

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Via GoToWebinar
June 10, 2020
9:34 a.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF QUARTERLY MEETING

The quarterly meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children was held on the 10th day of June, 2020, via GoToWebinar commencing at 9:34 a.m.

APPEARANCES

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cynthia Daniels-Hall, Chairperson
Christy Hutchinson, Vice Chairperson

Sara Bigley
Diane Coffey
Jennifer Degen
Leanna George
Christy Grant
Jennifer Grady
Kristen Hodges
Kimari Johnson
Virginia Moorefield
Cache Owens
Marge Terhaar

STAFF:

Carol Ann Hudgens
Danyelle Sanders
Sherry Thomas
Alexis Utz

COURT REPORTER:

Rebecca P. Scott

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1 Thereupon, the following proceeding was held:

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Welcome,
3 everyone. This is the Council on Educational
4 Services for Exceptional Children's meeting. It's
5 virtual because of COVID. I hope you all are well
6 and I thank you for joining us today.

7 So today we're going to do
8 introductions, and we're going to go by the
9 members list that we have available to us. Could
10 you put that up maybe, Alexis, where everybody can
11 see?

12 And so I'll start, and my name is
13 Cynthia Daniels-Hall. I'm a parent, I'm an
14 advocate, and I'm from Wake County, and I have
15 children on the autism spectrum. And next will
16 be Diane Coffey.

17 MS. COFFEY: Good morning. My name
18 is Diane Coffey, and I'm a parent from Watauga
19 County and also an advocate that works with
20 families.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Leanna?

22 MS. GEORGE: Sorry. I had to get
23 unmuted. I'm Leanna George. I'm a parent from
24 Johnston County. Both of my children have
25 exceptionalities, and I am an advocate for

1 families with children with disabilities. Thank
2 you.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Leslie Sellars?

4 MS. UTZ: I'm not seeing her name on
5 here.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. We'll go on
7 to Abby Childers. Sorry if I'm getting it wrong.
8 Abby?

9 MS. UTZ: I don't see her either.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. We'll skip
11 over to Jennifer Frey. No?

12 MS. UTZ: Nope.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Kristen
14 Hodges? Kristen Hodges?

15 MS. HODGES: Hello, how are you?

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh. Good.

17 MS. HODGES: This is Kristen Hodges.

18 I'm a parent. I have three children. Two have
19 IEPs. One is for speech and one is for a math
20 learning disability. I also have a daughter who
21 has a 504. I'm also a school counselor. So thank
22 you for doing this. I'm actually calling in from
23 a river by Maryland, so the magic of the Internet
24 is really helpful sometimes.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Kristen.

1 Lisa Black?

2 MS. UTZ: I do not see her name.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Sherita

4 Jones?

5 MS. UTZ: I do not see her name

6 either.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Jennifer Degen?

8 MS. DEGEN: Hi. I'm Jennifer Degen.

9 I'm with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in

10 Charlotte. I am a 20-year teacher of special ed.

11 I'm also the compliance facilitator for my school.

12 Good morning, everybody.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Christy

14 Grant?

15 MS. GRANT: Good morning. This is

16 Christy Grant. I am the traditional LEA EC

17 Director with Nash-Rocky Mount Schools.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Anthony

19 Baker?

20 MS. UTZ: Anthony sent me an email.

21 It is his last day of school, so he has a lot

22 going on, and he would not be able to attend

23 today.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent. Thank

25 you. And Christy Hutchinson?

1 MS. TERHAAR: Excuse me. I'm Marge
2 Terhaar. I'm above Christy's name on the list.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. Marge.
4 Sorry. Marge Terhaar.

5 MS. TERHAAR: No problem. Marge
6 Terhaar. Hi. I'm a professor at Meredith, and
7 I'm the coordinator for graduate programs in
8 special education as well as a parent of two adult
9 sons with ADHD.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Marge.
11 Christy Hutchinson?

12 MS. HUTCHINSON: Hey, guys. Christy
13 Hutchinson here, EC Director representative for
14 charter schools, and I currently work at Lincoln
15 Charter School.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Cache
17 Owens?

18 MS. OWENS: Good morning, everybody.
19 Cache here, the PTI Director at ECAC.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Cache.
21 Jennifer Grady?

22 MS. GRADY: Hi. This is Jennifer
23 Grady. I work for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of
24 North Carolina in the Health Policy Office, and
25 I'm the parent of two children, one who has

1 autism.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Selene
3 Johnson?

4 MS. UTZ: I do not see her name as
5 being present.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Do we have
7 Representative Larry Strickland?

8 MS. UTZ: I don't see his name.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Virginia
10 Moorefield?

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: This is Ginny
12 Moorefield. I am a parent to a middle-schooler
13 with traumatic brain injury in the ID severe
14 category. I'm also a regular ed world language
15 teacher, interpreter for the deaf, and sort of the
16 resident "that mom."

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Sherry
18 Thomas?

19 MS. UTZ: She is not present
20 currently. She's in another meeting, but she will
21 be joining us later in the session to do her
22 presentation part.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Carla
24 McNeill?

25 MS. UTZ: And this will be Kimari

1 now.

2 MS. JOHNSON: Yeah. This is Kimari.
3 I'm filling in for Carla. Moving forward, I'll be
4 replacing Carla on this. I am the Interim Program
5 Manager for the Interstate Compact on the
6 Placement of Children.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Kristi
8 Snuggs?

9 MS. UTZ: I do not see her.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Do we have Kelli
11 Terrell or Julie Jailall?

12 MS. UTZ: I do not see either of
13 their names either.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Sara Bigley?

15 MS. BIGLEY: Hey. Good morning,
16 everybody. This is Sara Bigley. I'm the State
17 Coordinator for Foster Care Education with DPI and
18 the SERVE Center at UNCG. Great to be here.
19 Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: And Lisa Phillips?

21 MS. UTZ: I do not see her name as
22 well.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Alexis, do
24 you or Danyelle want to introduce yourselves?

25 MS. UTZ: I was going to say I should

1 probably introduce since I've been talking in the
2 background. I am Alexis. I am the Parent Liaison
3 in the EC Division helping to run the background,
4 and Carol Ann is here as well helping me monitor
5 things on the side.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Carol Ann, you can
7 also introduce yourself, if you'd like.

8 MS. HUDGENS: Good morning. This is
9 Carol Ann Hudgens. Happy to join you this
10 morning. I work at the EC Division.

11 MS. SANDERS: Good morning. This is
12 Danyelle Sanders, the admin for Carol Ann Hudgens,
13 also the admin for the Council.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you,
15 everyone. So we're going to review the agenda.
16 If you see anything that needs to be changed or
17 corrected or added, please say so now.

18 **(No audible response.)**

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So hearing no
20 comments on that, Carol Ann, if you could just go
21 over the procedure for providing public comment
22 today.

23 MS. UTZ: All right. I'm actually
24 going to do the talking here. Here's the
25 guidelines for that. In looking at our attendees,

1 I don't see anyone that is not a council member
2 right now that has joined us for public comment,
3 but I'll keep an eye on that and see if anyone
4 pops up later.

5 If we do have someone, I'll just ask
6 them to do the "raise your hand" button so that we
7 can unmute them, and then they can do their public
8 speaking.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So, Council,
10 I'd like you to review the summary of the minutes
11 from the March 11th, 2020 meeting and see if there
12 is anything that needs corrections or additions or
13 anything else.

14 MS. UTZ: I'm not going to scroll
15 through it since you have a copy you can download
16 it. I don't want to make people sick.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

18 **(No audible response.)**

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So if we don't have
20 any comments or any additions or corrections to
21 the minutes or the summary of actions, I'd like to
22 request that we go ahead and get a motion to
23 approve.

24 MS. GRANT: Cynthia, this is Christy.
25 I make a motion to approve the minutes as written.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. A
2 second?

3 MS. GEORGE: Second. This is Leanna.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Christy made the
5 motion and Leanna approved -- Leanna was the
6 second. So all those who approve -- who vote to
7 approve the minutes, please say aye.

8 **(Multiple council members responded**
9 **aye.)**

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any nays?

11 **(No audible response.)**

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

13 **(No audible response.)**

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: So it looks like
15 the minutes are approved.

16 So we're going to move along quickly
17 here. We're moving along to the ECAC
18 presentation. Cache Owens?

19 MS. OWENS: Good morning, everybody.
20 Alexis, if you want to pull up the survey summary
21 document first, that would be a great help. Thank
22 you. So I will -- I can just let you know when
23 I'm ready for you to scroll down, if that works.

24 MS. UTZ: That's good.

25 MS. OWENS: So good morning again,

1 everybody. Alexis and Carol Ann just wanted me to
2 talk a little bit about ECAC's survey efforts that
3 we started kind of rather quickly after COVID
4 really took off. So we were able to work really
5 closely with DPI on kind of going over a summary
6 and figuring out next steps. So I just want to
7 give you-all a little bit of context and
8 background.

9 As the Parent Training and
10 Information Center, we have pretty regular calls
11 with OSEP, and on an OSEP call about COVID-19
12 feedback from parent centers, I was able to share
13 that we had done the survey, and OSEP was really
14 interested in seeing our results. And so ECAC was
15 able to work closely with some of the EC staff to
16 give OSEP both a summary of the survey findings as
17 well as some background as to the timeline of how
18 things unfolded here in North Carolina.

19 So we posted the survey and, in about
20 24 hours, had about 500 responses and left that
21 open for a week, and when all was said and done,
22 we had about 1100 responses. A small portion of
23 those were Spanish-speaking, and we did a second
24 round of surveys to try to get that number up, but
25 unfortunately, didn't get a huge response back

1 from Spanish-speaking families, but we were able
2 to get a lot of insights from the data that we
3 were able to collect.

4 And so I just wanted to walk through
5 some of the findings, and then when we're done
6 with this document, I will have Alexis pull up the
7 document that DPI put together of the timeline
8 just so you have context for the survey answers,
9 and these two documents are the ones that were
10 sent to OSEP.

11 So we had pretty equal representation
12 for a lot of age ranges, of course, with the big
13 bulk of them being elementary-aged children, but
14 we were happy to see that we could get feedback
15 from people with children in just about every age
16 group. So that's the breakdown there that you can
17 see of children's age.

18 And then, Alexis, if you want to
19 scroll down a little bit. Perfect. Right there
20 is good. So we had literally thousands of
21 comments to read through, pages and pages of
22 qualitative data from families, and so we asked
23 them kind of what are your needs.

24 And so, of course, this was in April
25 when we were in the full swing of remote learning,

1 and now I'm sure, if we did the survey again,
2 which we hope to do, to talk about what your needs
3 are now that we're entering into summer, we might
4 see things a little bit different.

5 But the top needs were definitely
6 focused on technology and really understanding how
7 to navigate using remote learning platforms. We
8 have a lot of people in North Carolina,
9 particularly in rural areas, that do not have
10 Internet, or if they do have Internet, it might
11 not be the best speed. If they have Internet at a
12 low speed and they have, you know, more than one
13 child, that can be pulling on the bandwidth and,
14 you know, not a workable speed for the whole
15 household.

16 I know in my house, you know, we were
17 all trying to work from home, three adults, and
18 then having my son on his schooling, the Internet
19 was moving kind of slow some days. So even for
20 those people that have Internet, if it's not at a
21 high enough speed, its functionality is not where
22 it needs to be.

23 And then, of course, you have the
24 issue of having a device, which is what we saw as
25 the number-one need. So if you have Internet but

1 you only have a phone maybe, it is really hard to,
2 you know, log in to Google Classroom or Canvas or
3 whatever your district was using on a cell phone
4 and have the same experience as if you were on a
5 laptop.

6 And then, of course, a similar issue
7 of if you have more than one child and you only
8 have one computer in the house. And so we had --
9 you know, some districts were able to loan out
10 devices, which I know was a huge help to families.
11 And then you kind of get to the next layer of that
12 of if you have a device in the home, you have to
13 have the digital literacy skills to be able to use
14 it and know how to easily navigate it. So there's
15 a lot of layers to some of these responses.

16 And then you'll see at number 5, the
17 fifth highest need that we heard from families is
18 that we have some families that are struggling to
19 meet their basic needs, having challenges with
20 housing security, food security, and really, you
21 know, when you're worried about where your next
22 meal is going to come from or where you're going
23 to live, finding the time to prioritize, you know,
24 logging in to do remote learning, of course, is
25 not high on the list. So this kind of gives us a

1 snapshot in time of what our families were
2 struggling with in April when we were in the full
3 swing things.

4 And, Alexis, if you want to scroll
5 down a little bit. So what we tried to do is --
6 like I said, we had a lot of comments to sift
7 through -- we tried to filter them out by age and
8 really get a feel for what were the themes of
9 comments based on the child's age. And so you can
10 see here we tried to summarize those, and one big
11 concern for parents and families with children of
12 birth to three is they were really concerned about
13 keeping the learning going and keeping the
14 services going.

15 You had some people who really had an
16 easy transition into telehealth or therapies and
17 other people not so much. So that was a big
18 concern, and then also how are they going to
19 really be on top of that transition plan if their
20 child is three and aging out into the next system.

21 For that three to five age, they
22 were, you know, similar concerns to birth to
23 three, and then just really trying to figure out
24 what do you do if your IEP is coming due, you're
25 about to go into kindergarten, how do you really

1 facilitate that when we're all, you know, under a
2 stay-at-home order at this point in time when the
3 survey was done.

4 And then the elementary age, again,
5 similar, but the big difference here is, I'm a
6 parent and I'm used to helping my child with
7 homework, but I don't know how to teach them.
8 And, you know, I can say from personal experience
9 that was a rough, you know, couple of months in
10 our house. My son is ten, and I think his
11 teachers are a little bit more persuasive than
12 myself as teacher-mom, and we definitely had some
13 tears at the kitchen table.

14 And, you know, that's me speaking
15 with a lot of privilege, as someone who's familiar
16 with special education and education systems, and
17 I have a PhD, I'm educated, and it was still
18 really, really difficult. So you can imagine for
19 families who maybe have low literacy levels or
20 parents themselves who have disabilities, just the
21 immense confusion around how to best help their
22 child learn.

23 And then, of course, we know our
24 children -- some of them have supports at school
25 to figure out how to get through the school day

1 with their behaviors or, you know, finding
2 different accommodations to help them really get
3 their work done to the best of their ability, and
4 trying to implement those things at home was
5 something that a lot of folks had questions
6 around.

7 When you go to the middle school age,
8 you're seeing people wondering about how to really
9 talk to their children about COVID and what the
10 anxiety looks like in children who are a little
11 bit older, maybe have a better understanding of
12 what's going on and wondering about how it's going
13 to look when they transition to high school.

14 And so when we get to middle school
15 and high school age, you know, you're, of course,
16 dealing with a little bit more difficult
17 schoolwork, but then you're also having kids who
18 are, you know, able to grasp fully what's going on
19 and maybe have ideas of their own of how their
20 remote learning is going to look, and so really
21 having parents know how to best support those
22 middle school and high schoolers was a question
23 that we saw.

24 And then, Alexis, if you'll scroll
25 down just a little bit. The IEP, of course, was a

1 big question, you know, if they needed their
2 annual review, how was that going to work. That
3 was something that we heard from just about every
4 age group. And then if you're looking at, you
5 know, young adults who have already finished high
6 school -- ECAC serves families with young adults
7 up to 26 -- they're really focused on how can they
8 continue to work on those transition skills from
9 home.

10 So if you have somebody who's in his
11 social group with autism and they're practicing,
12 you know, social skills and interpersonal skills
13 for the workplace, all of the sudden, they're
14 stuck at home and how can you keep that going
15 while we're all stuck in the house. So we were
16 able to really bring these insights to DPI and
17 work together to figure out how we can best
18 support families.

19 If you scroll down to the last page,
20 Alexis. So we asked families how do they -- how
21 do they best prefer to be communicated with, and
22 the vast majority preferred email, but you can see
23 it kind of runs the gamut of preferences. And so
24 that is helpful so that when we are working on,
25 you know, getting resources out to families that

1 we are able to know how they best want to receive
2 that information.

3 And so we decided to -- going
4 forward, we're going to try to compile as many
5 resources as we can and to say, you know, if you
6 need help with housing, you can contact X, Y, and
7 Z and really organize all the resources by
8 categories and blast that out to as many families
9 as we can so that they can easily, you know, find
10 and search what they need.

11 There is, and definitely in April
12 was, just an information overload of resources
13 coming from all directions, and so we wanted to
14 provide something that was easy to use and you
15 could just go right to the topic area that you
16 really needed support with.

17 And so we are really trying to think,
18 going into summer, how can we revisit the survey
19 effort so that we can see how sentiments of
20 families maybe have changed or stayed the same, to
21 really reevaluate their needs as we head into
22 summer and then, you know, eventually back into
23 the fall, whatever school is going to start
24 looking like when we go back. So those were our
25 findings.

1 And, Alexis, if you want to pull up
2 the timeline, we can talk through that. So this
3 is just -- and I'm sure a lot of the members on
4 the Council already are familiar with, you know,
5 the steps that DPI took to respond to COVID-19,
6 and so this document -- I'm not going to go
7 through it all, but this was provided to OSEP to
8 give context to the survey results. So, again, if
9 you remember, the survey went out on April 3rd,
10 and so this shows some of the steps that DPI had
11 taken prior to that.

12 And then if you scroll down a little
13 bit, Alexis, and it goes into what information was
14 posted and provided and what guidance and so
15 forth, and then it also shares, you know, the
16 timeline of when schools were closed and then the
17 extensions that occurred. So this is kind of the
18 snapshot picture that we shared with OSEP, and I
19 am curious to see, if we do this again -- now that
20 school is just wrapping up this week, hopefully,
21 we can do it the end of the month and see how
22 families are feeling.

23 But, you know, the clear message from
24 the survey was that families were just really
25 overwhelmed, as we all were and all continue to

1 be, and so it's just really key that we have a
2 good understanding of what families are needing so
3 we can connect them to resources. And so that is
4 where we are at with the survey.

5 Carol Ann or Alexis, if you-all want
6 to add anything or chime in, please do, but that
7 is ECAC's part of it.

8 MS. UTZ: I just wanted to say that I
9 did add these two documents that you should be
10 able to access to download. And I see Ginny has a
11 question. Ginny, can you unmute yourself? I lost
12 your name.

13 MS. MOOREFIELD: I'm sorry. I
14 thought I had. I was just saying, Cache, I'm not
15 sure if you're the one to answer this, but maybe
16 someone else can. I've got a couple of small
17 questions.

18 First is just a comment. I saw that
19 in the birth to three block of comments that ALS
20 was listed as a comment, and I know that a lot of
21 our early intervention programs use that for
22 communication. I'm sure that Anthony has that
23 completely under control by now, but I just wanted
24 to offer services if -- you know, if you need a
25 resource for that, please feel free to call me.

1 But, also, I wanted to ask three
2 questions. I'll throw them all out there at once,
3 and then you-all can respond as appropriate. But
4 I wanted to know, first of all, when these surveys
5 get sent out, can parents fill out multiple
6 surveys or like multiple times if they have
7 multiple children with disabilities?

8 And I'm just thinking about, you
9 know, those parents who have more than one child
10 with a disability in more than one age group,
11 especially if it's like a significant age
12 difference. And sometimes I know that when I'm
13 filling things out for the school, it can get kind
14 of frustrating because I need to answer one way
15 for one kid and then another way for the other
16 kid.

17 Then my second question was, can
18 you -- oh, gosh, I've already forgotten the
19 acronym -- the ECAC as well as DPI -- can you guys
20 help us as parents understand the--- Like I saw
21 the timeline. I totally get that, but from the
22 parent side, it felt like, yet again, our kids
23 were the last to be considered.

24 And I mean, you know, I personally
25 realize that having -- you know, having to

1 completely switch gears in the middle of the
2 school year for something like this is not an easy
3 task. Just from our perspective, we were last
4 again. So if you can maybe kind of speak to that.

5 And then the last question is, I know
6 that at least in Wake County, where we're starting
7 to make plans for reopening schools, we've gotten
8 a survey from Wake County about concerns that we
9 have as parents. And so especially with our kids,
10 a lot of them do come with extra health issues,
11 and I'm wondering have we begun the planning phase
12 for reopening for kids with special needs and
13 where are we in that so that we don't -- we're not
14 the last ones to be considered again.

15 MS. OWENS: Yeah, I think those are
16 really great questions, and I appreciate you
17 asking, and I also appreciate the ASL resource. I
18 will look into that.

19 And I can only really answer the
20 first of your questions, which is we use a
21 check-all-that-apply format when we send it out.
22 So if you look at the comments that we get, we'll
23 sometimes see people say, you know, for one kid
24 it's this and for my other kid it's this in
25 comment boxes so that they can, you know, fully

1 tell us the diversity in their household. And so
2 we did have people filling out the survey for more
3 than one child because I can definitely understand
4 how that would be difficult.

5 But the other two questions, I think,
6 would kind of be out of ECAC's wheelhouse, and so
7 maybe someone at DPI can address those.

8 MS. UTZ: Okay. Can you still hear
9 me?

10 MS. OWENS: I can hear you.

11 MS. UTZ: Okay. Sorry. I had to
12 switch -- I'm getting work done in my house, and I
13 had to switch to a headset. So I just wanted to
14 make sure that you could still hear me.

15 I do know -- I want to say in
16 Sherry's presentation she's going to speak to some
17 of those things that you had mentioned. So I
18 think instead of us answering it now, let's wait
19 until Sherry does her presentation, and then if
20 she does not touch base, then we can come back to
21 that. Is that okay with you, Ginny?

22 MS. MOOREFIELD: That sounds perfect.
23 Thanks. And also, Cache, for the "check all that
24 apply," apparently, it's just Wake County that
25 needs to get on board.

1 MS. OWENS: I hear you. I hear you.

2 MS. UTZ: Yes, Christy Grant, you
3 have your hand raised.

4 MS. GRANT: Yes. Cache, I really
5 like this information. I had not seen it, so
6 thank you so much for sharing it. Did you-all
7 track whether the families were in a traditional
8 LEA, charter, or homeschool, or was it just all
9 together?

10 MS. OWENS: In the first iteration
11 that we did, we just left it anonymous, and then
12 in the second round, we did ask county, but we
13 didn't ask difference in LEA. Unfortunately, we
14 don't have that data.

15 MS. GRANT: Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Cache, Cynthia
17 Daniels-Hall here. I wondered if you had numbers
18 for how many parents responded to your first and
19 your second survey, and how did you do your
20 outreach to parents?

21 MS. OWENS: Sure. So it was about
22 600 in the first round and then the rest in the
23 second round, so we had the bulk of responses
24 coming in within the first 24 hours and then
25 fizzling out. And so then once we did the second

1 blast, we got another big boost of numbers in.

2 And we primarily did the outreach
3 through our database. So we have about 8000
4 families and professionals in ECAC's database that
5 we can blast out an email through Constant
6 Contact, and then our Facebook page is the other
7 platform that we use where we have 11,000
8 followers and a reach of about four million. So
9 between those two, we're able to get a pretty wide
10 audience.

11 Now we saw in the results that
12 there's families who don't have Internet access,
13 and if you have a phone, you might have missed --
14 just have a phone and not a laptop, you might have
15 missed these things. So we did try to call
16 randomly and try to get their feedback, and didn't
17 have huge success with that.

18 So when we are thinking about our
19 next round, we're going to try out a texting
20 platform and see if that reaches more people
21 because we know that that's a flaw in who we were
22 able to reach.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

24 MS. UTZ: All right. Diane has a
25 question.

1 MS. COFFEY: Yes. Cache, you said
2 you did counties. Is that something we can get
3 broke down by the counties of what the needs were?

4 MS. OWENS: Yes. We do have
5 counties, but just keep in mind that we didn't ask
6 that in the first round. So it's only about 600
7 responses that we have the counties for, but yes,
8 we can break that down. Our data manager has been
9 trying to kind of drill in different ways to see
10 how it shakes out.

11 MS. COFFEY: Would we need to email
12 you or your data bank to get that?

13 MS. OWENS: If you email me, I can
14 definitely connect you and get kind of a summary
15 snapshot of that.

16 MS. COFFEY: Perfect. Thank you.

17 MS. OWENS: Yeah, no problem.

18 MS. UTZ: All right. I don't see any
19 more hands raised, but does anyone else have
20 anything for Cache?

21 **(No audible response.)**

22 MS. UTZ: Okay. It doesn't look like
23 it.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: We are at a little
25 after 10:00, and I don't know if Sherry is

1 available now for her part of the conversation or
2 if we want to take a little break or what.

3 MS. UTZ: She is not here yet. She
4 is finishing up to be here shortly, but maybe we
5 can take like a ten-minute break as she finishes
6 up her other meeting and then joins us.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. A ten-minute
8 break, then, folks. Thank you.

9 (A brief recess was taken from 10:08
10 a.m. to 10:16 a.m.)

11 MS. UTZ: All right. So Sherry has
12 been able to join us. Is it okay if we get back
13 on track so that we can hear from her?

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely.

15 MS. THOMAS: Good morning, everyone.
16 I appreciate you being flexible with me and my
17 inflexible schedule this morning. There is lots
18 going on and lots of development of documents
19 which requires lots of meetings, and
20 unfortunately, we don't always have control over
21 that.

22 It feels like forever since we've
23 been together in a council meeting, and there has
24 been a whole lot of change and development and
25 different focus of how we have been able to

1 deliver instruction for students with disabilities
2 and all students with the onset of COVID-19.

3 So one of the things I wanted to do
4 today is just make sure you were aware of some of
5 the resources that the Department has put out. We
6 have been involved with this intimately, as we
7 have supported guidance for all students to ensure
8 that students with disabilities were included and
9 then additional separate guidance around how some
10 of this guidance applies to students with
11 disabilities.

12 So thank you, Alexis. I think you
13 pulled up kind of the home page which is on the
14 DPI website. So there's a general statewide COVID
15 landing page, and then if we can get down, you can
16 see where it connects to the Department of Public
17 Instruction somewhere down there it is. I'm
18 sorry, Alexis. I'm probably talking faster than
19 you are moving.

20 But, generally, everything that we've
21 done at the agency has been connected back to the
22 overall guidance -- thank you -- that came from
23 the State. We tried to take the guidance from
24 DHHS and the Department of Safety and Governor
25 Cooper's Executive Orders and align it so that we

1 are supporting the statewide requirements, but
2 then applying that to an educational setting.

3 So this that you're seeing right now
4 is the home page for DPI, I believe, where we have
5 remote learning. And, Alexis, if you would not
6 mind scrolling on down under "Remote Learning
7 Resources." As I said before, there are resources
8 for all students, and then located under this, if
9 you'll scroll up just a little bit more, you'll
10 see "Students with Disabilities Supplemental
11 Optional Remote Learning." I think it's the
12 second tab down. Yes, if you don't mind clicking
13 on that.

14 And then this is where we have
15 provided a resource for teachers, for parents, for
16 EC directors, for superintendents, anyone in
17 administration. It's a public site so anyone can
18 access this, and we worked to really provide a
19 listing of guidance around how to access remote
20 learning, how to provide that support for remote
21 learning.

22 If you haven't been on this website,
23 I would encourage you to go look. Our staff, I
24 believe, did an incredible job of pulling these
25 resources together and creating this Google site.

1 I think they did this in about a week, and we
2 continue to update and provide additional
3 information.

4 And if you look to the left, the last
5 thing we did add was adapted physical education,
6 and so that was from the request of lots of folks
7 asking for additional information. We've also
8 linked that back to PE and the PE resources from
9 gen ed because we know that adapted physical
10 education has to be in line with general physical
11 education, just as many of our services do.

12 We tried to break this site down as
13 far as different content areas. So you're going
14 to see progress monitoring, you're going to see
15 literacy, math, again the adapted PE, social and
16 emotional support, and then we've gone into some
17 specific disability areas like hearing impaired,
18 visually impaired, deaf-blind as well as our
19 significant disabilities, and there's a tab for
20 preschool.

21 So, again, if you haven't been here,
22 I would encourage you to go look. You're welcome
23 to share this with any groups that you may be a
24 part of. We pushed this out through our EC
25 directors listserv. It's gone out, I believe,

1 through our parent newsletter network that we
2 have.

3 And, Alexis, if you'll just click
4 on -- let's just click on "Literacy," if you don't
5 mind. So what we tried to say at every page is
6 we're not endorsing or saying this is what you
7 must use, but we are providing this as a resource,
8 so a place to start. We never wanted anyone to
9 think we were telling them what to do. That's not
10 an option we have. That's not a role we play, but
11 we do provide resources and support.

12 And so this resource is there for all
13 to use. We had really good feedback. We can
14 track the number of hits, and we've had other
15 states and even other countries log into this
16 website and look at materials. It's been a pretty
17 active site. It's been shared out with some of
18 the national organizations I'm involved with as
19 the State Director, and so I feel really good
20 about at least having a portal of resources for
21 teachers and parents and administrators to go to.

22 If you have questions about this, I'm
23 happy to -- I don't know if you're taking
24 questions as we go through, but I'm happy to
25 address those questions if you have any specific

1 questions. Otherwise, we'll move on to the next
2 item that was on my agenda. And, again, if you
3 haven't been here, I do encourage you to go to
4 that website to just see what's been provided, and
5 I think someone's added the link there so that you
6 can get directly to that website.

7 MS. UTZ: And, Sherry, there's no
8 hands raised right now.

9 MS. THOMAS: Okay. Super. Then,
10 let's go to the next one, if you don't mind. So
11 this has been updated as of May 21st, but the
12 State Board has approved the requirements for the
13 '20-21 Remote Learning Instruction Plan, and these
14 are instruction plans that have to be developed at
15 the LEA level inclusive of all students. So there
16 is not a special plan for how special ed will
17 receive remote learning. It should be integrated
18 into the whole plan, just like any school
19 improvement plan should include all students.

20 If you're following the State Board
21 at all, you've seen that they have met multiple
22 times each month. For a while, they were meeting
23 weekly. I think we've gotten to about an
24 every- other-week instance, but with all the
25 remote learning and the recent DHHS guidance

1 around opening of school guidelines and
2 recommendations, I believe we're going to see
3 another uptick of those State Board meetings to
4 stay on top of the guidance that is coming out.
5 As you know, everything that comes out from the
6 Department has to be vetted and approved through
7 the State Board.

8 So this was one of the last items
9 that came through, and it's really describing
10 those remote learning plans that are due to DPI,
11 not for approval, but the legislation required
12 that the plans be submitted to DPI for review, and
13 I believe this was just -- my interpretation -- it
14 was just to ensure that each district had
15 developed a plan, and if not, then the agency then
16 has the opportunity to reach out to help support
17 those districts who may be not yet completing
18 their plan or may need help in developing that
19 plan.

20 And so there was some criteria and 15
21 components that needed to be included. I want to
22 go to that fourth bullet down there, and it was
23 just ensuring that students have equal access.
24 And this isn't just students with disabilities,
25 but all students must have equal access to the

1 remote learning, but especially our students with
2 disabilities must be able to receive their
3 specially designed instruction or their 504
4 accommodations and any interventions that were
5 included in a 504 Plan. So it's not separating
6 them out, but it's ensuring that they are included
7 in the development of the plan for all students.

8 And, again, this came from
9 legislation. We did have some opportunity for
10 feedback. As you know, our feedback doesn't
11 always get put into the language of legislation,
12 but we've at least been involved and been able to
13 provide feedback to legislators as they've moved
14 quickly through some of these bills to support
15 remote learning and to support our students with
16 disabilities in particular.

17 And if you'll scroll on. I don't
18 think there's anything else there I needed to
19 touch base on. Any questions about this
20 requirement for a remote learning plan from
21 districts? I will add, we are working with our
22 directors advisory council and with our internal
23 membership team to provide additional guidance
24 around the remote learning plan. There's
25 information that will be released today to

1 superintendents and to charter coordinators that
2 will address the work that's coming out of a
3 larger stakeholder group.

4 So the Superintendent created a
5 stakeholder group across the state of involved
6 parties: educators, parents, students, advocates,
7 universities, related service providers. And so
8 that large stakeholder group has been vetting the
9 guidance from DHHS and from the Governor's Office
10 and then moving that to the Department. There
11 have been subcommittees created to support what
12 remote learning will look like in the opening
13 of -- could potentially look like, if needed, at
14 the opening of school, what the opening of school
15 requirements will be, again, based on DHHS and
16 Department of Safety and the Governor's guidance
17 through Executive Orders.

18 Those committees have worked to
19 create a document that is encompassing the Jump
20 Start legislation that came out and summer
21 learning that was legislated to occur as well as
22 instructional remote learning plans, school
23 building safety and facility requirements, social
24 and emotional needs in learning, school nutrition,
25 staff guidance around special leave that's been

1 approved for staff who may have COVID-19 issues
2 and are not able to return to work.

3 All that guidance is coming out today
4 to superintendents in a meeting, which is why I
5 had to shift my time with you today. It's later
6 this afternoon, and then that will go to the State
7 Board tomorrow for their approval, and then be
8 released to the field. And, again, it is taking
9 what DHHS released Monday -- I think it was Monday
10 afternoon with the Governor's meeting that he held
11 late -- I think it was like 3:00 Monday afternoon.

12 So we've taken that DHHS guidance,
13 all the requirements, and implemented that
14 guidance within this document working from a DPI
15 standpoint. We've ensured that EC students are
16 included. We have ensured that there are
17 considerations for accessibility for all students,
18 and there's still work to be done as far as
19 implementing that.

20 Once those documents from the State
21 Board approval are released, then the EC Division
22 will be working to do clarification on any of
23 those areas that we need to provide for districts
24 on how that specifically may apply to a student
25 with a disability and looking at their special ed

1 services -- special ed and related services that
2 they will need to be provided. So there will be
3 continued guidance from us coming to support
4 what's coming out from the entire agency, and
5 that's kind of how we've worked since about March
6 13th of this year.

7 Let me see. I'm looking at the
8 agenda, and it looks like the next item is the
9 specific learning disability policy. So, as you
10 are aware, in 2016, the Board approved a new
11 eligibility criteria policy for specific learning
12 disabilities that eliminated the discrepancy model
13 and requires considering a multitude of data
14 including the response to instruction that was
15 provided to the student prior to moving to that
16 eligibility.

17 We've had some feedback over the
18 years around some of the language that was
19 problematic. You've had council members that have
20 been a part of additional stakeholder groups that
21 have reviewed that language, and we presented in
22 May the recommended language. We had some great
23 feedback during the public comment period, and
24 based on the public comment, we adjusted
25 additional language in that policy.

1 That did go to the Board earlier this
2 month -- gosh, I guess it was just last week, but
3 it seems like forever ago -- and the Board did
4 approve the amended policy. So that will be
5 quickly added to our website as soon as Web
6 Publishing can get it up, and Carol Ann may have a
7 better feel of when we think that's going to
8 happen. I would think it's in the next week or
9 so.

10 It doesn't change the process. It
11 just clarified the language in some places that
12 parents, advocates, organizations that support
13 students with disabilities like the Learning
14 Disabilities Association and Parents of Students
15 with Dyslexia. I believe we've come to a really
16 good place of common language and terminology, and
17 we've aligned it a little more appropriately with
18 what the ESSA guidance gives us around evidence-
19 based practices as opposed to scientific-based
20 practices.

21 As you-all know, IDEA has not been
22 updated since 2004. We have not had a
23 reauthorization since then. Lots of research has
24 happened. Lots of changes have happened out in
25 the field, but IDEA maintains some very old

1 language that is not really routine practice or
2 best practice or research-validated practice now.
3 So we tried to align some of those definitions
4 with ESSA, and that will be available to you as
5 well on the website. I believe we've shared that
6 out as well and made you aware that there was a
7 public comment period going on.

8 We will continue to move forward with
9 additional training as needed. We're always doing
10 guidance documents, working with school
11 psychologists, with educators, with EC directors,
12 and that's been an ongoing process since the
13 original policy was changed in 2016, and that will
14 not stop now. So we will continue, but as of
15 July 1, we will not be looking at a discrepancy
16 model for students with disabilities under the
17 area of specific learning disabilities.

18 So I'm going to pause there to see if
19 there are any questions about that policy change
20 or comments.

21 MS. UTZ: I don't see any in the chat
22 box or the question box regarding this one.

23 MS. THOMAS: Okay.

24 MS. UTZ: Diane did ask a question
25 about a document being available, but I missed

1 when she commented. So I'm not sure what document
2 she's referring to.

3 MS. THOMAS: Okay. I'll wait just a
4 minute for her to maybe update that for you.

5 MS. UTZ: Diane, I don't know if you
6 can just unmute yourself. That might be easier.

7 MS. COFFEY: Thank you. That is
8 easier. The one you were talking about that's
9 going to superintendents and then will go out to
10 the field, can that one be sent to us when it goes
11 to the field, or is that something that's only
12 going that way?

13 MS. THOMAS: No, no. Absolutely.
14 Once it is released from the Department, we will
15 be sending that out through our EC director
16 listserv, through the parent listserv, and we will
17 make sure it goes to all council members as well.

18 MS. COFFEY: Thank you.

19 MS. THOMAS: Sure. And then to
20 follow up, our guidance will probably not be
21 released until sometime next week because this has
22 all happened very fast, but we're also trying to
23 implement a vetting process through our directors
24 advisory council, and so any clarifications we
25 will be providing will then be released sometime

1 next week as well. So we'll make sure you have
2 that.

3 And I hope that most of you are
4 signed up for the parent information listserv. If
5 not, I would encourage you to do that so that you
6 can then share with others as we push guidance out
7 through that form of communication as well.

8 Any other questions?

9 MS. UTZ: There are none that are
10 popping up right now.

11 MS. THOMAS: And then I think -- have
12 we covered everything in that agenda?

13 MS. UTZ: Ginny, did Sherry answer
14 your question that you had mentioned right before
15 she got on?

16 MS. MOOREFIELD: I was just looking
17 to check. And, Sherry, I just wanted to ask if
18 you were okay. It kind of sounded like you had a
19 touch of the COVID there.

20 MS. THOMAS: No, it is my asthma and
21 I'm out on my [inaudible] working because, you
22 know, they've isolated me at home because I talk
23 all day on my computer. And I have a lot of
24 plants. I get a lot of oxygen out here, and I
25 hadn't turned the fan on, and it just -- it was

1 just my asthma. I'm good. Thank you for asking.

2 MS. MOOREFIELD: So, Sherry, I did
3 have just a couple of questions earlier when Cache
4 was sharing the information from the ECAC survey
5 that was sent out.

6 MS. THOMAS: Sure.

7 MS. MOOREFIELD: So the two that we
8 felt that you might be able to answer better
9 were -- so just from a parent point of view, it
10 just felt like, you know, our kids were, you know,
11 thought of last again for the preparations for
12 switching to remote learning.

13 And I mean, you know, we know what an
14 impossible task that is to get an entire state
15 shifted that quickly, but it just felt like, yet
16 again, our kids were the last ones. And that
17 could have been a county thing. I'm not sure.

18 And then my second question was, as
19 we're talking about reopening -- and I think you
20 did already mention this -- as we were talking
21 about reopening, I know that Wake County was
22 starting to contact parents about their thoughts
23 and concerns. And I had just asked earlier about
24 like, has the State already started to prepare for
25 those reopening things, and it sounds like you

1 guys have already started those conversations that
2 are now like in the reviewing process, is that
3 right?

4 MS. THOMAS: That is correct, and
5 those documents are -- that's what being shared
6 with superintendents and charter administrators
7 today. That's what will go to the State Board
8 tomorrow.

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: Right.

10 MS. THOMAS: It's -- I'm going to
11 give you the title of the document. It's called
12 "Lighting Our Way Forward."

13 MS. MOOREFIELD: And I also wanted to
14 ask -- because I don't think I am on that
15 listserv. Where is the -- do you just go to the
16 EC Division's page to sign up to join that
17 listserv?

18 MS. THOMAS: Alexis just pulled that
19 up for you, Virginia.

20 MS. UTZ: However, it's in Spanish.
21 Essentially, you go to DPI's home page, not the
22 Exceptional Children, and at the bottom, you'll
23 see "Sign Up for Updates," and then you'll input
24 your information and you can select the
25 Exceptional Children for Parents information.

1 MS. MOOREFIELD: Perfect. Thank you.

2 MS. THOMAS: You put in your name and
3 email, and then it will give you your choices.

4 All right. I'm going to jump back to
5 your question now. When we left the building
6 March the 13th, school buildings had not been
7 shuttered. School buildings had not been closed,
8 but we were already working with our EC directors
9 to start putting in place documentation, making
10 plans, and determining how they would start to
11 deliver remote instruction for students with
12 disabilities because we saw that coming.

13 I think it was the 14th of March,
14 that Saturday, when Governor Cooper issued
15 Executive Order 117, maybe, that shuttered school
16 buildings or closed school buildings, so not
17 stopping instruction but closing school buildings.
18 Those next two weeks, there was a huge difference
19 in how all districts responded. Some took a
20 spring break, some treated those as workdays, some
21 put a big pause on all instruction.

22 The guidance that we gave to all
23 directors at that point in time was to take two
24 weeks to make a good plan, determine how they
25 could provide those services, and then begin

1 communicating with parents on how that service
2 delivery would occur, and we asked them to take
3 that two-week pause because we felt like they
4 needed some time to plan. I mean, think about our
5 individualized instruction, just the whole
6 framework of what an IEP is. It doesn't lend
7 itself immediately to now I'm going to do this
8 remotely, now I'm going to do this online.

9 And so we encouraged districts to
10 take the two weeks as a pause, knowing that
11 whatever services they missed during those two
12 weeks, they would need to somehow be able to catch
13 up, provide extra information for. I know a lot
14 of districts went ahead and did supplementary
15 materials. They didn't start true instruction
16 until they could start true instruction for all
17 kids.

18 So the intent was never that our
19 students were left behind. We wanted to make sure
20 they had a real plan of how they were going to
21 deliver that and time to communicate with parents
22 and set that schedule up with parents to document
23 what they were going to be able to deliver and how
24 they were going to be able to deliver it.

25 I think Wake County is one of those

1 that started with supplemental, and they took then
2 a real spring break, and I think when they came
3 back is when they did new instruction.

4 There have been a lot of terms thrown
5 out by a lot of people that commingled. We tried
6 to get superintendents to stop using the word
7 "mandatory" because mandatory just means everybody
8 has to get it; that doesn't mean new instruction.
9 So we tried to move them either into supplemental
10 or new instruction. I will say we weren't very
11 successful because didn't have that power to
12 change their terminology, but we did voice that.

13 What I hope is that every district
14 has done the best they can to reach out and
15 provide instruction or supplemental support to all
16 students. What we were very clear on from every
17 piece of guidance we pushed out was, whatever you
18 are offering to all students, be it supplemental
19 or new instruction, must be delivered to special
20 ed. So if everybody is getting supplemental, then
21 everybody, including special ed, gets
22 supplemental. If everybody's getting new
23 instruction, then that includes special ed getting
24 new instruction.

25 And I do feel that they've done their

1 best to honor that, but one thing we said is, you
2 can't not do special ed and do general ed services
3 because then you've denied FAPE. Did it look like
4 it would have had students been back in a
5 brick-and-mortar building? Absolutely not.
6 There's no way to replicate that. We tried to
7 respond to questions from parents that we've
8 received. We worked with directors to provide
9 guidance and clarity, and there have been a number
10 of guidance documents that we have pushed out
11 addressing instruction.

12 The one thing that we know is that if
13 you are not providing full instruction or real
14 instruction or new instruction for all kids, we
15 can't hold FAPE to that same level. I mean FAPE
16 means you're providing your special ed instruction
17 that aligns with your general ed instruction.

18 So I'm sorry. I know people have
19 missed services. Districts are saying we know
20 we've missed, but we've got some funding in place
21 this summer for them to be able to provide some of
22 those services they just could not deliver. And
23 if you have noted any of the guidance we've pushed
24 out, we are encouraging -- and even the national
25 group that works with parent advocates and student

1 advocates, COPAA, has come out and said this
2 really isn't a time for compensatory ed unless you
3 just refuse to provide something. So comp ed
4 doesn't mean that we couldn't deliver it; it means
5 we just chose not to.

6 We refused -- we denied that, but
7 what we called future services are those services
8 that districts will recognize and own that they
9 weren't able to completely fulfill with that
10 student for whatever reason. ESY is not an
11 automatic for all kids, but it still applies this
12 summer if there's the documentation to move
13 through Extended School Year.

14 So we worked really hard with our
15 directors through our directors advisory council
16 and through some other outside stakeholders to get
17 that language clean and clear and aligned with
18 IDEA, knowing we've had basically no guidance
19 since the end of September from OSEP. We've
20 really kind of been out there on our own. I can
21 tell you we are totally aligned with what all
22 other states are doing.

23 I have been on sometimes weekly calls
24 with other state directors through a TA
25 Center or through our NASD or our National

1 Association of State Directors organization, and I
2 can tell you North Carolina has really followed
3 the same protocol and procedure that other states
4 have. We all shared resources. So things we've
5 done that was helpful to other states we've shared
6 and vice versa, and it's been a national
7 collaborative effort to try to align all these
8 services together.

9 That was a very long response to your
10 question. I hope I answered your question.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: You did, Sherry, and
12 thank you for explaining that. That makes total
13 sense to make sure that you have a good solid plan
14 instead of just throwing something out there
15 that's going to end up having a lot of bugs that
16 have to be fixed and cause further delays in
17 access to learning.

18 I just -- you know, I, like a lot of
19 parents, just didn't know what was happening, and
20 it's highly possible that we missed a message, you
21 know -- with all that was coming at us in April,
22 you know, that we just missed a message that said,
23 you know, we're planning this, we are working on
24 this, we're going to get this out to you soon. I
25 just -- I could have possibly missed it, but it

1 makes total sense to make sure that there is a
2 good solid plan before just running with something
3 quickly.

4 MS. THOMAS: Well, that was our
5 feeling because we didn't want this to be just
6 throwing something out there and calling it
7 instruction. I know, from talking to directors,
8 they've had to leave that communication piece up
9 to individual schools and individual teachers
10 because there was no way they could communicate
11 clearly to all parents because they didn't know
12 what that -- how that teacher was going to be able
13 to deliver that service.

14 But I hope at some point you did have
15 a conversation with the teacher around the
16 services that were being offered and would have
17 been provided. That is something we consistently
18 encouraged districts to ensure that they were
19 doing, and we've continued that conversation.
20 Even as they began this remote learning optional
21 plan, as we've gotten this guidance from DHHS
22 about the criteria for opening schools, our
23 strongest message has been communication because I
24 think if we don't have that, then we all get in
25 trouble. So thank you for that response that our

1 thinking was in line and made sense.

2 Are there other questions for me
3 today?

4 MS. UTZ: I do not see any.

5 MS. THOMAS: All right. Thank you
6 for allowing me to shift up the agenda. I
7 appreciate your service to the Council. I
8 appreciate all that you do and just know we are
9 here to support you in any way we can.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you so much,
11 Sherry.

12 MS. THOMAS: You are most welcome.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Council, we're
14 going to move on to our next item on the agenda,
15 and we open this up for local impact. So if you
16 have some information you want to share about the
17 local impact of COVID-19 on your particular
18 districts or the districts you serve or work in or
19 where your family and children go to school, this
20 is the time to share that.

21 So I'll start. Wake County, as
22 you've heard many times, had some difficulties in
23 the beginning trying to work on providing services
24 for children -- for all children, but especially
25 for children with disabilities. We had some

1 issues with, of course, hotspots, how the children
2 were going to connect even if they had access to
3 technology.

4 We also had some issues with
5 technology, getting out to students those
6 Chromebooks, or whatever technology the districts
7 were offering. We had some issues with they had
8 to order lots of technology and get those out to
9 students.

10 So April was very complex and many
11 families felt that they weren't getting the
12 services they needed. I think we got it together
13 by May, and I think there was a shift in how we
14 were doing things in Wake County.

15 And then you look at all the counties
16 that surround Wake County -- Durham County, Chapel
17 Hill-Carrboro. Those counties as well had some
18 initial glitches and they worked it through. So
19 anyone else want to talk about what happened in
20 their area?

21 MS. HODGES: This is Kristen Hodges.
22 I'm in Rowan County. I'm happy to talk a little
23 bit about what I saw as a lot of success. We are
24 a one-to-one county from grades 3 through 12. All
25 the students have technology. May [sic] 13th was

1 a Friday and it just, on the schedule, happened to
2 be at workday. So those students had taken their
3 technology home with them.

4 When it was apparent that we wouldn't
5 be coming back for at least a little while, the
6 superintendent asked the technology coordinators
7 to ensure that the K-2 students had iPads going
8 home with them as well. So that Monday, that was
9 arranged and that was dropped off by buses.

10 And from that point forward, it was
11 pretty seamless in terms of the instruction being
12 given to students. Each of the schools -- and
13 they did it in different, various ways, but
14 created documents and the teachers worked with the
15 students to find out what the individual family's
16 needs were. And like was done with the previous
17 survey, it was varied.

18 We did have -- in Salisbury, we have
19 Hotwire technology that's a very good [inaudible].
20 They volunteered to set up free Internet service
21 at anyone's home who didn't have it. So that was
22 helpful to a lot of our families. Outside of the
23 City of Salisbury, it took a couple of weeks, but
24 Spectrum volunteered to set up free Internet
25 service for anybody who didn't have it. So we got

1 it out to our kids as well.

2 We did experience some challenges
3 with parents not necessarily being as familiar
4 with the technology as students were in being able
5 to set up and connect. That Monday, that's when
6 we started the food service on the buses as well.

7 Overall I think it was -- it was done
8 pretty well. We were able to complete our third
9 quarter because we had started -- we have a
10 schedule that starts early, and this year students
11 are supposed to start August 3rd -- supposed to.
12 So I'm not sure if that will happen. I think, in
13 general, it worked well. Individually, we
14 experienced a lot of the challenges that a lot of
15 people do. Not everybody logged on. They didn't
16 necessarily show up to the Zoom meetings, and
17 there was a constant effort put in to help with
18 the connection.

19 So, you know, this is evolving, and I
20 know that there's been a spectrum. Overall --
21 because we had practiced e-learning days previous
22 to this, overall teachers were a bit familiar with
23 how to teach remotely, not to this extent, by any
24 means, and it certainly doesn't meet the needs of
25 all of our students.

1 Some of the weaknesses, I think, were
2 in terms of -- in terms of EC students in terms of
3 the variation. If you have an EC teacher who was
4 reaching out to their EC students and ensuring
5 that they were Zooming and getting the lessons,
6 and that was in the case of my elementary student.
7 From week one, she was getting her speech lessons,
8 and she received some -- we have a Title I teacher
9 meeting with her. But my middle school student
10 didn't have that connection with his EC teacher.
11 So I think, to some extent, it did vary widely.

12 I think we have to recognize the
13 importance of parents. I mean parents are
14 obviously important in every aspect of education,
15 but even more so with this. There's a co-teaching
16 component here that parents were thrown into, and
17 so teachers recognizing that and making sure that
18 they're communicating with the parents even more
19 so than when we normally teach. I think that
20 that's something we really need to acknowledge.

21 But overall I was pleased with how
22 Rowan County handled it. It was a really
23 challenging situation for everybody involved.
24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Anyone

1 else?

2 MS. UTZ: Leanna has her hand up to
3 share.

4 MS. GEORGE: Yes. Mine is more of
5 a -- something I've noticed with at least one
6 concern I've found with a friend of mine online
7 is, there is a lot of questions about initial
8 eligibility determinations during this time. I
9 have a parent who started the process in March
10 before COVID hit. Her son has turned three, so
11 she's just entering into this whole special
12 education world.

13 They started the process, and ever
14 since COVID struck, it's come to a screeching
15 halt, and now she's being told it's going to be
16 next school year before they can get [inaudible],
17 which I know goes against what came out in the OCR
18 Fact Sheet March 21st.

19 I just wanted to share that. It's
20 probably not just this one family. It's probably
21 happening in multiple counties with multiple
22 families [inaudible] care or services. And so I
23 just wanted to make sure that was made aware of so
24 that our [inaudible] families. That's all I
25 wanted to comment on.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Carol Ann, would
2 you like to comment on the fact that there was
3 guidance from the Secretary of Education that no
4 parts of IDEA was waived, and so even with the
5 initial evaluations, there needs to be some effort
6 on the part of the school district to work that
7 out with families.

8 MS. HUDGENS: Of course, Cynthia, I'd
9 be happy to. This is Carol Ann Hudgens. And to
10 follow up on the question and the comment that
11 Cynthia has offered, there was no flexibility or
12 no waiver, if you will, to the 90-day timeline for
13 the initial evaluation or any other associated
14 timeline. I know that that was a primary concern
15 that we were hearing from families about
16 timelines.

17 Additionally, there has been guidance
18 in how to move forward with those evaluations. I
19 think -- I think a prime consideration is, one,
20 the safety of all folks involved, safety of the
21 child, safety of the parent, safety of the school
22 staff in being able to administer the evaluation.

23 And so to the extent that some
24 evaluations could be done remotely, we would have
25 certainly encouraged that to have occurred, and by

1 that, sometimes there are checklists used for
2 children, sometimes there are interviews that are
3 done for gathering social and emotional history.
4 There certainly should be progress monitoring data
5 definitely up through March the 13th.

6 However, at some point, some of those
7 evaluations are difficult to complete. For
8 example, some evaluations require that there are
9 presentation materials that the school
10 psychologists have to present to the child to have
11 them to be able to interact and to collect
12 information, and there are certain guidelines with
13 the testing protocol that have to be observed in
14 order to make sure that there are accurate results
15 that are returned.

16 And so, yes, this is a very difficult
17 and challenging area that we're trying to wrestle
18 with. To the extent that evaluations are able to
19 be continued, we certainly encourage that. In
20 some unique circumstances, there may be
21 evaluations that cannot be completed until it's
22 safe to return to school because of the nature of
23 the piece of evaluation that is required.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Carol
25 Ann. Anybody else want to share about their local

1 impact?

2 MS. UTZ: So I have two hands up, so
3 I just kind of jotted it here. Whoever was
4 speaking, go ahead.

5 MS. MOOREFIELD: That was me. This
6 is Ginny Moorefield. Not really a local issue.
7 You know, once Wake County got up and running,
8 everything has been running fairly smoothly. But
9 when Leanna was talking about parents and kids who
10 were just starting to enter into the evaluation
11 process and begin that process, you know, it just
12 made me think.

13 I just wanted to throw this idea out
14 for LEAs, that it would be great if parents had
15 almost like a mentor parent because we don't -- we
16 don't know what we don't know, and there's no like
17 one clearinghouse of information for services in
18 school or in the community or anything like that.
19 So I know that I have learned everything that I
20 know just from networking with other parents and
21 running into other people.

22 So I just wanted to throw that out as
23 an idea just for, you know, local. If anybody has
24 anything like that set up or if they want to set
25 anything up just to give parents -- instead of

1 these huge organizations that you feel like you
2 kind of get lost in or overwhelmed by, having like
3 a mentor parent program that's just more
4 one-on-one or like one-on-two.

5 MS. UTZ: Okay. Thank you. Diane
6 and Christy both -- I saw your hands raised.

7 MS. COFFEY: This is Diane. I just
8 want to say, you know, overall our area went as
9 smooth as it can in doing something in a shift so
10 quick. I mean the initial was definitely crazy
11 times, I think, for everybody. The concerns I am,
12 as far as from families, hearing, it is a lot
13 around just the differences and it not being
14 consistent across the board.

15 And that, I can say, is very true
16 especially -- because I work in three counties, so
17 I -- from hearing from parents, there is great
18 differences depending on the counties as to how
19 services got handled and the consistency of that,
20 but then also even just consistency in how the
21 teachers -- like if you're talking middle school
22 where you have multiple teachers, that piece --
23 it's like you had -- most families were having to
24 go like from multiple platforms to get information
25 they needed instead of it all coming out in a

1 similar fashion.

2 So that's some areas I feel like, if
3 we do go back remotely, we need to make sure we're
4 thinking about, is more how to make it smoother in
5 those areas.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

7 Christy?

8 MS. GRANT: This is Christy. I just
9 wanted to kind of put out some of the -- what kind
10 of the local impact was with COVID as a school
11 district.

12 One of the things that I think -- I'm
13 not sure if it was Diane that mentioned it on
14 Ginny, but you know, overnight our whole
15 traditional educational setting just kind of was
16 thrown up in the air, and we had to bring all the
17 pieces back down and put them together and figure
18 out pretty quickly how we were going to address
19 the new layers of complexity that we were faced
20 with.

21 And I do believe, as somebody already
22 said, the technology barriers were the -- were
23 huge for us. We were a one-to-one district.
24 However, we have areas of our district that are
25 very rural and do not get Internet access. We

1 could not provide a MiFi to our parents. It just
2 didn't matter. In some of our areas, even though
3 they had access, it was very slow -- very slow
4 Internet access.

5 And Cache mentioned parents who had
6 multiple -- parents working, children working from
7 home. It was just -- the Internet access was very
8 slow for some of the areas that even have it. So
9 then just having to work through the whole
10 technology barriers that we had.

11 Even the assistive technology, we
12 were good with assistive technology within our
13 classrooms, but when it became remote and having
14 to look at oh, my gosh, now how do we infuse
15 assistive technology in a remote setting and teach
16 parents how to use a lot of the assistive
17 technology that we did. Another one was we found
18 parent proficiency with new technology, and to be
19 honest, some of our staff members, just really
20 having to work through the proficiency with
21 technology with really our parents.

22 When we talk specifically kind of
23 away from technology a little bit, you know,
24 serving our most vulnerable populations was
25 already a challenge, and now having to meet their

1 needs via a computer was extremely challenging.
2 And we are constantly problem-solving in how to --
3 what are the best ways that we can do that.

4 So students with significant
5 cognitive disabilities and mental health needs, we
6 really had to take a lot of time on a student-by-
7 student approach to figure out how can we best
8 meet their needs in this setting. And, quite
9 honestly, we did the absolute best we can, but do
10 I feel like we met all of their needs like we
11 truly needed to? No, I don't think we did. I
12 think that's one area that we're constantly having
13 to figure out, you know, different ways that we
14 can do and work with.

15 Our preschool students, our three- to
16 five-year-olds was another area that we kind of
17 struggled with because getting the attention of a
18 preschool child to a Zoom on a computer was very
19 difficult. So really just finding a better way or
20 a more intensive way, I guess you'd say, that I'm
21 not even really sure that meet the needs of our
22 preschool students. And then just searching out
23 alternative ways as much as possible.

24 The other part was that the
25 caregivers -- you know as parents your kitchen

1 tables basically became classrooms overnight, and
2 you became the educators and the therapists and
3 all along while coping with the anxiety of what
4 was going on in society with COVID, I think. So
5 the importance of family engagement and support
6 for the families became -- rose to the top of oh,
7 my gosh, we've got to provide that because that
8 was just critical.

9 We had parents with, you know, a lot
10 of anxiety about, you know, "I work in the
11 healthcare field, my husband's a law enforcement
12 officer. I don't even know how I'm going to deal
13 with my family right now, continue the education,
14 and now teach my child how to -- how to learn."
15 So I think that the caregiver responsiveness and
16 the responsiveness of the districts to the
17 caregivers is one thing that's going to be --
18 continue to be critical.

19 You know, like you-all talked about
20 Wake County, it took us -- it took us a little
21 while. We finally ended up problem-solving and
22 getting there. Are we where we need to be? No,
23 but going through this process helped us realize
24 that we do have some students in our district that
25 perform better through remote instruction than

1 they did in a classroom.

2 Because oftentimes we have students
3 who they don't want their classmates to know that
4 they can't read or that they can't do the math,
5 so they continue -- they act up to try to remove
6 themselves from that situation. So we did have a
7 lot of success stories with our students that made
8 a lot of progress, and we are continuing to see
9 how can we keep children in a situation where they
10 were thriving through remote instruction.

11 So just the variance, I think, is
12 just one thing, but just wanted to kind of give
13 some of the big moments that we had just from an
14 LEA/district kind of perspective.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Christy.
16 Alexis, do we have any other hands up or---

17 MS. UTZ: Yes. Christy Hutchinson
18 and then Ginny again.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So Christy
20 Hutchinson just finished.

21 MS. UTZ: No. That was Christy
22 Grant.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, Grant. Okay.

24 MS. HUTCHINSON: Sorry. I apologize.
25 This is Christy Hutchinson, and I'd just like to

1 speak from like a smaller district, but a really
2 spread out district. I want to echo every single
3 thing that Christy Grant -- like my little notes
4 here in front of me, she checked off three-
5 quarters of them.

6 But one of the things that we're
7 continuing to be challenged with is, we're all
8 talking about the parents and students accessing
9 the technology, the parents and students and
10 what they're going through, but one thing to
11 keep in mind is, all of our staff members -- be
12 it EC teachers, related services providers,
13 contractors -- all of our staff members are also
14 experiencing some of those same challenges, and
15 many of our staff members -- I know personally,
16 looking at a staff of just about 200 or so -- a
17 vast majority of those folks were having to be
18 caregivers for young children or other adults
19 during this time. So their availability between
20 8:00 and 3:00 or a traditional day did not look
21 the same as when those folks can get the
22 appropriate care for their young children or
23 dependents and come to work and focus on just work
24 for the day.

25 So their attention was split, and

1 while you might have parents desiring to and
2 speaking out about their need for children to be
3 engaged in an online format during the school day,
4 that might not be what we can provide as a school
5 because of the complications of our amazing staff
6 members, but they also have lives.

7 Some of the additional challenges we
8 struggled with was with our VI students because
9 the platform being utilized is predominantly
10 visual. Some of the other challenges that I think
11 we've all struggled with is the mental health, and
12 we're all fearful of what we're going to walk back
13 into in August because trauma does not look like
14 the trauma you see in a thriller in a movie.
15 Trauma can be a lot of different things to a lot
16 of folks, and we have a lot of parents that have
17 lost jobs that have always held jobs and been very
18 functioning members of society.

19 We were working with lots of
20 grandparents, and so that technology gap was even
21 greater. We've had a number of children that have
22 had to be relocated due to parents' employment
23 status and parents' employment in the medical
24 field and such. So that was -- I feel like COVID
25 is the great unequalizer and barrier creator for

1 lots of our families.

2 Some of the greatest ones we
3 struggled with were early -- early intervention,
4 our youngest students, and functional goals were
5 almost impossible to work on during this time. So
6 functional goals, either, you know, social-
7 emotional relationships with peers or functional
8 goals related to functioning in the school
9 setting, submitting work, completion of tasks, all
10 that was nearly impossible to work on during this
11 time.

12 One of the things that was a
13 highlight is our -- some of our high school
14 students transition plans have changed because,
15 like Christy said, we had a lot of high school
16 students that were incredibly successful on the
17 online platform, and for my small district,
18 predominantly some of our -- some of our students
19 with autism were very successful during this time,
20 and we talked with their parents through the idea
21 of potentially looking at an online opportunity
22 for postsecondary education as opposed to the
23 traditional.

24 One of the greatest barriers that we
25 haven't talked about today -- and I know this

1 isn't the group, but ESL was a gigantic barrier.
2 We found that very, very few of our ESL students
3 were able to get the proper support at home or
4 understand the directions. So some of those
5 students were at the greatest -- the greatest
6 deficit. And we also had high school kids working
7 40 hours a week because of the need of the family
8 to get that income.

9 So flexibility was the name of the
10 game, and I feel like COVID is the great
11 unequalizer because those barriers were just so
12 great, and we cannot make one decision for all
13 disability areas or all districts. We really had
14 to individualize all decisions.

15 My greatest concern is if this
16 continues, I feel like all of the barriers that we
17 can take away here in school and we can level the
18 playing field here at school because we can
19 provide the access -- we are not able to control
20 the home environments, and so we are not able to
21 level that playing field at all.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.
23 Anyone else, Alexis?

24 MS. UTZ: Ginny had her hand raised.
25 I don't know if she still needs to speak.

1 MS. MOOREFIELD: Well, to be quite
2 honest, I forgot to put my hand down. But I did
3 want to say just real quick thank you so much
4 to -- when Sherry shared and the Christys squared.
5 It really helps to be reminded, but also for, you
6 know, those of us labeled "that mom," you know,
7 even though we know how much work goes into
8 teaching our kids, it helps to know what's going
9 on in the background to keep us from feeling like,
10 you know, we're the last considered and the last
11 left out.

12 So I'm so very glad that you guys
13 shared what you're doing in your districts so
14 that, you know, I can go on, and when I hear
15 parents grumbling, I can remind them hey, you
16 know, this is what's going on that you don't see.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Ginny.
18 Alexis, anyone else?

19 MS. UTZ: I don't see any, no.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: So we're going to
21 move on and talk about an action to consider based
22 on the information we've all shared and the
23 information that we haven't shared but we know
24 about in our communities and our school systems,
25 and we're going to talk about the Unmet Needs

1 Committee maybe doing a survey.

2 And, Diane, do you want to talk a
3 little bit about that, and do you see -- I guess I
4 would ask the whole Council -- do you see a need
5 for a survey in light of the fact that ECAC has
6 already done one?

7 MS. GRANT: Cynthia, one thing---

8 MS. TERHAAR: This is Marge. Do you
9 want people on the committee to answer now,
10 Cynthia?

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, I want Diane
12 to talk a little bit about what the Unmet Needs
13 Committee might talk about in their work group.

14 MS. TERHAAR: Got it. Thank you.

15 MS. COFFEY: Hey, everybody. This is
16 Diane. We -- this got talked about a little bit
17 in our conference call that we do monthly prior to
18 these meetings, and we just were talking do we
19 need to do an unmet needs survey, and I am even in
20 question of like do we need to do one for teachers
21 and school staff, do we need to do one for
22 families, one for both.

23 I mean there's room to discuss this,
24 I guess, and that's sort of what we wanted to
25 throw out, is before we even come into the Unmet

1 Needs Committee and actually create a survey is,
2 yes, those questions: Do we need one; do we feel
3 like it's important to do one around COVID-19
4 issues; you know, if we do feel it's important to
5 do it, then what types of ways you think we should
6 do one.

7 So I definitely -- this is all to be
8 talked about, considered, figure out where we want
9 to go from here, and then the Unmet Needs
10 Committee will fine-tune it and get it back out
11 and try to get it all ready to go actually be
12 submitted, if we do decide to do one.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Diane.
14 So now it's time for this committee to share their
15 thoughts.

16 MS. HUTCHINSON: I wonder what's
17 already out there because I know, from a school
18 perspective, we've had to -- or we're in the
19 process of having to submit our new e-learning
20 plan for next school year, as we're now required
21 to add five additional calendar days into our
22 schedule. And I believe question number 10 -- and
23 I'm going from memory here, but question number 10
24 was how you're addressing special education
25 services, related services, ESL services, those

1 kinds of things. I could be off on the number of
2 the question.

3 But we've also had to respond to some
4 financial surveys out there to business
5 services -- financial business services to let
6 them know the impact of this on our district. So
7 part of me is wondering, like as a school system,
8 we've got to come up with our jumpstart plan.
9 That's going to have to address some of our
10 students with special needs.

11 How much of it has already been
12 gathered that we could get -- and maybe that's a
13 Carol Ann or a Sherry question -- that we could
14 just pull from what's already been gathered?
15 Because I think, from a school perspective, we are
16 getting several surveys to respond to from various
17 departments.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

19 MS. MOOREFIELD: This is Ginny
20 Moorefield. And kind of going along with what
21 Christy just said, as parents, we're also getting
22 surveys about like -- you know, just asking about
23 the reopening, and I kind of feel like there's
24 going to be a lot more of those, and I wouldn't
25 want to burn parents out with surveys.

1 So if the ECAC is already going to do
2 one with needs specifically for families with
3 special needs like any -- you know, any unmet
4 needs for them, maybe we could just partner with
5 them and then use their -- use their data.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.
7 Anyone else?

8 MS. GEORGE: Yeah. I kind of
9 agree -- this is Leanna. I kind of agree with
10 Ginny. It feels like there's already a lot of
11 surveys out there and, as Cache mentioned earlier,
12 possibly doing one for ECAC. If we have any
13 specific questions as the Council, maybe we can
14 ask ECAC if they could include those or consider
15 including those in their survey if they haven't
16 already had the same questions as we have. That's
17 my two cents.

18 MS. TERHAAR: I agree. And another
19 thought I have is, is there a way we could merely
20 contact school systems to ask if they are sending
21 out surveys with any relevant questions
22 specifically for parents of children in EC
23 programs. Then that way, if they don't, we're
24 planting the seed.

25 And then the second part of that is,

1 if so, we're requesting that they share that
2 report -- it's tricky to ask people to share data,
3 right, because that crosses some boundaries, but
4 to ask if they could share their report so that we
5 could synthesize it. Does that sound good to
6 people?

7 MS. HUTCHINSON: To speak to that
8 point just a little, one of the components of the
9 e-learning plan is that you are required to survey
10 all of your stakeholder groups so students,
11 parents, teaching staff. So that is a required
12 component of that e-learning, is to go ahead and
13 send that survey out and have that data in your
14 e-learning plan.

15 So to Ginny's point and to your
16 point, those surveys are required by every
17 district to be sent out right now. So we are
18 automatically sending surveys to parents, and like
19 Ginny said, do we want to. But that doesn't speak
20 to the point about are they tailored-towards-
21 students-with-special-needs-type questions. They
22 are general questions about access and such.

23 MS. TERHAAR: Yes. Yes. And maybe
24 we could even make a recommendation that -- I
25 don't know if it's too late because I don't know

1 what the timing is for any of this, but could we
2 make a recommendation to them to consider some
3 specific items that address this?

4 MS. GRANT: And, Marge, I think that
5 would be a idea. This is Christy Grant. But a
6 lot of those districts have already sent the
7 surveys out.

8 MS. TERHAAR: Okay.

9 MS. GRANT: You know, it would just
10 be hard to go back and include additional
11 questions, if they haven't already -- already done
12 that. And that was one of the things I was going
13 to say, was -- was just if there's a way that we
14 could partner with ECAC and do it there. We've
15 done a survey and we've done one specific outside
16 of our district survey internally for our EC
17 staff, and just hearing from some of them, they're
18 like, "We don't know which survey we've done and
19 which one we've had," and "We keep getting
20 bombarded with surveys right now during this time
21 of the year."

22 Because it's "How did it go during
23 COVID?" "Oh, well, let's look at remote -- let's
24 also look at remote learning." And then, you
25 know, some districts are going through

1 accreditation next year. Then, guess what? We're
2 doing surveys for that as well. So there's just a
3 lot of surveys being thrown out, and I'm really
4 worried that even with parents, there's going to
5 be this overwhelmed feeling of oh, my gosh, one
6 more survey, and they just won't do it.

7 So I just -- that is one of my -- you
8 know, the other thing is, maybe you could -- if
9 you wanted to do a survey to kind of see what are
10 the needs in the districts, because I do feel like
11 there's very different needs depending on where
12 you are within the state.

13 MS. TERHAAR: Absolutely.

14 MS. GRANT: Maybe it could go to EC
15 directors and having them kind of do the survey,
16 you know, and it may be based on some survey data
17 that they had done from parents.

18 Cache, if you-all could also send --
19 when you-all do the survey, if you could send it
20 out to EC directors, then we could also send it
21 out to our parents. We may get a higher return
22 rate on that as well.

23 MS. MOOREFIELD: And this is Ginny
24 Moorefield. Just another idea. One thing that we
25 could do is maybe come up with just a list of

1 recommended questions that we could send the ECAC
2 to consider, to LEA EC directors, county
3 directors, and things like, just -- like just some
4 recommended questions to consider that would fit
5 with their district and that they could -- you
6 know, they could pick and choose to add to
7 their -- whatever they're sending out so we don't
8 send out an additional survey, but that, you know,
9 we still get, you know, like you said, those seeds
10 planted.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Cache, are you
12 still on the line?

13 MS. UTZ: I don't see her anymore. I
14 think she had to go.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So Diane---

16 MS. COFFEY: Yes.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: ---in the Unmet
18 Needs Committee, do you think you have enough
19 information from what we've all shared here that
20 you're able to think about how you would work with
21 or try to partner with Cache and ECAC?

22 MS. COFFEY: Yes, I definitely think
23 I do on that side. Let me ask one clarifying
24 question, though, for the school personnel that
25 was answering. Is every single county

1 automatically reaching out to all parents, or are
2 they picking parents?

3 MS. GRANT: That's a good question.
4 I'm not sure. We sent the survey out to
5 everybody. I'm not sure how other districts did
6 it. You know, we also have our LEA self-
7 assessments for the EC Division where we -- we
8 have to look at information specific to EC
9 parents.

10 I just don't know where like -- we
11 sent it out to everybody. I don't know if some
12 were just doing it within their parent groups or
13 not. Does that make sense? I'm not sure how --
14 if that's consistent across the state or not. So
15 that might be a good thing with a suggestion to
16 send it out to all parents.

17 MS. COFFEY: Yeah. I can say for the
18 counties I'm working in, there's not been surveys
19 to every parent. So that's the reason why I was
20 asking that, is what the requirement was. So,
21 okay, that makes sense.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Diane, that
23 could be one of the recommendations we make, as
24 the person just said previously. I'm sorry. I
25 didn't catch who it was. That could be one of the

1 questions that the Unmet Needs Committee works on
2 and also how ECAC can expand their outreach
3 because I think 600 surveys, that is great, but
4 when we have 200,000 kids across the state with
5 IEPs, it looks a little sparsely.

6 MS. COFFEY: Yes, I agree that needs
7 to be increased. So definitely, yeah, I think
8 there's some room to work with here. So thank
9 you, everybody, for the input.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. We move on
11 to public comments. Do we have anybody, Alexis?

12 MS. UTZ: Let me do a quick scan
13 through again, but I did not see anyone. No, it
14 is all council members that are present.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So according
16 to policy, do we have to wait? Do we have a
17 timeline that they had to sign up by?

18 MS. UTZ: Yeah. They would have had
19 to sign up already and notify us that they were
20 here in order to---

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we'll
22 move on to establish goals of committee work. So
23 we have our committees. We have the Policies and
24 Procedures Committee, we have the Unmet Needs
25 Committee, we have the Reports and Data Committee,

1 we have the Executive Committee, but mostly we're
2 going to talk about Reports and Data, Unmet Needs,
3 and Policies and Procedures.

4 So those committees will get together
5 in the afternoon to do some committee work, but we
6 sort of want to talk about what kind of goals do
7 we want for those committees. So anybody from
8 Reports and Data want to---

9 MS. HUTCHINSON: Cynthia, I don't
10 know which team this falls under, but I know that
11 we have our council meetings set through December
12 of 2020. I always think there's some value to
13 folks knowing in the summertime, and I know that
14 we're penciling things in pending that we can
15 actually physically meet in person, and the backup
16 plan is virtual, but it would be nice if one of
17 those teams kind of looked at dates.

18 And we always sort of try and precede
19 the State Board meetings, so I appreciate that
20 those are on there for the 2020-21 school year,
21 but maybe one of the teams could look at getting
22 those dates established in March -- in the
23 springtime.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: So would Policies
25 and Procedures Committee -- would you want to take

1 that on?

2 MS. HUTCHINSON: I mean that's fine
3 with me if that works for others, and I don't know
4 if Alexis wants to join us because we typically do
5 reserve the State Board Meeting Room, and we try
6 and jump ahead of the State Board of Ed meeting.
7 So it might be a little coordinating, or if the
8 Board meetings are not booked out that far at this
9 point.

10 MS. GRANT: Right. Are those set
11 dates each year, or do we set -- do we set those,
12 though?

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, do you want
14 to -- because I think they're pretty set dates,
15 but---

16 MS. UTZ: So I am not exactly sure.
17 Like the bylaws say that you guys set them, but I
18 have not had to do this yet. I've come into it as
19 being already scheduled.

20 So, Danyelle, are you online still?

21 MS. SANDERS: Yes. Those dates were
22 already set even when I got here, and I guess it's
23 because it's quarterly. So I'm not sure, you
24 know, how that works as far as the dates being
25 changed because I came into it when they were

1 already set for 2020.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: So it's been a
3 practice, to my knowledge, that they were the
4 second Wednesday of every month that we met, so
5 quarterly second Wednesday. Leanna or Carol Ann?

6 MS. UTZ: I think it's up to you
7 guys. If that's what you want to keep, then we
8 can keep it, and we can double-check and make sure
9 the boardroom's available, and as long as it's
10 available, I think we can go with that.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Policies and
12 Procedures Committee along with Alexis, if she'd
13 like to join and maybe Danyelle, and have a
14 conversation about those meeting dates---

15 MS. UTZ: Yeah, we can do that.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: ---and make some
17 recommendations?

18 MS. GRANT: Sure.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.
20 Data and Reports, and I know Lisa Phillips is not
21 here. She's the chair. But anyone in that
22 committee want to think about or express some of
23 your thoughts on some of the things that you can
24 work on or some of the things that we need to
25 think about as goals for that committee.

1 MS. MOOREFIELD: Cynthia, this is
2 Ginny Moorefield. I just had a question. So the
3 Data committee, should they be the ones to come up
4 with any kind of like survey questions?

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: No. I thought that
6 should be, in my opinion -- but we can discuss
7 it -- the Unmet Needs Committee.

8 MS. MOOREFIELD: Okay. I wasn't
9 sure. I mean there are questions about unmet
10 needs, but then, you know -- but we're gathering
11 information. So I wasn't sure like who -- who be
12 best---

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Data and Reports
14 handles all the data and reports that come through
15 us from the EC Department. So things like the
16 reports that we get annually on the annual plan,
17 the reports that we get on things like well, now
18 we're going to be talking about
19 disproportionality, any reports like that.

20 And also I think -- this is something
21 that's just a thought of mine. One of the things
22 that IDEA recommends that we as a council do is
23 that we look at how different due process
24 hearings, facilitated -- IEP facilitations,
25 mediations as well as any state complaints, that

1 we look at those and make recommendations to the
2 Council. That's something we haven't done
3 previously, but it's something that would probably
4 fall under the Reports and Data.

5 So the committee chairs, do you feel
6 that that's enough information for you to, at the
7 appointed time, go into meetings?

8 MS. COFFEY: I do. The only question
9 I have is with the annual reports. We have
10 information that we need to give you, and if so,
11 have you got that laid out as far as what we need
12 to get to you?

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I did provide to
14 the Executive Committee, I think, a copy of the
15 draft annual report that Leanna provided to me for
16 the 2018-2019 annual report. For the 2019-2020
17 annual report, I don't have a draft outline
18 because I'd like to expand the report a little
19 bit. So I can -- if each committee -- we usually
20 have---

21 Danyelle, we had a form that we were
22 using for the committees to report out on the
23 work.

24 MS. SANDERS: I'll have to look into
25 it. I'm not aware. I'll look into my documents

1 and see if I can find it.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.
3 So I think that if the committee can meet -- if
4 the committees can meet, have a discussion about
5 the goals that they would like to see going
6 forward, the work that they want to do, and share
7 that back out with Alexis and Danyelle, and she
8 can get that out to the Executive Committee or to
9 myself in a timely fashion, I think we should be
10 able to pull together 2019-2020 draft report and
11 get that out to you guys.

12 Because I think -- if I remember
13 correctly, I think that Sherry and Carol Ann would
14 like to get that report together prior, I think --
15 was it July, Carol Ann?

16 MS. UTZ: It actually is supposed to
17 be drafted this month so that we can get it to the
18 State Board in July before they approve it in
19 August, or something like that.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Because in
21 our bylaws our report is due to the Board by
22 September, but---

23 MS. UTZ: Yes. And the Board needs
24 it a month ahead of time to review it to be able
25 to then approve it in September.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. That's fine.
2 So if we could do some work on that, and I can
3 work on getting a draft, and I think Christy
4 Hutchinson is working on the annual report as
5 well. So I'll be sharing the information with
6 her, and then we will share it out to the entire
7 Council.

8 MS. HUTCHINSON: Cynthia, just to
9 clarify real quick, we were given a second link by
10 Alexis to log in to do our committee work. Were
11 we still going to continue to plan to have a
12 little break and then jump into that committee
13 work at 1:00, or were you trying to scooch it up
14 and go ahead into that committee work now?

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: No. I was planning
16 to stick with our agenda and go into our committee
17 work at 1:00. Is that still available to us,
18 Danyelle and Alexis?

19 MS. UTZ: Yeah. Yeah, the committee
20 work is set up to do that---

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Now we are way
22 ahead of schedule, so if we wanted to jump into
23 that committee work earlier, would that also be
24 possible and would the Council think that that
25 works?

1 MS. UTZ: I can start the committee
2 session link meeting whenever you guys want.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Council?

4 MS. GRANT: I'm fine with going ahead
5 and doing it. I do have one question, though, one
6 clarifying question maybe once after the Council
7 responds to that request.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: So can we get a
9 motion from the Council to go ahead into committee
10 work earlier?

11 MS. GRANT: I'm sorry. I make a
12 motion that we go into committee work earlier.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Can we get a
14 second?

15 MS. HUTCHINSON: If we could just get
16 like a five-minute, quick, go-grab-a-drink break?

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure.

18 MS. HUTCHINSON: I'd second Christy's
19 motion. This is Christy Hutchinson.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: All in favor?

21 **(Multiple Council Members responded**
22 **aye.)**

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any -- we did the
24 all in favor. Any in disagreement or not in
25 favor?

1 (No audible response.)

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

3 (No audible response.)

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. It looks
5 like the ayes have it. We'll take a break, and
6 about 11:45, we'll go into committee work. Is
7 that good for you, Alexis?

8 MS. UTZ: Yes. But the one thing on
9 the agenda that's noted is that we have to adjourn
10 this meeting since we're not going to -- to end
11 this and close it so that we don't have to come
12 back after you guys are done with your committee
13 work.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So can we
15 get a motion to--- Any other further business?

16 MS. GRANT: Cynthia, I did have one
17 clarifying question. Maybe it's just because I've
18 really tried, since I've been on the committee, to
19 wrap my head around the committee work. Abby's
20 been the leader. I think she's only been at one
21 or two of the committees we've been in.

22 But with the work of the committee --
23 and I tried to look in the bylaws -- like are
24 there things that we should be doing or can or
25 can't? Is the work of the committee that is like

1 meant to be done outlined somewhere? Does that
2 make sense? I may be the only one feeling this
3 way.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: So do you mean
5 other than in our meetings the committees coming
6 together to chat and decide on different work?

7 MS. GRANT: Well, when we're talking
8 about goals for moving forward, like when I think
9 of the Policies and Procedures, my mind goes
10 immediately to like EC director policies and
11 procedures, but are there certain things like that
12 we should be doing within that?

13 And Leanna may, since she's on that
14 committee now -- can lead in that, but are there
15 things that we should be looking to develop? I
16 want to make sure we're developing the right goals
17 and that they're doable goals that we're allowed
18 to do, I guess, as the Council.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I think all
20 council members need to take a review of our
21 actual bylaws.

22 MS. GRANT: I looked there and maybe
23 I just -- maybe I missed it.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: I will say our
25 bylaws are not very clear on what our committees

1 actually do and what their roles are, but I think
2 if you take a look at the bylaws, you can see what
3 we are, the functions of the Council, and from
4 that, I think you can come up with ideas about
5 where the committees fit and what they need to do.

6 So if you look under the functions of
7 the bylaws, "Comment publicly via written formal
8 statements on any rules or regulations proposed by
9 the State regarding the education of children with
10 disabilities. The chairperson, the designee of
11 the---"

12 So you have the Unmet Needs. So
13 "Review the current information and advise the
14 state education agency in developing evaluations
15 and reporting on data." So that kind of
16 information would probably be under Data and
17 Reports.

18 MS. MOOREFIELD: Our job is to have
19 opinions.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

21 MS. GRANT: I didn't know if we had
22 to be asked first, or do we just -- any public --
23 any rules or regulations the State Board proposes
24 that we comment publicly on those?

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: That we make public

1 comment. That would mean we through the Council,
2 we, the Council, not we individually, but I think
3 we, the Council, make public comment on those. So
4 just like the SLD policy, the Council had an
5 opportunity to join the task force, to make public
6 comment, to do all of that.

7 MS. GRANT: Got it. Okay. Thank
8 you.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I do think we'll
10 come to the bylaws at another time. I think they
11 need to be a little more clear. We're planning --
12 based on this COVID, we don't know how that's
13 going to work -- to have a training that we've
14 done previously to help new council members as
15 well as the older council members to be able to
16 function better as a council.

17 So, Alexis, do you want to talk a
18 little bit about that before we adjourn?

19 MS. UTZ: Sure. So I know it's from
20 an organization in Oregon. I can't remember the
21 whole name right now, but the guy's name is
22 Jonathan. And in September, he is going to
23 present information about how state advisory
24 councils work, how their roles are, and how to
25 make the most and be most productive.

1 So he has not emailed me a final like
2 activity list yet, but it should be activities to
3 help the Council just kind of review things like
4 this and maybe to set up roles and what each
5 committee needs to do and stuff. So it will just
6 be information of how councils work in general.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So are
8 we ready to have that adjourn vote? So can we get
9 a---

10 MS. HUTCHINSON: I move that we
11 adjourn and maybe get back together at 11:50 so we
12 have a quick little drink break.

13 MS. GRANT: I second that.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: So we have a motion
15 to adjourn. All those in favor?

16 **(Multiple council members responded**
17 **aye.)**

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Anyone not in
19 favor?

20 **(No audible response.)**

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: And anyone
22 abstaining?

23 **(No audible response.)**

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Council, we are
25 adjourned until 11:50, and we will come back

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together in those committees. Thank you all for
joining us today.

MS. UTZ: Go ahead.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you all for
joining us today and stay safe.

(At 11:43 a.m., the council meeting
adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, REBECCA P. SCOTT, State-Certified
Verbatim Reporter, do hereby certify:

That said proceeding was reported by
me and the foregoing pages, numbered 4 through 97,
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Certified this 7th day of July, 2020.



Rebecca P. Scott