. FYE: Yes.

9 DR. MOORE: So -- and if you -- if your ratios
10 were off at all, I don't know how the counselor could
11 handle being in charge of --

12 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

13 DR. MOORE: -- all of that. So could you speak
14 a little bit to that?

15 DR. FYE: Yes. We do agree that it is part of
16 the -- the entire curriculum, not solely the
17 counselor. That was not the intent of it to --
18 sorry. Sarah Fye again.

19 But we also mentioned several times that we do
20 have the courses involved for career exploration. We
21 have the career shadowing; all of those included, but
22 that was just one statement of the counselor. But we
23 do agree it is part of the entire curriculum.

24 DR. MOORE: All right. I believe that's all my
25 questions.

1 DR. FYE: Thank you.

2 DR. MOORE: Thank you so much.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. I've got just a
4 few questions and then we'll move forward. So I've
5 got a question about the literacy block. Can you
6 explain that to us?

7 DR. FYE: Yes.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So just the specifics of what
9 that looks like in practice.

10 DR. FYE: So depending on the grade level, of
11 course, your literacy block may look different, but
12 we -- generally, we have a dedicated -- in our K-2
13 program we have a dedicated phonological awareness
14 and phonics block. We have programming that's in
15 there that's explicit direct instruction specifically
16 regarding phonological awareness and phonics. We
17 have -- then we bring in -- we prefer, I should say,
18 because our principals do have some autonomy, and
19 some schools do things a little bit differently. But
20 ideally, it would be a 20-minute phonics block. They
21 would be in small groups, and we do a significant
22 amount of work with small groups. So we would have
23 word work centers. We would have comprehension
24 centers. We would have teacher stations, of course.
25 And we bring in a lot of technology, so we would also

1 have technology centers and, so, we would expect that
2 to be the -- I believe it's 90 or 120 minutes -- I
3 forget exactly -- depending on which grade level.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

5 DR. FYE: And then moving up into third through
6 fifth grade there's obviously more of an emphasis on
7 comprehension, literature, and informational text,
8 but we also provide opportunities within those center
9 blocks in the small groups for intervention because
10 we're aware all over the country our students, even
11 up into, you know, intermediate grades, are still
12 having issues with phonics and decoding and fluency.
13 And so we offer support in that, as well, and that
14 goes up 6 through 12, as well. I was a former high
15 school intensive reading teacher, so, obviously, we
16 know that even older children have trouble with that.
17 And -- of course.

18 One of the board members.

19 MS. MORALES: Chantal Morales. I'm one of the
20 board members and I'm also an acting principal.

21 So I just want to speak to the point of
22 curriculum, especially when it comes to literacy
23 instruction. One of the things that our schools
24 really emphasize is differentiated instruction. So
25 when it comes to differentiating, we're talking about

1 not only providing MTSS for students who need
2 enrichment, but also for students who need intense
3 intervention. So that also occurs as part of the
4 literacy block. So you might be talking about
5 breaking up into small groups and providing
6 instruction for kids who are below grade level
7 significantly; and then a different group might be
8 working on enrichment skills. So that is an
9 important component of our literacy block, as well.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

11 DR. MOORE: Dr. Sutherlin, can I ask a follow-up
12 question on that?

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

14 DR. MOORE: I had this in my notes and then
15 forgot about it. I do appreciate that you give ample
16 time to math and science and explicitly call that
17 out. I was wondering, though, on the science with
18 only 30 minutes per day, is there any flexibility
19 allowed --

20 DR. FYE: Yes.

21 DR. MOORE: -- for days that, maybe, you're
22 doing --

23 DR. FYE: If you have a lab or something.

24 DR. MOORE: -- a lab? Okay.

25 DR. FYE: Of course. Yeah. So it would --

1 sometimes it would come out of specials time, or it
2 would just be allocated. Yes.

3 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

4 DR. FYE: And Chantal would like to expand.

5 MS. MORALES: Chantal Morales again.

6 They can also integrate. So, like,
7 cross-curricular they can also integrate within other
8 subject areas. So if it is a lab, for example, it
9 could take up your entire, maybe, math and science
10 block if there's math involved. There might also be
11 even reading and language arts involved.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you for that. You know,
13 when you see 90 to 120 minutes you immediately think
14 attention spans are not going to be near that long,
15 so you need -- you need to know exactly what's going
16 on.

17 DR. FYE: Nor will ours.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. Yeah. Could you
19 provide more detail on how you'll provide special
20 education services? The rest of your application is
21 very detailed --

22 DR. FYE: Yes.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- but when we got to that
24 section, we could use a little more information.

25 DR. FYE: Absolutely.

1 MS. SALAZAR: I'll bring Daniel up to because
2 he's a practicing principal too.

3 Liliana Salizar, Academica.

4 MR. SHOURDS: Daniel Shourds, Somerset.

5 MS. SALAZAR: So overall, we adhere to all of
6 the rules in IDEA and, therefore, we go through the
7 process of the child find -- finding a child that is
8 in need of special education, going through the
9 evaluation process. Once they qualify for one of the
10 13 IDEA categories, then we go ahead and we hold a
11 meeting, and we put an IEP in place. Based on those
12 IEPs, as we start enrolling students we start
13 reviewing those IEPs. What are the needs on those
14 IEPs? How much special need-designed instruction are
15 they going to be receiving? And based on that is how
16 we start creating our master schedule and offering
17 our related services. And so it really all depends
18 on what we come in because there might be some
19 students that require a more intensive setting such
20 as pulling out and giving them a resource setting.
21 There might be students that require support
22 facilitation where the special education teacher goes
23 in and provides additional support. So it's those
24 IEPs that drive what services we're going to be
25 providing and then, definitely, we will be providing.

1 Danny, do you want to talk a little bit about in
2 your school how you look at all the different
3 exceptionalities?

4 MR. SHOURDS: Sure.

5 So we do provide the full continuity of services for
6 all students. You know, we have a push and pull-out
7 model for students who have support facilitation or
8 if they need direct instruction they're pulled out,
9 as well. We also contract with SLPs and OTs to make
10 sure that we're able to provide whatever services
11 that students need. So those -- you know, whether
12 they're in the school or they're contracted service
13 providers, we're able to meet the needs of all of our
14 students.

15 MS. SALAZAR: And parents are meaningful
16 partners when it comes to working with students with
17 disabilities as they are with them much more time
18 than we are. And so when they come to those IEP
19 meetings, we very much stress parental input to
20 ensure that we're capturing the needs of the
21 students.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I'd like to open it up to the
23 panel if there are any other questions regarding
24 special education services.

25 Yes? Dr. Wright-McMurray?

1 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So can you speak a little
2 bit on your transition services for students that are
3 in your upper grades as they're moving out of
4 secondary into post-secondary? What does that look
5 like for those students?

6 MS. SALAZAR: Yes, absolutely. And that's an
7 extremely important part of all of the entire IEP
8 process. Typically starting at around age 12, we
9 strongly encourage for our students to be a part of
10 the IEP process, and we start asking them questions
11 like: what are you thinking about doing in the
12 future? What are your strengths? What would you
13 like to do? And we start infusing that into the IEP
14 because we want to make sure that we're capturing
15 those strengths and if there's opportunities within
16 our school for them to take certain classes -- maybe
17 CTE classes; maybe college prep classes that is going
18 to help them follow their dream -- then we do that.
19 Their senior -- their high school years -- grades 9
20 through 12 -- is where we get really involved in
21 post-secondary options. We do career interest
22 surveys, maybe vocational surveys. We have them be a
23 part of community programs where they can go out and
24 do internships and see what they're interested in,
25 and we involve the parents. We just want to make

1 sure that we're always tasking them and asking them:
2 where is it that you want your life to go? And then
3 if it's within the school community to start
4 preparing them for that, then we absolutely do it.
5 If not, then we reach out to community resources.
6 Vocational rehabilitation is a wonderful department
7 to work with, also, that we can get all of the things
8 that they need in order for them to be successful in
9 a post-secondary. The last thing we want them to do
10 is graduate and not have something to do. We want to
11 make sure that they either go vocational, college, or
12 if they just want to go straight to work: They do
13 that, as well.

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Thank you.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any other questions?

16 (NO RESPONSE)

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I just had a, sort of, point
18 of clarification. On your teacher licensure waiver
19 you state that there's an alternate evaluation system
20 that you are utilizing. It was in the rationale, and
21 I just wanted to be clear. Are we asking for a
22 waiver of the evaluation system?

23 MR. CAMPBELL: There is a -- Ken Campbell.
24 There is a observation platform -- actually, Daniel
25 will probably be able to speak better to it --

1 through DLI -- Doral Leadership Institute -- that's
2 been developed for teacher observation, feedback,
3 professional development. All that -- all that
4 stuff. It's something that Somerset has been using
5 for quite some time now. It's been very successful.
6 We just like to bring that with us, but I'll let
7 Daniel answer to specifics.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

9 MR. SHOURDS: Yeah. So, you know -- so we're
10 all being measured by the same standard -- all the
11 principals across the network; all the -- all the
12 teachers across the same network -- you know, so it's
13 -- it's -- consortium of charter schools. It was
14 approved by the State of Florida, you know, but we've
15 used it in our other states, too, but it's just so
16 that we -- we're looking at everyone under the same
17 lens.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. And the only reason I
19 ask is because teachers -- if you have teachers that
20 qualify -- because we now have incentive pay that's
21 tied to teaching here in the State of Arkansas. If
22 they don't meet all of the qualifications, then even
23 though they might have a growth score or they might
24 meet one of the other criteria, they wouldn't qualify
25 for that incentive pay because they're not in our

1 system. And so that's what I wanted to just let you
2 know is that that is -- that's something that might
3 be a hindrance. Yeah.

4 MR. SHOURDS: Thank you --

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

6 MR. SHOURDS: -- for that information.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And it doesn't prohibit you
8 from going in and using your system and then doing a
9 separate observation for our system. I just wanted
10 to --

11 MR. SHOURDS: Good to know. Thank you.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- point that out there, too.

13 And then the other thing was on your class size
14 and teaching load waiver, the rationale was for
15 teacher licensure. It was the same rationale pasted
16 a second time in the final application, so I just
17 wanted to know if you could speak to why -- the class
18 size and teaching load.

19 MR. CAMPBELL: Ken Campbell, and for the record,
20 I apologize if there was a scrutinous error on that
21 duplicating the section.

22 To the best of my memory, the knowledge -- the
23 rationale behind the request for the class size
24 waiver was more -- and the teaching load -- was more
25 in how Somerset operates on a day-to-day basis with

1 their students and --

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Uh-huh.

3 MR. CAMPBELL: -- as everybody in charters
4 knows, you have to be Gumby -- very flexible all the
5 time. And in Florida and some of the other states
6 that we operate in, we have -- we have class size
7 limits that are actually lower than Arkansas. So
8 there was never a consideration that we weren't going
9 to be able to -- to make those class sizes. It was,
10 again, out of an abundance of caution to make sure
11 day one we are ready to make -- to give us a little
12 bit of breathing room as far as we have to move some
13 people around. Things happen all the time and
14 sometimes teachers are asked to do an extra -- cover
15 an extra class or stay after to do -- to do things or
16 there's events and other things that our teachers
17 quite frequently, based on the feedback we've got,
18 they like to do --

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Uh-huh.

20 MR. CAMPBELL: -- because they love their jobs
21 and they love their kids and families; but it was a
22 matter of, like, looking at the black letter law and
23 the requirements and rules and being like, all right.
24 Well, by this, how we do it isn't going to be quite
25 as compatible as we would like on day one."

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

2 MR. CAMPBELL: So again, just to give us that --
3 that breathing room to -- so we can run up and build
4 that. There's no interest in having, you know, one
5 teacher with 70 kids in the class and they're working
6 nine hours a day. That is not the intent at all
7 under the rationale for the waiver. It is more just
8 a matter of giving us that flexibility to be able to
9 replicate the Somerset model successfully in
10 Arkansas.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you for that
12 clarification.

13 MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you for the question.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

15 All right. Do I have any other questions from
16 the Panel? Mr. Scott?

17 MR. SCOTT: Yes. Just two quick questions. I'm
18 just wondering how will schools communicate with
19 parents that don't speak English?

20 DR. FYE: We already have a number of schools,
21 obviously, where our parents do not speak the same
22 language as they don't speak English. We offer,
23 obviously, the home language survey to see where
24 students might need English language support, but we
25 are very fortunate that we have a diverse faculty; a

1 diverse principalship where we are able to translate
2 and provide services so that our families have that
3 communication. And even as somebody who speaks
4 multiple languages, I'm not above using Google
5 Translate and, you know, AI to support those
6 translations to make sure that our families are
7 receiving communication. Whether that be, you know,
8 newsletters that go home providing that in multiple
9 languages. Whether that's, you know, Class Dojo or
10 some kind of remind system that we use. We obviously
11 survey our families to see what communication works
12 for them and then we make sure that they have it
13 because that partnership is vital.

14 MR. SCOTT: Thank you. Are you familiar with
15 TransAct and ParentNotices?

16 DR. FYE: TransACT myself I am not specifically.

17 MR. SCOTT: Here in Arkansas that's one of the
18 tools that's available to all of the schools.

19 DR. FYE: Even better if it's already there.
20 Yes, we'll make sure to use it.

21 MR. SCOTT: The last question involves high
22 schools. A differentiator, I believe, was listed
23 was, perhaps, football. So is your plan to
24 incorporate football at some particular point? If
25 so, what does that look like?

1 DR. FYE: I can tell you that our high schools
2 that are already in existence have a lot of
3 activities and sports, so I cannot think of anybody
4 who would not want our football to happen. I think
5 it just needs to be put into place. Is that okay to
6 say?

7 MR. SCOTT: Certainly.

8 DR. FYE: I'm personally a big football fan, so
9 of course.

10 MR. SCOTT: I guess, I kind of sort of know a
11 little bit about football, but -- so -- but from an
12 operational standpoint --

13 DR. FYE: Yes.

14 MR. SCOTT: -- to implement a football program
15 is very costly.

16 DR. FYE: Yes.

17 MR. SCOTT: But it's a huge differentiator --

18 DR. FYE: Yes.

19 MR. SCOTT: -- for those as you recruit. So
20 that's what --

21 DR. FYE: And I know that in our secondary
22 schools -- our middle and high schools -- we talk a
23 lot about when we're -- you know, I know Todd spoke a
24 bit about it being a two-phase process most likely.
25 The first temporary building or location wherever it

1 may be and then the -- the final place where we're
2 hoping to be.

3 It is very difficult to get middle and high
4 school students if you don't have certain things;
5 right? If you don't have certain extra-curricular
6 programs, if you don't have certain programming, if
7 you don't have basketball and football and other
8 options for students. So that's always on the table.

9 MR. GERMAN: To go directly to your question,
10 our big school in Texas has, literally, sky boxes.
11 We have -- it is the -- a semi-professional team
12 rents our field. But we have other schools that are
13 more artistically oriented and don't have a football
14 team because it's not really their thing.

15 We -- knowing Arkansas, more than likely, once
16 we build the scale and have the budget, we'll do it.
17 And sometimes that is, again, organic. We -- I've
18 seen our teams go from playing on basically a dirt
19 field to -- I mean, we now pretty much astroturf
20 every school because it -- financially, it just makes
21 more sense, even though it hurts the first time out.
22 So -- but if the school -- if it works absolutely.

23 Go ahead.

24 MR. SMITH: One of the schools in our ecosystem
25 -- I just want to read you the stats because stats

1 are football; right? This was the nerd school. It's
2 an inner-city school in -- well, it's near Doral, so,
3 you know, it's a high Title I area. In 2022, they
4 won the state football championship, and this is the
5 Nerd school. In 2018, '19, '12, '15, '17, '20, '21,
6 '22 and '23, they were district and regional
7 champions. And now they're the -- this is 6A --
8 they're the state champions. So they're beating
9 Gainesville, Buchholz, they're beating Satellite,
10 Apollo -- I mean, they're beating all the schools all
11 over Florida. So a nerd school can turn into the
12 state champions in football. I'm convinced in
13 Arkansas, the football champions, can actually have
14 an art program. So it's going to go the other way.
15 The football will be great, but the other stuff is
16 going to be great too.

17 MR. SCOTT: All right.

18 DR. FYE: And we also -- I just have to brag
19 about some of our other non-football things because
20 we've had some amazing wrestling and powerlifting
21 results. So, like, big football fan, but there's a
22 lot of other things that -- some of them I didn't
23 even know about until I got into what we do. So we
24 have some incredible kids doing amazing things all
25 over the country.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you.

2 MR. SCOTT: Thank you.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any other questions? Dr.

4 Moore?

5 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I have a curiosity
6 question.

7 Sorry. Did you want --

8 DR. MOORE: No, go ahead.

9 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. I think in one of
10 the comments it was mentioned that sometimes there is
11 a bit of a struggle for non-Somerset leadership to
12 transition into Somerset leadership roles, say
13 principal. And I know you mentioned that you plan to
14 have teachers to come and to support and mentor. So
15 is it the intent that you would be able to hire from
16 Arkansas' population to be principals or do you feel
17 like that -- because I couldn't tell from your
18 comment. Is it that -- that would be a challenge for
19 them to transition?

20 MR. GERMAN: Ideally, I think as the board, we
21 kind of like to have one of our existing principals
22 come up to get the school started, but we -- probably
23 50/50 that we'll have a principal come from Arkansas.
24 We -- I just don't know. Staff and everything will
25 -- I would think 95 percent will absolutely be from

1 the local community.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

3 MS. SADESKY: And, like, oftentimes we try to
4 get someone to actually wants to relocate here
5 permanently, you know? So in our other schools that
6 -- in Texas, you know, like, we had one of our
7 leaders and his entire family relocate there
8 permanently and they love it, you know. And so
9 obviously that's the goal if we could find someone
10 within our network that would want to relocate here
11 permanently. If not, you know, we're going to find
12 the best leader. And again, ideally, someone that
13 knows a Somerset way, it will make a much easier
14 transition. But if we can't, then we'll hire locally
15 and will help develop that person along with a
16 seasoned, veteran Somerset principal.

17 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. Thanks.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Dr. Moore?

19 DR. MOORE: My question is not necessarily for
20 Somerset, but more just before we vote, I need to get
21 some clarification. So can --

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. I was going to -- I was
23 going to ask legal to come up and coach us through
24 this process.

25 DR. MOORE: Okay. Because, specifically, I

1 wanted to ensure that we're adding the transportation
2 waiver since it's actually not in there. It's
3 mentioned in the narrative, but not listed. So that
4 that will be added. And that we will -- we're
5 agreeing upon revisiting that waiver and the ratio
6 waiver in a year from now. And then, No. three, as I
7 was looking, the language is not in here correct on
8 the waiver. We mentioned the CNA and MA. Arkansas
9 law requires the RN, so changing all that. Will that
10 -- does that need to be changed in the application or
11 just because of the waiver -- the waiver just waives
12 all of it? I mean, how do -- I want something that
13 says an application or somewhere that we're not using
14 CNAs and MAs that we're using LPNs under the guidance
15 of an RN.

16 MR. REYNOLDS: So what you -- I mean, what you
17 got in front of you is, you know, what the charter
18 stated on the record. And so you'll be voting on the
19 application as amended. And so, you know, all of the
20 additional waivers that they've confirmed that they
21 want to add, the conditions that they've agreed to,
22 you'll be voting on the application as amended today.
23 And you'll have to vote six times, once for each LEA
24 number. So all the waivers will apply to all of the
25 campuses -- or the two campuses and all of the

1 schools.

2 DR. MOORE: But you're saying everything we
3 discussed today that they agreed to verbally is what
4 we're voting on, not voting on as written?

5 MR. REYNOLDS: Yes.

6 DR. MOORE: Not voting on as written?

7 MR. REYNOLDS: No. You'll be voting on the
8 application as amended.

9 DR. MOORE: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR. REYNOLDS: Yep.

11 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So, I guess, I have
12 another -- sorry.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Go ahead, Dr. Wright-McMurray.

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So with that, I have
15 another question because I feel like -- that we came
16 to consensus agreement on, like, CNA, LPN, that
17 piece, but I don't feel as clear on transportation
18 for some reason. I feel like we discussed it, but I
19 don't think we got a chance to really get to a point
20 for me to understand where are we on that.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And the --

22 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So I probably would want
23 to revisit some of those just to make sure that I
24 know what we are agreeing to and that we're voting on
25 before moving forward. And I hate to have to --

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- repeat, but I just want
3 to make sure that we're all on the same page.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Well -- and what I think we
5 could do to cover all of that -- and if you want
6 something more specific, we can go with that. But I
7 think we can say in one year we'll have them come
8 back and revisit their waivers to see if they would
9 like to rescind any of those waivers at that time.
10 So that would be, like, an amendment piece.

11 MR. REYNOLDS: And I think --

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I think back -- so back to
13 -- I think there was agreement that no, they're not
14 wanting to say they're using CNAs. They would prefer
15 LPN to be the language, but currently it says CNA. So
16 -- but if we go forward with the waiver -- the waiver
17 is written or intended -- so that's why I just want
18 to make sure --

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. So on --

20 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- I'm clearly
21 understanding what they're agreeing to.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right. So on the record, they
23 did state -- and we can go ahead and reconfirm this
24 if we need to, but they did state that they would go
25 with an LPN versus a CNA; am I correct on that?

1 MR. REYNOLDS: That's what my notes say.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. And then, the other was
3 the piece on transportation. And so we said that we
4 would revisit the transportation waiver --

5 MR. REYNOLDS: That's correct.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- in one year; is that
7 correct?

8 MR. REYNOLDS: That's correct.

9 MR. GERMAN: Yes.

10 MR. REYNOLDS: Okay.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And then, also, I know
13 that, you know, I posed the question and then you,
14 you know, came behind the clean up on their -- the
15 various options related to licensure, and I don't
16 know where they landed --

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- on that. Are they
19 going to keep that or are they going to utilize the
20 options that you recommended?

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. And that's still a
22 question --

23 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah --

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- that's up --

25 MR. REYNOLDS: -- that's --

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- in the air.

2 MR. REYNOLDS: -- still a question. I don't
3 know the answer to that. That's something --

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I don't have any closure on
5 that. And part of that comes from the fact that -- I
6 guess what my concern is, and I think what Dr. Moore
7 was speaking to as well, is if we have a waiver of
8 ratio, that doesn't provide the services to the
9 students. If we have the ability to go in and
10 actually hire a long-term sub alongside that
11 counselor that they may have in place, then that does
12 provide some services to students that wouldn't be
13 provided otherwise. And so I think that's where the
14 apprehension comes in is let's say they do have 1,000
15 students, well, the ratio is supposed be 1 to 450 --

16 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- where are those services
18 going to be provided and how? That's the piece I
19 think that we're still kind of circling around.

20 MR. REYNOLDS: And I certainly can't speak for
21 the charter, but --

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

23 MS. NEWTON: So then, if the motion were made,
24 is it made with the contingency or --

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Well, so everything that we've

1 said so far is on the record. And so anything that
2 they've agreed to on the record becomes part of the
3 motion.

4 MR. SCOTT: So one area that is still open
5 outside of waivers and more so in a particular
6 location. So at some point, I'm sure they get to the
7 point where they're identifying facility that
8 impacts, obviously, their budget.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: They will have to get that
10 facility approved anyway, so they'll have to come
11 back for that. Yeah. All right.

12 Sorry.

13 MR. GERMAN: I guess, it sounds like the -- one
14 of the things -- the waiver on the counselor just --
15 because we're even confused ourselves on it -- like
16 most of these waivers, we're looking at it that, when
17 we have 1,000 kids, we don't -- have no problem with
18 the waiver. It's more when we have 100 kids.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

20 MR. GERMAN: And that's where we -- in the 450
21 the -- at 450 we have -- obviously, we're going to
22 have a counselor. We were looking at more the waiver
23 for the first -- as we're growing because I think the
24 way the law is written, it's like day one, you have
25 to -- all these things and that's -- it's kind of an

1 insurmountable hurdle. So that's where -- that's
2 where we're understanding. That's why we asked for
3 the waiver. We're -- if -- we're not looking for it
4 -- we're not trying to have 1,000 kids with one
5 counselor.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

7 MR. GERMAN: So that's --

8 DR. MOORE: Well, that actually makes me --

9 MR. GERMAN: I want to get us back on --

10 DR. MOORE: -- go back to Dr. Sutherlin's
11 question: those hundred kids, then, how will they be
12 serviced if you don't have a counselor?

13 MS. SALAZAR: We will -- we will have a
14 counselor, but I don't know if it's going to be a
15 fully certified counselor, if it's going to be a
16 licensed mental clinician, a social worker, school
17 psychologist; counseling services will be met. That
18 is extremely important. I just can't commit that
19 it's going to be a counselor per se.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And this is where that
21 long-term sub comes in --

22 MS. SALAZAR: Yes.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- or the emergency teaching
24 permit --

25 MS. SALAZAR: Yes.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- you wouldn't need the
2 waiver if you were to employ a long-term sub or an
3 emergency teaching permit for someone who has the
4 work experience behind them and the college course
5 credit, you could get a year-long emergency teaching
6 permit; and if that person decided to continue to
7 work for you, you could then have them work towards a
8 licensure in that year; and then they could even be
9 awarded a second year of an emergency teaching permit
10 if they make ample progress towards a license; and
11 then that would enable you to have a licensed
12 counselor here in the state, but you wouldn't
13 necessarily need a waiver of counselor or counselor
14 ratio to do that.

15 MS. SALAZAR: And, again, I understand that it's
16 just, nationally, it's just so hard to find
17 individuals to go into counseling period. And so
18 that's where, you know, the needs will be met, I
19 just, you know, I can't -- right now I couldn't
20 commit to you that that I'm going to be able to find
21 a person; but I am -- I will actively -- we will
22 definitely actively look into the different
23 credentials or the different pathways that we have.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And I think this is a two-part
25 question, though, that I think we're bringing up is,

1 okay, let's put the licensure piece aside --

2 MS. SALAZAR: Okay.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- and let's say -- okay.
4 Let's say we grant the licensure waiver -- just
5 hypothetically -- then we come back, and we grant the
6 ratio, the question is: how are those students that
7 go over the 450 -- with the extra services that
8 you've described in your application -- how are they
9 being served? That's -- that's the question.

10 MS. SALAZAR: By the -- so not saying that there
11 is a person that is licensed, because again, the goal
12 is to have someone that is licensed or someone that,
13 you know, that is. So if there is someone that is
14 licensed, anytime, if we do go over that 450, then we
15 will definitely revisit then hiring additional
16 personnel because we know that your ratio is up to
17 450. So -- and as Todd was saying, we're not going
18 to have one counselor to 1,000 children.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right. I guess, that's --
20 that's the question that we're asking though is,
21 okay. If we're going to hire a counselor, they're
22 unlicensed and we're going to go to the 450, but then
23 we're waiving the 450 ratio because that's one of the
24 waivers. So then you go over the 450, what ways are
25 those hundred kids, 200 kids going to be served?

1 That's -- that's the question.

2 MS. SALAZAR: So we would revisit that counselor
3 scheduled to ensure that that counselor is only doing
4 the main responsibilities and job of what a counselor
5 should be doing because there are times that
6 sometimes our counselors are pulled for other things,
7 and that would be very impossible to do. So we would
8 have to make sure -- the principal would have to
9 closely supervise the counselor's schedule and ensure
10 that the counselor is actually doing what they're
11 hired to do which is working with our families and
12 working with our students.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN; But even in -- at that, the
14 recommended ratio is 1 to 450. So the question then
15 becomes: are we overburdening the counselor? Even
16 though we're not having them do those extra duties
17 that aren't typically under their purview, are we
18 overburdening them in terms of the student caseload?
19 And are they providing the best services to students?
20 And I think that -- that's the question that's on the
21 table.

22 MS. SALAZAR: Yes, I understand that. And in
23 schools -- in some of our schools, we do also pull
24 out and we look -- work with local community agencies
25 and services and co-contract with them because there

1 are -- for example, there are certain group of
2 children that just might need specific mental health
3 counseling, you know, counseling as per their IEP.
4 So in different -- in different states, we do work
5 with outside agencies outside mental health
6 organizations that could come in and we contract with
7 them; and they would be able to provide that -- that
8 pocket of service. So that our counselor could then
9 be able to address all of those services. So we are
10 most definitely open to working and co-contracting
11 with other partners. And at the same time if --
12 option -- if available, virtual there are some of our
13 schools that are also accessing mental health
14 services in a virtual setting and they do get it that
15 way as well.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So hearing that makes me feel
17 better that there are some contracted services that
18 go on beyond the individual who is serving primarily
19 as the counselor.

20 MS. SALAZAR: Yes.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Doctor Moore, did you have
22 more you wanted to ask about that?

23 DR. MOORE: No. And I appreciate you separating
24 the fact that there's a license one and there's a
25 ratio one and trying to understand why we need both

1 of those because it's two different reasons. So --
2 but I would like it to be something we flag to
3 revisit a year from now.

4 MS. SALAZAR: Absolutely. Thank you and thank
5 you for asking the clarifying question so that we can
6 do it better. Thank you.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

8 MR. GERMAN: So we're clear on that, she's
9 tough. So we're going to revisit that so that
10 satisfies everybody.

11 MS. SALAZAR: Absolutely. Thank you.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

13 MR. SCOTT: So --

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Scott?

15 MR. SCOTT: Just to build upon that last
16 statement, contracted services, the assumption is
17 that the counselor position is full time, and you may
18 import contracted services. Are those numbers in the
19 budget at all for the contracted services?

20 MS. SALAZAR: We do have a line item for
21 contracted services.

22 Richard, are you on?

23 Oh, he had to come off?

24 But we do have a line item for contracted
25 services because as part of the IEP process,

1 sometimes we're -- it's not only speech language
2 pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy,
3 there are sometimes behavioral services that we might
4 need to contract with, and definitely counseling
5 could fall under that as well.

6 MR. SCOTT: Thank you.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Doctor Wright-McMurray?

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So just again for clarity,
9 I know that we have discussed credentials and
10 licensing on a couple of items. And so one being
11 school counselor, one just being as teachers as well.
12 And I think on that one there was a recommendation of
13 various options that are available so that you don't
14 have to have the waiver in place. And I'm not 100
15 percent sure that we landed on an agreement there
16 either. So, again, before we move forward with the
17 vote, want to make sure I know what we're voting on
18 and then what the expectations are for the charter,
19 if approved, to come back with additional
20 information.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So what I'm hearing is we need
22 some clarity around why the waiver for counsel --
23 like, for licensure, for counselor versus one of the
24 licensure exceptions that's an option.

25 MS. SALAZAR: Can you give me one moment please?

1 Okay. Sorry I have to speak with the bosses.
2 I'm the -- very low on the totem pole even though --
3 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: No.
4 MS. SALAZAR: -- my husband thinks I'm very high
5 on his totem pole. I just want to clarify that.
6 All right. So what we will do is -- just to be
7 clear -- is that since there are options available to
8 us, then we will go ahead and use those options
9 available to us. So we can commit to you that we
10 will either have a licensed counselor or we will take
11 advantage of the options that are available to us
12 here in the state of Arkansas.
13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And I will say to you that
14 even if, like, let's say you hire someone for as an
15 ATP or an LTS, you can always place them on an ALP
16 which is an additional licensure plan. And
17 DR. MOORE: Can we get a few more letters there?
18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. I know. I'm just --
19 I'm throwing out all the acronyms. Yeah.
20 MS. SALAZAR: The thing is that I'm special ed.,
21 so I absolutely understand everything he said because
22 my life is all around acronyms.
23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.
24 MS. SALAZAR: So we're we are speaking the same
25 language.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

2 So that ALP, even if you hired a different
3 individual who wanted to pursue that licensure, they
4 would be able to work for you under that ALP. And
5 you wouldn't flag for standards for accreditation.
6 They'd be working towards that licensure. So it
7 gives you, I mean, there's even more flexible -- more
8 flexibility.

9 MS. SALAZAR: No, and I really appreciate that
10 because I do want you to know -- not because I'm --
11 I'm saying you guys are so wonderful -- but we are in
12 a lot of states and very few states give me wiggle
13 room for when it comes to counseling. And it's very
14 hard to become a counselor because many people have
15 to take an entire semester off to do their hours.
16 And who can afford to do that?

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

18 MS. SALAZAR: So I greatly appreciate that you
19 guys have those options available for us and we are
20 totally going to take advantage of them.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I appreciate that. Thank you.

22 MS. SALAZAR: Thank you.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any other questions?

24 MR. BALDWIN: So I'm now -- I'm going to ask the
25 question about the motion. So are we down to just

1 having you all come back in one year to discuss the
2 transportation waiver? Is that the only waiver
3 that's one year?

4 DR. MOORE: I think -- and we still have the
5 ratio.

6 MR. GERMAN: Yeah, I think --

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. Yes.

8 MR. GERMAN: I'm fine to just keep those. Let's
9 just hit some things next time to make sure
10 everybody's comfortable and that we're --

11 MR. BALDWIN: So the ratio waiver is amended?

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

13 MR. GERMAN: That's fine too.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes, it would be part of that.

15 MR. BALDWIN: Okay.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And -- so, Mr. Reynolds, we
17 can have one motion, but then vote on that motion for
18 multiple schools? Or how would we go about that
19 process?

20 MR. REYNOLDS: So --

21 MR. GERMAN: Can we --

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Go ahead.

23 MR. GERMAN: I just want to make sure we're all
24 clear because it seems like we've been around and
25 around.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

2 MR. GERMAN: And as you address them, I want to
3 make sure that we have as much flexibility because we
4 were sort of understanding it was one vote for
5 everything, not six. But --

6 MR. REYNOLDS: Because you'll have six LEA
7 numbers, the -- each LEA number will have its own
8 individual charter. And so to approve each charter,
9 you'll have to have a vote from the CAP.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. All right.

11 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Chair?

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes?

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Again, I hate to be this
14 person, but I still have the same question. So we
15 have resolved school counseling, but -- so are we
16 keeping all the waivers in place, even being aware
17 that there are options for teaching license?

18 MR. REYNOLDS: So --

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: The way that I understand it
20 --

21 MR. REYNOLDS: That was going to be --

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- we would need to have --

23 MR. REYNOLDS: That was --

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- Mr. Reynolds --

25 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- get it on the record.

2 MR. REYNOLDS: That was going to be my -- yeah.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

4 MR. REYNOLDS: That was going to be my
5 clarifying question for the charter.

6 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

7 MR. REYNOLDS: So are you -- and this is
8 something the charter will have to confirm. Are you
9 rescinding the waiver for teacher licensure and the
10 -- or the licensor portion of the school counselor
11 waiver?

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Not teacher licensure --

13 MR. REYNOLDS: Not --

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- but counselor?

15 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

16 And then the motion will also include the
17 conditions that we'll check in in a year for the
18 transportation waiver and the ratio portion of the
19 school counselor waiver.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

21 MR. GERMAN: That is correct.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So can we -- can we get that
23 on the record just so that --

24 MR. GERMAN: Can I agree with what he just --

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. That would be fine.

1 MR. GERMAN: Yes.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you.

3 All right. Any other questions?

4 I'll entertain a motion unless --

5 MR. REYNOLDS: So --

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- unless -- yes?

7 MR. REYNOLDS: So just for clarity, the motion
8 can be to approve the application as amended --

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

10 MR. REYNOLDS: -- to say all -- listing out the
11 different conditions. And then I did have one other
12 thing.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

14 MR. BALDWIN: Let me -- let me make the shot
15 this.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

17 MR. BALDWIN: Don't go very far because I'm --

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. We may need your help.

19 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. So I vote to approve the
20 summer set application as amended by the Charter
21 Panel to open charter school campuses in Northwest
22 Arkansas and Little Rock, Arkansas, with each campus
23 providing a K through 5 school, a 6 through 8 school
24 and a 9 through 12 school. The motion includes
25 reconsideration of the transportation waiver and the

1 counseling -- what did you call that?

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Ratio.

3 DR. MOORE: Ratio.

4 MR. BALDWIN: The counseling ratio waiver after
5 one year from today.

6 DR. MOORE: I second.

7 MR. REYNOLDS: You nailed it.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So I have a motion from Mr.
9 Baldwin and a second from Dr. Moore. All those in
10 favor?

11 MR. BALDWIN: Aye.

12 MS. NEWTON: Aye

13 MR. SCOTT: Aye.

14 DR. MOORE: Aye.

15 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Aye.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Aye.

17 Any opposed?

18 (NO RESPONSE)

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any abstentions?

20 MR. DAVIS: Aye.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. The motion passes
22 for -- do we do it six times? So that was for
23 Somerset Academy, Little Rock Elementary School.

24 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah. And then I would do each

25 --

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

2 MR. REYNOLDS: -- individual grade level
3 designation --

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

5 MR. REYNOLDS: -- for each campus.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

7 So the next school will be Somerset Academy,
8 Little Rock Middle School. All those in favor -- or
9 do we need a separate motion?

10 MR. REYNOLDS: You have to do a separate motion.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So he's going to have to read
12 all of that again?

13 DR. MOORE: Yeah. Can --

14 MR. REYNOLDS: I'm sorry.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

16 DR. MOORE: Can -- if you'll just read -- read
17 that each time?

18 MR. BALDWIN: Do I have to read it each time?

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

20 DR. MOORE: It'll make it a lot easier for us.

21 MR. REYNOLDS: Yes. That's the cleanest way to
22 do it.

23 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. I vote to approve the
24 Somerset application as amended by the Charter Panel
25 to open charter school campuses in Northwest Arkansas

1 and Little Rock, Arkansas, with each campus providing
2 a K through 5 school, a 6 through 8 school and 9
3 through 12 school. The motion includes
4 reconsideration of the transportation waiver and the
5 counseling --

6 DR. MOORE: Ratio.

7 MR. BALDWIN: -- ratio waiver.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

9 I have a motion. Do I have a second?

10 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Second.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. I have a motion
12 from Mr. Baldwin and a second from Dr.
13 Wright- McMurray. All those in favor?

14 MR. BALDWIN: Aye.

15 MS. NEWTON: Aye

16 MR. SCOTT: Aye.

17 DR. MOORE: Aye.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Aye.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Aye.

20 Any opposed?

21 (NO RESPONSE)

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any abstentions?

23 MR. DAVIS: Aye.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Motion passes.

25 We'll move on to Somerset Academy Little Rock High

1 School.

2 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. I vote to approve the
3 Somerset application as amended by the Charter Panel
4 to open charter school campuses in Northwest Arkansas
5 and Little Rock, Arkansas, with each campus providing
6 a K through 5 school, a 6 through 8 school and a 9
7 through 12 school. The motion includes
8 reconsideration of the transportation waiver and the
9 counseling ratio waiver after one year.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. Do I have a second?

11 DR. MOORE: I second.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So a motion by Mr. Baldwin; a
13 second by Dr. Moore. All those in favor?

14 MR. BALDWIN: Aye.

15 MS. NEWTON: Aye

16 MR. SCOTT: Aye.

17 DR. MOORE: Aye.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Aye.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Aye.

20 Any opposed?

21 (NO RESPONSE)

22 Any abstentions?

23 MR. DAVIS: Aye.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. The motion passes.

25 All right. Next up is Somerset Academy,

1 Bentonville Elementary School.

2 MR. BALDWIN: I vote to approve the --

3 MS. LIMA: Can I come up?

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes?

5 MS. LIMA: In the last motion, you already named
6 the K-5, the 6-8 and the 9-12 for Little Rock;
7 correct? And so, now, would just be the K-5, the
8 middle and the high for Little -- for Bentonville.
9 So it should be really --

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: It has to be --

11 MS. LIMA: -- six total, but --

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. It has to be six
13 separate motions.

14 MS. LIMA: But each motion then would include
15 one grade level band?

16 MR. GERMAN: When he made his motion, he read
17 off the elementary and the middle --

18 MR. BALDWIN: I've included all of them in one
19 because I just think I was going to do one motion.

20 MR. GERMAN: I did too, but then, I just want to
21 make sure it's okay --

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

23 DR. MOORE: He seems to be -- he seems to be
24 speaking to the big picture.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. That's what I --

1 DR. MOORE: We're -- that we're approving it for
2 them.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

4 MR. REYNOLDS: No, I think that the motion as
5 you're reading it this time, even though it's --
6 we're for -- we're voting on each individual LEA
7 number.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

9 MR. GERMAN: So we have to -- technically, the
10 elementary -- then the -- okay.

11 MR. BALDWIN: Yeah.

12 MR. REYNOLDS: Just so long as the record is
13 clear which school -- which LEA number we're voting
14 on. And I think that Dr. Sutherlin is --

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

16 MR. BALDWIN: Yeah, it's a good question.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

18 All right. So I'll go back to Somerset Academy
19 Bentonville Elementary School.

20 MR. BALDWIN: All right. I vote to approve the
21 Somerset application as amended by the Charter Panel
22 to open charter school campuses in Northwest Arkansas
23 and Little Rock, Arkansas, with each campus providing
24 a K through 5 school, a 6 through 8 school and a 9
25 through 12 school. The motion includes

1 reconsideration of transportation waiver and the
2 counseling ratio waiver after one year.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. I have a motion. Do I
4 have a second?

5 DR. MOORE: A second.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Motion by Mr. Baldwin, second
7 by Dr. Wright-McMurray (sic). All those in favor?

8 MR. BALDWIN: Aye.

9 MS. NEWTON: Aye

10 MR. SCOTT: Aye.

11 DR. MOORE: Aye.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Aye.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Aye.

14 Any opposed?

15 (NO RESPONSE)

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any abstentions?

17 MR. DAVIS: Aye.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. The motion passes.

19 Next up is Somerset Academy, Bentonville Middle
20 School.

21 MR. BALDWIN: I vote to approve the Somerset
22 application submitted by the Charter Panel to open
23 charter school campuses in Northwest Arkansas and
24 Little Rock, Arkansas, with each campus providing a K
25 through 5 school, a 6 through 8 school and a 9

1 through 12 school. The motion includes
2 reconsideration of the transportation waiver and the
3 counseling ratio waiver after one year.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. I have a motion.
5 Do I have a second?

6 MR. SCOTT: Second.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

8 I have a motion by Mr. Baldwin; a second by Mr.
9 Scott. All those in favor?

10 MR. BALDWIN: Aye.

11 MS. NEWTON: Aye

12 MR. SCOTT: Aye.

13 DR. MOORE: Aye.

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Aye.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Aye.

16 Any opposed?

17 (NO RESPONSE)

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any abstentions?

19 MR. DAVIS: Aye.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Motion passes.

21 Somer -- okay. Next up is Somerset Academy,
22 Bentonville High School.

23 MR. BALDIWN: I vote to approve the Somerset
24 application as submitted by the Charter Panel to open
25 charter school campuses in Northwest Arkansas and

1 Little Rock, Arkansas, each campus providing a K
2 through 5 school, 6 through 8 school and a 9 through
3 12 school. The motion includes reconsideration of
4 the transportation waiver and the counseling ratio
5 waiver after one year.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. I have a motion. Do I
7 have a second?

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Second

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. I have a motion
10 from Mr. Baldwin; second from Dr. Wright-McMurray.
11 All those in favor?

12 MR. BALDWIN: Aye.

13 MS. NEWTON: Aye

14 MR. SCOTT: Aye.

15 DR. MOORE: Aye.

16 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Aye.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Aye.

18 Any opposed?

19 (NO RESPONSE)

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any abstentions?

21 MR. DAVIS: Aye.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

23 And I think we have one more left. Let's see.
24 I believe it's Somerset Academy, Little Rock High
25 School; is that correct?

1 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. I vote to approve the
2 Somerset application as amended by the Charter Panel
3 to open charter school campuses in Northwest Arkansas
4 and Little Rock, Arkansas with each campus providing
5 a K through 5 School, a 6 through 8 school and a 9
6 through 12 school. The motion includes
7 reconsideration of the transportation waiver and the
8 counseling ratio waiver after one year.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

10 I have a motion on the table. Do I have a
11 second?

12 DR. MOORE: Aye.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

14 DR. MOORE: Or -- sorry. Second.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: You're good.

16 So I have a motion by Mr. Baldwin and a second
17 by Dr. Moore. All those in favor?

18 MR. BALDWIN: Aye.

19 MS. NEWTON: Aye

20 MR. SCOTT: Aye.

21 DR. MOORE: Aye.

22 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Aye.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Aye.

24 Any opposed?

25 (NO RESPONSE)

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any abstentions?

2 MR. DAVIS: Aye.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. The motion passes.

4 Give us just a few minutes to fill out our
5 voting sheets and we'll get right back to you.

6 All right. We'll start with Dr. Moore.

7 DR. MOORE: I made these shorter and sweeter
8 than normal in case I had to say it six times.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

10 DR. MOORE: Do we need to -- do we need to say
11 it all six times?

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I don't think so because we're
13 approving all of them --

14 DR. MOORE: Okay.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- but, you know, we're just
16 giving them their feedback.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. So I just put, like I
18 said, short and sweet on all these. I vote to
19 approve the charter request for each of these six
20 campuses, as amended in today's review.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

22 Ms. Newton.

23 MS. NEWTON: I voted to approve the application
24 for the charter and the comprehensive -- my
25 justification is the comprehensive structure and

1 educational history of the applicant provides
2 confidence that their plan is solid and addresses all
3 aspects of -- necessary to student success as well as
4 community growth.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

6 Mr. Baldwin.

7 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. Welcome to Arkansas. And
8 we're excited to have you all here and have
9 confidence in your program and all the good that
10 you're going to do for students here in Arkansas.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

12 Mr. Davis.

13 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. They got one more hurdle.
14 They still have got to go to State Board. No
15 response from me.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

17 Mr. Scott.

18 MR. SCOTT: Congratulations.

19 I voted for the approval of each of the six
20 schools because of demonstrated capability to
21 leverage extensive experience in charter school
22 expansion. Despite my concerns in their readiness to
23 deliver in the first year, I'm very comfortable with
24 the fact that there's an opportunity to revisit all
25 of those concerns.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Dr. Wright-McMurray.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. Like Dr. Moore, I
3 kept my short and sweet.

4 I support Somerset Academy's application as
5 amended.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

7 And then I voted for Somerset Academy Charter
8 schools to open the state of Arkansas. It's
9 innovative approaches and history of success will be
10 a great asset to the state.

11 So congratulations. We appreciate you being
12 here today. Thank you.

13 So what is the pleasure of the Board? Do we
14 want to take a five-to-ten-minute break?

15 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: It's required.

16 DR. MOORE: Yes.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. So we will take -- we
18 will take a nine-minute break and we'll be back at
19 12:10.

20 (WHEREUPON, after a break was taken, the
21 proceedings were resumed as follows, to-wit:)

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So we have decided we're
23 actually going to break for lunch until 12:45; and
24 then, we'll come back at 12:45 so that everybody is
25 ready to go.

1 (WHEREUPON, after a break was taken, the
2 proceedings were resumed as follows, to-wit:)

3 **III.2. CONSIDERATION OF REAL WORLD PREPARATORY OPEN ENROLLMENT**
4 **CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION REQUEST**

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. We'll call the
6 meeting back to order. If -- Ms. Summons, if I could
7 get you to introduce our next charter applicant.

8 MS. SUMMONS: Good afternoon. Dorie Summons,
9 DESE Charter Office.

10 Real World Preparatory has submitted an
11 application to establish an open enrollment charter
12 school beginning in '25-'26. The charter will follow
13 the traditional and college prep model, and we do
14 have representatives here from Real World
15 Preparatory.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you very
17 much.

18 If you plan on speaking on behalf of the
19 charter, would you stand and raise your right hand?

20 MS. MOORE: We did that earlier because we
21 didn't know we weren't supposed to.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Oh. It's okay.

23 Do you swear that the testimony you're about to
24 give is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
25 the truth?

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(ALL ANSWER AFFIRMATIVELY)

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you very much. You may begin. And remember, speak very clearly into the microphone and as close as possible so that we can get the information to our viewing audience.

MS. MOORE: So we were just talking, and I got tears in my eyes when I looked up and saw this and said that looks pretty dang good, doesn't it? Who would think that two teachers would be here because they wanted to change education?

Good afternoon. My name is April Moore. I will serve as the superintendent and codirector for Real World Preparatory.

As active educators in Arkansas, we are going to be a model to our students. This is our dream big. So this is why we're. It's no coincidence that we chose a triangle to represent our logo because it has historically been the strongest geometric shape, and it makes the best choice for building structures like bridges, the bridges that we want to build.

Which one is it? Oh, there we go. Okay.

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Oh, good.

MS. MOORE: So we have some pillars about transforming student passions into opportunities with

1 our mission and vision. One would be the social
2 capital that we have obtained as 30-40-year-olds. We
3 -- it took us a long time to build our networks in
4 the community. We want to give these to our students
5 when they're graduating. At least the intro to this
6 networking and this ability to meet people and to
7 advocate for themselves.

8 We want to retain talent in our community. We
9 are in Northwest Arkansas. We are born and raised
10 Northwest Arkansas, so, of course, we want to retain
11 the talent in our community. We also want our kids
12 to go out. We want to encourage them to go out, to
13 leave, to learn and to bring it back.

14 Relationships were very, very heavily
15 relationship based as you will see. Relationships
16 are everything.

17 A community of practice. We don't want to
18 gatekeep all of our information and we want to
19 encourage schools to come together because if we were
20 a unit in Northwest Arkansas, we would be a lot
21 stronger than all of these entities separate from
22 each other. But there seems to be a gatekeeping
23 thing right now and we would like to break down that
24 barrier and invite others into our school.

25 Culture is going to be very, very important.

1 Again, it goes back to relationships, relevance and
2 rigor.

3 And we're going to serve the whole child. We
4 want to love the whole child and serve the whole
5 child; and that's exactly what we plan to do.

6 So this has been three years in the making.
7 Speaking of our social capital: we have joined
8 rotaries; we have joined chambers of commerce; we
9 have gone to several community celebrations. We have
10 been boots on the ground to come up with and develop
11 over 400 community partners in Northwest Arkansas for
12 the past three years.

13 So we feel like Real World Preparatory is
14 essential for bridging the gap in Northwest Arkansas
15 between traditional education and the practical
16 skills needed for success, especially in our ever
17 evolving, rapidly changing world. According to U.S.
18 News & World Report, Springdale High School has an 83
19 percent graduation rate and Fayetteville has a 90
20 percent graduation rate. Those are not acceptable,
21 not for our kiddos.

22 The large percentage of students in these
23 districts are minorities and economically
24 disadvantaged. While conventional curriculum
25 provides foundational knowledge, they fall short when

1 addressing real-world challenges such as financial
2 literacy, networking and social capital,
3 entrepreneurial skills, and adaptive problem solving.

4 Northwest Arkansas has a growing economy and a
5 diverse business landscape, as we all know. It is
6 also predicted to have the population of Austin
7 within the next few years -- at least in our
8 lifetime.

9 Especially, if we are to retain the talent in
10 our communities, we have to make sure that these
11 skills are put into place. Real World Preparatory
12 can offer curriculum that integrates practical
13 experiences with academic learning. Therefore,
14 preparing students to thrive in various career paths
15 and contribute meaningfully to the local community
16 and help grow the economy. By focusing on these life
17 skills, we are going to ensure that students are not
18 only ready for college, but also the complexities of
19 the modern world.

20 Again, I'm April Moore. I'm going to serve as
21 the superintendent, so I'll be the single point of
22 contact as far as outwardly facing and on day-to-day.
23 Inside the school, we will serve as codirectors. We
24 are trying this form of leadership as -- to fill in
25 for each other's weaknesses and each other's

1 strengths because we have very different weaknesses
2 and strengths, and we feel like together we are
3 better. Just like we follow the philosophy of always
4 hire smarter, we always want to hire smarter than
5 what we are. When I would -- as a principal, when I
6 would interview teachers, I always wanted to hire the
7 smarter ones. I was never intimidated by that, and I
8 always wanted to help them learn also and expand
9 their background.

10 So here's a little bit of my education. So my
11 strength is organizational management. I have a
12 Masters of Art in teaching. These -- this is what
13 I've accomplished. And then the licensure, I'm very
14 CTE based. So I'm really, really looking forward to
15 picking your brains at some point. And we are just
16 really, really excited to be here.

17 Let me introduce you to Crystal.

18 MS. ECKLES: Yes. So I'm Crystal and I will
19 serve as the principal of the school.

20 This slide pretty much is my certifications,
21 education I am very passionate about restorative
22 practices. I've done training in both the
23 International Restorative Practice and also Leaving
24 the Village. I'm very passionate about that because
25 I do understand that we need to figure out the root

1 problem and stop putting bandages on, doing
2 suspension and things like that because those
3 behaviors still continue to happen if we don't figure
4 out what that problem is. I have also some
5 experience in coaching as well in the position that
6 I'm doing now, but then also as a teacher as well.

7 MS. MOORE: I'm going to piggyback on that with
8 the restorative practices, just to clarify, because
9 we were asked a question. I have actively been using
10 restorative practices for six years. I was also
11 trained with Big Picture with Jen and Sonn in 2016
12 using restorative practices.

13 I'm definitely the shortest one today because I
14 came over here and played with it during the break.

15 Okay. So who are we and how will we serve? So
16 all students will have an inclusive experience at
17 Real World. I know that a lot of school districts
18 say all means. All will mean all to every single one
19 of our 300 students. We've seen it happen before,
20 and we can do it again.

21 So students, when they come in, they will be
22 assigned an advisor. And during the first couple of
23 weeks we may shuffle based on personalities just a
24 little bit, but that advisor will stay with the same
25 15 to 20 students the entire duration of their high

1 school career. They will know that student. They
2 will be the liaison between that student's family,
3 between the community. They are the first outreach
4 for that student. Just as an example, my first
5 advisory that graduated, I got an email from one of
6 them this morning for a reference for law school.
7 And -- just to stay in contact with those kids and
8 that's also building their social networking and
9 social capital.

10 So we will have a really diverse curriculum.
11 You will see that we have -- we've asked for several
12 waivers, and we can explain those. They'll be given
13 equitable access to all aspects of school life,
14 whether it be academic, extracurricular or social
15 activities. We will strive to make sure that there
16 is equitable access. We have also asked for a waiver
17 for ALE and GT due to having the diverse offerings of
18 courses in our community that are already offered by
19 NWTI, NWACC, Virtual Arkansas and we plan to go the
20 extra mile to make sure that extension happens. When
21 students are passionate in a particular area, we will
22 make it our mission to make sure that they are able
23 to extend that knowledge.

24 For example, we have an amazing contact in
25 Bentonville who is a local artist and we're very

1 excited to partner with her. She's excited to have
2 interns for art. She has her own gallery. And we
3 are really, really excited. She's excited to partner
4 with us. And we have 400 more of those that we've
5 been working on. We will strive to be a model in the
6 community for entrepreneurship and education in
7 northwest Arkansas.

8 In the future, we would like to offer spaces for
9 student businesses or small businesses to operate
10 within our school for student workers, especially for
11 the mentor program, to help build those up.

12 Again, at Real World Preparatory, all will mean
13 all. Each and every student will be seen and heard.

14 Their student success plan and weekly advisory,
15 one on ones will be sacred to our culture. They will
16 not be time for pep rallies or just where everything
17 falls. It seems to be the catch all with most of our
18 schools. I know with my advisory right now, it seems
19 to be the catch all to do all the things. That will
20 be sacred to our culture and that will drive student
21 learning. The advisory will consist of social,
22 emotional and behavior support. Also, if you can
23 imagine, that person has gotten to know those
24 students very well so that they can provide that
25 support, and those relationships can later be

1 leveraged in their education. As students are
2 advised, reflection and pivoting will occur to ensure
3 that we are responsive to student needs on their
4 student success plan. In order to be responsive to
5 student needs, we will partner with several
6 organizations. At the core of our programming, we
7 will partner with Big Picture Learning and CTE.
8 While we have asked for a waiver for CTE, it is due
9 to being small and not wanting to overextend
10 ourselves at start-up. We will be very involved with
11 CTE but want to offer all programs that students are
12 interested in by partnering with other organizations,
13 we can offer more programs to our students. Last
14 fall, the Walton Foundation actually came out with a
15 study, and I was surprised when I read the top
16 careers that CTE would be looking at for the future
17 because they weren't the things that we're focusing
18 on right now. CTE is going to have to pivot.
19 Eventually, we want to offer the most popular
20 programs on our campus. I know that agribusiness was
21 one, hospitality -- there was a list that was in the
22 newspaper. And there were just things that I
23 wouldn't necessarily -- like, construction and
24 welding weren't on there.

25 We mentioned partnering with others often at

1 Real World preparatory. We will not gatekeep best
2 practices and we hope to be a community of practice
3 with all neighboring school districts working
4 together instead of gatekeeping resources and best
5 practices.

6 MS. ECKLES: Okay. So April has mentioned Big
7 Picture Learning a couple of times already and so I
8 am going to kind of talk about that. So we will be
9 implementing and actually following the Big Picture
10 Learning model.

11 I feel like I'm just going to take this off and
12 talk.

13 And so we will actually be -- if approved, we
14 will be the only BPL school in Northwest Arkansas.
15 Ninety-seven percent of BPL students admitted into
16 two- or four-year colleges, 88 percent alumni enroll
17 in post-secondary education or training within two
18 years of graduation, and then 74 of alumni who
19 entered the workforce secured a job through an
20 internship connection.

21 We believe social capital is very important. We
22 believe in getting students out there and deciding
23 what they want to do. Yes, we love the CTE, but what
24 are we doing before they decide CTE? Like, when are
25 -- what are we doing before they say, okay, this is

1 the career path that I want to do. What type of
2 exploration are we doing before that? And so Big
3 Picture is really big on that. It is exploring those
4 different interests that students have. And so
5 coaching community of practice is very important,
6 student opportunities, leadership programs. We will
7 also be implementing Harbor Freight which is one of
8 our initiatives. So April and I both have taught at
9 a Big Picture school. That's the reason why we know
10 about this model. I currently work for Big Picture
11 as a program director, actually in Northwest
12 Arkansas. And so we have a lot of background on BPL.
13 Harbor Freight is one of the initiatives that BPL has
14 and that's where we get students paired with mentors
15 that has something to do with tools that can be
16 welding; that could be construction, whatever that
17 is. They receive a stipend for that, and they get to
18 go out in the community and actually learn that
19 stuff. But the stipend is where it's like, okay, I'm
20 going to get money for this; it's not a free
21 internship.

22 And then, the International Big Picture Learning
23 Credentials which is something that actually started
24 in Australia. We are currently trying to move that
25 to the States, and we will actually be following that

1 model as well. I actually start training in that
2 Wednesday. It's an 18-month training so that we can
3 actually implement that into our school. It is
4 actually for 11th and 12th grade students.

5 Me again.

6 Okay. So the next one, I kind of spoke on this,
7 the restorative practices. We implemented
8 restorative practices in the school that I was
9 previously in. Like I said previously, I had
10 training in it. I was also part of the leadership
11 restorative practice team that actually gave support
12 to different teachers in the building. We actually
13 had to do different hearings when it came to students
14 who the restorative was just not working. And I
15 truly believe that both can coexist in a school,
16 restorative practices and also the traditional
17 discipline, because sometimes we get to a point where
18 the restorative is not working. But I also think the
19 important piece of restorative practice is, again,
20 figuring out what the root cause is; but not only
21 that, when we do -- I hope we never have to suspend a
22 student -- but what are we doing when we reenter that
23 student into the community? Like, are we just
24 reentering them in? They just go to class? No.
25 We're going to create a circle where we have every

1 person involved and we have a discussion on what's
2 going on and how do we move forward. And we don't
3 repeat those things. And so restorative practices
4 will be very important in our culture.

5 MS. MOORE: She's so tall and I'm so short. I'm
6 sorry.

7 Okay. So we've mentioned partnerships several
8 times. So these are just a few of the partners that
9 we want to partner with; and these are not internship
10 or community partners, these are more of our base.

11 We -- the Office of Educational Policy has
12 agreed to help us disaggregate data and making
13 data-driven decisions. We want to ensure that our
14 students are supported with appropriate intervention
15 and enrichment. They will also help us run our
16 lottery if needed. We will partner with APSRC. And
17 this is something that I personally look forward to.
18 Their guidance, resources, training, professional
19 development, feedback is something that I've always
20 looked forward to and I look forward to again. APSRC
21 will be instrumental in supporting our school. This
22 includes compliance with state and federal
23 regulations, financial management, administrative
24 procedures, refining policies and procedures and
25 adhering to the legal requirements and the best

1 practices. As you are well aware, their legal and
2 finance departments are top notch. We're really
3 looking forward to working with them.

4 As a Tier 1 practice, we'll use Capturing Kids
5 Hearts and Kagan strategies to support teachers in
6 the classroom with consistent and similar classroom
7 procedures and practices. This will provide a
8 culture where kids can expect and know what to be
9 expected of them.

10 We will also implement a positive behavior
11 incentive system, which I've actually done in
12 Springdale before, and -- Northwest Arkansas -- the
13 kids were really, really receptive to positive
14 behavior incentives. That -- they had never seen
15 that before -- or with fidelity they hadn't -- with
16 all of their teachers on. So we want to recognize
17 students for doing the right thing because too often
18 we recognize them for doing the wrong thing. And
19 those kids are the kids that get attention. We want
20 all of our kids to get attention.

21 So part of our outreach has connected us with
22 many businesses and professionals in the community.
23 Community Services, Inc., which submitted a letter of
24 support, they actually provide the counseling and
25 support services for families and individuals

1 involved with the juvenile court in Washington
2 County. We formed a relationship with the
3 individuals in both courts to serve and support the
4 students who may have not made the best decisions in
5 the past. We want to try to change that and give
6 them something worth looking forward to. Sometimes a
7 smaller school with flexibility is just what these
8 students need, and that's what we want to provide for
9 them.

10 NWTI and NWACC are excellent community partners.
11 Actually, our board president works at NWACC. He's a
12 certified counselor and he runs the Trails Department
13 and loves his job. And he's really excited about
14 this also. So we're going to partner with NWTI and
15 NWACC and possibly even individual school districts
16 to provide CTE classes that maybe our kids can fit
17 into a spot because it's just one child interested in
18 something, concurrent classes and an opportunity for
19 students to attend college or gain industry
20 certifications prior to high school graduation.

21 As we strive for every student to graduate, we
22 want them to be enrolled, enlisted or employed.
23 That's also our triangle. We want them to be one of
24 our Es.

25 We will also partner with the military branches

1 who are very active in Northwest Arkansas. In the
2 past, we've given all of our 10th graders, at another
3 charter school that we helped start, the ASVAB, and
4 it actually really helped us. And now that
5 YouScience is coming in and playing a role in the
6 aptitudes, maybe we can compare those two. So there
7 will be a plan in place with the branches, we just
8 didn't to go make the plan before we were approved.

9 Okay.

10 MS. ECKLES: Okay. So the next one is our
11 academic plan.

12 You are short.

13 And it's -- all of our curriculum is Arkansas
14 approved and they are all HQIM approved. We both as
15 educators -- April taught math and also science. I
16 was English. We all have experience in this
17 curriculum so it's nothing new to us.

18 Originally, we -- on our original application,
19 we did not have a curriculum chosen because we wanted
20 teachers to have that autonomy to decide what
21 curriculum would be taught. But then we kind of
22 reflected on that was like, no, we probably need to
23 make that decision ahead of time and then we can go
24 and make changes as needed.

25 So the next one is school culture and April

1 actually brought up the three Rs previously. So
2 relationships, relevance and rigor.

3 So relationships, that is so important to the
4 core of our school. I remember growing up and my mom
5 would always say it's not what you know, it's who you
6 know. And I think now we've moved to a, it's not
7 what you know, who you know; it's who knows you. So
8 you can say you know people all day, but do they know
9 you? Do they know to mention your name in the room
10 that you're not in? And so we want our students to
11 understand that relationships are so important. When
12 they're out doing internship, the relationship that
13 you have with your mentor is so important; the
14 relationship that you have with your teacher is so
15 important; advisor; principal those relationships are
16 very important.

17 Relevance, especially when it comes to our
18 curriculum, like, what we teach our kids, is it
19 relevant to what they are wanting to know? Is it
20 relevant to the times? A lot of times, we have to
21 switch what we're teaching because that's not what is
22 relevant to the times that we are in education at the
23 time.

24 Rigor, yes, meet everyone where they are, but
25 are we pulling them up to where they need to be? So

1 we will definitely meet all of our students where
2 they are, but we're going to actually push them to
3 aim a little higher when it comes to their curriculum
4 and learning things on our campus.

5 MS. MOORE: Okay. So to add to that, I'm going
6 to go back to relationships where we're going to
7 emphasize daily advisory periods. Like I said, those
8 are -- will be sacred. Restorative practices.
9 Initiatives like Capturing Kids Hearts, these foster
10 positive, inclusive school and culture where students
11 feel supported emotionally and socially; and it
12 creates an environment that they feel safe in and
13 it's conducive to learn, both -- and growth, personal
14 and academic.

15 Volunteers, mentors and parents will play a
16 critical role and will significantly impact our
17 schools, community reactions and relations, and their
18 all -- overall effectiveness. Parents will be
19 encouraged to participate in school board, providing
20 feedback and advocating for their children. We're
21 also going to try to teach our children to advocate
22 for themselves. We will encourage parents to be
23 volunteers and have open communications using
24 something such as SchoolStatus. I know that it
25 translates, and it actually does Marshallese now too.

1 So -- we will encourage parents to be volunteers, and
2 we will have open doors. We want volunteers to
3 assist in activities in the school. We want them to
4 be tutoring. We want extracurricular programs.

5 But this also brings up the point of safety for
6 our children. So we will absolutely do background
7 checks on our -- anybody that comes into our school.
8 We can use the Adam Walsh Act and do the volunteer
9 background check through the state police. I used to
10 do those for my internship program. And we also run
11 an additional sex offender registry check just to
12 make sure because you can never be too safe with our
13 kids. I mean, these are our future. These are our
14 children. We have to be safe with them.

15 So let me just make sure -- sorry I lost myself.
16 I am so sorry you have to listen to my voice. I've
17 had a cold all week.

18 So again, all adults that mentor or volunteer,
19 or even have contact with the students will have a
20 clear volunteer background check.

21 Community relationships will be essential to our
22 model and for it to work, those relationships have to
23 be there. We've definitely put in the ground bark
24 for it. So we're -- we're waiting -- we tilled the
25 soil and now we're just waiting to plant the seeds.

1 We will actively strengthen the community by building
2 ties and trust and support that has not been there
3 before.

4 Again, this is something that we're really proud
5 of, the three Es: employed, enlisted or enrolled.
6 We really want our kids to have a plan and starting
7 day one with their student success plans -- actually
8 upon enrollment -- when they're interviewed for
9 enrollment. And not -- interviewed is a bad word.
10 But when they come and enroll, they get met by us.
11 They get met by us and their teachers. We help them
12 fill out their paperwork. We talk to them about the
13 school. That's where our relationship starts. It
14 doesn't start when they come into our school day one.
15 It starts when they walk in our door or when we shake
16 their hand for the first time at the Christmas
17 parade, for instance.

18 So just a few more clarifications -- there you
19 go. Just a few more clarifications that we had
20 possibly thought might come up and that we wanted to
21 go ahead and address. You can tell we're teachers.

22 So the nurse, okay. So due to limited
23 resources, we will not have the financial resources
24 to employ a full-time nurse day one. We're
25 requesting a waiver to alleviate these funds and

1 allow the school to allocate resources elsewhere at
2 start-up. And we -- feel free to make us revisit
3 that.

4 To meet all testing requirements, we will
5 contract a school nurse for referrals and for our
6 required hearing and vision screenings. Our school
7 office manager will be the designated school nurse.
8 All of the admin will be trained -- and lead teachers
9 -- will be trained in Stop the Bleed, CPR, AED EpiPen
10 and Narcan use. Unfortunately, that last one is
11 becoming more and more popular. We will ensure that
12 student health needs are adequately met through any
13 means that we need to make sure. We do now have an
14 amazing medical school, the Alice Walton Medical
15 School, that is also a community partner of ours. We
16 have a doctor from one of the local hospitals on our
17 board. So we are positive that we can get this taken
18 care of.

19 The counseling program we've requested a waiver
20 to address the unique needs of our high school
21 community by adapting our counseling program to
22 better serve our students. We aim to enhance the
23 effectiveness of our counseling services and support
24 our students' academic, social and emotional
25 development through advisory and our school culture.

1 Our current challenge will be allocating funds,
2 just like the previous for a full-time counselor,
3 with the potential drawback of being able to address
4 student needs effectively. By spreading
5 responsibilities, typically designated to counselors
6 to the advisors, students will get more
7 individualized attention and support; and that
8 advisor will know that student and know those parents
9 and know that situation. So actually the ratio will
10 come down to no more than one to 25 if we were to go
11 full force first year, hopefully no more than one to
12 20.

13 College readiness and career planning are done
14 through the internship program and advisory period.
15 We will expand roles in the community with mental
16 health professionals such as CSI that I had mentioned
17 earlier. Also, I have partnered in the past with
18 Ozark Guidance and Arisa Health, and they've come in.
19 They like for us to provide a room so that they can
20 come in and serve the kid while it's school time and
21 that it's an environment where they feel safe, and
22 the parents don't have to give up anytime with them.

23 One example -- or another example is the Hope
24 Cancer Resources in Springdale. They come in and
25 provide tobacco cessation classes which is something

1 that is really needed with the kids that are smoking
2 nowadays because it seems to be starting younger and
3 younger.

4 So we will, like I said, invite those counseling
5 organizations to use our designated space. They will
6 have a designated space because we believe mental
7 health is so important to our kids and their success
8 academically. We will establish a monitoring and
9 evaluation system to assess the impact of the waiver
10 on students and their outcomes and adjust the
11 strategies as needed.

12 We do regularly, as advisories staff children
13 and make sure that we're providing for their needs
14 and that all the teachers are seeing the same things
15 or that we're all aware of the same things. That's
16 the one great thing about having advisories and
17 advisory meetings in a small school or one of the
18 many things regular feedback from students, parents,
19 advisors and community liaisons will guide ongoing
20 improvements to this program. We believe that these
21 changings changes to a counseling program for a small
22 school will significantly improve our ability to
23 address the diverse needs of our students and
24 contribute to their overall individual success. We
25 appreciate your consideration and support in making

1 this a vital adjustment.

2 We do not need to ask for a waiver for the
3 minimum salary because in Northwest Arkansas, you
4 can't compete with that. Well, we have to we --
5 we're going to offer it for sure. Our steps,
6 however, will be flexible and based on experience.
7 We want to be a model and an example of a school that
8 serves the community, that truly serves every single
9 kid and is responsive to the community around them,
10 truly bringing people together to transform passions
11 into opportunities.

12 Thank you very much.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Reynolds.

14 MR. REYNOLDS: Stephen Reynolds, staff attorney
15 for the Department.

16 I'll go over to the legal review real quick. So
17 just like this morning, I'll go waiver topic by
18 waiver topic and list all the code sections and
19 standards and rules the charter is seeking to waive.

20 So -- can you hear me?

21 MR. DAVIS: A little louder

22 MR. REYNOLDS: Okay. All right. So there's --
23 there we go.

24 So waiver topic No. one is the board of
25 directors. The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas

1 Code 6-13-608, 6-13-611, 6-13-612(c), 6-13-613,
2 6-13-615, 6-13-616(a), 6-13-617, 6-13-618,
3 6-13-619(c) (d) 1-4, 6-13-620(5), 6-13-622(b),
4 6-13-630, 6-13-634, 6-13-3 -- -1303 and 6-14-101 et
5 seq. And I have no legal concerns with that waiver.

6 The waiver topic No. two is business manager.
7 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
8 6-15-2302(b) and the Department rule governing the
9 Arkansas Fiscal Assessment and Accountability
10 Program, but only Section 12. I have no legal
11 concerns with that waiver.

12 Waiver topic No. three is a personnel policies.
13 It's employment of licensed personnel. The charter
14 is seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-17-301, and the
15 Department rule governing educator licensure only
16 Section 7. And I have no legal concerns with that
17 waiver.

18 Waiver topic No. four is curriculum -- the
19 required instruction. The charter is seeking to
20 waive Standard for Accreditation 1-A.1.3. And I have
21 no legal concerns with that waiver.

22 Waiver topic No. five is the flag display. The
23 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-16-105
24 and 6-16-106. I have no legal concerns with that
25 waiver.

1 Waiver topic No. six, daily planning period.
2 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
3 6-17-114. I have no legal concerns with that waiver.

4 Waiver topic No. seven, the personnel policies:
5 duty free lunch and the non-instructional duty. The
6 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-17-111
7 and 6-17-117. I have no legal concerns with that
8 waiver.

9 Waiver topic No. eight is personnel policies,
10 requirements on the personnel policy committee. The
11 charter is seeking waive Arkansas Code 6-17-201(a)
12 and (c), 6-17-203 and 6-17-205. I have no legal
13 concerns with that waiver.

14 Waiver topic No. nine, is the personnel
15 policies. It's the classified employee personnel
16 policies. The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas
17 Code 6-17-2301(c) -- yeah -- 617-2301(c), 6-17-2303,
18 6-17-2304 and 6-17-2305. I have no legal concerns
19 with that waiver.

20 Waiver topic No. ten is the school nurse. The
21 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-18-706.
22 I have no legal concerns with that waiver.

23 Waiver topic No. 11 is the superintendent. The
24 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-13-109,
25 6-17-427 and Standard for Accreditation 4-B.1 and

1 4-B.2. I have no legal concerns with that waiver.

2 Waiver topic No. 12 is transportation. Arkansas
3 -- the charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
4 6-19-101 et seq. I have no legal concerns with that
5 waiver.

6 Waiver topic No. 13 is the facilities. The
7 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
8 6-20-117 (2)-(5). I have no legal concerns with that
9 waiver.

10 Waiver topic No. 14 is the student services.
11 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
12 6-20-2208(c) (6) and the Standard for Accreditation
13 2-G.1. I believe that's gifted and talented. And I
14 have no legal concerns with that waiver.

15 Waiver topic No. 15 the alternative learning
16 environment or ALE. The charter is seeking to waive
17 Arkansas Code 6-15-1 -- 1005(b) (5),
18 6-18-503(a) (1) (C) (i) and 6-48-101 et seq. The
19 standard for accreditation 2-I.1 and Section 4 of the
20 Department's rule governing the distribution of
21 students with special needs funds. I have no legal
22 concerns with that waiver.

23 Waiver topic No. 16 is the library media
24 services and the specialists. The charter is seeking
25 to waive Arkansas Code 6-25-103 and 6-25-104 and the

1 Standard for Accreditation 2-D.1, 4-F.1 and 4-F.2.

2 And I have no legal concerns with that waiver.

3 Waiver topic No. 17 is the student discipline
4 policies. The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas
5 Code 6-18-503(b)(2) and Department's rules governing
6 student discipline and school safety, only section
7 4.11. I have no legal concerns with that waiver.

8 Waiver topic No. 18 is a -- teacher licensure.
9 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
10 6-15-1004, 6-17-309, 6-17-401, 6-17-902, 6-17-908,
11 6-17-919 and Standard for Accreditation 4-D.1. I
12 have no legal concerns with that waiver.

13 Waiver topic No. 19 is the principal. The
14 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-17-302
15 and Standard for Accreditation 4-C.1 and 4-C.2. And
16 I have no legal concerns with that waiver.

17 Waiver topic No. 20 is the food services. The
18 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code 6-18-705,
19 6-20-701 et seq. The Standard for Accreditation
20 3-D.1. And the Department's rules governing
21 nutrition and physical activity and body mass index
22 for age assessment protocols in Arkansas Public
23 schools, except for Section 5.02.5 and Section 12.00.
24 I have no legal concerns.

25 I would like for the charter to confirm that

1 they're -- that they are aware that federal law
2 regarding food service requirements can't be waived.
3 And those -- that was the only note that I had on
4 that waiver.

5 Waiver topic No. 21 is a comprehensive school
6 counseling program and the school counselor. The
7 charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
8 6-18-2002(2) (A), 6-18-2003(a) (2) (A), 6-18-1004(a) (2),
9 the Standard for Accreditation 4-E.1 and 4-E.2. I
10 have no legal concerns for that waiver.

11 And finally, waiver topic 22. The curriculum,
12 advanced placement courses and concurrent credit.
13 The charter is seeking to waive Arkansas Code
14 6-16-1203(a), 6-16-1204(a) (c) and (d), Standard for
15 Accreditation, I- -- 1-A.1.3 through 10 and the
16 Department's rules governing grading course credit
17 sections four -- chapter -- 4-1.00 and 6.00 --
18 section 6.00. And I have no legal concerns for that
19 waiver.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you very much.
21 Appreciate it.

22 All right. Doctor Wright-McMurray, do you have
23 any questions?

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Good afternoon and --

25 MS. MOORE: Hi.

1 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- thank you for your
2 presentation.

3 So I do have a couple of questions. One is --
4 one is back on the waiver. So just for my
5 clarification, as it relates to superintendent, so
6 you're waiving -- and I may have to have legal to
7 clarify for me. So it looks like -- is it 6-17-427?
8 And so it's being waived because there is not an
9 intent for the -- to complete the Department's
10 mentoring program; is that correct?

11 MS. MOORE: I do intend to complete the
12 mentoring program.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Is that what that's
14 intending to say?

15 MR. REYNOLDS: Yes, that's what the code section
16 requires.

17 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So if they waive
18 that, then they are waiving the requirement to
19 participate?

20 MR. REYNOLDS: Yes.

21 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So --

22 MS. MOORE: We can't participate, even if we
23 waive?

24 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah. If you participate in the
25 mentoring program, then there's no need for the

1 waiver because the waiver removes the requirement.
2 The waiver would remove the requirement to
3 participate in the student -- or the superintendent
4 mentoring program. So if you intend to participate,
5 then you wouldn't need the waiver.

6 MS. MOORE: We always want to better ourselves.
7 Absolutely. I was under the assumption that it was
8 the licensure -- the license.

9 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So they need to
10 rescind that waiver request if they're not -- if they
11 do plan to participate in the mentoring program?

12 MR. REYNOLDS: That's correct.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So if you -- if you would like
15 to rescind that waiver on the record?

16 MS. MOORE: I resend the waiver to not attend
17 the mentoring --

18 DR. MOORE: Are you looking at waiver No. 11,
19 though?

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: It's -- yes. So 6-17-427 is
21 the code section that they're referring to.

22 DR. MOORE: Okay. But as of right now, you are
23 not licensed to be a superintendent --

24 MS. MOORE: No --

25 DR. MOORE: -- correct?

1 MS. MOORE: -- I am not. I'm only building
2 level.

3 DR. MOORE: So would she -- since she is not a
4 superintendent, do they not still need that waiver?

5 MS. MOORE: That's what we thought.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: That's a good question.

7 DR. MOORE: Yeah. I don't under -- to me.

8 MS. MOORE: That's what I thought.

9 DR. MOORE: Yeah. To me the waiver is still
10 needed.

11 MR. REYNOLDS: So --

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I guess I'm just slightly
13 confused.

14 MR. REYNOLDS: So the waiver for the licensure
15 component is in the standards since that's what they
16 would flag for in SFA.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

18 MR. REYNOLDS: But, I guess, it does make sense
19 that if they're not a licensed superintendent, then
20 they wouldn't be able to participate.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

22 MR. REYNOLDS: We don't -- we don't let
23 non-licensed superintendents participate in the
24 school mentoring program.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

1 MR. REYNOLDS: That's my understanding. See --
2 yeah. If they're going to need a waiver for the
3 superintendent licensure, then yeah, then, yeah --
4 then by definition they would have to have the waiver
5 for the superintendent mentoring program.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Which would mean that they
7 could not participate in that program?

8 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Because they can't participate
10 in the program anyway because they're not a licensed
11 superintendent.

12 MR. REYNOLDS: Right. Okay.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. Yeah. So --

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: That helps.

15 MS. MOORE: Can I be in the process of
16 licensure?

17 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I just need clarity, but
18 -- yeah. That's fine.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So she's asking, could she be
20 in the process of licensure; and the answer to that
21 would be that this part of the -- like, after your
22 license, then you would be mentored. So this would
23 be after the fact.

24 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

25 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Sorry. Okay, thanks.

1 Okay. So my major question -- and just kind of
2 looking at your application and looking at part of
3 the rationale for why you feel that your charter is
4 needed, is the limited opportunities for all students
5 to be able to participate in career technical
6 education and other pieces. So, I guess, what I'm
7 having a challenge with is that it's just, like, that
8 your application is strongly focused on those
9 components that would be considered career technical
10 education. And so for there to be a request for
11 waivers in place for CTE and then -- it seems almost
12 trying to create a parallel track to what is already
13 in place that could support students. Because it's
14 not like the students that you are wanting to support
15 would be those that would be traditionally
16 under-resourced or underserved. And that's a lot
17 of what CTE does under, like, categories under
18 Perkins special populations. And I saw that you
19 referenced the Jobs for Arkansas Graduates program
20 and that's -- a huge focus of that program is support
21 students who for whatever reason have some type of
22 barrier to graduating on time. So there's those
23 structures and avenues that are in place. So, I
24 guess, I would need more detail from you on what
25 systems are you going to have in place that are not

1 already going to meet the needs of what's already
2 been established?

3 MS. MOORE: So what hasn't been established --
4 just because I work in the districts there. I want
5 to be careful with my words because I don't want to
6 want to say anything against anyone. I see kids fall
7 through the cracks every day, every single day that
8 are parts of these programs and they're not being
9 supported. That's why I think taking it into a
10 smaller school instead of being such a large district
11 because the four main districts have school -- have
12 kids falling through the cracks every day. They ran
13 out of ankle bracelets last year. I mean, like, for
14 the courts. Like, I just feel like there are so many
15 kids that fall through the cracks that are designated
16 and would be perfect for these programs, but due to
17 barriers of having to serve time or having siblings
18 that they have to babysit. There are so many things
19 that are not supportive outside of school that we
20 could help with. And our advisory program could help
21 with that and help with the community resources
22 because there are so many resources in Northwest
23 Arkansas. But they are -- I don't feel like they're
24 utilized to their fullest and they could serve our
25 kids so much better. That's why we want to have a

1 small school, and we want all to mean all. We want
2 to serve those kids where -- and have them dream big.
3 We want them to be able to do the things and remove
4 those barriers. And I see it every day. I see those
5 kids falling and then they are either incarcerated or
6 they drop out. We want to stop that.

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So can't remember
8 exactly -- one of your comments you mentioned
9 pathways such as, like, agriculture and those pieces.
10 So what would be your plan for implementing those
11 pathways in your charter?

12 MS. MOORE: To do more research. I know that
13 that is going to require money and it's going to
14 require resources that aren't necessarily just
15 readily available, because even the Walton's said
16 according to this study, we're going to have to
17 pivot. Something has to be done. So we will be
18 moving with them and hopefully maybe even a couple of
19 steps ahead of them because we're smaller and can
20 move faster and on a smaller scale. So we will have
21 to do more research if -- to be really, really
22 honest.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So -- okay. I'm
24 trying -- so you're saying that as you're working
25 towards opening your school, then you would be

1 researching the process to develop and implement
2 pathways for your students?

3 MS. MOORE: Yes, absolutely.

4 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. And then, remind me
5 again -- because I was -- I'm trying to work through
6 a notification.

7 MS. MOORE: That's okay.

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Remind me again, so your
9 grades are starting where?

10 MS. MOORE: So originally -- and this was
11 something that I wanted to correct on our
12 application. Originally, we had wanted to start with
13 10th and 11th grade, but the Office of Educational
14 Policy, their advice is to start with 9th, 10th,
15 11th. So that we don't just have one group of
16 testers giving us our report card score. I think
17 that's a great idea. So we're going to go ahead and
18 open the enrollment for 9th grade and hopefully we
19 have enough for a class. I think we will. I have
20 junior high students right now, so they'll be
21 trickling into this. We are asked nearly daily by
22 teachers and students and parents: when is this
23 going to happen? We want this to happen. This --
24 they actually encouraged us to do this. So that --
25 that's why we're here.

1 Something that you asked about the waiver for
2 CTE, we just wanted to cover all of our bases because
3 we know that we're not going to be able to offer all
4 of these programs on our campus or without a partner.
5 So we wanted to cover all of our bases and not get
6 into any kind of legal trouble. Just to cover
7 ourselves, but our intent is to absolutely,
8 wholeheartedly offer everything that we can.

9 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

10 DR. MOORE: Doctor Wright-McMurray, on that
11 note, I just want to ask --

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Sure.

13 DR. MOORE: And this might be a legal question,
14 I couldn't -- I saw the narrative that you were
15 asking for a waiver for CTE, but I didn't see it in
16 the list of waivers. So did you -- am I overlooking
17 it? I've looked twice, but --

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I didn't see it either --

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I was having trouble as well.

20 DR. MOORE: Okay.

21 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- but I know that she
22 mentioned it in her comments.

23 DR. MOORE: Yeah. And -- well -- and it's --

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So that's why I asked.

25 DR. MOORE: It's in the application and the

1 narrative. So I was just wondering if Stephen could
2 speak to that. If -- one of those many codes that
3 you so, so excitingly listed.

4 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah. I didn't see -- I didn't
5 see the waiver for CTE in my legal reviews, so I did
6 -- and I pulled all of their -- all -- I pulled all
7 of the code sections, I think, straight from your
8 application. So if it's not in the legal review,
9 then I didn't see it in the application. So if you
10 guys want to add that waiver, I'll need to find the
11 code section real quick --

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

13 MR. REYNOLDS: -- and bring it up.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: We'll continue on with
15 questions and then --

16 MS. MOORE: Sure.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- we'll try to come back.

18 MS. MOORE: Yes, please.

19 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So then, my next question
20 goes to the Go2Grow program. So -- can you provide a
21 little bit more detail on how that's going to be
22 implemented in the school, and specifically how the
23 internship's going to work that are part of that
24 component?

25 MS. ECKLES: Yes. So our Go2Grow program is our

1 internship -- well, our real-world learning program.
2 So that encompasses internships, that encompasses
3 professionals coming in and doing career talks,
4 shadow days, information interviews. So since we're
5 starting with 9th grade, 9th graders will not be
6 doing internships. That is a time where they get to
7 do community service-learning projects and they get
8 to get out in the community and learn what it is to
9 be in the community working side by side with adults.
10 We don't want to throw them out into internships in
11 9th grade.

12 Internships won't come in until 10th, 11th and
13 12th grade and they will be interest driven. They
14 will do a lot of surveys to decide what is it that
15 they're interested in; and then we will pair them
16 with mentors that we already have, or search for
17 other mentors in those career fields that they're
18 interested in. And so that would -- that's pretty
19 much the scope of it.

20 I don't know if you have any other questions
21 that you need clarification on.

22 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So, I guess, my question
23 is: if we looked at a student --

24 MS. ECKLES: Yes.

25 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- and we're looking at

1 their day, what would their day look like that is
2 inclusive of the internship opportunity along with
3 the rest of their school day?

4 MS. ECKLES: Yes. So that's -- do you want to
5 speak to that?

6 It's more so on Wednesdays is when that happens,
7 but it's a lot of different stuff that happens on
8 Wednesdays, also internships, though.

9 MS. MOORE: So it's a moving component. I've
10 been an internship director. Crystal now trains
11 internship directors. So really, it's flexible.
12 It's whatever the mentor has available. We would
13 love for it to be Wednesday afternoons. They're also
14 getting their work-based learning. I'm certified to
15 do that so they can get that credit; and that
16 especially works well for students who are behind on
17 credits because they can work; and they can learn;
18 and they can catch up on those credits; and be doing
19 something really productive at the same time. So
20 their day would consist of coming, doing their
21 Wednesday schedule in the morning; then they would go
22 out into the community and be part of the real world
23 in the afternoon. They would be doing projects.
24 They would -- so for example, we had a student -- a
25 group of students who undertook Ms. Charlotte's

1 Community Gardens in Fort Smith -- Ms. Tidwell's
2 Gardens, and they revamped it. They redid a program,
3 and they actually did where they went and gave fruits
4 and vegetable -- fresh fruits and vegetables to the
5 different schools in the afternoon. So the kids
6 could take those home. And some kids had never
7 tasted, like, a banana pepper or it was just
8 something that they could experience and grow on
9 those actual experiences and background knowledge.

10 Sorry, excuse me.

11 So it could look different for every student.
12 If they have an art internship, they would join the
13 studio and there might be -- so the advisor and the
14 internship director would sit down and talk about:
15 what do you want this to look like? The mentor:
16 what do you want to get out of this? Because that's
17 a big ask for someone to take on a kid four to six
18 hours a week. What do you want this to look like?
19 What are your available hours? Do you have something
20 that you need solved? Is there a problem that you
21 need solved because you know what, these kids can
22 usually do it, especially with tech. So we want to
23 put them into that and then let them start learning
24 what they're doing. And is there a way to slip that
25 in? Is there a way to connect what the mentor needs,

1 possibly, being solution oriented and what the kid
2 can do and what they can provide and what they're
3 interested in.

4 So that's our goal. Now, sometimes those two
5 things don't align. So we have to be really creative
6 and be a generalist. And that takes someone going in
7 and being very creative and we will very much so
8 train our advisors and be backup anytime they need
9 someone.

10 Our advisors visit the kids every two weeks on-
11 site so that they can support the mentor also.
12 That's really, really important to keeping that
13 relationship, the communication open, and that
14 relationship sustainable to the next intern because
15 some kids might decide that they don't like their
16 internship. I had a girl in the 10th grade that
17 went, she wanted to be an EMT, that was what she
18 wanted to do, that was what she wanted to be. She
19 got on the ambulance, saw blood, passed out; so that
20 wasn't going to work out for her, and she didn't
21 realize that. So why spend the money and the time
22 when you could have learned it in high school; you
23 could have learned it through these different
24 experiential opportunities.

25 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So course credit-wise, are

1 you only going to focus on internship or the other
2 work by starting courses?

3 MS. MOORE: We want to eventually do the other
4 work-based learning courses. I'm actually enrolled
5 to get the 418 and not just the 412.

6 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So you don't
7 already have the endorsement?

8 MS. MOORE: I do have the 412.

9 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. But do you have --
10 you have the endorsement for work-based learning?

11 MS. MOORE: Yes.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So I guess, my -- I
13 guess back to my previous question then: if you're
14 planning on allowing students to get credit for the
15 other work-based courses like career practicum or
16 career apprenticeship, then you would have to have
17 CTE pathways in place to do that?

18 MS. MOORE: We're going to have to rely on,
19 like, Virtual Arkansas and different partners --

20 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

21 MS. MOORE: -- because we don't know how many
22 kids are going to be interested at the very
23 beginning. We just want to cover ourselves for start
24 up. We don't want to over stretch ourselves because
25 we are homegrown. We are ground zero. And we are --

1 we have literally been called to serve our community
2 and that's where we want to keep it. We want to keep
3 our -- we want to keep it -- it little and then we
4 can always come back and say, hey, we don't need this
5 anymore; and as soon as we don't need it, we will be
6 back.

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So you're planning to
8 offer a CTE through Virtual Arkansas is what you're
9 saying?

10 MS. MOORE: Yes. Or NWACC or NWTI. Yes,
11 absolutely.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

13 MS. MOORE: Because they have some great
14 programs, sometimes they just don't have the room. I
15 know that for one of my courses two years ago, when I
16 tried to get some of my girls into the nursing
17 program, they only had 12 openings for all of
18 Northwest Arkansas. So, you know, ideally,
19 eventually I'd like to have a Peak center in
20 Northwest Arkansas, something that -- of that
21 capacity. But that's my big -- my big dream after
22 this big dream.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

24 Mr. Scott?

25 MR. SCOTT: Well, continuing on the mentorship

1 and internships, I'm thinking about also the role of
2 the counselor, and in particular the student success
3 plans. So describe to me how all of it works.
4 Because there is a requirement, especially those
5 grade levels, to establish the student success plan.
6 So logistically, which resource handles what?

7 MS. ECKLES: Yes. So we are asking for the way
8 the counselor, but that's where our advisory program
9 comes in. So I was an advisor; April was an advisor.
10 I was an advisory director and that's where a lot of
11 those pieces come into play is the success plan --
12 the success plan that is created in the advisory
13 between the advisor and the student. They go over
14 that plan, putting things that they plan on doing,
15 goals, all of that stuff; credit checks, that happens
16 in the advisory as well. So a lot of those
17 components that the counselor is supposed to do,
18 those type of things -- exploration, those type of
19 things, that all happens in the advisory.

20 MR. SCOTT: The assumption is the parents/family
21 members are --

22 MS. ECKLES: Yes, yes, they are part of that as
23 well. So we do -- they do one to ones. We do -- so
24 in a normal school, you have your parent teacher
25 conferences; we actually do more than just the parent

1 teacher conferences. They have to do -- actually two
2 other conferences before the parent teacher
3 conference. And that is where the parent comes in
4 and they -- I mean, there's -- it becomes a family.
5 That's your point of contact, your advisor. I don't
6 know how many times, me as a parent, I called the
7 school and try to get in touch with the counselor,
8 whoever you can't because they're so busy. An
9 advisor only has 20 students that they are
10 responsible for, and it's responsible for those type
11 of things. And that parent can get in touch with
12 that advisor quickly and find that information. And
13 then, also, those meetings that we have in between
14 and after the normal parent-teacher conference as
15 well.

16 MR. SCOTT: So you've also talked about the
17 mentorships and mentors --

18 MS. ECKLES: Uh-huh.

19 MR. SCOTT: -- and also community partners. And
20 let me commend you on identifying specific community
21 partners. Of question is: the impact, what kind of
22 relationship that is, is it in kind? Is it something
23 that's going to impact your budget? How does that
24 work?

25 MS. ECKLES: Yeah. So the internship program

1 does not impact the budget. Those are professionals
2 in the community that are offering their time to
3 mentor student. They go to their internship, and
4 they learn. There's no money that has to go to a
5 mentor to actually be a mentor. There's no money
6 going to that at all.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Can I pay you back on your
8 question?

9 So you discussed background checks a little bit,
10 but who's going to pay for background checks for
11 mentors? Because ultimately, if they're doing this,
12 you know, as a volunteer, are they going to have to
13 go and get a background check if a student is coming
14 to them in their place of business?

15 MS. MOORE: So the background checks are \$11,
16 and the school will have to absorb that. It's just
17 going to have to be a thing. It's to keep our kids
18 safe. It has to be a baseline thing. But several
19 times, once you get the background check, it carries
20 on for years because that person generally wants to
21 continue on. We've had mentors that stayed on for
22 years because they love helping kids so much. We
23 have a kid being trained in prosthetics right now
24 because those people are aging out and they're so
25 thrilled to get people, young people that are

1 interested in it, to carry that on and move into the
2 next generation because there's no one to replace
3 them when they retire.

4 So we will have to absorb that cost, and it will
5 just have to be done.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Well, and the reason I ask is
7 because there are three -- well, for teachers and
8 even now for registered volunteers, there are three
9 separate background checks that we go through here at
10 the Department. One is the state -- the Arkansas
11 State Police; then, we have our FBI fingerprinting;
12 and then we have our Child Maltreatment. And so when
13 you look at those three, that actually totals
14 somewhere closer to \$75 if they were to go through
15 all those processes. However, you know, when you're
16 getting out into mentors and things like that, we
17 don't have an ORI code to cover that. So, I guess, I
18 just want you to be cognizant of the fact that that
19 \$11 background check is very different from the one
20 that they would go through if they were going through
21 as a teacher or classified employee or, you know, or
22 registered volunteer.

23 And Mr. Baldwin.

24 MR. BALDWIN: Yes. I -- following up to this
25 question: what grade levels are going to be able to

1 go out and do the internships and be out of the
2 school building and in the public? Is -- it's 7th
3 grade? 8th grade? I guess you start in 9th grade.

4 MS. MOORE: Yes, sir.

5 MR. BALDWIN: So is it 9th grade? 10th grade?
6 Or is it juniors and seniors?

7 MS. MOORE: Tenth, 11th, 12th. Those will be
8 the people in the community. We want them to get a
9 good establishment of our culture and how we do act
10 and code-switching and how to be appropriate in the
11 community because so many of our kids have no clue.
12 And, I mean, even how to use a phone, just the things
13 that you need to know.

14 MR. BALDWIN: So I would just -- kind of
15 following up with the background check, but there's
16 also an insurance question from business. So my bank
17 used to do a bunch of this with the school systems in
18 Batesville. And we would only do juniors and seniors
19 and really -- we only really wanted to do seniors
20 because our insurance company didn't like us having
21 underage kids that weren't employees, you know, full-
22 time employees on our property. It was an -- it was
23 a problem for us with insurance. Just know that that
24 is out there too.

25 MS. MOORE: Yes, I remember in the past talking

1 about riders and different -- yes. We'll -- thank
2 you.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Davis?

4 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. Just quickly on the on the
5 same topic because it's one of the questions I have.

6 I feel like we're starting to conflate terms
7 like internship, mentor, advisor; right? And so I
8 think about, particularly, mentors and mentorship
9 separate from internship, right, where someone's
10 going to a place; they're doing the job for a certain
11 period of versus a mentorship as someone that is
12 helping them understand the business. So can you
13 talk about -- when you talk about this partnership,
14 these mentors, internships, can you separate that for
15 me a little bit?

16 MS. MOORE: Sure.

17 MR. DAVIS: So are they doing mentors and
18 internships?

19 MS. MOORE: Yes.

20 MR. DAVIS: Are they just doing --

21 MS. MOORE: Yes.

22 MR. DAVIS: -- internships?

23 MS. MOORE: They hold hands with each other. So
24 at every internship they have a mentor.

25 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

1 MS. MOORE: That person is the go-to; that's the
2 one that has the background check; that's the one
3 that stays with them; that's the one that's
4 responsible for them when they're there; that's their
5 go-to person.

6 We -- they will have a mentor. That mentor is
7 the person that they go to talk about their project,
8 to talk about their reflection of the day and that is
9 also the person, or group of people, that surround
10 them and support that mentor that would come to their
11 exhibitions every single -- or their scholars'
12 showcase -- every single semester. Those people are
13 going to be coming into our school and looking at all
14 of the projects so that they're like, wow, okay. So
15 getting ideas and tossing things around and then they
16 can connect with each other too, and maybe help each
17 other out or collaborate with different interns.

18 MR. DAVIS: I have got it. I have got it.

19 MS. MOORE: Yes.

20 MR. DAVIS: And just one more quickly.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

22 MR. DAVIS: I know we're trying to go down the
23 list here.

24 So I completely understand mentors and
25 typically, you know, mentors are unpaid in that

1 relationship. But when we talk about internships,
2 are the internships -- the students working in these
3 places of employment, they will be unpaid as well?

4 MS. MOORE: (Nods head up and down)

5 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

6 MS. ECKLES: It really depends sometimes. So,
7 like, I'm an internship coordinator -- well, director
8 -- in Northwest Arkansas and I find internship
9 placements for students. Just the other day I got
10 one at a financial institute and they actually
11 decided they were going to pay the student. So
12 sometimes it can be a paid internship. It just
13 depends on the mentor and if they have the funds to
14 provide that to the student, so it can actually be
15 either or. It can be an unpaid or a paid.

16 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

17 MS. ECKLES: Yeah.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Good.

19 Mr. Scott?

20 MR. SCOTT: On that very point --

21 MS. ECKLES: Yes.

22 MR. SCOTT: So getting paid for it is a huge
23 incentive for most of the students; right? That --
24 that's great. And you have to balance that with the
25 community service learning hours --

1 MS. ECKLES: Yeah.

2 MR. SCOTT: -- which is truly a volunteer --

3 MS. ECKLES: Yeah.

4 MR. SCOTT: -- right? It's kind of tough when
5 person A is volunteering at this establishment and
6 they know their friend, person B, is getting paid;
7 right? So it's a balancing act. We're glad to know
8 that there are several options out there. And that's
9 a that's a tough sale to your students.

10 MS. MOORE: We're going to try to have them
11 knock their community service out in 9th grade.

12 MS. ECKLES: Ninth grade, yeah.

13 MS. MOORE: Because that's where they get to
14 learn how to act appropriately. And that's kind of
15 an odd age also. So their advisors will be with
16 them, and they will be their mentor for that.

17 MR. SCOTT: When we say knock them out in 9th
18 grade, what do you mean?

19 MS. MOORE: Do what?

20 MS. ECKLES: Get all the hours. Get the hours.

21 MS. MOORE: Oh, get the hours.

22 MS. ECKLES: He said, what do you mean by 9th
23 grade?

24 MS. MOORE: Get the hours -- 75 hours for their
25 credit. And we want them to go ahead and earn it

1 when they first come into our school.

2 MR. SCOTT: There's some minimum -- minimum of
3 20 hours each year --

4 MS. MOORE: Each year.

5 MR. SCOTT: -- with the maximum of 75.

6 MS. MOORE: They did do that, didn't they?

7 MR. SCOTT: Yeah.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: They did.

9 MS. MOORE: Yes.

10 MR. SCOTT: So it's doable.

11 MS. MOORE: We're going to do it. We're going
12 to do it. We'll get it knocked out.

13 And we'll have summer stuff. I mean, we are not
14 going to really probably close our doors during the
15 summer, hardly at all. I know that at previous
16 schools, our doors were on all the time. So we'll be
17 doing stuff all summer and having those kids really
18 involved in everything in the community that -- our
19 community between Fayetteville and Springdale is so
20 rich in culture, there's so many opportunities to do
21 that and so many opportunities to learn about it. So
22 we want them to take advantage of that.

23 MR. SCOTT: So before I get into the next
24 question, I want to take a pause and commend you all
25 because it's -- you're not coming here as a robust

1 charter management organization, but you are
2 educators that have a heart's passion to help your
3 community and schools. So I want to commend you on
4 that. Independent of whatever decision that's made
5 today and whatever decision is made from the State
6 Board, etcetera, I encourage you to follow your
7 heart's passions. That's going to be huge. We need
8 more of that for the students that we're serving here
9 in the state. Okay.

10 MS. MOORE: Trying to be a model.

11 MR. SCOTT: So the questions I have are designed
12 to take a deeper dive into operationally how things
13 are going. So there -- one of the first waivers
14 pertain to school boards. So help me understand
15 governance as you operate the school in light of some
16 of the perceived waivers.

17 MS. MOORE: So we have three school board
18 members currently. We hope to add two more, but we
19 want them to be very specific in their industry so
20 that they can mentor us or our business manager. We
21 want to be strategic about it so that they're
22 actively involved in helping that person grow too.
23 And then, they get to see, oh, okay, I did that. So
24 then they can speak to it.

25 So we have three right now. Aaron White is our

1 school board president. He also is a school
2 counselor who works at NWACC. So our partnership
3 there is going to be amazing. He has a heart for
4 kids. He's worked for about two decades -- a decade
5 and a half -- in helping kids. He was actually a
6 teacher for me at the last high school that I was a
7 principal; and he's amazing. He was the first person
8 that we instantly thought of to bring on board. He's
9 been instrumental in planning this.

10 So we have two other board members who are
11 educators or professionals in the community. They
12 have a heart for this. They actually approached us
13 about it when we started talking about what our dream
14 would be at some networking events. And then we
15 started conversing back and forth and every time we
16 saw each other it just got more and more and more.
17 We were able to add on to that.

18 MR. BALDWIN: Can you tell us who their names
19 are and what their professional background -- I'm
20 sorry to interrupt.

21 MS. MOORE: Yes.

22 MS. ECKLES: I mean, well, we know that Aaron
23 is.

24 MS. MOORE: Aaron White, Emerson and Sarah. I
25 don't remember their last names, to be honest.

1 MS. ECKLES: Sarah -- she's an educator right
2 now. Emerson is in the medical field. Let me get
3 the actual --

4 MR. BALDWIN: I noticed that on is from
5 McGehee, Arkansas. McGehee, Arkansas, one of your
6 board.

7 MS. ECKLES: Yeah. So Emerson Goodwin. He is
8 actually -- he serves as the senior vice president of
9 business development for ARcare in Northwest
10 Arkansas. And so we actually met him during
11 networking. And the funny thing about him is when I
12 was like, hey, can I meet you? I have something I
13 want to ask you. He is completely against charters.
14 I'm just going to say that and just for him to --
15 after talking to him and talking about our goals and
16 what we want to do, he was actually like now listen,
17 I'm not going to be one of the board members that's
18 just going to say yes, yes, yes. I'm going to be
19 hard to work with. Well, that's what we want. We
20 don't want a school board that's just going to say
21 yes all the time. We want pushback. And so it's
22 exciting to have him on the board knowing that he
23 just does not agree with charter schools for whatever
24 reason it is. And then Sarah Burns is actually an
25 educator. She is -- oh, yeah. McGehee, yes. So she

1 originally was an English teacher at Future , and she
2 transferred to McGehee, where she is an English
3 teacher and journalism teacher right now.

4 MR. SCOTT: Thank you for sharing that. I
5 thought about the -- your board composition. Sounds
6 like you nailed it in regards to education --
7 educators -- someone that understands your academic
8 because at the end of day there'll be reports to the
9 board, they're overseeing their report. Academics,
10 finance, operations and someone on the board that
11 understands your academic model, that's huge. So I'm
12 not sure who on the finance side, but as you recruit
13 other board members, finance --

14 MS. ECKLES: Yeah. That's --

15 MR. SCOTT: -- operations, those are huge.

16 MS. ECKLES: Yes. We actually want to try to
17 find somebody in nonprofit that has experience there
18 to be on the board. I think that would be a plus
19 too.

20 MR. SCOTT: Okay. I want to commend you on the
21 focus on community education at the board level. In
22 your application you spoke to that and that's ideal,
23 having your board members that are volunteer board
24 members in the community but also have a focus on
25 that -- establishing your partnerships to help ease

1 your staff issues in regards to building academic
2 outcomes. So thank you for that.

3 MS. MOORE: Thank you.

4 MR. SCOTT: Recruiting community support: help
5 me understand your thoughts around that.

6 MS. ECKLES: Yeah. So I think -- April lives in
7 Springdale, so she's been there for a while. I've
8 been working there for about two years. And so we've
9 been doing a lot of that outreach already. We
10 haven't been really strong on it because we didn't
11 want to go out there and do all this recruitment and
12 get people to sign up for the school and then we're
13 not approved. Then we have to say, oh, we're not
14 approved; doors are not open. And we just didn't
15 want to do that. But we are going to be like hitting
16 the ground running if we are approved today. If
17 we're not approved, we'll be back. You'll see us
18 again until we are approved. And so we will hit the
19 ground running with doing recruitment, doing a lot of
20 events where we can set up booths and talk to parents
21 or whoever is involved about our program. Actually
22 going to the schools and talking to them. So doing a
23 lot of different outreach where we're setting up
24 booths and just going to different events and getting
25 our name out there.

1 MR. SCOTT: Okay. That's huge because at the
2 end of the day, when it comes to charters
3 historically, it started in the traditional
4 public-school world where someone said, hey, look,
5 let's look at some innovative approaches to doing
6 something and let's work with some teachers to give
7 them some pilots to start something. So that will
8 certainly be the case. And then at -- the reason I
9 asked about recording is because at the end of the
10 day, your parents are going to have to have a choice
11 to sign up or not. What are my other options? So
12 you have competitors out there. And so as you build
13 your recruitment plan, it's going to be critical for
14 you to understand those other options there.

15 I can come back.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

17 Mr. Davis?

18 MR. DAVIS: Yeah.

19 Let's talk a little bit more about that --
20 because I did review the application -- and
21 particularly about the recruiting. Because I did
22 review the application, and I know you put sort of
23 the public announcement out there and in that
24 application, you talked about -- for parents sort of
25 showing up. So I would be interested in hearing a

1 little bit more about the recruitment -- recruitment
2 plan and what that might look.

3 MS. ECKLES: Just trying to find it in our
4 document. It'll definitely be --

5 MR. DAVIS: It's on page 95.

6 MS. ECKLES: Okay. We'll definitely -- so one
7 of the things that -- so April and I taught at a
8 separate school from the one that we're trying to
9 start now which was a public charter school. And so
10 we were actually on the ground at the beginning. And
11 one of the things that we saw that was very
12 successful, were CreateAthons that we did and that is
13 where students, parents, community people, whoever
14 wanted to learn about the school could learn about
15 it. And so we would definitely be doing those
16 CreateAthons where we have those monthly or biweekly
17 where parents can -- and students can come in and
18 learn about it. And that's where they actually kind
19 of start. I know a lot of times, a lot of our idea
20 with the schools actually came through those
21 CreateAthons because we let, you know, students be,
22 you know, imagine what does -- what does the school
23 look like to you? Like, what type of programs do you
24 want to see? What type of clubs do you want to see?
25 And I think that's important, too, is allowing

1 students to create the clubs that they want to see in
2 their school. So we would definitely be heavy on
3 doing CreateAthons. I actually during -- I'm a part
4 of the BNI network group in Springdale. And so I
5 will actually -- we have a guy in there that actually
6 has a podcast. And so he has offered us to come in
7 and actually be on his podcast to talk about the
8 school. So actually doing, like, news things. The
9 CreateAthons is going to be, like -- it's going to be
10 the one that's going to actually get people in our
11 doors and to hear about us is the CreateAthons.

12 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. Thanks for that. Just a
13 couple of more questions from me.

14 And -- we talked a little bit about boards, so
15 we got that kind of going. A couple of budget
16 questions. Teacher benefits, all of that, you expect
17 to cover teacher retirement, those types of things?
18 And talk to me a little bit about start-up cost and
19 how you plan to fill that gap.

20 MS. MOORE: So with the start-up cost, we put it
21 off of 110 kids. We don't think that that -- we
22 think that that's attainable.

23 MR. DAVIS: Yeah.

24 MS. MOORE: And that's very realistic and we may
25 very well go over that with the amount of just word

1 -- because we have not spread word, just people
2 talking to each other.

3 So we're going to apply for grants, of course.
4 As soon as we get the okay -- the thumbs up, we're
5 going to hit the ground running with grants. We have
6 some connections within some different opportunities
7 that we definitely want to pursue. We do expect to
8 do that minimally because the other schools in
9 Northwest Arkansas do it. We can't get the kind of
10 teachers that we want and need without offering that.
11 So we're going to have to wear different hats.
12 That's why we decided to be codirectors as far as the
13 inner -- internal day-to-day and support each other
14 with our strengths because we can't do it all
15 ourselves. And we're going to have to find people
16 who are generalists, who can switch on and off and
17 who have knowledge in many, many different random --

18 MR. DAVIS: Yeah.

19 MS. MOORE: -- topics. So we're going to have
20 to wear different hats. It's been done before. I've
21 done it with two campuses. It's hard work, but I
22 also don't mind marrying my work. So --

23 MR. DAVIS: So what I hear you saying is --
24 because your first-year budget is approaching
25 somewhere around \$1,000,000 for the --

1 MS. MOORE: Yes.

2 MR. DAVIS: -- 110 students. And you know,
3 resources in regards to the state, don't -- you know,
4 they're not -- they're not coming to beginning of
5 school year.

6 MS. MOORE: Right.

7 MR. DAVIS: And so what I hear you saying is the
8 plan is to apply for potential grants to try to fill
9 that gap --

10 MS. MOORE: Yes.

11 MR. DAVIS: -- until you can, potentially, get
12 funding for the state for the students.

13 MS. MOORE: Absolutely. October 1st could not
14 come soon enough. But yes, that's something, as a
15 former finance major, that I definitely need -- which
16 I did not graduate with. I graduated with
17 organizational management. That's something -- where
18 we're going to need a board member, one to help us,
19 and hopefully they have the background knowledge to
20 guide us through that and then to train our business
21 manager, of course. But someone that can -- we're
22 going to have to just sit down and make this our goal
23 to sit down and have enough money with reserves to be
24 able to start because people are not going to rent us
25 a building with no down payment or with no, you know,

1 deposit.

2 MR. DAVIS: Yeah.

3 MS. MOORE: So, I mean, we're going to have to
4 be smart about it, especially in Northwest Arkansas.
5 And if we don't get to open next fall, it's okay.
6 This is what we're supposed to do. We can do it the
7 next fall, it's okay; it will happen. It just may
8 take time.

9 MR. DAVIS: Yeah. Thanks for that. I'll save
10 it.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Baldwin?

12 MR. BALDWIN: Thank you.

13 Doing what you guys are doing, you all have to
14 be brave. To start something new like this with, you
15 know -- the one we saw this morning, they -- they've
16 been doing this a long time and y'all were back there
17 listening to them. But to do it on your own, that
18 takes courage. So respect to you guys for that.

19 Let me ask a little bit about the service area
20 that you guys anticipate. And I think in the
21 application, you talked about, you know, Bentonville
22 Elkins, Farmington, Fayetteville, Huntsville,
23 Greenland and Rogers and Springdale. So that's a
24 really big -- I know that you know that's a big area.
25 How did you come up with that area in your -- when

1 you were going through your thought process?

2 MS. MOORE: So when Crystal came to Northwest
3 Arkansas, we had worked together before, and she had
4 just become the coordinator for Big Picture -- their
5 director in Northwest Arkansas. She said, hey, let's
6 work together; let's do this. So that's how we ended
7 up starting together our resources. And -- sorry.
8 What was the question again?

9 MR. BALDWIN: Just how did you come up with that
10 big of an area?

11 MS. MOORE: Okay. So we came up with the area
12 because those are all of the little schools that kind
13 of filter in. So when I was a principal in
14 Springdale, those were the kids that came. Even if
15 it was just one, we put them in there. We also
16 looked at other applications and at other data when
17 Crystal was compiling this, so that we could get a
18 big picture of it because right now real estate is at
19 \$232 a square foot in Northwest Arkansas. So we're
20 going to have to be really smart and strategic about
21 where we are. We want to be around Highway 71
22 because the regional transit runs there, and we can
23 also pair with an executive bus company who has also
24 helped some other schools start up to provide our
25 transportation for our first-year students. So that

1 was really what we had in mind as far as looking at
2 the bigger area because we may not be where we want
3 to be the first year, but we'll eventually get there.
4 We'll eventually be able to be right smack dab in the
5 middle of where we want to serve.

6 MR. BALDWIN: So where -- oh.

7 MS. ECKLES: And I think also to keep in mind
8 that even though our school will be in the
9 Fayetteville/Springdale area, those schools on the
10 outside are still part of Northwest Arkansas. And so
11 our doors are open to them. We don't want to say
12 that we're only going to service Springdale if we're
13 in Springdale. We want to service everyone. Now, we
14 know that we probably -- we may not even get students
15 from Elkins. We don't know. We may just get one or
16 two, but they're still a part of the group of --
17 well, that area that we're trying to service.

18 MR. BALDWIN: Where do you think you'll put your
19 building? In trying to serve that area, are you
20 thinking Fayetteville or somewhere between
21 Fayetteville and Springdale? Or kind of -- cause
22 that'll drive a lot of who you can pull from, you
23 know, from Huntsville.

24 MS. MOORE: Absolutely.

25 MR. BALDWIN: Yeah.

1 MS. MOORE: Yeah. So we do know that the 412
2 will go, you know, straight into it. I work on 412
3 right now. So we would like to be within a
4 three-mile radius of the mall because that's where
5 our kids are coming from. The further east you go,
6 the more those kids are not necessarily going to fit
7 into this model. It's going to be the kids more on
8 the western side of town -- or the eastern side of
9 town -- I'm sorry. So we want to stay right there.

10 Plus we have regional transit, and they have
11 established stops. They don't have to reorganize and
12 absorb any cost for extra stops or -- and we've
13 looked at their map; we met with them a few years ago
14 about where they could go. And it was going to cost
15 over \$1,000,000 to reconfigure for a school on the
16 western side of town. And they were like, no, we are
17 not -- we are not doing a dedicated run for you guys.
18 So transportation goes into play with where we want
19 to be but being in -- within that -- on the eastside
20 of 49. That's the side of town that we want to serve
21 right between Springdale and Fayetteville.

22 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. So talk to us about
23 transportation. And we had a long conversation this
24 morning about that. It's kind of the same --

25 MS. MOORE: Sure did.

1 MR. BALDWIN: -- really the same question: is
2 -- you've got these, you know, these small rural
3 towns that you wanted to pull into the bigger town.
4 So how does that work? And does the bus service that
5 you're talking about go out to Huntsville and Elkins
6 and Greenland, you know, those little towns out?

7 MS. MOORE: Well, if it was a student with the
8 needs, we would make sure that it was taken care of
9 because of the Title funding that would make that
10 appropriate. However, with that being said --
11 because we are aware of that -- when I was a
12 principal, I had 91 students a second year, only
13 three of them required transportation in this
14 community. So it's not as much of a need as maybe it
15 was in the past. We had kids that were -- we had a
16 couple of kids with scooters, but a lot of kids
17 carpooled. They were able to find -- because they
18 wanted to go to our school so badly and be with our
19 teachers, that they would carpool to get there.
20 Their parents said, you find the way, you can do I;
21 or their parents would switch off or their parents
22 were so adamant about it, some of them changed their
23 work schedules to put them with us. So to answer
24 your question, we will meet that need. We will pay
25 for -- we allocated the funds; we will pay for the

1 bus if that's what it requires. If the student needs
2 it, that's what we're going to do.

3 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. That could be expensive.

4 MS. MOORE: It could.

5 MR. BALDWIN: It could be more than --

6 MS. MOORE: It could.

7 MR. BALDWIN: -- you can have in the budget.

8 MS. MOORE: And I also have my passenger
9 endorsement, so that would maybe waive the bus
10 driver. I know you laugh, but I really had to drive
11 the bus at the last school I was at. And I couldn't
12 figure out how to turn it off.

13 MR. DAVIS: I love the stackable credentials.

14 MS. MOORE: Yeah. Well, you kind of -- you have
15 to. When you love your kids and you've been called
16 to do this, you have to. I mean, you just do what it
17 takes.

18 MR. BALDWIN: You know, I would -- so just
19 thought, when I looked when I looked at that
20 geography, I thought that's a big bite to take. And,
21 you know, I think that the number of students that
22 you're projecting, you're going to probably most
23 likely get from Fayetteville, Springdale, you know,
24 kind of closer in. And so you might think about do
25 you -- you know, do you really want to put in

1 Huntsville which is a long way away? I live in West
2 Fork and to go from West Fork to Bentonville is 45
3 minutes one way and back on the interstate going 75
4 miles an hour. So do you really -- you know, and you
5 may, you know, you may have thought about that and
6 just thought, well, we're going to get one person
7 from Elkins. And that's your decision, but I just
8 think that it complicates things to have that much
9 geography.

10 And then, my last question is going to your
11 budget. And I just went through here and I guess I
12 am worried -- and I'm a finance person, so I, you
13 know, that's always the first thing I look at are the
14 numbers. And you guys are showing \$114,000, what I
15 call a net profit, at the end of the first year. And
16 I really think you guys should get with someone, and
17 maybe you have already, to look at the costs that you
18 have in here because I think your costs are
19 understated. I think it's going to be more expensive
20 than what you have budgeted right now. So I don't
21 think you're going to have \$114,000 profit at the end
22 of the first year. I think you'll be -- break even
23 at best.

24 MS. MOORE: Right.

25 MR. BALDWIN: And then you get in the cost of

1 renovating the building, which is not in here, you
2 know, the upfront cost that was already talked about.
3 I think you should probably try to estimate what
4 those would be because that can be a significant
5 amount.

6 You know, looking at your transportation, I
7 guess the \$5,000 in the budget is the city bus
8 service? You know, is that really -- I mean, is that
9 going to -- if you have 100 kids riding that bus
10 twice a day, is that -- is that going to be enough?
11 And then foodservice, you know, when you're feeding
12 kids. I guess you're going to provide breakfast and
13 lunch?

14 MS. MOORE: Yes.

15 MR. BALDWIN: So I don't know that there's a --
16 is there a cost in here for that -- for --

17 MS. MOORE: Oh.

18 MR. BALDWIN: -- food service?

19 MS. MOORE: It was -- food services. I waited
20 until year two to start adding that. I'm sorry.

21 MR. BALDWIN: It does. And, you know, what I
22 don't want you all to do is to get -- is to run out
23 of money --

24 MS. MOORE: Right.

25 MR. BALDWIN: -- like real fast.

1 MS. MOORE: Absolutely.

2 MR. BALDWIN: Yeah. And so I think it's
3 important to go through this. And then, just
4 property -- you know, property insurance, insurance
5 for furniture and fixtures. I mean, that stuff is
6 crazy expensive. Now, who all worked with you on the
7 budget?

8 MS. MOORE: I actually did most of the budget
9 using other business managers at different schools
10 and just calling and asking questions. I also got a
11 little bit of help from Jayne Green, and she's also
12 going to help us extensively when we're ready to sit
13 down and say, okay, let's really nail this down.

14 MR. BALDWIN: I think, you know, APSRC is good
15 to work with. And I think what they can do -- and
16 others can do the same thing -- is they can look at
17 what other schools have budgeted in their first year
18 and give you some examples.

19 MS. MOORE: Okay.

20 MR. BALDWIN: That is because if you are off by
21 a couple hundred thousand dollars, then you're --

22 MS. MOORE: That's not good.

23 MR. BALDWIN: -- you're going to be in trouble.

24 MS. MOORE: I had used two schools that I've
25 worked with before as examples and tried to configure

1 it down to per pupil or use their estimates.

2 MR. BALDWIN: Okay.

3 MS. MOORE: Or schools like ours that serve the
4 same community.

5 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. Thank you.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Ms. Newton?

7 MS. NEWTON: I don't know what to call this;
8 it's certainly not a question; but I want to echo the
9 sentiments of my fellow board members. And I applaud
10 your enthusiasm and your optimism, and I think it's a
11 dream that that certainly has a possibility. I'm
12 concerned now so many things that are -- it's not a
13 finished garment. It may be still on the boat at the
14 store. And so that concerns me from my background in
15 terms of job training and placement and mentoring and
16 all that. First of all, with the mentors, there's a
17 training -- or should be a training that goes along
18 with that. There are some expectations, even from
19 mentors, that they get lunch if they go to mentor,
20 you know? And that goes on with the intern with not
21 sending young people out to a job site without
22 training and expectations. So those soft skill
23 things that are not academic but are clearly needed
24 to be taught or to be understood, or to be, you know,
25 just ground in over and over. Again, make

1 assumptions that you know that you're supposed to be
2 on time, and that's not 30 minutes, you know,
3 whatever -- or that you're supposed to go every day.
4 And I know it sounds mundane, but so many things, to
5 be successful in the social aspect of it -- not
6 educational, because I can't speak to that as some
7 others can. But there's some social aspects that --
8 and if you're dealing with the one time, maybe one
9 opportunity to get this done, you don't want to do
10 the things that cause to say, well, you know, those
11 folks are not credible. They don't know -- can't
12 keep mentors, can't keep interns, or whether it's
13 from a business perspective, a lot of different
14 things. And I think within your partnership, you
15 should include some folks that are just practical
16 business folks. One of the things we used to say to
17 our job sites is if this person messes up, let us
18 know quickly because we're going to snatch them out
19 and put another one in. So we couldn't -- didn't
20 have enough of those type of circumstances to let us
21 make mistakes and have a do over.

22 So I you know all the -- it sounds very
23 optimistic, and it sounds promising, but there are --
24 so many things have been understood about a lot of
25 your stakeholders because word gets around whether

1 positive or negative. So my concerns are not your
2 background as much as the solidness, the stability of
3 the plan or the structure and the blueprint of it
4 all. And so you start with this initially, of
5 course, the plumbing and then you add on, but then
6 you don't add on more than your infrastructure can.
7 So I hear big plans and large plans and I think
8 that's all well and good. But at the same time I
9 just don't know if you're ready to support that
10 large, yes. You know, there may be plan one, two,
11 three and four. That's just my humble opinion. But
12 I'm -- that's what concerns me because I'd rather see
13 you stretch your plan out as opposed to starting
14 something as optimistic as it sounds and not being
15 able to carry out. You guys are two people and
16 outside of the two of you, you're the only ones who
17 can speak to what's going to happen concretely. And,
18 you know, we'll just make it happen, or we'll pay for
19 it if it comes up. That's more than a notion from my
20 experience.

21 MS. ECKLES: And I just -- I wanted to speak to
22 that about the training of the mentors. That's
23 actually a part of the advisory component. We don't
24 launch students out into internships. It's like,
25 okay, this is where you're going to go. We do

1 extensive onboarding training, like, they learn to
2 make phone calls. They learn how to speak. They
3 learn how to shake hands. They learn about being on
4 time. And we also do the same thing with mentors,
5 like. we expect --

6 MS. NEWTON: And in their curriculum -- that's
7 my -- my question as it relates to that: is when can
8 you afford that based on what my colleague has said?
9 Mr. Baldwin is here. So that's important to begin
10 with, absolutely. But when can you afford it -- is
11 the other part -- with all the other things that are
12 going on? I know that's critical. Absolutely. You
13 should never send anybody out without that having
14 been done. But given the other concerns about
15 transportation and equipment and insurance, where
16 does that come? Is that year two? Year three? Or
17 second semester, whatever? Certainly, it doesn't
18 come when you open your doors.

19 MS. ECKLES: Right. And I think it's -- I think
20 the answer to that is that it does come year two or
21 three because when we start -- when we're starting
22 out, we start with 9th grades. There's no
23 internships during 9th grade year. They're doing
24 community service learning. That's us going out as
25 groups to different places to do this. So there's no

1 internships or anything that first year that we be
2 open.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Dr. Moore?

4 DR. MOORE: And I agree with others. Thank you
5 for your passion. I can tell your hearts are into
6 this and I also appreciate your colorful coordination
7 of purple and black. It's nice.

8 But I appreciate that you see that many students
9 do fall through the cracks every day in all of our
10 schools. No one intends for that to happen, but it
11 does, and I appreciate you wanting to reach those
12 students and make sure that they have opportunities
13 for success.

14 I do have several questions. One being, so your
15 waiver that's about AP and concurrent and I do not
16 have a problem with the AP waiver as long as students
17 have opportunities for concurrent, personally. But I
18 did have a question about the concurrent piece. It
19 says that students will take classes at partnering
20 universities or online programs. So does that mean
21 you do not have a goal of any of your teachers being
22 able to teach concurrent?

23 MS. MOORE: Not at the beginning.

24 DR. MOORE: Okay. So for the students, will
25 transportation be provided to the to the higher ed

1 institutions for that concurrent? What's the partner
2 for online courses? What's your plan for concurrent
3 then?

4 MS. MOORE: So NWACC is just down the street
5 from us. It's centrally located. And then, there's
6 also the Bentonville campus. We can also offer the
7 online that's always an option. So whichever, as far
8 as budgeting goes, would be best and most feasible
9 for that student.

10 DR. MOORE: So how would that look in your
11 master schedule then? Because I looked at your
12 master schedule about courses that are offered and
13 concurrent's not listed in any of the master schedule
14 or the course offering. So how would that look?
15 Would there be a certain class period dedicated?
16 Like, how would that work?

17 MS. MOORE: Well, if it was on campus and it was
18 in the afternoon, we would let the students go. And
19 if we have to provide transportation, that's
20 something that we're definitely going to have to
21 revisit.

22 Now, as far as if it was online, I know that
23 several of our kids have taken Virtual Arkansas
24 concurrent in the past and they were able to do it in
25 a classroom with a facilitator.

1 DR. MOORE: Okay. And then, additionally, on
2 the transportation, I know that we've had lots of
3 talks about the cost of transportation; but you
4 mentioned partnering with NWACC and if you're if
5 students are going to go to any of the secondary
6 centers in the area, that is -- that's on the
7 responsibilities -- it's my understanding that's the
8 responsibility of the school to pay for that
9 transportation. So -- especially if you're relying
10 on them for CTE services. So that's one thing there.

11 And then I wanted clarification, you mentioned
12 -- and let me get to the page on here that originally
13 you were planning on year one being 10th and 11th
14 grade, but you said you're going to start with 9th
15 grade. Is that just 9th grade or you're starting
16 with 9th and 10th grade? Are you going to start with
17 two grades or three grades or one grade? Could you
18 restate that?

19 MS. ECKLES: It's just 9th grade. Yeah. We're
20 just starting with 9th grade.

21 DR. MOORE: So just --

22 MS. ECKLES: Yeah.

23 DR. MOORE: -- 9th grade? Okay. I didn't know
24 if you meant adding 9th grade.

25 MS. ECKLES: No. Yeah. So the original plan

1 was 10th and 11th, and we were -- they said that we
2 should start with 9th grade.

3 DR. MOORE: Okay.

4 MS. ECKLES: And so we're just starting with
5 just 9th grade the first year.

6 DR. MOORE: Okay. That explains a lot of your
7 other things then -- is -- that things that would
8 start year two if you were starting when 9th grade.
9 That's helpful. And so, then, for your total
10 projected number of students and your budget and
11 everything, does that mean -- when you had 10th and
12 11th you were anticipating 100 students. So if it's
13 just 9th grade, are you still anticipating 100
14 students or are you anticipating 50 students?

15 MS. MOORE: We're going to recruit 100 students
16 --

17 DR. MOORE: Still?

18 MS. MOORE: -- easily. I'm actually at my
19 school right now and I have several 7th and 8th
20 graders asking, and their parents are approaching me.
21 So it's very encouraging and -- that they want
22 something too. So it's very encouraging. And some
23 of those kiddos do some really important things in
24 the community as far as sports and extracurriculars.
25 So I know the word will spread. We just haven't been

1 over advertising.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Can I build on that question

3 --

4 DR. MOORE: Sure.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- real quick?

6 So in looking at -- and we've kind of danced
7 around it a little bit -- but this idea of interest
8 and what is the -- you know, being able to quantify
9 that interest because we -- we've got the anecdotal
10 interest, but have you done a interest survey? Have
11 you done anything to kind of get some numbers to say
12 here's what we're seeing? These are the students
13 that are interested in coming here. And granted
14 those things -- they may not consider going there
15 once it comes down to it or they -- you may have way
16 more than that. But just having those numbers would
17 make it a little bit easier for us to wrap our heads
18 around what's the -- what's the desire for this to be
19 there? So I just want you to think about that.

20 And then I'll send it back to Dr. Moore.

21 DR. MOORE: Thank you.

22 And then, on another note, I was looking at the
23 master schedule. And as far as courses required to
24 be offered by ADE, you might want to go back and look
25 at that because I know on the math, it's missing a

1 course that's required. Because in math you have --
2 there are four required courses; then, you have to
3 pick two from a list of others. And, like, if you
4 offer Pre-AP Algebra 1, that's not counting as a
5 separate course; that's not one of the extra ones.
6 So you have six courses listed, but you're missing
7 some. And I think that may be the case in science
8 because pre-AP Biology is not going to count, in
9 addition to biology, as a required course. It might
10 have changed, so you might want to check with DESE
11 about that. And Amy Counts, she's your expert on
12 that and she's in here.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Back there in the blue dress.

14 DR. MOORE: Yeah.

15 So you can check with her.

16 And then, we've talked a lot about internships,
17 and I applaud the work-based learning opportunities
18 that you're wanting to do; and echo what Dr.
19 Wright-McMurray said about getting with the Division
20 of Career and Technical education and really looking
21 at opportunities because there are course -- I'm sure
22 you know if you're already working in schools --
23 there are standards for that. It's not just a -- you
24 can say internship loosely and use that word
25 generically, but if you say internships, that is a

1 course code; there are standards for that. And it's
2 very -- it's not just willy nilly go out and do
3 something, like, there are certain things that are
4 required. So looking at that -- and to that point, I
5 was wondering about the access and transportation for
6 that. So there's not only the access to your school
7 -- or transportation -- or the access to the higher
8 ed institution that requires transportation, but that
9 access to business partners, like, how students will
10 get there and then get home after. So could you talk
11 a little bit about that piece -- about the
12 transportation to internships if you're intending on
13 nearly all of your students having that opportunity?

14 MS. ECKLES: Yes. So that will come into the
15 second year, and we are looking at actually applying
16 for grants. At a previous school that we worked at,
17 we actually were -- we actually were able to get
18 someone to fund vans. So we had two 16-passenger
19 vans. And we actually had someone that actually did
20 the transportation to students -- to their
21 internships. So they dropped them off. The ones
22 that needed transportation, dropped them off, knew
23 what time they had to go and pick them back up. So
24 the transportation, as far as the internship, would
25 not be a problem. We plan on following that same

1 thing that we had at the other school -- is getting
2 funding for vans for the school for internship
3 purposes only. Yeah.

4 DR. MOORE: Okay. And in 10th grade, it is --
5 certainly, you have a lot of kids who may just be
6 14/15 years old. So to your point, a lot of times
7 you know we struggle with them even wanting
8 16-year-olds in businesses. So just, you know,
9 keeping that in mind, how challenging that may really
10 be. And I don't know if someone's totally dedicated
11 to leading all the internships, but the thought of
12 internships for 100 students, even. I mean, that
13 that's a caseload.

14 MS. ECKLES: Yes. Yeah. And that's -- it will
15 fall on us, but that I think that's the unique thing
16 of having an advisor that has the 20 students because
17 that advisor is responsible for just those 20
18 students. So there's a lot of support that goes into
19 that internship piece. And yes, 10th grade is very
20 young and we're not saying that we're going to launch
21 all the 10th graders out. There may be some that are
22 not even ready. And we'll be like, yeah, I don't
23 think you're ready. We may need to do some more
24 work. We'll wait till 11th or 12th grade. And then
25 we may get some that are just like, okay, yeah. We

1 trust that you are ready to do an internship. So
2 even though we may have the 100, we do not expect
3 that all hundred will actually be out at an
4 internship; but we will have the transportation to
5 get them there if we need it.

6 DR. MOORE: Okay. And I think it's awesome that
7 they will have that, like, one to 20 ratio or
8 something for advisors. But they're -- and Sonja
9 could speak much more to this than I can -- the
10 specific work-based learning coordinator has to be
11 part of that.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So if that's -- I'm sorry.

13 DR. MOORE: Oh, no, go ahead.

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Sorry.

15 So that's part of my question. And I got -- I
16 stopped asking questions before because I don't want
17 to hog the question cycle. But -- so that's part of
18 my question: is the advisors it sounds like are
19 going to be responsible for work-based learning --
20 supporting that; correct?

21 MS. MOORE: They will have -- there will be an
22 internship director or coordinator over them where
23 they're giving the support. So sometimes the
24 advisors can't get out into the community which is
25 what we've actually seen with our work-based learning

1 programs in Northwest Arkansas. Sometimes the
2 teacher can't leave the school; sometimes we can't
3 get out and support that mentor or that site, but the
4 internship coordinator can. This person will be
5 freed up full -- no teacher duties as soon as we're
6 able to. They may have to wear a couple of hats to
7 start with, but they will be the ones going out into
8 the community and making sure that relationship is
9 okay and repairing their relationships if there needs
10 to be reparation or just providing extra support for
11 the advisors.

12 Paperwork also gets done and we have a program
13 called ImBlaze where we file our paperwork. It
14 actually GPSs our kids so that we know where they're
15 at when they're on their internships because they
16 clock in and clock out. We keep all of the
17 information. Surveys are done immediately after the
18 kid clocks out; something is sent to the mentor to
19 talk about how the day went -- quick survey.
20 Something that doesn't take too much time from them.
21 The student also reflects in that, and they can also
22 keep track of their experiences as far as, like,
23 community service and things like that go. And it's
24 just crossed over with AI. So we're really excited
25 about that -- to show how far it is from their house.

1 And what's the closest opportunity in our database as
2 far as hair or cosmetology? What's the closest to
3 their house and what's the most feasible way to get
4 there?

5 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

6 MS. MOORE: So --

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- just backing up for a
8 second, okay. So in response to a question that Dr.
9 Moore had a few seconds ago, you indicated that
10 advisors would have a role in the internship
11 component.

12 MS. MOORE: Yes.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So what is going to
14 be the advisors' role in the internship component on
15 a regular basis. So we're not looking at that -- this
16 day came up, teacher can't get out of the classroom.
17 If you had mapped out the advisors' job description
18 it would say, what?

19 MS. ECKLES: So the advisors' job as far as
20 internships is actually they're overseeing, like,
21 kind of, like, a tiny internship program themselves
22 because their students are in internship. So they're
23 responsible for site visits. That's going out and
24 making sure this is having that -- they are
25 responsible for the training of the mentors, talking

1 to them about what is expected of them. Actually,
2 going over stuff with students as well. So they --
3 it's, like, a mini-internship program that the
4 advisors are responsible for, but they do all of
5 those steps: the training of the mentor, the
6 training of the student, making a decision if they
7 are ready to go out to an internship or not.

8 So I don't know if that kind of answers your
9 question or if you --

10 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: It does.

11 MS. ECKLES: Okay.

12 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So that's their -- that's
13 their role and responsibility as relates to
14 internship.

15 MS. ECKLES: Internship, yes, ma'am.

16 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And then previously, if --
17 I want to make sure I'm following all the
18 conversations correctly. You mentioned earlier that
19 to try to offset the responsibilities of a school
20 counselor, that advisors would have some role in that
21 process as well; is that correct?

22 MS. ECKLES: Correct. Yes.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. And so, I guess, my
24 question is: if they have us role in internship and
25 they have a role in school counseling and then -- I'm

1 imagining that they also have other responsibilities
2 or is that all that they're going to be doing?

3 MS. ECKLES: No. So I was an advisor and so I
4 was also -- and, actually, I was a content teacher
5 and then I also had an advisory that I was
6 responsible for as well that incorporated all those
7 things. Yeah.

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. So just listening
9 to that sounds like a whole lot --

10 MS. ECKLES: It is.

11 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- for one person to --

12 MS. ECKLES: It is.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- do effectively. Now, I
14 know we can assign those roles to individuals and
15 they can do them, but that just sounds like to me --
16 just listening to it -- that sounds like a whole lot
17 for one person to be responsible for. Because I know
18 you indicate you have the endorsement to be a
19 work-based learning coordinator and you said you've
20 served in that role of capacity before. You know
21 that there is a lot that's involved in just that
22 piece and supporting students, providing the
23 feedback, getting feedback from employers,
24 incorporating that back into the classroom
25 environment, then keeping -- helping them keep track

1 of their hours. And that just seems like that's
2 going to be a lot on top of that piece.

3 And then, we haven't even talked about your part
4 of your mission is restorative practices. And so you
5 are already admitting you're going to be working with
6 students that may have some additional challenges
7 that need to be addressed. And so to layer that in
8 as well, I'm just -- I guess I would like to know
9 more what is your vision on how that's going to be
10 operated effectively? And I can step out and come
11 back to that because I know Dr. Moore may not

12 DR. MOORE: You're fine.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- be done. But when she
14 said that about internship, I just know -- that's one
15 of the offices that reports directly to me, and I
16 know the volume of work that is required for that.
17 And so I just get a little concerned if we have
18 someone that's trying to do all of those pieces as
19 well as school counseling components and then
20 restorative practices. But just something to think
21 about --

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And I think Mr. Baldwin --

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- but I'll step out from.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Baldwin has something to
25 add.

1 MR. BALDWIN: And let me -- let me tag team both
2 of the ladies because this has kind of brought up
3 something I saw when I read the -- read your
4 application. So you have, like, a world of great
5 things. It's like, you know, it was really fun to
6 read. And I thought, as I read it before I got back
7 to the detail, that you guys would have, you know --
8 in order to accomplish that, you would have the staff
9 that would be, like, one teacher for every ten kids
10 or one teacher for every five kids. Because Dr.
11 Wright-McMurray is right, this is all going to take a
12 lot of time, especially the restorative practices
13 part, because that's a, you know, that's special --
14 takes special people and it just takes skilled and
15 talented people. And, you know, when I look at the
16 budget, you -- you're budgeting four faculty for 100
17 kids. So that's one teacher for 25 kids which when
18 you have all the extra work, it just seems like it's
19 a lot. Just a lot to accomplish with a small staff
20 of people.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Dr. Moore?

22 DR. MOORE: I also wanted to ask about the
23 waiver for school nurses. I know we talked -- y'all
24 heard -- everything heard this morning, some of that
25 same stuff --

1 MS. MOORE: Yes.

2 DR. MOORE: -- applies and you have plans to
3 work with medical students in the area. As you
4 mentioned, there's a new med school up there and
5 there's also nursing schools up there.

6 MS. MOORE: Yes.

7 DR. MOORE: But, you know, that's a plan; that's
8 a hope. How will you administer medication to
9 children until that happens, not guaranteed that
10 that's going to happen. What's a plan for medicine
11 for children?

12 MS. MOORE: So in the past it has been the
13 designee at the school that I was at. I don't know
14 if we did it right or not, but it was the designee --
15 the office manager that followed the prescriptive
16 from the doctor. It had to be of an action plan from
17 the doctor and we've only ever had, at that school,
18 two kids that had medication. And then we've had
19 magnets before for -- what was it, April?

20 DR. MOORE: A what? I'm sorry.

21 MS. MOORE: A -- magnets for Afib?

22 DR. MOORE: And I'm not familiar; that's not my
23 area of expertise; I don't know how that works with
24 waivers, but I was just curious how someone who's not
25 licensed to administer medicine could. So that's a

1 question.

2 MS. MOORE: We will -- we'll first get with
3 legal for sure. But I know that at my son's school,
4 I've had to get a prescriptive, this is how you do it
5 from the doctor, and then signed off. But it's very
6 detailed and it's from his actual physician. And
7 that's what I did at the last school that I was at.
8 I don't know if we did it right, but we had -- we did
9 have to administer medicine for two different kids.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Reynolds, I know this is
11 not necessarily your area of law, but are you
12 familiar with any of the restrictions involving
13 medications?

14 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And, Chairman Sutherlin,
15 when an opportunity -- the question that I asked, I
16 would like to give them an opportunity -- to have an
17 opportunity --

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

19 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- to respond.

20 DR. MOORE: Oh, I'm sorry, Dr. Wright-McMurray.

21 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: No.

22 DR. MOORE: I didn't realize they hadn't
23 answered your question.

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: You're fine.

25 I don't want to throw the question out there and

1 just say ha. I want them to be able to respond.

2 MR. REYNOLDS: Stephen Reynolds, staff attorney
3 for the Department.

4 No, administering medicine is not my area of
5 expertise --

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

7 MR. REYNOLDS: -- but I do know that -- so there
8 are certain requirements in the law that cannot be
9 waived: the eye and vision screening, CPR, emergency
10 health services can't be waived. Additionally, there
11 are restrictions on the model that can be utilized
12 when you're -- when you don't have a registered
13 nurse, you know, working in the school. I know the
14 most common model that we've seen is an RN at the
15 district level may not have a RN in every school, may
16 have an LPN or some other designation.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

18 MR. REYNOLDS: But that's about all I can speak
19 to as far as administering medication.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Well, I appreciate
21 that. Thank you.

22 DR. MOORE: So before I ask my last question,
23 could y'all address -- if you need her to repeat it.

24 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: No, no. I can't wait till
25 you get done. I just didn't want us to wrap up and I

1 didn't --

2 DR. MOORE: Well, no. We'll stay on that train
3 of thought. Go ahead, go ahead. So it doesn't get
4 forgotten.

5 They might need you to repeat it --

6 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

7 DR. MOORE: -- since I interrupted.

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So just to repeat, it
9 seems like that the advisor will be responsible for
10 three major pieces. And so if you could just share
11 with us your plan on how that's going to be
12 effectively implemented with them being responsible
13 for a piece of work-based learning, a piece of school
14 counseling; and then they're also going to have a
15 role in the restorative practices component of your
16 school; and on top of that, they may be teaching
17 content. So that's four major pieces. So what does
18 that look like within the school?

19 MS. MOORE: So two of the major pieces, I will
20 absorb the work-based learning for the first year.
21 I'm really good with the Seamless, really good with
22 the reporting and really good with the classrooms --
23 that hour required. That -- I've got that. I can
24 contribute that easily.

25 Crystal is going to take over restorative

1 practices. She's an ace at that, so she's going to
2 lead that; also train our advisors. But -- unless
3 the advisor will be required to be in the circle or
4 -- their time as far as that goes, they won't be
5 doing much with restorative practices.

6 MS. ECKLES: Yeah. I was just saying that the
7 restorative practice piece is not on the advisors'
8 plate. Now, we will train them that way they know
9 how to incorporate that in their classrooms. But as
10 far as them being, like, over their restorative
11 practice piece, that would not be on their plate at
12 all.

13 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

14 MS. ECKLES: Yeah.

15 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: And I guess -- and I will
16 let it bounce back to Dr. Moore. I guess more so my
17 thought on that was that the student as an individual
18 that will require restorative practices support may
19 be a student that just generally through the course
20 of the day is going to need some more lifting up from
21 the -- from the teacher. And so to have that already
22 as the foundational piece in place, then to have a
23 responsibility that is associated with internship,
24 then to have a responsibility that is associated with
25 school counseling. I feel like that's where I was

1 coming from, that you're going to be working with
2 students that are going to need additional support
3 just generally. So when you have that in place and
4 then you layer on these other pieces, it just gets to
5 be a little bit concerning hearing that; that someone
6 would be able to effectively meet the needs of all
7 the other things they need to do because they may
8 have to support a student more so because of whatever
9 is bringing them to them that would need that
10 additional support. So that's where that was coming
11 from.

12 MS. MOORE: Absolutely. And that's where we're
13 also going to rely on the community outreach. If
14 that child is requiring so much of that support -- or
15 needed support and time, we're going to have someone
16 else -- we're going to get the services for that
17 child. Now, if that's their safe adult, we're going
18 to have to revisit that just because, you know,
19 sometimes you have that kid and that's their safe
20 adult; and you have to wean them from that. And we
21 hope to step into that quite often, especially since
22 relationships are so important to our school. We
23 hope to be able to do that. And we also will have
24 lesson plans. I mean, we have -- we've already
25 pretty much finished our lesson plans for not 10th,

1 11th, 12th as far as advisory goes, incorporating
2 these different aspects of the counseling and the
3 internships. And most of the advisors' internship
4 role, other than site visits themselves, is automated
5 and it goes directly to the work-based learning
6 coordinator. So anything that they request -- the
7 students will request it and then the work-based
8 learning coordinator will oversee that. So coming
9 from somebody who has had all of those roles at one
10 time and aged about five years, it -- it's doable.
11 It's hard and we're going to try -- we know what it's
12 like, so we're going to try to take that off their
13 plate. We're going to try to take bits and pieces
14 off, give them solid plans, and then a lot of
15 reflection time so that we can go into it better the
16 next year.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Dr. Moore?

18 DR. MOORE: All right. So my last thing is
19 almost more just a -- an observance -- a statement.
20 So it seems that maybe this will be your first role
21 as principal, and this will be your first role as
22 superintendent. So even at a school that's already
23 established, boy, that's a challenge to take on.
24 That's a lot. And so you're taking that on as you
25 also are a founding person for this charter, as

1 you're also going to help with the work-based
2 learning and you're also going to lead with the
3 restorative practices. So I applaud you because
4 you're much braver than I am, and I can tell that
5 you've already committed to be willing to not sleep
6 for the next year. Like, your passion exudes, but I
7 think the reality of that being doable and a
8 successful model may be a real challenge to achieve
9 because even if you -- I mean, just -- there's so
10 many compounding factors there. So I applaud your
11 willingness to do that, but I could see that it may
12 make more sense to either have someone else doing
13 some of those other things that you're wanting to
14 take on or have someone else be the building level
15 principal and the superintendent. Because to try to
16 do all those other things and do those leadership
17 roles, especially in your first year of doing those
18 leadership roles, doesn't set you up for success
19 which wouldn't set students up for success. So it
20 just seems like a real challenge.

21 And it does seem like a lot of the data that you
22 have may be anecdotal and hope that things will
23 happen. And I'm sure you were probably waiting to
24 get the green light to then get more hard data, but
25 approval from us often needs a little more firm data

1 to make that decision off of, so that's just some
2 comments to share.

3 MS. MOORE: Thank you.

4 MS. NEWTON: I have a question.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes, Ms. Newton.

6 MS. NEWTON: Based on what I think I hear --

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Can you pull your microphone
8 down? Sorry. Thank you.

9 MS. NEWTON: Oh, I'm sorry. Based on what I
10 think I hear -- and this is a hypothetical -- would
11 it be best -- given the trend that seems to be
12 flowing in terms of the questions, would it be best
13 for them to withdraw or for us to decide -- or them
14 have the opportunity to withdraw to let us go and
15 talk this over again or -- I don't know when the next
16 cycle is or whatever. But I don't -- I think at this
17 point maybe -- it's fairly obvious to me what --
18 well, it's obvious to me what I would do -- what I'm
19 going to recommend or move. I don't know how, you
20 know, they may not be -- the others.

21 CHAIR SUTHELIN: Right.

22 MS. NEWTON: But what would be the best -- what
23 are the options at this point given all the concerns
24 of all the Panel as I understand?

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

1 Mr. Reynolds, would you like to come up and give
2 us our options -- or give the applicant their
3 options?

4 MR. REYNOLDS: So the -- Stephen Reynolds staff
5 turning for the Department.

6 So the three options on the table are, one,
7 grant the application; two, reject the application
8 and they can apply next cycle; or, three, you can
9 table it, come back -- have them come back in a
10 month, maybe they have some hard -- more hard data,
11 have thought about things, you know, a little bit
12 more in depth. They can get with the Charter Office
13 to ask them specific questions. You guys can get
14 questions to the Charter Office, but those are really
15 the three options available.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So withdrawal of application
17 is not an option?

18 MR. REYNOLDS: They can withdraw, but it's -- I
19 mean, it's not the same as a rejection of the
20 application, but they would still have to wait to
21 come back --

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right, right.

23 MR. REYNOLDS: -- and then apply next year. So
24 --

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Baldwin?

1 MR. BALDWIN: So a question on that -- and I
2 think we would love to see them rework the
3 application, however, legally it needs to happen.
4 But with them also changing the application to start
5 with the 9th grade only, to me they need to re-budget
6 everything; they need to do a lot of work --

7 MR. REYNOLDS: Right. That --

8 MR. BALDWIN: -- probably. And they need to
9 probably listen to all the comments and maybe not try
10 to be such a broad giant.

11 MR. REYNOLDS: Yeah. That was why I mentioned
12 the --

13 MR. BALDWIN: Yeah.

14 MR. REYNOLDS: -- tabling it and coming back in
15 a month.

16 MR. BALDWIN: Or two months?

17 MR. REYNOLDS: Or whatever.

18 MR. BALDWIN: I don't know if you have enough
19 time.

20 DR. MOORE: I don't even see this being a couple
21 of months. This seems like an additional school year
22 to me, but it's on my level of expertise. But just
23 the budget alone and all of that; I don't see it
24 being a month or two.

25 MR. REYNOLDS: So -- yeah. I mean, you know,

1 the charter could withdraw their application and come
2 back next year, or you guys could vote to reject the
3 application.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: But either way, the outcome is
5 the same. They would still be able to reapply next
6 year --

7 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- so it's not as though it's
9 a detriment to them if it were --

10 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- rejected.

12 MR. REYNOLDS: Right.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: I do know that we have Jerri
14 Clark on the Zoom. And, you know, the question we
15 asked earlier was about school nurses and whether or
16 not you have to be a school nurse to administer
17 medication. And so I wanted to give her an
18 opportunity just to give you that feedback so that
19 you could hear that.

20 So, Jerri, can you -- can you hear us?

21 MS. CLARK: I can hear, but for some reason it's
22 muffled.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Oh, we can't hear you. Hold
24 on just a second.

25 MR. DAVIS: Well, while we figure that out, will

1 they have access to the transcript?

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. So that will be posted
3 online. So all of the feedback that we provided will
4 be provided in that transcript. And they also have
5 feedback from the Panel Members. So they'll have
6 that -- meaning the internal review committee that
7 looked over the charter application. So they will
8 have that feedback as well.

9 MR. DAVIS: Because there's been a -- there's
10 been a lot, and I know -- I don't know how I would
11 even begin to approach it without having something to
12 respond to. So --

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

14 MR. DAVIS: -- I'm glad they get that.

15 DR. MOORE: And, Dr. Sutherlin, also, I remember
16 in the past when we encouraged them to work with
17 APSRC like we've said, there was -- also encouraged
18 to work with the consultant. And I remember another
19 school worked with a consultant and came --

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Correct.

21 DR. MOORE: -- back. I don't know how you find
22 those consultants or any of that, but any
23 encouragement we could give to them on that?

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. And I would say you
25 know, if you can gather more individuals to your

1 cause that are here with you, I think that will --
2 that will help bolster your case. Because if you
3 have others that can speak to your vision and your
4 mission, I think that will help. Because right now
5 we're here and we're seeing your passion. We're
6 seeing that you really want to do this, and we just
7 need to see that there are others that want to walk
8 alongside you and do this with you.

9 Jerri, can you try again just to see if we can
10 hear you?

11 MS. CLARK: So I can hear you say my name.

12 MS. MUNDELL: We can hear her in there.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Oh. Okay. Okay. Yes.

14 Jerri, would you mind coming down to talk with
15 us?

16 MS. CLARK: Yeah, I'm on my way. Sure.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. Thank you.

18 MS. MOORE: Full transparency -- full
19 transparency while she's coming. We were both really
20 concerned about our jobs because I do work in a
21 school district, and they do not like competition.
22 And she does work for an organization that we will
23 represent. So we were both really concerned about
24 our jobs, and this was a huge chance for us to take
25 too. And I hope that's not held against us. That's

1 why we didn't go super public with things, and we
2 kept it kind of small because we know that the love
3 and that the support is actually there; we just have
4 to prove it to you guys.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. And, you know, the
6 other piece because -- does anyone else have any
7 questions or feedback to give because I --

8 MR. SCOTT: Just a -- it's sort of a quick
9 comment. I want to preface it by a quote from a
10 former football coach -- legendary -- that said,
11 success equals the peace of mind that comes from the
12 satisfaction of knowing that you've done your best.
13 Part of doing your best, I believe, is to gather all
14 the intel you can. It has already been mentioned,
15 transcripts from this, the questions that have come
16 out; there's some additional ones that will come as
17 you work with various consultants, APSRC, whoever the
18 parties may be. But be true to your heart knowing
19 the timing is also important. So doing your best as
20 a part of gather the intel, mapping the appropriate
21 answers responses and coming back confidently and
22 knowing that you're serving the kids and the
23 communities that you desire. Okay. All right.

24 MR. BALDWIN: And I would add, you know, you
25 guys are great educators. I would find a great

1 financial person to help you with the budget and to
2 think through all the components of it because a lot
3 of the, you know, answers that you guys are giving us
4 are going to cost a lot of money and you need that
5 financial mind side by side with your education mind
6 to make sure it all fits together.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Anyone else?

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Oh, no. I would just, I
9 guess, reiterate what I've been trying to get to from
10 the beginning is that I strongly encourage you to
11 reach out to our division, the Division of Career and
12 Technical Education, and get a sense of the pathways
13 that you think you may want to offer -- work very
14 closely with our pathway advisors to get that
15 information. And I will say that you mentioned that
16 there are some challenges for students being
17 successful in the current structure, but I know that
18 there are some strong programs in your area. So
19 whatever is causing the gap, I think that's maybe
20 what you want to try to figure out and target that
21 because there are strong programs in that area with
22 career tech ed, with Jobs for Arkansas Graduates.
23 And so whatever is causing that gap maybe will be
24 where you want to focus. And maybe that will help
25 you to shrink a little bit of what you're trying to

1 do so you're not trying to do so much at one time;
2 but you're maybe you're closer to meeting whatever
3 that need is. So you're not reduplicating what's
4 already in place.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

6 Jerri, would you mind coming to the podium,
7 please? And please state your name and position.

8 MS. CLARK: I'm Jerri Clark. I'm the health
9 services director here at the Department.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So the question was asked as
11 far as administering medication: can anyone other
12 than a nurse administer medication to a student?

13 MS. CLARK: Certain types of med --

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: You may want to pull the --
15 yeah. There you go.

16 MS. CLARK: Certain types of medication can be
17 delegated to a layperson, which is someone with
18 without a healthcare license. Typically, that person
19 has to be trained for the medication administration
20 by a licensed nurse. There are certain medications
21 that cannot be delegated. That is actually regulated
22 by the Nurse Practice Act for the state of Arkansas
23 which is not something that is waivable by this
24 Board.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. All right.

1 MS. CLARK: Does that help?

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes, that helps us.

3 MS. CLARK: Okay.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you very much.

5 MS. CLARK: Perfect.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Appreciate it.

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So that does -- sorry.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Oh, go ahead.

9 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: There was one thing where
10 they indicated that they were planning on the office
11 manager serving as the nurse. So what was that going
12 to look like? Sorry. Because I'm just trying to
13 make sure we leave it with all the details --

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Right.

15 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: -- that we need to
16 address.

17 MS. MOORE: So we had planned on the office
18 manager being trained in Stop the Bleed, the AED, the
19 Narcan, the EpiPen, because that's pretty -- that's
20 pretty much the most common that has to be -- and
21 CPR. So we had wanted them to be trained in all of
22 those as well as the administrators so that they
23 could back that person up. And that be the person
24 that was designated that the kids go to, mostly for
25 Band-Aids, but for any kind of medicine -- the lock

1 box, anything like that.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So --

3 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So it sounds like -- I'm
4 sorry.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Oh, go ahead.

6 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So it sounds like the
7 office manager was not going to be a licensed nurse,
8 so there would need to be someone that is identified
9 that could distribute the drugs that are on that
10 specified list still.

11 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Correct.

12 DR. MOORE: So, like, Jerri is ADHD medicine on
13 that list or is that something that a layperson can
14 administer? Because that seems to be another common
15 one, ADHD medicines -- or migraine medicine is
16 another common one.

17 MS. CLARK: Typically, those would be controlled
18 substances that cannot be administered by someone
19 without a healthcare license. And likely you're
20 going to see students on the campus that have some
21 type of chronic condition that would either require
22 medication that has to be administered by a licensed
23 healthcare professional. Or you're going to see
24 conditions among students that require tasks such as
25 diabetic students that need calorie counts and things

1 like that throughout the day that would need to be
2 either trained by a nurse or conducted by a nurse.
3 So those are some things that if you -- if you waive
4 the requirement for the school to have a nurse on
5 campus, they would need a plan in place for how they
6 would have access to a healthcare professional to
7 take care of those tasks that cannot be delegated.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And what I would say is, you
9 know, rather than, you know, go through all this
10 here, I think what we can do is if you'll get in
11 contact with Jerri and Jerri can walk you through
12 that, that whole process of what needs to happen in
13 order for you to be able to move forward with that
14 waiver. Yes.

15 So here -- here's where we are right now. We
16 can either go the route of you deciding that you want
17 to pull your application, or we can go ahead and take
18 a move. And it's sort of -- I'm going to leave that
19 decision up to you because if you want to pull your
20 application, I don't want to deny you the ability to
21 do that. So just on the record, I'd like for you to
22 state whether or not that is your choice to do so.

23 MS. ECKLES: Yeah, we'll definitely do that. I
24 think we've learned something here today and like we
25 said, I think at the beginning, that it may not get

1 approved today, but we'll be back. And I'm thankful
2 for all the feedback that everyone has given us and
3 that we can go back and have a year to actually
4 reflect and come back next year with a bad plan that
5 you guys would like jump in to approve. So we will
6 withdraw, yes.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. And I would say, you
8 know, every one of those -- those different units
9 reach out to them; they're more than willing to help
10 and to kind of guide you through that process. You
11 know, ALE, special education, we didn't get into
12 those components, but, you know, those are some areas
13 you probably want to talk with. Yvonne Greene is
14 actually on the Zoom right now; she's been listening,
15 so she knows what your plan is, and so she can kind
16 of give you some guidance moving forward as well. So
17 just reach out to those people here at the
18 Department.

19 MS. MOORE: Thank you.

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes.

21 All right. Well, we appreciate you being here
22 today. Thank you so much. And please do go and look
23 at that transcript and then what we will do as
24 individual Panel Members is if we have suggestions,
25 we're going to send those to Dorie Summons, who's our

1 charter director; and she can go through and provide
2 those back to you so that you have all that feedback
3 ready to go for next time.

4 MS. ECKLES: And can I -- Dr. Moore, you were
5 talking about data before you stopped talking. When
6 you give that to Dorie, could you kind of explain
7 what you were meaning about the data that we should
8 have here next time? I don't know if you remember
9 you saying that -- the harder data.

10 DR. MOORE: Oh, well, sure. I was just about
11 some of the applications we've --

12 MS. ECKLES: Okay.

13 DR. MOORE: -- received that they come to us
14 with a little more data.

15 MS. ECKLES: Okay. I didn't know if there were
16 specifics that you could give us. That's what I was
17 wondering.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

19 DR. MOORE: We can give -- we can definitely
20 provide some feedback.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: We can provide some feedback
22 on that, but for instance, one element would be that
23 interest survey --

24 MS. ECKLES: Yes.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- to be able to provide that

1 data. But we can provide you that all via email so
2 that you have that to go off of.

3 All right. Well, thank you so much. Appreciate
4 it.

5 DR. MOORE: Thank you for the heart that you
6 have for students.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yes. Thank you so much.

8 MS. MOORE: We will be back.

9 DR. MOORE: It's obviously you've invested a lot
10 of time in this already.

11 MS. MOORE: Yes, thank you very much.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And we know it's going to come
13 back stronger. So --

14 MS. MOORE: Oh, definitely.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah.

16 **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Any new business?

18 (NO RESPONSE)

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: If not, I'll entertain a
20 motion to adjourn.

21 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I move that we adjourn.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. I have a motion to
23 adjourn. Do I have a second?

24 MR. SCOTT: I second.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. All those in

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favor?

(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

All those opposed? Any abstentions? None.

Okay. All right. We're adjourned. Thank you
so much.

(The agenda concluded at 3:02 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss
 COUNTY OF PULASKI)

I, Miranda McEntire, Certified Court Reporter #852, do hereby certify that the facts stated by me in the caption on the foregoing proceedings are true; and that the foregoing proceedings were reported verbatim through the use of the voice-writing method and thereafter transcribed by me or under my direct supervision to the best of my ability, taken at the time and place set out on the caption hereto.

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