

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES  
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Raleigh, North Carolina  
September 11, 2019  
9:43 a.m.

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**TRANSCRIPT OF QUARTERLY MEETING**

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The quarterly meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children was held on the 11th day of September, 2019, in the State Board of Education Boardroom, Education Building, 301 North Wilmington Street, Raleigh, North Carolina, commencing at 9:43 a.m.

APPEARANCES

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN  
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leanna George, Chairperson  
Cynthia Daniels-Hall, Vice Chairperson (via  
Webinar)

Anna Carter (via Webinar)  
Abby Childers (via Webinar)  
Diane Coffey  
Christy Grant  
Jennifer Grady  
Kristen Hodges (via Webinar)  
Christy Hutchinson  
Selene Johnson  
Virginia Moorefield  
Jennifer Degen (via Webinar)  
Cache Owens (via Webinar)  
Lisa Phillips  
Kenya Pope  
Marge Terhaar

STAFF:

Tish Bynum  
Matt Hoskins  
Carol Ann Hudgens  
Danyelle Sanders  
Sherry Thomas

VISITORS:

Rebecca Fescina  
Courtney Dadisma  
Claire Green  
Public Speaker 1  
Public Speaker 2  
Public Speaker 3

COURT REPORTER:

Rebecca P. Scott

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1 Thereupon, the following proceeding was held:

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Welcome to our  
3 meeting today. This is the Council on Educational  
4 Services for Exceptional Children. I'm Leanna  
5 George. I'm the Chair of this committee. I'm the  
6 parent of two children on the autism spectrum. I  
7 have my son with me today. He is homeschooled.  
8 My daughter resides in group home out in Marion,  
9 North Carolina, and attends the high school there.  
10 And we'll go to the right.

11 MS. HUTCHINSON: Christy Hutchinson,  
12 Special Ed Director for Lincoln Charter School,  
13 and for this Council, I'm the charter school rep.

14 MS. COFFEY: Diane Coffey, and I'm a  
15 parent of two special needs kids, and I'm in the  
16 western part of the state up in Boone.

17 **(Technical difficulties and pause.)**

18 MS. HUTCHINSON: Christy Hutchinson,  
19 charter school rep and EC Director of Lincoln  
20 Charter School.

21 MS. COFFEY: Diane Coffey, parent  
22 rep, two kids with special needs, and from the  
23 western community in Watauga County.

24 MS. PHILLIPS: Lisa Phillips, State  
25 Coordinator for the North Carolina Homeless

1 Education Program, part of Federal Program  
2 Monitoring and Support here at DPI.

3 MS. MOOREFIELD: Ginny Moorefield,  
4 regular ed teacher, interpreter for the deaf, and  
5 the parent of a child with traumatic brain injury.

6 MS. TERHAAR: Marge Terhaar, IHE rep,  
7 professor at Meredith College, Coordinator of  
8 Graduate Programs in Special Ed, and the parent  
9 of two adult sons with ADHD.

10 MS. POPE: Good morning. Kenya Pope.  
11 I'm the EC Compliance Specialist for Juvenile  
12 Justice. I'm sitting in this morning for my  
13 supervisor.

14 MS. FESCINA: Becky Fescina, Alliance  
15 Health Community Education Specialist.

16 MS. HUDGENS: Good morning. I'm  
17 Carol Ann Hudgens. I'm the Section Chief for  
18 Policy Monitoring and Audit. I'm very happy to  
19 support this Council. If I could, I'm going to  
20 acknowledge the people that are participating  
21 virtually.

22 And I'm going to unmute Anna so that  
23 you can introduce yourself. Go ahead, Anna.

24 MS. CARTER: Hey. This is Anna  
25 Carter, the Director of the Division of Child

1 Development and Early Education.

2 MS. HUDGENS: Cache, you will need to  
3 unmute your own line.

4 MS. OWENS: Hi, everybody. This is  
5 Cache. I'm the Parent Training and Information  
6 Director with ECAC, and I'm also the parent to a  
7 child with mental health challenges and autism.

8 MS. HUDGENS: Thank you, Cache.  
9 Moving on to Cynthia. You're unmuted.

10 MS. DANIELS-HALL: Good morning. I'm  
11 Cynthia Daniels-Hall. I'm a parent in Wake County  
12 of children with autism. I also work with  
13 families across the state as an education  
14 advocate, and I also work with NAMI, the National  
15 Alliance on Mental Illness, and [inaudible] Young  
16 Families Program.

17 MS. HUDGENS: Thank you, Cynthia.  
18 Jennifer, you're unmuted. Good morning, Jennifer.  
19 I have your line unmuted. Her mike is not  
20 working. Jennifer, do you want to type anything  
21 in the question box for me to introduce you?

22 Jennifer, I did hear you a little  
23 bit, so I think something's working.

24 MS. DEGEN: Oh. Can you hear me?

25 MS. HUDGENS: I can.

1 MS. DEGEN: Oh, hi. I'm Jennifer  
2 Degen. I'm from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.  
3 I'm a facilitator at East Mecklenburg High School.

4 MS. HUDGENS: Excellent. Thank you,  
5 Jennifer. And Kristen?

6 MS. HODGES: Good morning. This is  
7 Kristen Hodges. I have a child with an IEP. I'm  
8 a parent of a child also with a 504. I'm also an  
9 elementary school counselor in Rowan County.  
10 Thank you for having me.

11 MS. HUDGENS: Thank you, Kristen.

12 COURT REPORTER: Good morning. I'm  
13 Becky Scott. I'm the court reporter and I'm  
14 making a record of the proceedings today.

15 MS. BYNUM: Tish Bynum, Special  
16 Assistant for the North Carolina Governor's School  
17 and admin for this Council.

18 DANYELLE SANDERS: Admin for EC  
19 Division, Policy Monitoring and Audit.

20 MS. THOMAS: Good morning. I'm  
21 Sherry Thomas. I'm the Director of the  
22 Exceptional Children Division. It's nice to be  
23 here.

24 MS. GRANT: And I'm Christy Grant  
25 with a traditional LEA, EC Director in Nash-Rocky

1 Mount Schools.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: I see we have two  
3 guests in the gallery. Would you like to  
4 introduce yourselves? It's not required, but we  
5 like to know who's here.

6 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: I'm [redacted] and  
7 I'm a parent.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Nice to have you  
9 here.

10 MS. DADISMA: Courtney Dadisma and  
11 I'm also a parent.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you for being  
13 here. We appreciate the support and input from  
14 you.

15 We'll move along. I'm sure we've all  
16 had the opportunity to read the agenda the meeting  
17 minutes. Would you like to go ahead and move to  
18 vote for approval of the minutes from the last  
19 meeting or summary of actions?

20 MS. HUTCHINSON: I make a motion that  
21 we approve them.

22 MS. JOHNSON: I second.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. All in  
24 favor?

25 (All council members responded aye.)

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any opposed?

2 (No response.)

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: And all in favor --  
4 or if they just want to type it.

5 MS. HUDGENS: Let me type it in the  
6 message box. Folks online, we are voting to  
7 approve the minutes as written. If you approve of  
8 the minutes, can you submit a question that says  
9 "approved"?

10 Thank you, ladies. We have that.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Thank  
12 you very much.

13 I just wanted to open the floor if  
14 there's anybody who would like to nominate  
15 somebody. I'm willing to maintain as Chair. I'm  
16 not sure if Cynthia Daniels wanted to step down  
17 from Vice Chair or if she's staying on. But if  
18 there's anybody who wants to potentially nominate  
19 someone for chair or vice chair, I'd just open the  
20 floor up for that, if there's anybody that would  
21 like to take on that mantle. Is there anybody on  
22 the---

23 MS. MOOREFIELD: If any position is  
24 open, so if either one of you don't want to serve,  
25 I think that Christy Hutchinson is very organized

1 and on top of things and could handle us.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm sure she could  
3 too, but would Christy be interested in taking  
4 that on?

5 MS. MOOREFIELD: You asked for  
6 nominations.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Does Christy need  
8 another hat to fill?

9 MS. HUTCHINSON: I hadn't thought  
10 about it.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: We might come back  
12 to that during committee time and make formal---

13 MS. MOOREFIELD: I'm just saying if  
14 you or Cynthia did not want to continue, not  
15 putting you on the spot, Christy.

16 MS. HUDGENS: May I recognize  
17 Cynthia? She's asked to be unmuted to address the  
18 group.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

20 MS. HUDGENS: Cynthia, we're ready  
21 for you. Cynthia, your line is unmuted whenever  
22 you're ready.

23 MS. DANIELS-HALL: So, Leanna, you're  
24 opening up nominations for Chair?

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, if there's

1 anybody interested in running for Chair.

2 MS. DANIELS-HALLS: So can I ask, are  
3 you stepping down or---

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm willing to stay  
5 in as Chair. I have no problem with that, but  
6 just if there's anybody who thought they might  
7 could do a more effective job as Chair,  
8 considering the craziness we've had over the  
9 summer, I just wanted to open up the floor so that  
10 if anybody would like to take on that mantle, you  
11 know, that they feel like they have that  
12 opportunity. That I'm not trying to squelch  
13 anybody else's leadership potential or desires, if  
14 that makes sense to the group.

15 MS. DANIELS-HALL: So according to  
16 our policies, the Chair serves for a period of  
17 time. If you're opening up the Chair, I don't  
18 think we should consider this as a referendum on  
19 you or your capabilities because I think you've  
20 served in an excellent capacity as Chair. So  
21 that's what I wanted to say. Thank you.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: I just wanted --  
23 you know, if there's any desire. So if anybody  
24 wants to say anything, say it by lunchtime, and  
25 we'll figure it out, and if we need to do a vote

1 after lunch, we can. I'm opening up that door, if  
2 anybody wants to go through it. It's not an easy  
3 job being Chair, but anyway.

4 Let's move forward. We have a  
5 wonderful presenter, Becky from Alliance. I've  
6 known her for quite awhile now. She's here to  
7 present on mental first aid -- mental health first  
8 aid. I know Johnston County Schools is doing a  
9 lot with that right now, and I'd love to hear more  
10 about what they're doing and how we can implement  
11 it with the support of the MCOs in other schools  
12 and things like that. I'm not sure how much she  
13 [inaudible], but she's awesome.

14 MS. FESCINA: Thank you for having  
15 me. I appreciate that. Thanks, Leanna, for  
16 inviting me. We'll queue the presentation. And  
17 this is a PowerPoint that I have retooled a little  
18 bit that has been given to me by Mental Health  
19 First Aid USA from the National Council for  
20 Behavioral Health. So I reworked it a little bit  
21 to fit this presentation.

22 In full disclosure, because, you  
23 know, it was just kind of a comedy of errors, I  
24 was pulling some information about our numbers  
25 because I wanted to really provide you some

1 information around what we were doing not only in  
2 Johnston County but within Alliance Health, our  
3 organization itself, and my computer crashed last  
4 night. So I have a few of these numbers, but I  
5 can always email them to Tish, and they can get  
6 out to the mass audience, once I take my computer  
7 to IT today.

8 So, again, thanks for having me.

9 Prior to kind of introducing what Mental Health  
10 First Aid is, I'll tell you a little bit about  
11 Alliance Health and my background. I am a former  
12 EC teacher and school administrator, so my passion  
13 and my love is this population, and I value every  
14 single thing that you all do for our children and  
15 families. I stayed home for three years with my  
16 little babies and decided, when I wanted to return  
17 to work, that a school administrator job was not  
18 in alignment with my family goals at this time,  
19 and so I fell into this and doing community  
20 education work.

21 And so I am a certified Youth Mental  
22 Health First Aid trainer, and I absolutely love  
23 it. I also work closely with the other school  
24 systems, specifically Johnston County because  
25 that's where my office is located, in doing

1 suicide prevention, talking about safe social  
2 media for students, giving trainings to parents at  
3 PTAs and back-to-school nights on parenting  
4 skills.

5 One of the big pushes in Johnston  
6 County right now is resilience, and they're  
7 working on a Resilience project. They actually  
8 have a couple schools specifically that they're  
9 working with, but showing that film  
10 "Resilience --" if you haven't seen it, it's  
11 wonderful, please view it -- and really talking to  
12 our schools about trauma and being trauma informed  
13 and, you know, what that means for our little ones  
14 that come to -- and our big ones that come to  
15 school every day not knowing what their home life  
16 is looking like.

17 And the focus of those conversations  
18 is not just what we're doing inside of the school  
19 building for the kids, but what are we doing for  
20 the caregivers, because if the caregivers are  
21 suffering trauma, we know it's intergenerational,  
22 and we're not taking care of the caregivers, the  
23 caregivers cannot take care of the kids that  
24 they're slated to care for.

25 So, again, thank you for being here.

1 I just wanted to give you a little bit of  
2 background about what I do, and then let's get  
3 into the crux of Mental Health First Aid.

4 So Mental Health First Aid, it's a  
5 national program, it's across the country, and  
6 it's actually worldwide. It's the initial help  
7 offered to a person developing a mental health or  
8 substance use problem or experiencing a mental  
9 health crisis. So it is that intervention piece,  
10 that small piece of prevention, but really what we  
11 look at is intervening. The first aid is given  
12 until appropriate treatment and support are  
13 received or until the crisis resolves.

14 And how I look at that is, I think  
15 about -- many of us are first aid trained,  
16 certified and trained in first aid. So this is  
17 the first aid component for mental health. We are  
18 not going to treat. We are not going to diagnose.  
19 We are going to provide first aid until we can get  
20 that person over to someone else who is more  
21 experienced, more apt, more equipped to deal with  
22 the situation, or if the situation has passed.

23 So in our training, it is an  
24 eight-hour workshop. Typically, we do eight  
25 hours. We tend to use two trainers. I'm a former

1 educator and standing up at a podium is not my  
2 thing, so I really like to move around and use my  
3 hands. So I apologize for that. It's hard to  
4 keep myself still standing up here.

5 I usually do it by myself because I  
6 am comfortable in a room in a classroom setting,  
7 so I usually take on that eight-hour training  
8 myself, but you can have a second trainer there.  
9 You can also split it up into two days, so a  
10 four-hour session and a four-hour session,  
11 depending upon the group that you're working with.

12 So we look at risk factors and  
13 warning signs of mental health and substance use  
14 problems, information on depression, anxiety,  
15 trauma, psychosis, and substance use. And then we  
16 talk about the five-step action plan. That's a  
17 huge component. It's called ALGEE, and we'll talk  
18 about that a little bit later, but it's that  
19 five-step action plan to help someone who is  
20 developing a mental health problem or is a having  
21 a potential crisis or is in crisis. And we  
22 actually do some role-playing scenarios within the  
23 training as we walk through an individual that is  
24 not in crisis to slowly developing and turning  
25 into a crisis.

1                   And then we talk about evidence-based  
2 professional, peer, and self-help resources  
3 nationally and locally. And you can see there's  
4 Youth Mental Health, there is a Spanish version  
5 down there, and then we have an adult version.  
6 And then within those three versions, there are  
7 different modules that we'll talk about as well.

8                   And so this is the action plan I  
9 talked about ALGEE, and that's ALGEE right there  
10 up in the corner. He is our little koala bear  
11 representative, and ALGEE actually came from  
12 Australia. That's why you see the koala bear.  
13 That's where the curriculum originated and came  
14 over to the US.

15                   So we talk about ALGEE: assessment,  
16 listen, give reassurance and information,  
17 encourage appropriate professional help, and  
18 encourage self-help and support strategies. And  
19 what we teach in this course is that although  
20 ALGEE is linear because the word is linear, it is  
21 not a linear system, and so we may pick up  
22 anywhere within that system. We also learn that  
23 we're always going to listen nonjudgmentally. So  
24 it's not just step number 2 that that's where we  
25 listen nonjudgmentally, it happens throughout the

1 five-step process.

2 But just knowing that those are five  
3 of those steps, it may start anywhere. We're  
4 always going to assess for risk of suicide or  
5 harm. We're always going to listen  
6 nonjudgmentally, but where it might differ is, we  
7 might be able to encourage -- we might be  
8 encouraging self-help and other supports instead  
9 of appropriate professional help. Those E's may  
10 change. You may do one and not the other, or you  
11 may do one before the other, depending upon the  
12 situation.

13 So, you know, why do we need Mental  
14 Health First Aid? You know, I say to everyone  
15 that everyone needs this. It is that important.  
16 Everyone needs this course, and we need it because  
17 mental health problems are common. We know that  
18 stigma is associated with mental health problems,  
19 and that's part of what we talk about in the  
20 course, is breaking down those barriers and  
21 breaking down the stigma around mental health.

22 Professional help is not always on  
23 hand. You may live in a rural community. That  
24 person may be isolated, not have transportation.  
25 You may be, you know, in a one-on-one arena with

1 someone and professional help may not be right at  
2 hand. So you need to be able to have those skills  
3 in your toolbox to help that individual.

4 Individuals with mental health  
5 problems, they often do not seek help, and that's  
6 another thing that we talk about. It typically  
7 takes someone ten years to seek treatment. That  
8 is on average, ten years to seek treatment for a  
9 mental health issue. And so that's -- that's  
10 huge, and so oftentimes we need to provide those  
11 supports and we need to be having those  
12 conversations with them to get them into treatment  
13 quicker.

14 Many people are not well-informed and  
15 don't know how to respond. We just don't know,  
16 not that you don't want to respond or that you  
17 want to do harm, but you just don't know. The  
18 knowledge is not there. So we want to -- so in  
19 the course, we're going to learn how to notice  
20 when someone needs help, promote understanding and  
21 have that common language around mental health,  
22 again breaking down that stigma and those barriers  
23 and having a common language, encourage community  
24 members to support one another. That's huge.  
25 Help more people get the help that they need, and

1 then learn how to intervene, and truly, you might  
2 save a life. Knowledge is power.

3 And so there's ALGEE. He is our  
4 hero. Four reasons to become a mental health  
5 first aider. That you are prepared. It is just  
6 like CPR, that when a crisis occurs, you are  
7 prepared and you have the tools to help assist and  
8 provide aid. Number two, mental illnesses are  
9 common. We talked about that. One in five people  
10 will experience one in a given year. We also know  
11 that people recover from mental illness and can be  
12 well, if given the right support and the right  
13 treatment.

14 Number three, that you care. You  
15 want to be there for family, a friend, a  
16 colleague. Know how to start the conversation,  
17 and that you can help, that you have the power to  
18 help someone, that it doesn't -- it's not  
19 necessarily that someone needs a professional to  
20 help them through a situation, that you can be  
21 that one person that can be a benefit to them.  
22 Learn when and how to step in and offer your  
23 support.

24 And so I talked about this just a few  
25 minutes ago. This is what we do, where Mental

1 Health First Aid can help. We're looking at that  
2 yellow section, so we're looking at just a little  
3 bit of the prevention, just the very tip, but  
4 primarily early intervention.

5 We want to intervene and then link  
6 that person with resources, whether it's  
7 professional help or self-help or get them to  
8 someplace, whether it is an emergency room or  
9 something like that, again, depending upon the  
10 situation. Every situation is different. Every  
11 situation will be triage differently. However,  
12 you're still going to use that ALGEE format in  
13 terms of the steps. So we're not looking at  
14 recovery, we're not looking at diagnosing, but  
15 we're looking in the area of where someone is  
16 becoming unwell and that is currently unwell.

17 And so who are Mental Health First  
18 Aiders? I say it's everyone. So we look at  
19 teachers and supervisors and first responders, and  
20 former First Lady Michelle Obama is a trained  
21 first aider, and her blurb right there is, "It  
22 really gives you the skills you need to identify  
23 and ultimately help someone in need." And, again,  
24 that is just so powerful, I think, because we're  
25 all here on earth to help each other and support

1 each other. So let's put some more tools in our  
2 toolkit to do that.

3 Oh, gosh. So this is a super tiny  
4 graphic. It looked a lot bigger on my computer.  
5 Who we're reaching. So this is brand-new and  
6 updated. I pulled this off of the website a  
7 couple of days ago, and in North Carolina---

8 Can you just look over your shoulder  
9 by chance?

10 MS. HUTCHINSON: 72,000.

11 MS. FESCINA: Thank you so much. So  
12 72,000 have been trained -- have been trained. I  
13 will tell you -- again, I'll give you a little bit  
14 of information about Johnston County and Alliance  
15 Health. So Alliance Health alone, we have 16  
16 trained trainers in Adult and Youth Mental Health  
17 First Aid. I alone -- I only came on board about  
18 a year ago and just got trained in May, but since  
19 May of having my Youth Mental Health First Aid  
20 certification, I've taught three classes with  
21 about 50 individuals now in Johnston County that  
22 have been trained as Mental Health First Aiders.

23 Some of my colleagues and my peers  
24 within Alliance Health do upwards to 30 classes a  
25 year. You can go to our website and find all of

1 those trainings, and which I will provide to  
2 you-all. Right now they are free to the  
3 community. They're located in Johnston County, in  
4 Wake County, in Durham County, and in Cumberland  
5 County. You don't have to be a resident of that  
6 particular county to go and attend.

7 So get on that website and take a  
8 look at that, and I'll provide you with some more  
9 information. Your Mental Health First Aid  
10 brochure, on the back of it, it also has all of  
11 the Mental Health First Aid contacts for each of  
12 our catchment areas. So you can follow up.

13 And so these are the people that  
14 we're actually reaching. Okay. So we've talked  
15 about 72,000 people that we have currently trained  
16 in North Carolina, but this is the breakdown of  
17 who we're actually reaching. 10.43 percent of  
18 social services, law enforcement -- 11.7 percent  
19 of law enforcement and public safety. We actually  
20 trained 80 Department of Public Safety employees  
21 in the last couple of months in Johnston County.  
22 So that's fantastic and fabulous.

23 I fully believe that this should be  
24 part of the crisis intervention team training,  
25 that it should be required for them to go through

1 Mental Health First Aid. They have a lot of other  
2 great components of that course, which is a  
3 40-hour long week for EMS and first responders to  
4 be trained in crisis intervention, but not  
5 specifically in Mental Health First Aid. So I  
6 really think that that should be a huge component  
7 of their training. It could be a full day for  
8 them as part of their 40-hour component. So we're  
9 working on it.

10 Who else do I think we should be  
11 reaching is every single person that works in the  
12 school system. I mean that is just anybody that  
13 comes across a child should have this information  
14 and this knowledge. So we're working on it.  
15 We're getting there. I was actually trained and  
16 certified through a grant that came down from  
17 North Carolina PTA. So I was able to get training  
18 through that. That's amazing. It's coming down  
19 the pike slowly but surely.

20 And so, again, here are the states  
21 that are most trained. It kind of makes sense a  
22 little bit. You're looking at California and  
23 Texas, one and three, but you know, we also look  
24 at the size of people. So that makes sense that  
25 they may have more people that are trained. But

1 there are currently Mental Health First Aiders in  
2 all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Guam, so pretty  
3 cool.

4 MS. HUTCHINSON: What did you mean by  
5 "one in three"?

6 MS. FESCINA: One and three, the  
7 largest states. California has the most because  
8 it's -- again, it makes sense because it's a large  
9 state. Texas is third. It's a huge state. Yeah,  
10 just sizewise.

11 MS. HUTCHINSON: I thought you meant  
12 one in three people.

13 MS. FESCINA: No, ma'am. Nope. Yes?

14 MS. MOOREFIELD: And you said that in  
15 North Carolina we have 72,000 that had been  
16 trained?

17 MS. FESCINA: Correct. Correct.

18 MS. HUDGENS: We have a question from  
19 the audience. Abby, you're unmuted.

20 MS. CHILDERS: Hi. Can you hear me?

21 MS. HUDGENS: Yes.

22 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Good morning.

23 I actually do have a question. When you were  
24 talking about -- just a second ago about the  
25 different people that you're trying to reach and

1       how you especially think that people in schools  
2       should be [inaudible] for this, which I totally  
3       agree with, I'm guessing that this is probably --  
4       each county kind of has their own thing of the way  
5       they do it.

6                       In Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, if  
7       there is ever an attempted suicide or any child  
8       that is having a mental crisis, it always goes  
9       straight to the guidance counselor, and the  
10      guidance counselor then does a suicide  
11      intervention where they ask a bunch of questions  
12      [inaudible] evaluation, I should say, and then  
13      they score -- I think it's a one, two, and three,  
14      if I'm not mistaken.

15                      Anyway, from that, can you tell me if  
16      the people probably in North Carolina that do  
17      have -- the 72,000 that have been trained, are a  
18      lot of those guidance counselors, or who are those  
19      people?

20                      MS. FESCINA: You know, I honestly  
21      don't have those numbers in front of me. I could  
22      probably pull it from the National Council for  
23      Behavioral Health. I could probably get those  
24      numbers for you, but I do know that in every  
25      district, things are done differently. And so you

1 will find that in some school districts, there is  
2 a huge push to get teachers and staff trained, but  
3 you know, that also costs money and dollars.  
4 That's why we need to advocate, you know, for more  
5 money for social emotional learning and social  
6 emotional health and well-being.

7 But everybody does it differently,  
8 and I know, in fact, in every school system, you  
9 know, those suicide risk protocols look  
10 differently as well. When I think about boots on  
11 the ground and who should be trained first like  
12 triage, I would say yes, school counselors should  
13 really have it, school social workers, and then  
14 you're looking at teachers and then administrators  
15 and then some of those other support staff. But I  
16 don't know that that is across the board how each  
17 and every district is doing it.

18 MS. CHILDERS: I totally agree. I  
19 think this is great. I've seen the ones that CMS  
20 uses -- the guidance counselors use, and this is  
21 so -- this is way more in-depth, and I love this.

22 MS. FESCINA: I do know that I worked  
23 with Johnston County Public Schools the beginning  
24 of the school year, and they -- they had not --  
25 they did not have a protocol in place for a

1 student that came and had a risk of suicide or  
2 thoughts of suicide or suicidal ideation. And so  
3 Alliance Health and some other community partners  
4 worked with the school district to get that  
5 protocol in place, not having anything to do with  
6 Mental Health First Aid, but as you can see across  
7 the board and across the state, there's great  
8 distances and variations of what each school  
9 district has in place and what each school  
10 district needs to have in place.

11 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Great. Thank  
12 you.

13 MS. FESCINA: The 72,000 -- it just  
14 dawned on me too. So this is also -- the slide  
15 that had the states on it is the most updated  
16 version. This, I'm guessing, is a few years old  
17 because it is their promotional material, and I  
18 chucked in that brand-new most recent slide. So  
19 those numbers are going to look different. Thank  
20 you for pointing that out.

21 So I don't know if we can play this.  
22 I think -- I believe that this is a little video  
23 shot from a phone call to a [inaudible]. I hope  
24 we can do it. If not---

25 (Pause.)

1 MS. FESCINA: And the video gave a  
2 little history about Mental Health First Aid and  
3 how it came about, and so it originated in  
4 Australia. And the movement really happened over  
5 time, and for the curriculum for Mental Health  
6 First Aid in the United States, it was actually  
7 written and developed at Georgetown University in  
8 Washington, DC.

9 And so the National Council for  
10 Behavioral Health is housed there, and they do a  
11 wealth of trainings in Washington, DC, and that's  
12 kind of where it developed. So that was just a  
13 little bit of a background of Mental Health First  
14 Aid, but you-all will get it. You-all are smart.

15 So "Be the One to Make a Difference."  
16 This is just a campaign that was launched by the  
17 National Council, and it's verbiage and language  
18 that I use in the training all the time, and I  
19 just think it's important to have that language.  
20 You know, you could be the one. You could be the  
21 one that could be the difference -- that makes the  
22 difference in that person's or that individual's  
23 life.

24 As educators and teachers, that's  
25 what we think about all the time in our classroom,

1 that we could be the one that really makes a  
2 difference in a child's life, and so think about  
3 how powerful it could be that you're the one that  
4 actually saves a life by intervening and having  
5 this knowledge.

6 So "The Value of Mental Health First  
7 Aid." I think it's priceless to me, but of  
8 course, there is a -- there is a dollar figure.  
9 So our manuals are about \$20. How we run our  
10 program at least at Alliance Health -- and, again,  
11 everybody across the country does a little bit  
12 differently -- we were able to purchase lots of  
13 manuals in the last few years. We are quickly  
14 running out of them, which is, I guess, a  
15 double-edged sword because we're doing a lot of  
16 training, but the money is also running out too.

17 So we have -- currently, I run every  
18 other month an open community class that is open  
19 to the community for free. I provide the  
20 textbooks for Youth Mental Health First Aid, and  
21 that's in Smithfield in Johnston County. My  
22 colleague James Osborne, he does Adult Mental  
23 Health First Aid for me and--- I just flopped it.  
24 I do a class every month. He does it every other  
25 month because I have to pull him from Wake County.

1 And so he does a class for me every other month  
2 for Adult Mental Health First Aid, and again,  
3 those are community, kind of open forum classes.  
4 Anybody can register for them.

5 I'm also slowly starting to do some  
6 closed courses for organizations and groups. The  
7 health department is wanting to do a course for  
8 me -- wants me to do a course for them, and so  
9 they purchased those manuals at \$18.95 a manual.  
10 They are going to hold onto them and keep them,  
11 and then the training is provided for free by me  
12 or my colleague.

13 MS. GRADY: How do you get  
14 information on that training?

15 MS. FESCINA: So you have a Mental  
16 Health First Aid flyer there. On the back should  
17 be the contact information, but I will also give  
18 you the website where you can go onto our website  
19 and you can see all of the trainings that are  
20 coming up because I'm talking specifically about  
21 Johnston County. We have three other catchment  
22 areas that also do trainings.

23 MS. GRADY: Thank you.

24 MS. FESCINA: So Mental Health First  
25 Aid works. It really is -- it's proven to work.

1 On a daily basis, we're presented with people  
2 dealing with mental illness. Every day this  
3 training will be beneficial. These are people  
4 that have taken it, from a pastor to a peer  
5 support specialist to a police officer.

6 This is just information about what  
7 people are saying on Twitter and online. We'll  
8 get to some really interesting information that  
9 Lady Gaga is doing. There's a movement now for  
10 Teen Mental Health First Aid, and I'll talk to you  
11 a little bit about that. It has really taken  
12 flight. There's some exciting stuff going on with  
13 that and support through her foundation and  
14 through her efforts.

15 So why should my employees be  
16 trained? I mean I think we can all understand why  
17 a school system should be trained, but why an  
18 organization or a private company or something of  
19 that nature? What do we know again? One in five  
20 American adults experience a mental illness each  
21 year, but look at that next component: "Employers  
22 face an estimated 80 to \$100 billion in direct  
23 costs annually due to mental illness and substance  
24 use, including lost productivity and absenteeism."  
25 That's huge.

1                   And so when we look -- I'll also give  
2                   you a link to AFSP. We might even be able to pull  
3                   it up later on, if we have some time, because I'd  
4                   really like -- would like to show you that  
5                   interactive website where you can get some  
6                   specific information around North Carolina and  
7                   some of those statistics.

8                   But 10.8 million full-time workers  
9                   have a substance use disorder. 10.8 million. We  
10                  know that when characteristics, when things  
11                  continue to compound, when they build up on each  
12                  other, there is a greater risk of developing a  
13                  mental illness. So when I talk about substance  
14                  use disorder, when I talked about poverty, when I  
15                  talk about a family member that has also died by  
16                  suicide, those statistics start to increase and  
17                  rise that you will development a mental health  
18                  disorder as well.

19                  So "Government Support." This is the  
20                  Mental Health First Aid Act of 2015. It  
21                  authorized \$20 million for Mental Health First  
22                  Aid. Again, this is 2015. And then down below,  
23                  \$15 million annually in Mental Health First Aid  
24                  appropriations.

25                  These are the modules. And so I am

1 only trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid.  
2 However, some of my colleagues are trained in  
3 other modules so that they would provide the Adult  
4 Mental Health First Aid course, but then there  
5 would be a component for veterans. So that's  
6 Mental Health First Aid USA right there. That's  
7 specifically for veterans. There's a Spanish  
8 component down at the bottom right. Mental Health  
9 First Aid USA top right is for our first  
10 responders and law enforcement. Then there is  
11 also one for higher education, which I think is  
12 really interesting, and that's a module that is  
13 included in the Mental Health First Aid.

14 And so these are some of the  
15 components about what it talks about. Talks about  
16 some of our active duty and our reserve military,  
17 30 percent of them that are deployed in Iraq and  
18 Afghanistan have a mental health condition. PTSD.  
19 It is real. It is valid. People are coming home  
20 from war and experiencing things and seeing things  
21 that we cannot even comprehend, and they can't  
22 comprehend how to handle it. And oftentimes we're  
23 talking about our men typically, not just -- not  
24 only men, but primarily men, and we know that men  
25 often seek treatment less often than women.

1                   Mental Health First Aid for Higher  
2 Education. So this is, you know, the demands of  
3 school. We know that mental health issues and  
4 suicide rates increase as we get older, and as we  
5 get older, it's oftentimes because our stressors  
6 become greater. And so there is that window from  
7 when a student is either leaving high school and  
8 going into college and experiencing the -- or  
9 maybe not going into college, and then those young  
10 adults that are leaving college and trying to  
11 figure out what they do. We have found that there  
12 are spikes and increases of suicide attempts and  
13 completed suicides in that age range.

14                   And so this is our public safety. I  
15 say it all the time. I totally believe that all  
16 of our public safety officers, specifically those  
17 that are working on those crisis intervention  
18 teams, need to have this. Approximately 20,000  
19 public safety professionals have taken the course.  
20 Again, this was about 2015, I think, that this  
21 specific professional material was developed, so  
22 I'm sure that that is much greater now. Police  
23 academies in Philly, DC, Seattle, and numerous  
24 smaller and rural departments. Even in little  
25 Jo-Co, we are working hard to get our public

1 safety officers trained.

2 Youth Mental Health First Aid. This  
3 is my baby. It introduces participants to the  
4 unique risk factors and warning signs of mental  
5 health problems in adolescents because it  
6 oftentimes looks different and it oftentimes looks  
7 like normal adolescent development. So it's super  
8 important to know just the small nuances between  
9 what normal adolescent development looks like and  
10 when we might be walking into a potential mental  
11 health crisis or mental health challenge or mental  
12 health disorder.

13 It builds understanding of the  
14 importance of early intervention, teaches  
15 individuals how to help an adolescent in crisis or  
16 experiencing a challenge -- mental health  
17 challenge, and the course is designed for adults  
18 who regularly interact with adolescents. So we're  
19 talking about our teachers, our school staff, our  
20 coaches, our youth group leaders, our parents, and  
21 anyone else that we can think of that may interact  
22 with our youth ages 12 to 18. Specifically, that  
23 is -- that course is meant for those youth that  
24 are 12 to 18 years of age.

25 And so that little snippet of video

1 that we missed, it gave a little bit more  
2 background about this, but again, it originated in  
3 Australia. It's currently in 23 countries. The  
4 adult course is for 18 years and older, and again,  
5 that youth course is for 12 to 18. It's available  
6 both in Spanish and English. Mental Health First  
7 Aid is included in SAMHSA's National Registry of  
8 Evidence-based Programs and Practices. So it's  
9 evidence-based. There is research that says that  
10 this is working.

11 So this is the adult curriculum  
12 overview. We're not going to go heavy on it, but  
13 these are some of the modules that -- if you were  
14 to take the adult course, what we would talk about  
15 and what we would go over. There are some, again,  
16 roleplays.

17 I know in the youth there is an  
18 anxiety attack roleplay. We know that anxiety  
19 attacks often look like heart attacks, and so  
20 being able to triage the difference, and that if  
21 you don't know the difference and you don't know  
22 the individual that is experiencing that issue,  
23 then, you call 911, that you treat it like a heart  
24 attack. So there's just some important things  
25 that you can do every single day. Again,

1 knowledge is power and having those tools in your  
2 toolkit are really important.

3           So "Evidence, Mental Health First  
4 Aid." This is just evidence behind Mental Health  
5 First Aid. I believe that this might have been  
6 another video, but we're going to move right along  
7 with that. Increases knowledge and understanding.  
8 Encourages people helping people, which is huge.  
9 That's why we're here on earth, I believe.  
10 Supports people getting help. Decreases social  
11 distance and increases mental wellness.

12           So the first aid instructor course,  
13 this is the course that I went through, and it's  
14 fairly intensive. It's a five-day training. I  
15 actually went to one that was a three-day  
16 training, so it was extremely intensive. But,  
17 again, it teaches you all of the components that  
18 we would need to teach you-all. Some of them do  
19 allow for approved CEUs.

20           I know I took the course -- again, it  
21 was a grant that was given by North Carolina PTA  
22 that I applied to participate and was thankfully  
23 granted the opportunity to become an instructor.  
24 They did several of them. I know one was in  
25 Raleigh. I actually went to the one, I believe,

1 that was in Charlotte because I had other  
2 obligations here in Raleigh, and I think they were  
3 doing another area around--- And now I recognize  
4 your face.

5 MS. HUTCHINSON: You did the training  
6 in Charlotte.

7 MS. FESCINA: Yeah. I felt like I  
8 knew you from somewhere.

9 MS. HUTCHINSON: Down by the airport.

10 MS. FESCINA: Yes, okay. I was  
11 there.

12 MS. BYNUM: Small world.

13 MS. FESCINA: Yeah, small world. So  
14 why should I be an instructor? Connecting,  
15 advocating, educating, leading, bringing your  
16 community together, reducing stigma, having some  
17 common language, showing others how they can be  
18 beneficial and how they can help.

19 This is Mental Health First Aid in  
20 the News. Again, I hope that, you know, if this  
21 slide or this can be shared with all of you, you  
22 can click on those links and read a little bit  
23 about it, but what I wanted to highlight was Lady  
24 Gaga's announcement that Teen Mental Health First  
25 Aid pilot program will expand to 20 additional

1 high schools. That was June 11th, 2019, and I  
2 actually just got a snippet somewhere in August  
3 that they've now expanded it to 35 more schools.  
4 So really excited about what's coming down the  
5 pike there.

6 The difference between Teen Mental  
7 Health First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid  
8 is that this is teens teaching teens, and so  
9 again, how they can help a peer, how they can  
10 intervene, how they can be the one to support.  
11 Again, not diagnosing, not treating, but just  
12 knowing those signs and getting them -- oftentimes  
13 we find that when youth do say something, they say  
14 something to a friend.

15 So find or host a course, this is one  
16 of the great places that you can go to find or  
17 host a course. This is [MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://MentalHealthFirstAid.org).  
18 This is going to give your national registry. So  
19 anywhere in the US, you can find where courses are  
20 available and where you can take one.

21 And then that is me. Take a course  
22 through Alliance Health, please. Again, there are  
23 other great organizations that are doing it  
24 locally as well. Again, I'm here as an Alliance  
25 representative, so I know those in my right-hand

1 pocket, but again, you can go to our website. You  
2 can feel free to email me. I can give you that  
3 information about locally what is happening in  
4 your area.

5 But, again, we all need to advocate  
6 for training. We all need to advocate that this  
7 is so important for our teachers, for anyone that  
8 interacts with -- again, my priority is youth.  
9 That's my passion, but for anyone, truly. You  
10 just never know who you're going to come across.

11 Questions for me? Or to become a  
12 mental health instructor, go to that website as  
13 well. Questions for me?

14 **(No audible response.)**

15 MS. FESCINA: Thank you for having  
16 me. I appreciate it.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Becky.

18 MS. FESCINA: Oh. You know what? I  
19 do have just a few minutes. Can I bring up AFSP  
20 for all of you that don't know it?

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure.

22 MS. FESCINA: I'd love to show you  
23 the statistics for North Carolina. There's a  
24 really great info graphic, and it's quite  
25 astonishing, and I think it's important

1 information for you-all to have.

2 AFSP, for those that don't know, is  
3 the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.  
4 They do community walks to raise awareness and  
5 reduce stigma around suicide and mental health and  
6 wellness. I know I am walking in Fuquay-Varina's  
7 walk. I know they have one in Durham. I'm sure  
8 that there's one in Raleigh -- a big one in  
9 Raleigh.

10 Disclosure. I lost the first love of  
11 my life to suicide in 2004, and so I am extremely  
12 passionate around this subject and this topic.  
13 Yeah. You never know who you're going to, again,  
14 run across and what they may need and what help  
15 they may need. So I just feel like, as long as I  
16 can do this work, I will continue to advocate.

17 So when you go here, you want to go  
18 to "About Suicide," and then if you scroll down  
19 here, there's all kinds of great information.  
20 What I really am astounded by is looking at some  
21 of these statistics here. And so suicide is the  
22 tenth leading cause of death in the US, and this  
23 is pertinent and up-to-date stuff. In fact, the  
24 info graphic that I'm going to show you, I think,  
25 is a 2019 info graphic.

1                   In 2017, 47,173 Americans died by  
2 suicide. In 2017, there were an estimated 1.4  
3 million attempts, and it cost the US in 2015 \$69  
4 billion. And if you scroll a little bit further  
5 down here, then you get all this other  
6 information, but you can go here and click on  
7 "North Carolina," and then I can do a fact sheet,  
8 and that's really what I wanted you-all to see.

9                   So here is your state facts here, and  
10 so number of deaths by suicide in North Carolina,  
11 1521, nationally 47,173. This is ranks per  
12 100,000 in the population. State rank is 35. But  
13 what's really amazing is that it's the second  
14 leading cause of death for ages 15 to 34. The  
15 second leading cause of death. And so if we're  
16 not talking about it, what are we doing about it?

17                   This is really -- again, the website  
18 is a wealth of information. You can go to all 50  
19 states and take a look at it and get some really  
20 important information. Sign up for a walk,  
21 donate, advocate, and come find me if you'd like  
22 to take a course. Thank you, again.

23                   THE CHAIRPERSON: We have teachers  
24 here on the group. What is currently in the  
25 health/PE requirement? I'm sure we still have

1 that for high school students for graduation. Is  
2 there a mental health component -- first aid  
3 component that is included in that? Could there  
4 be one that we have included in that? Because I  
5 think that might be a great tool for them.

6 MS. GRANT: For the students?

7 MS. HUTCHINSON: PE standards  
8 include---

9 MS. FESCINA: Social emotional.

10 MS. HUTCHINSON: Uh-huh. Starting  
11 in -- right down to kindergarten. I mean just at,  
12 you know, varying degrees and, obviously,  
13 structure. Middle school, it becomes really  
14 chunky and emotional mental health and peer  
15 relationships and healthy relationships and every  
16 aspect of that.

17 MS. FESCINA: And I don't know about  
18 statewide, but I know, again, I can speak for  
19 Johnston County Public Schools because I work so  
20 closely with them. They have a director of social  
21 emotional learning now at the district level, and  
22 every school is required in their SIP plan to have  
23 a social emotional learning goal for their school  
24 and for their staff, and so that's something that  
25 we've also been working on with them as to how --

1 how to get them to their goal.

2 MS. GRANT: And I can speak to  
3 Nash-Rocky Mount Schools in that aspect. We did  
4 have -- last year hire a district mental health  
5 coordinator, who's kind of doing the same thing,  
6 overseeing our threat assessment and suicide  
7 protocols. And we have four Mental Health First  
8 Aid trainers, and so we do provide training.

9 One of the trainings that we found or  
10 the participants found to be the most powerful was  
11 our PE teachers and our coaches because they have  
12 really good relationships with our students, and  
13 they were just astonished by -- we weren't really  
14 sure with a bunch of football coaches and baseball  
15 coaches and all how that would end up, but they  
16 have really -- the feedback we've gotten over the  
17 years is, you know, "Can we get updated on that  
18 training? It's been awhile."

19 So it's been really interesting to  
20 see. They're the ones that the kids really talk  
21 with as well, along with our counselors and, of  
22 course, our support staff. We have a five-year  
23 plan where every person in our school district  
24 will eventually have Young Mental Health First Aid  
25 training. So we've got several schools that are

1 doing it now. We also -- we've had to write  
2 several grants because it is kind of expensive  
3 with the manuals, but it is very worth it.

4 And we are now -- we're fixing to  
5 actually have a training where we have a grant.  
6 We paired up with firefighters and our sheriff's  
7 department and are fixing to do several trainings  
8 with them. So it is an extremely valuable  
9 training.

10 MS. FESCINA: Once you have taken the  
11 eight-hour course, it's a certification that you  
12 receive, and the certification is good for three  
13 years. I did not mention that, but you will be  
14 certified for three years before the certification  
15 expires. I know several organizations and  
16 agencies require it for their staff, and they  
17 retake it every three years. So---

18 MS. THOMAS: So one thing I would  
19 like to mention, we here at the agency in our  
20 division have a SAMHSA grant that is working with  
21 three pilots sites around school mental health,  
22 and it's in conjunction with the DHHS. So it was  
23 nice to see a lot of that referenced. Cleveland,  
24 Rockingham, and Beaufort Counties are the three  
25 that are in the pilot. So we're hoping to see

1 some good work for that. I think it is a  
2 five-year grant. So the idea is to build that  
3 capacity and use those as demonstration sites and  
4 then build that across the state. So it's good  
5 work. It's, unfortunately, highly needed work,  
6 but it's good work.

7 MS. FESCINA: Thank you. Thanks for  
8 having me.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll take a  
10 ten-minute break, and then we'll come back for our  
11 ECATS demo with Carol Ann. I'm sure she's looking  
12 forward to that.

13 (A brief recess was taken from 10:36  
14 a.m. to 10:52 a.m.)

15 MS. HUDGENS: All right. Good  
16 morning, everyone. I am excited to be able to  
17 take you through a little demonstration of ECATS.  
18 At some point, I will be stopping and catching my  
19 breath to make sure you have an opportunity to ask  
20 me any questions that you might have, so that we  
21 can give you a peek at those things that might be  
22 of interest to you.

23 All right. This is what you get when  
24 you're running two computers at one time. Hold on  
25 just a second.

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(Pause.)

MS. HUDGENS: All right. Here we go. This is what we call the dashboard for ECATS, and as you can see, there's a lot of information on the screen just right away. So I'm going to do my best to enlarge my screen when it comes to those particular areas that I would like to focus on.

Right here at the top is our announcement window, and in this announcement window, we have the opportunity to be able to push out messages to all of our users from the state level. We can also have the ability for the district to be able to push out its own messages to its users. We believe that this is going to be a really helpful tool when reminding the field of headcounts, any kind of reminders that we need to offer regarding reporting timelines, any useful tips or adjustments to the system. We really feel like this will be a very helpful place.

As you can see, I am in the training site. I also tend to call this the sandbox because what we have in here are students that we have just created for the purposes of training. This is not live student data. So I want to be sure that we share that up-front. It is a

1 demonstration site, and as you can see by some of  
2 the messages that are scrolling down, we provided  
3 CEUs to our teachers if they participated in  
4 training. We have a survey in the announcement  
5 box. We have some just training-related messages  
6 currently in the sandbox.

7 All right. As we walk down and look  
8 a little further or scroll down in our sandbox a  
9 little bit further and on the dashboard, we have  
10 what we call widgets here, and these widgets are  
11 designed to show an aggregate view of a variety of  
12 things. We have information around compliance.  
13 We have information around school caseload. We  
14 have information for students with overdue dates,  
15 percentage of time students are being served in  
16 general education or in special education  
17 settings, how many students that we have in  
18 referral, how many are eligible, and so forth.

19 And I'm going to start clicking on  
20 some of these in just a moment. What I want to  
21 share, before we get to that, is your dashboard  
22 populates based on your user type. So if I am a  
23 superintendent in a district, I'm going to be able  
24 to see all of my schools as my caseload school  
25 dashboard. And so the principle of the colors

1 here is very much like a traffic light. Green  
2 means I'm good to go, I'm in compliance; Yellow  
3 means I have a warning that something is about to  
4 become to due; and red means I have something  
5 overdue and I have to attend to it right away.

6 So if I'm a superintendent and I'm  
7 looking at the health of my schools, just very  
8 quickly by the pie charts listed here, if you can  
9 see my cursor moving up and down, I can tell just  
10 very quickly how my schools are doing in  
11 compliance, and if I'm seeing some areas perhaps  
12 that have more red or even a sliver of red, I can  
13 hover over this pie chart here, and I can see  
14 exactly a percentage -- or what that percentage  
15 means on that pie chart.

16 And so, for example, here I clicked  
17 on the Children's Village Academy, and when I'm  
18 hovering over the pie chart, it says that I have  
19 91 percent compliance in the school, meaning 22  
20 out of 24 of my students has compliance, either  
21 meaning that they have current eligibility and  
22 they have a current IEP in place for that student.  
23 And so, again, this is just demonstration data for  
24 the purposes of today and for our training, but it  
25 gives you a lot of valuable information just right

1 when you log onto the screen.

2 This also works for us here at the  
3 State. Our state aggregate view has all of the  
4 schools -- all of the districts populated, and so  
5 we can get similar information when we're looking  
6 at the state view. And we find that particularly  
7 exciting because, as you all know, we have been a  
8 state with third-party vendors, and so that would  
9 mean that we would have to look at our information  
10 through a variety of means, and not have it  
11 necessarily at our fingertips in such a manner as  
12 it is now. So we're really excited by this, and  
13 we're excited that we have now the ability to be  
14 able to look at things in real time.

15 What I'm doing here is I'm zooming in  
16 on some of the widgets here. I spoke about the  
17 one in the middle regarding caseload in schools,  
18 and now I'm looking over to my left, and I'm  
19 looking at the compliance here regarding those  
20 IEPs for initial students, initial evaluations,  
21 IEPs, and PSSP is the Private School Services  
22 Plan. So we do have to monitor those Private  
23 School Services Plans that we are serving with our  
24 proportionate shared funds at the district level.

25 And so you can just see here what the

1 compliance -- again, in the little chart above,  
2 green is in compliance, yellow is coming due, red  
3 is out of compliance. And so that just gives me  
4 the breakdown across my district.

5 I'm going to go along this row and  
6 I'm going to go over here to the right where we  
7 have students with overdue dates, and what I see  
8 here is that we have 345 students who may be  
9 overdue for either getting consent for an  
10 evaluation, which requires parent consent --  
11 written parent consent, or I could be potentially  
12 over for consent for that initial placement in  
13 which parents have to provide that initial written  
14 consent before we are able to serve students with  
15 special education.

16 The nice thing about this chart is,  
17 who might those 345 students be, and so if I click  
18 on the bar graph, it shows me exactly who those  
19 students are, and it looks like third grade has  
20 been a bumper year for either referrals or  
21 placement decisions. Again, this is a  
22 demonstration site, but what a valuable piece of  
23 information here that something is happening in  
24 third grade in my district.

25 And so that would just be an example

1 of how this information could be particularly  
2 useful if I'm looking at, one, how I need to  
3 allocate my resources because if we have a high  
4 number of students perhaps that are in the third  
5 grade or being referred at third grade, what are  
6 some things that we might want to probe a little  
7 deeper to find out? Are there difficulties with  
8 the referral process? Are there difficulties with  
9 providing interventions prior to referrals? Are  
10 we having a lot of children enter the district for  
11 the first time at third grade?

12           So, again, not necessarily  
13 hypothesizing that any of what I just shared would  
14 be the case, but it would be a starting point that  
15 I would at least, as a superintendent or a  
16 building administrator, say, "Hmm. What's going  
17 on in third grade in this building and why do we  
18 have so many students who are overdue in third  
19 grade in this building?" And so, again, I feel  
20 like that's a real useful piece of information,  
21 that depending on what your vantage point is, you  
22 could start asking some essential questions about  
23 programming, not only in general ed settings, but  
24 you could ask about programming regarding  
25 exceptional children.

1 All right. And so that works as well  
2 for the bar graphs around eligible students, and  
3 we have a lot of kindergartners who are overdue.  
4 Again, I can, you know, make some hypotheses. Is  
5 there anything around transition from part B to C  
6 or from preschool to kindergarten programs? Are  
7 we having a lot of referrals in kindergarten for  
8 whatever reason, or are a lot of these referrals  
9 prompted by particular notification mechanisms?

10 Again, when you have more detailed  
11 knowledge about your particular LEA and your  
12 particular district, this helps inform trends. It  
13 gives you a snapshot of what patterns might be or  
14 where you might need to allocate additional  
15 resources. Maybe we have a lot of kindergarten  
16 teachers who are making referrals who might be new  
17 teachers and who might need to have some  
18 additional professional development --  
19 professional development around the developmental  
20 stages of all children at the kindergarten level,  
21 and that what might be prompting a referral is  
22 actually an appropriate developmental difference  
23 for children who are very young. And so just some  
24 examples of how data could be used from the  
25 dashboard here.

1 I'm going to scroll down, and I'm  
2 actually going to pause and catch my breath and  
3 check on the folks online and see if they have any  
4 questions for me, and then I'll come to you,  
5 Ginny.

6 Okay. Abby, I'm checking with you  
7 right now. Can you hear me better now? Can you  
8 submit a question that says you can hear me?  
9 Okay. Thank you, Abby.

10 I'm going to go to Ginny now. Ginny,  
11 you had a question for me?

12 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yes. I think at the  
13 beginning you said something about that one of the  
14 capabilities with this platform was that the user  
15 could send out information. So would -- like  
16 let's say you were the administrator and you saw  
17 the chart up at the top that had, you know, your  
18 categories of students who had something that was  
19 overdue. Are you able to send like a mass message  
20 to all -- I don't know if it would be a case  
21 manager or a parent or whatever -- to let them  
22 know, "Hey, if you're getting this message, it  
23 means you have something overdue"? Can they do  
24 that from there, like send a mass---

25 MS. HUDGENS: So your question has a

1 couple of layers that I want to address. First of  
2 all, the announcement windowpane here is more  
3 general announcements because this pushes out to  
4 all users. This is not likely where we would want  
5 to have student-specific or teacher-specific  
6 information regarding the caseloads, whether  
7 they're compliant or not.

8 Then the second part of your question  
9 is around compliance, and teachers have their  
10 caseloads assigned to them, and when I get a  
11 little further in the presentation, the system is  
12 designed on its own to be able to show those  
13 alerts around compliance. So in terms of  
14 messaging, emailing within the system, that is not  
15 the capacity for the system. It's really a data  
16 dashboard, a data management system.

17 And for communication between case  
18 managers, from districts to teachers, from the  
19 State to districts, that is better handled through  
20 our email systems rather than inside of this  
21 system.

22 MS. MOOREFIELD: I know that this is  
23 a demo that we're looking at. So if -- if, for  
24 instance, I was the coordinator for -- let's say I  
25 was the coordinator for Wake County. So would my

1 opening dashboard -- the announcements dashboard,  
2 would it look the same as this or -- because I  
3 also remember you saying that, you know, it  
4 depends on what your user function is.

5 So like if a teacher were to log into  
6 ECATS versus a school administrator or at the  
7 district level administrator, do their  
8 announcement boards look the same or does that  
9 also change depending?

10 MS. HUDGENS: So the announcement  
11 board is going to be consistent across the users,  
12 no matter the user type. Your dashboard is going  
13 to have the same widgets, but the information  
14 that's displayed in the widget is based on your  
15 permission and your role.

16 So if I am a fifth-grade teacher at  
17 Ace Academy, I'm only going to be seeing those  
18 students that I'm associated with. I'm either  
19 delivering a service to them or I am on their IEP.  
20 And so then my dashboard is going to show the  
21 students for whom I have a direct responsibility  
22 for. Now that's at the student and service  
23 provider level.

24 So, then, if I'm a school  
25 administrator, I can see all the students in my

1 building. Okay. If I am a regional supervisor  
2 like for a big district, I might be supervising  
3 like a program specialist. I could be supervising  
4 multiple schools. So in my dashboard, I would see  
5 all the schools, and then I could drill down by  
6 school to see all the students and the case  
7 managers.

8 And so that -- that dashboard  
9 populates up based on, one, what you need to know  
10 and, two, your permission granted in the system.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: Right. So if I  
12 were -- if I were a district administrator and I  
13 wanted to check in and I were to see -- and I'm  
14 just using the overdue thing as an example.

15 MS. HUDGENS: Uh-huh.

16 MS. MOOREFIELD: So I cannot, then,  
17 just like click from there to get a drop-down and  
18 message all? So I would look at that and go,  
19 "Hmm. Okay," and then have to go to the email in  
20 order to create that reminder?

21 MS. HUDGENS: Correct. Correct.  
22 Correct. The system didn't contemplate mass  
23 emailing inside of the system. That gets into a  
24 different type of user utility, and so it was not  
25 intended to be a back-and-forth communication tool

1 as much as it is intended to be a data management  
2 tool.

3 MS. MOOREFIELD: I see. And is there  
4 any kind of like notification system set up within  
5 ECATS that would -- you know, like if you had  
6 something that was coming due, does it notify the  
7 teacher, the admin, or whomever?

8 MS. HUDGENS: So we did have alerts  
9 built in place for--- Let me rephrase that. We  
10 do have alerts built in place that based on your  
11 role, you can get an aggregate of such-and-such is  
12 coming due, you need to attend to this.

13 MS. MOOREFIELD: Right.

14 MS. HUDGENS: During the  
15 implementation phase, we turned off that mass  
16 communication because if you're a building  
17 principal of 2300 students and 500 of them are  
18 students with disabilities, then you could  
19 potentially get 500 daily messages about the  
20 status of a student.

21 And so the way we are organizing  
22 that, we certainly don't want folks to become  
23 blind to those messages, and that's what happens  
24 when there's mass emailing. So what we have done  
25 is, we have turned that feature off right now

1 during implementation---

2 MS. MOOREFIELD: That makes sense.

3 MS. HUDGENS: ---and we are wanting  
4 to train the users to the compliance symbols  
5 inside of the system.

6 MS. MOOREFIELD: That make sense.

7 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. Any other  
8 questions? Did that prompt any other questions?

9 **(No audible response.)**

10 MS. HUDGENS: All right. Ginny,  
11 you're going to keep me sharp today, I can tell.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ginny's awesome.

13 MS. HUDGENS: She is awesome.

14 MS. MOOREFIELD: Well, Ginny's a  
15 problem finder, a lot of times.

16 MS. HUDGENS: No. If I can answer  
17 your questions today, I'm going to consider it a  
18 good day.

19 MS. MOOREFIELD: You know, I'm just  
20 thinking, you know, if I had to use this and it  
21 was my responsibility to stay on top of this data,  
22 you know, I wouldn't want to have to go, okay, now  
23 I've got to send 500 emails out.

24 MS. HUDGENS: Yes.

25 MS. MOOREFIELD: But that does make

1 sense to turn the notifications off when you're  
2 learning how to do it.

3 MS. HUDGENS: Uh-huh. So one of the  
4 things I'm going to raise on behalf of those  
5 friends of us that are on virtually, they're very  
6 interested in the questions that you guys raise  
7 here. So you might have to hug your mike a little  
8 bit, which is why I'm leaning toward mine.

9 So if you guys will reciprocate and  
10 lean into your mike. I'll try to remember to  
11 repeat your question, but I think my multitasker  
12 is about multitasked out between two computers.  
13 So if you-all will help me with that this morning,  
14 that would just be fabulous.

15 Okay. So I'm moving on down to the  
16 widgets here, and it looks like by this widget we  
17 are serving everybody in the regular classroom,  
18 and so we are pushing in our services in this  
19 particular aggregate view, and this just shows how  
20 students are being placed. They are regular on  
21 the continuum.

22 Okay. All right. So students by  
23 time in special education -- and let me rephrase  
24 what I said about the first widget. Students by  
25 placement in the special ed settings. So you know

1 depending on the time of day that you are  
2 receiving services determines whether or not  
3 you're considered regular, resource, or separate  
4 in terms of federal reporting for your time spent  
5 in special ed.

6           So if we look at students by  
7 percentage of time in special ed, most of our  
8 students in this aggregate view are being pulled  
9 out less than 40 percent of the day. And then we  
10 can see -- the next one, we have students between  
11 40 and 79 percent of the day, and then we just  
12 have 13 students who spend 80 percent or more of  
13 their day in a special ed setting. And so we  
14 consider that good stuff, right, that they're  
15 getting access to the general curriculum and  
16 supplemental aids and supports. Okay.

17           All right. Students by status. This  
18 works similar to the other widget that I showed  
19 you, how many students have a referral and so  
20 forth. And so when I click on this, I can search  
21 these students by using this search window, and  
22 I'm going to talk a little bit more about this in  
23 a few minutes. I want to continue with the main  
24 menu, and then we'll get to this. That's my  
25 little teaser for a search.

1                   So coming on down, I think then  
2 another very interesting widget that we have here  
3 is our students by disability, and this is  
4 representative of my district. And so many times  
5 you guys have raised questions about how do  
6 districts make decisions about the professional  
7 development that they provide, how do they look to  
8 recruit and retain teachers, what are the needs of  
9 students in a particular district.

10                   So in this school district, which is  
11 what this view shows, most of my individuals with  
12 disabilities in the training site are individuals  
13 with learning disabilities, and so I can see how  
14 that has spread out amongst the sample size that  
15 we have here. So I could click on these students  
16 and see the students here who are considered  
17 intellectually disabled. And so, again, that kind  
18 of helps you drill down based on what the  
19 disability categories are here representative of  
20 your school, of your district, and of the state.

21                   And so based on this information, I  
22 might probe it a little further and see if there  
23 are patterns with where these students fall.  
24 Again, do I have a lot of students with speech  
25 impairments in the early grades? That would be

1 what I would expect, is a lot of children with  
2 speech impairments in the early grades. Where do  
3 our other children fall out? Again, you can click  
4 on these bar graphs and find some more detailed  
5 information. Okay.

6 As we scroll down to the bottom here,  
7 there's another message center with alerts and  
8 action items. This gets to your point, Ginny,  
9 about some of those automated benefits of the  
10 system talking to me about my caseload and what my  
11 responsibilities are.

12 "My Reports," this is just a quick  
13 way to -- there's multiple ways to get to things  
14 in the system. "My Reports," any reports that I  
15 have run recently, it will populate in this window  
16 so I don't have to click to another screen. I can  
17 just go back and forth to the report that I  
18 wanted.

19 The next tab is a tab of resources  
20 that we have provided for a variety of purposes.  
21 Certainly, there are special education support  
22 documents here, service logging, intervention and  
23 planning documents, but for the purposes of  
24 demonstration, I'm going to click on the special  
25 education documents here, and what these documents

1 show us -- and I'm going to minimize my screen for  
2 a minute.

3 If I go over, there's quick reference  
4 cards for where to find things. If I need to  
5 navigate the system and I can't remember how to  
6 get to something, these are little tips that are  
7 collected here. The user manual here, this is not  
8 a user guide to teach you how to do special ed, in  
9 other words, but this is more about how to find  
10 things. If you are conducting a reevaluation and  
11 you need to remember what tabs to click on inside  
12 of the system, you can go to this user guide to  
13 help you figure that out. And then there's a  
14 training guide here as well.

15 One of the other features that will  
16 come in here is the ability of the district to be  
17 able to load their own training documents. So if  
18 we have -- if Christy, for example, has a special  
19 ed manual for her school district that helps their  
20 teachers comply with what local policy is and  
21 state policy, then she can upload that here to  
22 this tab, and they would be able to find it at  
23 that point. The district can customize that.

24 MS. HUTCHINSON: You can add like  
25 functional behavior assessments that are on

1 statewide forms or BIPs.

2 MS. HUDGENS: Yes. You can use other  
3 documents that are local approved documents there.  
4 Okay. They're standalone. In other words,  
5 they're not necessarily editable or actionable in  
6 terms of typing in them live in the system.

7 MS. HUTCHINSON: It's just access.

8 MS. HUDGENS: It's just access to  
9 different things. To Christy's point, districts  
10 have sometimes some cover letters, some different  
11 communications that they like to use with their  
12 families that are pretty routine for their special  
13 ed programs, and so they have the ability to load  
14 them on here.

15 All right. Questions for me? I'm  
16 going to check over in the chat box. It looks  
17 like we're okay the chat box. Any questions here  
18 on the dashboard for me?

19 **(No audible response.)**

20 MS. HUDGENS: All right. I'm going  
21 to go back to the top here and look at what I call  
22 the ribbon, and the ribbon is this top blue area  
23 here. You see our nice ECATS logo. If I were  
24 in Nash-Rocky Mount School District, it's going to  
25 populate right here. Why that's important is for

1 us at the State. If we are problem-solving with a  
2 director about a particular case, we can go into  
3 that LEA and it helps us know what LEA we're  
4 sitting in when we're working on activities.

5 Then this is "My User," "My  
6 Calendar." "My Calendar" will populate with my  
7 meetings that are coming forward, but it does not  
8 interface with like an Outlook calendar or an  
9 Outlook -- email provider calendar. It's just a  
10 calendar within the system. And then what we have  
11 across the top is the main menu which takes us to  
12 the dashboard. We can look up students by going  
13 to the student tab.

14 In "Wizards," we have a variety of  
15 tools that help the users develop their progress  
16 reports, to review accommodations, to look at  
17 service logs, to set up their caseload. Wizards  
18 are intended to group students together that are  
19 going to have the same function performed. If  
20 it's progress report time and I'm a case manager,  
21 then I would use this wizard to pull all of my  
22 children together so I could start reporting on  
23 their progress.

24 Progress monitoring, if you guys  
25 recall, one of the things that we were very

1 excited about is the progress monitoring tool that  
2 progress monitors directly from the IEP, that we  
3 are able to collect data on those particular goals  
4 and objectives if they're appropriate, and then  
5 look at that information on a graph, and then  
6 bring that information into the progress report.

7 We have not had an option in North  
8 Carolina for the progress monitoring to be  
9 organized in this manner, and so what we've  
10 elected to do is, focus our implementation  
11 training on just getting into the system. Our  
12 second wave of training will come around using the  
13 progress monitoring tool. Because if you think  
14 about implementation, we've got to get active IEPs  
15 and data into the system so that then we have  
16 those goals and objectives then that can interface  
17 with the progress monitoring tool and begin to  
18 collect data.

19 And, as you can imagine, that is  
20 going to be a fairly significant training effort,  
21 and so we didn't want to layer that on top of  
22 implementation at this time. Because it is so  
23 important, we want to make sure that we're dealing  
24 with implementation first and then doing a really  
25 good job with the progress monitoring tool that's

1 available.

2 Now just as a point of interest, the  
3 progress monitoring tool is not a requirement that  
4 LEAs have to use or that case managers have to  
5 use. However, one of our goals when we provide  
6 this training is to show the wonderful benefits of  
7 this tool, that it makes it so highly desirable,  
8 that our districts and our teachers will elect to  
9 make that part of how they progress monitor.

10 And remember, I will say this. There  
11 are multiple ways to progress-monitor goals and  
12 objectives, and even though we have this wonderful  
13 tool in the system, I would think that we would  
14 want to have multiple ways of progress monitoring,  
15 and this would just be one of those tools we might  
16 elect to use.

17 Okay. Questions here?

18 MS. MOOREFIELD: This is Ginny. I  
19 just wanted to ask, when it does become available  
20 and trained and are using, will parents have  
21 access to that information?

22 MS. HUDGENS: So currently parents  
23 are not a user inside of the system. However,  
24 this information can be brought into the child's  
25 progress report. So where you might be getting a

1 progress report right now that says "meeting  
2 goal," "not met goal," and so forth, the progress  
3 monitoring data from that goal can then be brought  
4 in and a graph of data displayed where that IEP  
5 goal is.

6 So, yes, parents will have access to  
7 the information, and of course, at any time, that  
8 could be run for an IEP meeting and so forth. But  
9 in terms of being an active user in the system,  
10 no.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: But like if I  
12 wanted -- the last meeting or meeting before where  
13 the fellow from DPI came in and showed us some  
14 progress monitoring tools, I've started asking  
15 that of my child's therapists and teachers, and so  
16 I can interact with that daily so that I can tell  
17 his private therapists and doctors and specialists  
18 what they're working on at school.

19 So is that something that the teacher  
20 could easily email me, or would I have to have it  
21 printed out every time I wanted a copy of it?

22 MS. HUDGENS: So there's probably a  
23 combination of both of those that can happen, and  
24 we will factor that into how we roll out the  
25 training about how it can be assessable, when it's

1 appropriate to have it accessible, and for whom.

2 MS. MOOREFIELD: Okay.

3 MS. HUDGENS: Okay.

4 MS. GRANT: This is Christy. Carol  
5 Ann, I know you said this, but I just want to make  
6 sure I processed it right. So when will the  
7 progress monitoring component -- teachers be able  
8 to use it?

9 MS. HUDGENS: The progress monitoring  
10 component is live now, and so districts can elect  
11 to start working toward that independently---

12 MS. HUTCHINSON: The videos are in  
13 there, though.

14 MS. HUDGENS: Yes.

15 MS. GRANT: We have it. We have it  
16 and we have IEPs in, but we're not seeing the  
17 progress monitoring piece, so we'll talk.

18 MS. HUDGENS: Yeah. So it's already  
19 built into the system. And so, yes, Christy, I  
20 can answer you in more detail, but at this time,  
21 we have not been doing a big push on it for  
22 training for the reasons I've mentioned. Okay.

23 Other questions for progress  
24 monitoring or anything that I've covered so far?

25 **(No audible response.)**

1 MS. HUDGENS: So "My Account," any  
2 documents that I run or create, I can go to my  
3 docs. "Reporting, My Reports, Standard Reports,  
4 Advanced Reporting." Standard Reports indicates  
5 that we have a particular set of reports that can  
6 be run based on your user type on demand, and I  
7 will take you through that once I get through some  
8 more student-specific demonstration that I'd like  
9 to do.

10 And the early warning system, how  
11 many of you have remembered hearing about the  
12 early warning systems through our interventions  
13 through MTSS, and this information shows you if  
14 students are at risk based on the intervention  
15 data that they are receiving. This is the tab for  
16 that area.

17 My specialty and my involvement with  
18 the product has been in the special ed module, so  
19 I'm going to spend most of my time demonstrating  
20 that today. Okay. So let's go ahead and let's  
21 look at students. So I can select -- I can search  
22 students a variety of ways. I can look at their  
23 last name. I can go to their particular school,  
24 particular grade level. I can look and see what  
25 their status is. Maybe I want to know all

1 eligible students in third grade, so I could put  
2 in that demographic information.

3 I can also look at the student ID by  
4 the Power School ID because remember, this is  
5 integrated with Power School. So now I can use  
6 that same number to locate a student. That might  
7 be particularly helpful when we have students who  
8 have very similar names, and that does happen  
9 across the state.

10 We can also do an advanced search  
11 where, to Ginny's point, some of those things  
12 about compliance. Maybe I want to look at  
13 students who are overdue maybe in third grade.  
14 Again, what I'm trying to illustrate here is that  
15 the options for searching for students or groups  
16 of students are wide and varied. You can look up  
17 by disability type. You can look up by placement,  
18 you know, preschool setting placements, regular,  
19 resource. You can find a variety of things here  
20 in placement.

21 For special ed services, maybe I am  
22 reviewing my staff for the year, and I know that I  
23 have a need for students who are receiving, let's  
24 say, adapted physical education, and I might need  
25 to know how many students in my district have

1 adapted physical education on their IEP and where  
2 are they located. So it might help me inform the  
3 kind of staffing expertise that I might need.

4 All right. And then others that  
5 become really important for school districts are  
6 related services; for example, audiology, how many  
7 kids do I have with audiological services. And as  
8 you can imagine not only for allocating resources  
9 but for scheduling, where are those students  
10 located. If I have a really large LEA -- "large"  
11 by definition of geographically it's deep and  
12 wide, for example -- where are those kids located  
13 and how might I need to allocate those resources  
14 to cover those students.

15 Pardon me. I've embraced allergy  
16 season, so pardon me.

17 The other thing I can do is as a  
18 teacher, I can do my own caseload. So I can just  
19 click on "Caseload," and everyone that I'm either  
20 providing a service to, which means I'm on their  
21 IEP team to provide services to them, and maybe  
22 I'm the case manager and I'm also providing  
23 services, but I'm also maintaining their special  
24 ed record, I can pull up my caseload that way.

25 All right. Questions here on looking

1 for students?

2 (No audible response.)

3 MS. HUDGENS: All right. So I have  
4 been working with some students here, and for the  
5 purposes of demonstrating, let's just say this is  
6 my caseload. And what do I notice right away  
7 about this column? If you recall what I'm saying  
8 about colors, what comes kind of clear right away?

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: You've got stuff to  
10 do.

11 MS. HUDGENS: I have stuff to do;  
12 that is very good, Ginny. Right, I have quite a  
13 few things that are approaching. Now I'm just  
14 going to walk down this list because there's a lot  
15 of good information here. The clear check means  
16 that student is not eligible for special education  
17 services. So the question might be, why am I  
18 seeing this on the EC side, and that's because, at  
19 any given time, that student might be referred,  
20 and I might need to start on the initial referral  
21 process and need access to that student's  
22 information.

23 A green check looks like I'm in good  
24 shape. Red -- again, if I hover over these,  
25 either the eligibility or IEP is out of

1 compliance. Now Christy and Christy are really  
2 interested in this column because when it comes  
3 headcount time, they're going to be flapping in  
4 the wind for all of these stop signs because that  
5 means that we as a state cannot allocate funding  
6 for three students on this page because their  
7 eligibility and/or their IEP is out-of-date.

8 So very important stuff here, and  
9 then, of course, something's coming due pretty  
10 quickly, and again, this just kind of gives us  
11 some information as far as where some difficulties  
12 might be, some opportunities for reminders, some  
13 further investigation about what is happening with  
14 these students.

15 And, again, just kind of following  
16 that on across, we have the case managers. Again,  
17 since this is training, there are just user types  
18 here, but I could look here and see if we have  
19 similar users who are having difficulty managing  
20 their caseload. So we might have to offer some  
21 different support for that teacher because it  
22 could be the perfect storm that we have a new  
23 classroom, and the students assigned to that  
24 classroom all had activities coming up with their  
25 IEPs very quickly. So we might want to allocate

1 some more supports to help that teacher bring  
2 things into compliance.

3 Okay. Questions here?

4 MS. HUTCHINSON: We're still working  
5 through glitches, though. Some of those red stop  
6 signs aren't really red stop signs.

7 MS. HUDGENS: Yes. So let me further  
8 explain---

9 MS. HUTCHINSON: For those of us who  
10 don't like to sleep at night with red stop signs,  
11 some of those are fake red stop signs.

12 MS. HUDGENS: Yes. And for the  
13 record, there have been moments in time this fall  
14 that I thought I would break out in hives with the  
15 ECATS logo as my hive marks.

16 But one of the things that LEAs are  
17 working on right now is to clean up their  
18 dashboards, and what Christy is referencing is  
19 that when we brought in data from our third-party  
20 sources some of our students that had been exited  
21 out of the EC process may or may not have had some  
22 of their files closed and verified, and so it's  
23 bringing it over, appearing that it's active, and  
24 the student is not active. So that's causing a  
25 lot of people angst right now, and so we're

1 working with our LEAs, and we provided some  
2 information about how those students can be  
3 properly closed out, for lack of a better word.

4 MS. HUTCHINSON: And when we initiate  
5 a reeval, it's showing a red stop sign too.

6 MS. HUDGENS: So it's good times all  
7 the way around, Christy, right?

8 MS. HUTCHINSON: Well, for some of us  
9 that like no red stop signs---

10 MS. HUDGENS: Yeah. Well, I mean I'm  
11 smiling because I like the sense of urgency, but  
12 you're smiling because your sense of urgency is  
13 crippling, so---

14 MS. MOOREFIELD: The red dot on the  
15 iPhone, the notifications, huh-uh. I can't handle  
16 it. See, red dots. I can't handle it.

17 MS. HUDGENS: So just for the folks  
18 online, we're just having a sidebar conversation  
19 about those alerts that we're trying to get fixed,  
20 and that everyone has a sense of urgency around  
21 correcting those.

22 So any other questions or comments on  
23 this part?

24 **(No audible response.)**

25 MS. HUDGENS: All right. So I'm

1 going to go ahead, and I'm going to select "Hope  
2 Test," just for demonstration. Anything that is  
3 underlined can be -- is a hyperlink and it will  
4 take me directly to it. So where I started off  
5 with you guys is the dashboard for the county or  
6 caseload. Where I am now is the student profile  
7 for a particular student, so I'm just looking at a  
8 particular student, and that landing page has a  
9 lot of cumulative information here.

10 So what I'm seeing here for this  
11 student is that, again, just kind of the personal  
12 information, who their parent or guardian might  
13 be, who their teachers might be, their birth date,  
14 and so forth. Then, as I click across the tabs  
15 here, I get more and more different kinds of  
16 information. So if I am implementing some  
17 interventions and I have some performance data for  
18 a variety of things, those information come up  
19 here. Okay. It brings it over.

20 So remember we talked about the  
21 integration between MTSS and ECATS or the special  
22 ed module, and so for our districts who are in the  
23 room, there's some testing going on here in the  
24 training site. So don't let anything give you  
25 some heartburn here while we're working, okay,

1 because I saw Christy's eyes -- this Christy, not  
2 that Christy.

3 All right. So, again, with the  
4 integration of Power School, any of the grades  
5 that will be coming in for this school year, we  
6 can click and see them here on this tab. Again,  
7 the same would be true for attendance and then  
8 academic. And I may have told you wrong here on  
9 the performance data. Academic -- this tab is the  
10 MTSS tab. So if you're working and you're  
11 receiving tiered support, here is your progress  
12 monitoring data at an aggregate level, meaning  
13 it's kind of summarized here, for a variety of  
14 things that are going on.

15 So we have some progress monitoring  
16 data here. I know I've got a data point right  
17 here relative to behavior, social emotional. You  
18 can see -- or maybe if I would enlarge this, you  
19 could see -- what some of the chart's -- the key  
20 to the chart. This blue little diamond is talking  
21 about behavioral data. It tells me I collected it  
22 on the 29th.

23 Again, why this might be important  
24 for the EC teacher is that if they are getting  
25 ready to provide a present level of performance

1 and they're trying to determine whether or not a  
2 child might need some additional support through  
3 their special ed program, they could look at this  
4 progress monitoring data from things that are  
5 happening in general education to factor into  
6 maybe an IEP team discussion about what is needed,  
7 maybe more is needed, maybe less is needed, maybe  
8 something different needs to be changed. Okay.

9 Ideally, what we would be seeing is that children  
10 are making progress with their supports, and so we  
11 know that we've got a solid program in place.

12 And then for special education, you  
13 know who's on the IEP team, the dates of the IEP,  
14 and here at this screen too, we can see our  
15 hyperlink into the IEP document. So this is where  
16 we're going to pause, and I'm going to take you  
17 through this about what the new forms look like.  
18 And you'll recall from different times I've shared  
19 information here that the forms are baked into the  
20 system, that depending on what the child needs and  
21 what the IEP team agrees upon is what prints out  
22 on the forms.

23 And so this is the completed IEP for  
24 this particular student, and so for you-all, this  
25 might be of interest because this is what you're

1 going to see when you go to a meeting. So your  
2 IEP will have your child's information up at the  
3 top. It will have -- instead of "ECATS Training  
4 Site," it will say your school. And then, of  
5 course, we have the student profile. If you'll  
6 remember, the way we organized the forms is, we  
7 wanted all the information about the child very  
8 early on in the IEP so we would know how to  
9 program. So what are their strengths, what are  
10 their concerns, what is the student's vision for  
11 the future, what are the parents' concerns, and  
12 then we get into the present levels of academic  
13 and functional performance.

14 So any of the areas that we assessed,  
15 where did that information come from, and then the  
16 team has to answer the question, "Does the child  
17 need specially-designed instruction?" And so if  
18 the team requires specially-designed instruction,  
19 that tells me that I need to have a goal and/or  
20 accommodations and supplemental aids and supports  
21 and/or services for this particular area of need.

22 So, families, if you have a child in  
23 the initial evaluation process and your  
24 comprehensive evaluation had multiple areas that  
25 were assessed, you're going to see each of those

1 areas assessed here with that source of  
2 information and then a present level of  
3 performance around that, and the team will decide  
4 yes or no, if that particular area requires  
5 services. Okay.

6 All right. Here's an opportunity to  
7 talk about any relevant medical information and  
8 then how does that disability impact the  
9 involvement and the progress in the general  
10 curriculum, and then here is the special factors  
11 area. Okay. And, again, this is the output, and  
12 I'm going to go back in the interface and show you  
13 where some of these things are located for  
14 teachers to put in information.

15 We know what the special factors are  
16 around behavior, hearing needs, does the child  
17 require adapted physical education. And one thing  
18 I wanted to point out, again, that was something  
19 that we discussed in past Council opportunities  
20 is, are parents fully aware of the content  
21 standards that their children are engaging with;  
22 do they believe that they're in the standard  
23 content; do know they're in the occupational  
24 course of study; do they know that they're on  
25 extended standards.

1                   So this question is in the special  
2 factors information for every child. So it really  
3 is meant to be a time of critical conversation and  
4 transparency with the families because, as we  
5 know, if children are on the extended content  
6 standards, they are progressing through curriculum  
7 much slower than their typical peers, and extended  
8 content standards do not result in a high school  
9 diploma.

10                   And so that's a critical piece of  
11 information sometimes that does not get the  
12 discussion warranted until high school, and for a  
13 variety of reasons, you can imagine that's  
14 probably not the time that it needs to be  
15 discussed. It needs to be discussed early on,  
16 especially when you're making a significant  
17 deviation for a child's program away from the  
18 standard content. Okay.

19                   And then there's an opportunity to  
20 capture additional parent concerns. Again,  
21 transition, will the child be 14 during the IEP?  
22 No. All the parts associated with postsecondary.  
23 Measurable annual goals. Here are the goals, how  
24 we're going to document mastery, how will it be  
25 measured. Is assistive technology required, and

1 you see we said social emotional at the beginning  
2 of the IEP required. Specially-designed  
3 instruction. So this is where we're addressing  
4 that area of need.

5 We also talk about if it's related to  
6 transition and are there any integrative services  
7 that are supporting that goal. And then also we  
8 have the ability, if the IEP team -- depending on  
9 when the IEP team is meeting, if they're speaking  
10 to ESY at that time, then you can make a decision  
11 about whether those particular goals are going to  
12 be addressed during extended school year. Okay.

13 And then how we document services in  
14 the least restrictive environment, how those are  
15 itemized. There are specially-designed  
16 instruction for social emotional skills. We also  
17 have physical therapy, and there are also going to  
18 be supplemental aids and supports that are  
19 provided at two times a week for 30 minutes.

20 This part is the accommodations where  
21 the child is participating. Many of you are  
22 familiar with the participants and how those  
23 accommodations are included. Any kind of supports  
24 for school personnel, participation in state and  
25 district-wide testing, alternate assessments and

1 so forth.

2           Again, a lot of this, for  
3 demonstration purposes, has just been run through  
4 very quickly. You wouldn't see specially-designed  
5 instruction for recess. You would probably see  
6 accommodations for recess. I'm just pointing that  
7 out because there are some things here that you  
8 may be scratching your head about, seeing for  
9 demonstration purposes. And, again, it's really  
10 meant to highlight the big parts of the IEP.

11 Okay.

12           And there's where you capture the IEP  
13 team participants. Now we haven't gotten very far  
14 into the system to be able to see all of that  
15 information, and so I'm going to catch my breath  
16 here because I see that we have a question in the  
17 chat box. So I'm going to look over here real  
18 quick.

19           Okay. So Cache has a question here  
20 regarding the continuum of services and LRE. If  
21 you recall from old state forms, when considering  
22 least restrictive environment, the team would  
23 check off what they considered resource, regular,  
24 separate, and then all of the early childhood  
25 placement options. And so that was on the IEP

1 that IEP teams could check off. So Cache's  
2 question is, she didn't notice that on the IEP.  
3 How do parents know if they're regular, resource,  
4 or separate?

5 And so one of the things that we  
6 considered when we were developing the system is  
7 that sometimes an unintended thing that was  
8 happening around that time is that teachers often  
9 got into jiggling numbers and services because  
10 they had a separate class, and they wanted the  
11 child's services to fit in a separate class, and  
12 so separate on the continuum began to be  
13 interpreted as separate class.

14 And what resource -- regular,  
15 resource, and separate originally and still is  
16 intended to achieve is a federal reporting time  
17 just so that we can notify the feds about how long  
18 students are spending in special ed settings. It  
19 was to describe chunks of time. It was not  
20 intended to describe the child's location of  
21 service, whether they were in resource or  
22 separate.

23 So because that information only  
24 needed to be a federal reporting item, we  
25 calculated that time in the background depending

1 on how the student services were listed. And so  
2 to Cache's question, I'm going to go back to the  
3 IEP document here, and I'm going to look at the  
4 services that this student has.

5 So, essentially, what I'm interested  
6 in is how much time is my child in special  
7 education away from kids, and if I look at the  
8 location of my services here, I'm receiving two  
9 different types of service, but one is in the  
10 general education location and one is in the  
11 special education setting. So for 30 minutes a  
12 day, I'm pulled away from my friends or not my  
13 friends -- bad word -- but from typical developing  
14 peers and I'm in a special ed setting for special  
15 ed services.

16 And so what we know about regular,  
17 resource, and separate is -- remember, separate is  
18 more than 80 percent of your day away from typical  
19 peers. I am not considered separate here.  
20 Because where is most of my day spent? Most of my  
21 day is spent in the general ed setting. And so  
22 for federal reporting purposes, I'm going to look  
23 like regular on the continuum.

24 And so we felt it was really  
25 important for parents to understand where their

1 child was receiving services, not the  
2 classification of how they were receiving services  
3 in terms of regular, resource, and separate. So  
4 here, if you had more special education, then you  
5 are increasing in that continuum of removal from  
6 your typical peers, and that's defined by the  
7 location of your service, whether it's general ed  
8 or special ed.

9 And so we believe what's really  
10 important is that specially-designed instruction  
11 is based on the student's need, not the classroom  
12 they're attending, okay, because resource and  
13 separate is all a special ed setting. Okay. And  
14 so we wanted to kind of walk away from those  
15 labeling of classrooms based on a federal  
16 reporting continuum.

17 So that is a long explanation for why  
18 it's not there, and I'm checking over here, and it  
19 looks like I answered Cache's question. And I see  
20 a question from Cynthia. So let me look at that.

21 Okay. So the question is, who will  
22 be required to explain the continuum to the  
23 parent? And that will be the IEP team. The IEP  
24 team is talking about the least restrictive  
25 environment, so it's their responsibility to talk

1 about this when they're talking about the services  
2 that are required for a student.

3 Other questions for me?

4 **(No audible response.)**

5 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. All right. So I  
6 think that's probably one of the biggest things  
7 that would be of interest to the parent council is  
8 seeing that IEP and the new look of the IEP. So  
9 the next part that I'm just going to just quickly  
10 highlight through is how the system is intended to  
11 be efficient for our teachers.

12 And so the "EC Process" tab, I have  
13 highlighted here -- and I'm going to zoom in for  
14 just a moment -- is highlighted here, and so based  
15 on what type of EC process that I have to engage  
16 in, it's organized such that teachers can come in  
17 here and plan for their meetings. And so, of  
18 course, invitations, getting ready for a meeting.  
19 So, of course, I would need an invitation to the  
20 parent. If I'm going to invite any kind of  
21 outside agencies for transition services, I've got  
22 to get permission from the parents to have them  
23 included. If I'm excusing an IEP team member, I  
24 have to get the parent's approval to do so. And  
25 so anything related to the invitation to the

1 meeting is all kind of packaged here together.

2 That's why we like the tabs.

3 The referral is where it's all built  
4 together. We might have the school-age referral,  
5 we might have a kindergarten referral, and those  
6 questions unique to each of those age groups would  
7 be found here on the tab.

8 I'm going to take a breath because I  
9 have another question here. So Cache's question  
10 from virtual is, are signatures required on the  
11 IEP -- are signatures still required or are names  
12 typed in? If no physical signature, how is  
13 accountability monitored?

14 Okay. So brace yourself for another  
15 wordy response. So signatures on an IEP is not  
16 required by any federal or state statute. The IEP  
17 simply documents those that participated in the  
18 IEP team meeting. The signature -- there's not a  
19 signature place that says you agree or disagree.  
20 Your signature does the same thing as a typed-in  
21 name. It says that you were present. So from the  
22 State's perspective, there is no requirement for a  
23 signature for an IEP team meeting.

24 Now local LEAs can determine whether  
25 or not they want to have that signature, and so

1 that's perfectly reasonable that Christy and  
2 Christy could say, "Hey, at all of our meetings,  
3 we are having our parents sign IEP meetings," and  
4 that's perfectly fine. Because local has the  
5 authority to be able to make that as part of their  
6 practice, but it is not required.

7 And then the second part of her  
8 question is, how is accountability measured? So  
9 for the things that require a parent's signature,  
10 which is the initial consent for evaluation and  
11 the initial consent for placement in special ed,  
12 the consent to access private insurance, those  
13 things are signature requirements. And so there's  
14 a couple of things that can happen there. Those  
15 signature pages can be uploaded into the system  
16 using what we call Paperclip and/or can be  
17 maintained in the physical file at the school --  
18 at the school office, LEA department, and so  
19 forth. Different practices and procedures are at  
20 play locally, but we would not be monitoring for  
21 signatures on an IEP. Okay.

22 All right. Abby has a question, so  
23 I'm going to unmute her. All right. Abby, you  
24 should be ready to go.

25 MS. CHILDERS: Can you hear me now?

1 MS. HUDGENS: Yes, we got you.

2 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Sorry. I  
3 wanted to ask -- so you're saying that when the  
4 parent signs, that doesn't -- it just basically is  
5 stating that they were present at the meeting, but  
6 it also needs, though -- if they don't sign, isn't  
7 there a place where they have to be able state why  
8 the parent isn't signing is that the parent  
9 doesn't agree with something on the IEP or so on?

10 MS. HUDGENS: No, there's not  
11 actually. If the parent chooses not to sign,  
12 that's perfectly fine. They don't have to do so.  
13 The protection that is in place for the parent --  
14 the procedural safeguard is the prior written  
15 notice states how long it will be before the  
16 action that the IEP team took will go into effect,  
17 and during that prior written notice period, the  
18 parent can pursue their procedural safeguards. If  
19 they want to file a due process to stop the  
20 actions, if they want to file a state complaint,  
21 if they want to call the state and request  
22 mediation or a facilitated IEP meeting because  
23 they disagree, those are a variety of options at  
24 the state level.

25 At the local level, they can leave

1 that IEP meeting where they didn't choose to sign  
2 the IEP and either contact the EC director, or  
3 depending on how the system is organized, there  
4 might be a program specialist assigned to the  
5 school, but they then can reach out to local  
6 leadership to explain or to share that they are in  
7 disagreement with the IEP and they would like to  
8 reconvene and reconsider and so forth.

9 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. I just wanted  
10 to make sure I understood that correctly because  
11 what I had -- I just experienced this not too long  
12 ago as a special education decision-maker for  
13 another child, and the attorney -- you know, we  
14 were talking about it and going back and forth  
15 with the school. So I did not -- I refused to  
16 sign the IEP, but the attorney said that we did  
17 have to put in there why. So we actually do not,  
18 is that correct?

19 MS. HUDGENS: That's correct by state  
20 policy and perspective. Now you have perhaps  
21 stepped upon something at a local level and that  
22 is a local level requirement that I'm necessarily  
23 aware of. However, parents don't have to sign  
24 anything if they don't want to.

25 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Okay. All

1 right. Thank you. I appreciate that.

2 MS. HUDGENS: Sure. All right. Are  
3 we good in here? Any questions?

4 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: Can parents ask  
5 questions?

6 MS. HUDGENS: Sure.

7 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: I had a question  
8 just in respect to the nonsigning. So with  
9 regards to minutes from meetings and prior written  
10 notices, a lot of times certainly from my  
11 experience at meetings, the minutes don't  
12 necessarily reflect accurately what has actually  
13 taken place in the meeting.

14 MS. HUDGENS: Sure.

15 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: So with regards to  
16 signing of minutes, what's stopping things from  
17 being changed after a parent has left the meeting  
18 in respect to those or things getting added or  
19 taken away on documents? That's concerning to me  
20 as a parent.

21 MS. HUDGENS: Sure. So there's a  
22 couple of layers in response to your question, and  
23 I'm sorry I'm going to have my back to you. So a  
24 couple of things. And for those listening online,  
25 the question is around other meeting documents

1 such as minutes, prior written notice. Prior  
2 written notice has to be provided to the parent  
3 before the action takes place. There's nothing  
4 that specifies that the prior written notice has  
5 to be given at the conclusion at the meeting. It  
6 just has to be given prior to the action taking  
7 place.

8 So your question, then, to follow up  
9 on that, is what if it is substantively different  
10 when you receive it---

11 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: Right. Right.

12 MS. HUDGENS: ---than what you  
13 understand the meeting to have occurred and what  
14 has been decided upon when you were present.

15 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: Absolutely.

16 MS. HUDGENS: And so there is another  
17 parent right that triggers at that time, and that  
18 is the right a parent to amend the educational  
19 record. And so if you believe that that does  
20 not -- the documents you receive -- the minutes,  
21 the prior written notice -- doesn't reflect your  
22 understanding of the meeting, you can write a  
23 letter stating such and that you want the record  
24 amended to reflect what your understanding was.

25 And so then the district has the

1 opportunity to respond back to you about whether  
2 or not they'll make that change, and if not, what  
3 your rights are then at that point. Now that's  
4 just one.

5 The second option that the parent  
6 has, if they don't want to get into this issue of  
7 amending the record, they can always request that  
8 the IEP team reconvene because what you received  
9 notice about and what you thought you were  
10 agreeing to did not match, and perhaps the IEP  
11 team needs to reconvene.

12 Or, third curtain, you could also ask  
13 for a parent administrative conference or a  
14 parent-teacher conference so that you have a good  
15 understanding that what they wrote is, in fact,  
16 what happened according to your understanding. In  
17 other words, there's multiple ways that you can  
18 make sure that the record reflects the  
19 understanding.

20 Ultimately, though, the prior written  
21 notice must reflect the decisions of the IEP team,  
22 and so if there's a disagreement on what your  
23 prior written notice said and what you believe you  
24 were agreeing to, then you have some options for  
25 the team to come back together.

1 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: Okay. Thank you.

2 MS. HUDGENS: Sure.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKER 2: My question is,  
4 when does an IEP, the actual document itself,  
5 become deliverable? If you have an IEP meeting  
6 and, for whatever reason, it is incomplete and we  
7 were -- well, personally, we were discussing  
8 service time. So service time and placement were  
9 not discussed. We had began to discuss the  
10 service time. I did sign the consent to services.  
11 However, I was not consenting to a halfway written  
12 IEP.

13 I want to know -- I would like to  
14 know -- I had no idea it was going to be delivered  
15 halfway written. I'm perplexed as to when it  
16 actually becomes a deliverable document, you know,  
17 to be enacted.

18 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. So, one, it  
19 should be complete. So your instinct is right  
20 there. You should not be consenting to something  
21 that you don't believe accurately describes what  
22 your child should be receiving. So it sounds like  
23 this was an initial meeting, that your child was  
24 identified for the very first time if you were  
25 providing consent for services, is that correct?

1 PUBLIC SPEAKER 2: Yes, ma'am. We  
2 had an IEP meeting, and it was quite long, and it  
3 was not completed, and we had an agreement to  
4 reconvene the following morning at 9:00, and we  
5 all showed up and the Guilford County  
6 representative was not there.

7 And I am in staunch disagreement with  
8 the way my children are being remediated. They  
9 are not progressing. And so I wanted to have that  
10 discussion, but I did not want to have that  
11 discussion in front of the teachers that are  
12 trying to remediate them.

13 MS. HUDGENS: Sure. So a couple of  
14 options for you, and I'll just start with the  
15 procedural errors. First of all, an incomplete  
16 IEP is just that; it's an incomplete IEP. You  
17 don't have a complete program in place. So that  
18 would have been a procedural violation. You could  
19 have done two things. You could have withheld  
20 your consent for services until that IEP was  
21 completed, but secondly -- secondly, coming back  
22 to the table to complete it, sometimes meetings  
23 can run long and there is a part two. But the IEP  
24 is not considered the final IEP until all the  
25 services, all the goals and objectives, the

1 supplemental aids and supports are determined by  
2 the IEP team.

3 So in your situation, you have a  
4 couple of options going forward. If it's still  
5 not resolved, you can request another IEP team  
6 meeting to get those items resolved. You could  
7 call the EC director and let them know what your  
8 experience was. You can certainly have a  
9 conference with the school principal, if you don't  
10 want to have a discussion in front of the IEP team  
11 about some other issues that are going on.

12 But the way to ultimately resolve  
13 anything that has not been concluded is to go back  
14 to the IEP team and have another meeting and get  
15 that IEP finalized. There are some other options  
16 you have, and I might talk to you about them at  
17 the break, if you want to talk about some other  
18 options, but for the IEP purposes and for the  
19 purposes of demonstrating, I think I got you to  
20 the point that is good for this part. Does that  
21 work for you?

22 PUBLIC SPEAKER 2: Yes, ma'am. Yes,  
23 ma'am.

24 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. Very good.  
25 You're welcome. This is really stump the chump

1 today, isn't it? All right. You guys have been  
2 very kind.

3 Are there other things that you have  
4 a question about? What is the time for me, Tish?  
5 Is it now?

6 MS. BYNUM: Well, technically, 12:00.

7 MS. HUDGENS: Technically, 12:00.

8 Okay. So I'm going to grab a moment and let you  
9 tell me what you would like to see at this point.

10 MS. MOOREFIELD: You said that -- I  
11 don't even know now. Did you say that like the  
12 IEP forms are in the ECATS system? So like when I  
13 go in for my son's IEP meeting, this is what I'll  
14 be seeing as they're typing in all of those  
15 different things?

16 MS. HUDGENS: Actually, maybe. And  
17 I'm not trying to be coy here in my response to  
18 you, but you're segueing into something very  
19 important that I do want to share with the  
20 Council. It is not our intention that your IEP  
21 meeting be watching someone do data entry.

22 MS. MOOREFIELD: It often is, though.

23 MS. HUDGENS: Right. But I'm telling  
24 you from the State's perspective. Now keep in  
25 mind, there's local practices and procedures that

1 are not a problem. They have local discretion on  
2 some things. But from the State's perspective, it  
3 is not our -- we would not be saying that you have  
4 to have what is called a live meeting. I would  
5 never want a parent to use up their valuable time  
6 watching me do data entry. The regulations  
7 support, and we should come to the table with a  
8 proposal, right?

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: It's never happened.

10 MS. HUDGENS: Okay.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: So in a real life  
12 IEP meeting, when they are putting in goals and  
13 putting in -- so can we--- You don't have to go  
14 through all the different sections. I just wanted  
15 to see what it looked like.

16 MS. HUDGENS: So I'm going to get on  
17 my soapbox one more time before I show you what  
18 you want.

19 MS. MOOREFIELD: Okay.

20 MS. HUDGENS: So what we have created  
21 inside the system is the ability to create a draft  
22 document, and that watermarks every page of those  
23 documents as "proposed" because we have an  
24 obligation based on our educational expertise to  
25 create a starting point for the team to discuss.

1 That is not a predetermination. That is planning  
2 for an effective IEP team meeting, and so that's  
3 why those documents are marked "proposed." So  
4 when they come into a team, you have something to  
5 start with. Okay.

6 So you start there and you're working  
7 through that. I would not -- I think it would be  
8 a poor use of time to walk into my IEP team  
9 meeting and see this screen.

10 MS. MOOREFIELD: Well, it's a very  
11 poor use of my time to sit for two hours, but that  
12 is what's necessary.

13 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. So moving  
14 forward, what I would -- what the IEP team should  
15 be working from is a proposed copy. That proposed  
16 copy can be written out, it can be adjusted, there  
17 can be extra pages that are going into that  
18 proposed copy because the meeting is supposed to  
19 be student-centered, not watching how wonderful I  
20 am on a computer, not watching me stumble through  
21 these different tabs. Conversation is supposed to  
22 be high and tight on the student's needs.

23 And so once that IEP -- that meeting  
24 copy IEP -- those adjustments can then -- that is  
25 the meeting copy. That is what happened at that

1 meeting. So if that is what the team agrees upon,  
2 then "proposed" can be crossed through, and that  
3 can be your final copy. Okay. And it can be -- a  
4 copy can be given to the parent that that's the  
5 final.

6 Now all of us type A people want it  
7 nice and pretty with no scratches through it and  
8 we want it in the system. That's okay too. That  
9 doesn't take away the value from the meeting copy,  
10 but what I have to do is take that meeting copy  
11 and then I get it into the system and I finalize  
12 it in the system, and then I can print you and me  
13 a clean nice copy of what that finalized IEP looks  
14 like. So that's how business should work in an  
15 ideal situation.

16 MS. MOOREFIELD: And I hope that that  
17 does for 99 percent of all of them.

18 MS. HUDGENS: Right. So I'm going to  
19 take you into the system and suppose I'm working  
20 on goals. So here I can add goals, and this "Show  
21 Section" button shows me what part of the IEP it  
22 would show up on. So you could display this  
23 during a meeting to see where it's coming --  
24 coming.

25 If I'm in the IEP, again, and I want

1 to look at the assessment summary, these are all  
2 the different evaluations that my child might have  
3 had conducted. I can see what the details are for  
4 them here. You know, there's a lot I can see.  
5 But let's think about the assessment summary.  
6 I've given permission to do that. They've done  
7 it. This is the results. So it would be highly  
8 unusual for a team to be watching the input of  
9 data for the assessment summary because that needs  
10 to go in ahead of time.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: Right.

12 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. Then the other  
13 part could be, in the IEP, the services, you might  
14 be looking at services. This is where you can add  
15 special ed services if they're needed. Remember  
16 how it looked on the IEP that was itemized? I can  
17 show a section here for how that looks on the IEP.

18 MS. MOOREFIELD: And really just that  
19 menu is basically what I was looking for because  
20 I -- my experience has been, with the old system,  
21 we spent probably a good 20 to 30 minutes of the  
22 two hours for the annual just them trying to find  
23 where things were. So I like this because I  
24 understand this.

25 Just with my son's particular

1 teacher, who is very, very sweet, but bless him, I  
2 kind of feel like we're going to be, you know, "I  
3 don't know how to do this." So I wanted to see  
4 that for myself just so that if I do have to  
5 explain it to somebody else or another parent, you  
6 know, because I do like to do advocacy as well,  
7 just so that I could see what it looks like and be  
8 able to explain it. So the menu right there is  
9 perfect.

10 MS. HUDGENS: Yeah. So I just  
11 clicked on the "Create IEP," and so I might leave  
12 parts of this IEP blank. Now remember we talked  
13 about how the system would give us alerts. The  
14 teacher's going to get all kinds of alerts if they  
15 haven't done something complete or if something's  
16 in wrong or if something is missing, but they can  
17 still create the draft because they might not want  
18 to put all the services down because they might  
19 need to have more discussion about what would be  
20 appropriate for a student. So I might leave the  
21 entire services blank.

22 Well, the system is going to go, you  
23 know, red crazy, telling you hey, you forgot  
24 services, but that's okay because you're in a  
25 draft. You can create a draft document. And so

1 what the system is doing, is telling me, you know,  
2 you have errors. You can't make it final until  
3 you take care of these things, and we know that,  
4 but what's important here is that we have  
5 something to go to the meeting with.

6 And so you can see the draft status  
7 here, and when I pull it up, there is the  
8 "proposed" watermark that I was telling you about,  
9 okay, so it's on all of the pages.

10 MS. MOOREFIELD: So going back to  
11 what the most recent mom had brought up about the  
12 incomplete IEP, so with the ECATS system, that  
13 shouldn't happen, right, because it will---

14 MS. HUTCHINSON: Well, you can leave  
15 it in draft format, as you should, to come to the  
16 meeting. Then have the parts that were---

17 MS. MOOREFIELD: Right. But I mean  
18 like at the end.

19 MS. HUTCHINSON: ---incomplete to  
20 discuss.

21 MS. MOOREFIELD: Right, right, right.  
22 But what I'm asking is, is like this mom, you  
23 know, she came in and---

24 MS. HUDGENS: She could have an  
25 incomplete IEP because it hasn't been finalized

1 yet.

2 MS. MOOREFIELD: Right. But what her  
3 question was, is when do those documents become  
4 live, when does the plan become live, and she was  
5 concerned, if I'm correct, that the IEP was  
6 incomplete, and she didn't want an incomplete one  
7 to go live.

8 MS. HUDGENS: Right.

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: So this system would  
10 really kind of prevent that from happening, right?

11 MS. HUDGENS: Yes. It alerts you  
12 that it's incomplete. Okay. So then when you  
13 make it final -- I'm going into my meeting with a  
14 draft. We have our meeting. We make our changes  
15 on the paper copy. Now it's also okay that if the  
16 LEA wants to have someone sitting beside this  
17 special ed teacher that's updating the system  
18 while the meeting's happening, not projecting it  
19 on the screen, but they have somebody that's a  
20 buddy taking notes, that's also perfectly fine.  
21 But we want to make sure that the meeting is  
22 student-centered, and we don't want to have  
23 technology getting in the way of that. So we go  
24 to the meeting with a draft.

25 Now, locally, directors will

1 establish their own practice for how quickly they  
2 want these finalized after the meeting. I think  
3 it's reasonable, if there's a meeting happening on  
4 a Friday, I mean it might be reasonable to have a  
5 ten-day window in the system just to get it  
6 finalized, if it lapses over a weekend or a  
7 holiday or so forth, because those alerts are  
8 going to be firing at you if it's not final.

9 And the other thing is too, is you're  
10 not going to want to wait to the last day of your  
11 current IEP to have your new IEP meeting. So  
12 there is the notion of planning ahead of time so  
13 that if you have to have multiple meetings and so  
14 forth, you've got a current IEP in place while the  
15 new IEP is being worked on.

16 MS. MOOREFIELD: In the system, does  
17 it alert -- and the only reason I'm asking all  
18 these questions is because all of these wonderful  
19 things that you're saying should happen, I've  
20 either never experienced as a parent or have only  
21 experienced once. So I've never -- I've gotten a  
22 draft copy one time before an IEP, and then like  
23 I -- you know, I've never been the one to set the  
24 IEP date. You know, what you were saying about,  
25 you know, just in case you have to have multiple

1 meetings, making sure that you do that a couple of  
2 weeks in advance of it, if you do, you know, all  
3 of that.

4 Will the system in that like coming  
5 due -- will that send an alert to the teacher like  
6 that the IEP is going to be due in a certain  
7 amount of weeks?

8 MS. HUDGENS: Well, the alert is on  
9 their dashboard, and they will see that alert  
10 every time they log in.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: But that's one of  
12 them, that it's coming due?

13 MS. HUDGENS: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

14 MS. MOOREFIELD: Okay. Do you happen  
15 to know what the time setting is on that, or is it  
16 individual?

17 MS. HUDGENS: I think we set it at  
18 least 30, if not 60 days ahead of time.

19 MS. MOOREFIELD: Oh, okay.

20 MS. HUTCHINSON: They told us in  
21 training the drafts are only 30 days.

22 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. Thank you.

23 MS. HUTCHINSON: But you could always  
24 create another draft from the data that's already  
25 in there.

1 MS. HUDGENS: Uh-huh. Right. Okay.  
2 The last thing I want to show you is the student  
3 history. So what is here is the whole history.  
4 This is like the big filing cabinet of all  
5 finalized documents. So I can see when my child  
6 or my student was made eligible. I can click on  
7 the "Details" button and get the eligibility  
8 there. I see when the parent gave me consent to  
9 provide those services. I have a green IEP. That  
10 means I'm current. You see the days here. So the  
11 days here tells you how many days on the IEP -- or  
12 that IEP has been active. Okay. All right. And  
13 you can see they've done some testing with RTI and  
14 the information there.

15 All right. I think that might be a  
16 gracious plenty for a morning, but has anyone had  
17 something just burning that they haven't seen that  
18 they'd like to see?

19 MS. MOOREFIELD: It looks very  
20 intuitive. I mean, have you had -- have you had  
21 any feedback from teachers who are starting to use  
22 it?

23 MS. HUDGENS: We have had lots of  
24 feedback.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: "Why did you-all

1 change the system? I just got used to the old  
2 one." I've heard that one, so---

3 MS. MOOREFIELD: Atypical feedback.

4 MS. HUDGENS: Yes. I think that, in  
5 general -- and I'm going to speak from what I'm  
6 hearing, and then not to put our LEAs on the spot,  
7 but if they choose to share any of their feedback,  
8 I'm going to open the floor for them. We have  
9 heard that they like the look of it. They like  
10 the way it's grouped together. They like the  
11 organization of the pages. I mean, as far as an  
12 interface, it's aesthetically appealing and it  
13 seems to be organized well.

14 I think, from that point in, how  
15 teachers feel about using the system, I think a  
16 pretty generous summary statement will be that the  
17 more you use it, the better you'll be. With any  
18 new thing, it takes a minute to get acclimated to  
19 where things are now located and how to develop  
20 things. I think that there are some teachers that  
21 are a little cautious about clicking around in the  
22 system because they're worried they're going to  
23 mess something up. So rather than clicking on  
24 things to problem-solve, they might freeze and ask  
25 a question rather than explore a little bit

1 further.

2 I think one thing that makes people  
3 really panicked is IEP meetings that have come  
4 quickly after implementation, and they've had  
5 maybe a little less time to prepare and learn the  
6 system before that first IEP meeting has arrived.

7 And one thing that I will say as a  
8 public service announcement is that in a limited  
9 scope, if an LEA has to use paper copies to do an  
10 IEP meeting, that is not a procedural issue with  
11 us as a state. It just then has to be put into  
12 the system.

13 So for families that might be  
14 wondering, "Hey, I've heard this buzz about a new  
15 system, but I'm not seeing the new system" or "I'm  
16 seeing forms I've recognized before," that's not  
17 necessarily a bad thing. What we are most  
18 concerned about as a state is that IEP meetings  
19 happen and that parents adequately have an  
20 understanding of what has happened for their  
21 student and the plan for the student. Okay.

22 So some -- there has been a little  
23 bit of anxiety about the meetings that have come  
24 quickly. Okay. So that might be just a little  
25 bit of a different experience. There might be a

1 little bit more time at the meeting than you might  
2 have predicted before or you might have paper  
3 forms for that meeting. Again, in a limited  
4 scope, I think it's reasonable for LEAs to have a  
5 little bit more time. The important thing is, is  
6 they have an effective IEP meeting and then what  
7 documents they used at the IEP meeting then are  
8 put into the system so that we can collect that  
9 information.

10 So I don't know if you guys want to  
11 talk about the good, the bad, the ugly. I mean,  
12 go for it.

13 MS. HUTCHINSON: You go first.

14 MS. GRANT: Well, we have 28 schools  
15 in our district, so we have a good many teachers  
16 using the system [inaudible]. We're very excited  
17 about the comprehensiveness of the system, if that  
18 makes sense, how it all fits in and plays, and  
19 there's a one-stop shop, kind of speaking, because  
20 our teachers used to have to go here to get this  
21 and here to get this and here to get that, and  
22 it's all right there.

23 I was -- I was around when we first  
24 transitioned to CECAS, our system that we were  
25 using and have used forever. So I have to remind

1 everybody that we went through this same moment of  
2 panic during a change just because moving our  
3 cheese is really hard. And this first year, we  
4 knew and planned for the supports that we needed  
5 to put in place as a district simply because, "Oh,  
6 my gosh. I have an IEP meeting due in three  
7 weeks, and I don't know how to get here and I  
8 don't know how to get here." So it's like this  
9 panic.

10 So we immediately regrouped and did an  
11 ECATS hotline and have all these people  
12 strategically placed around our schools, and we  
13 did a core ECATS leadership team. I think if we  
14 did not have that as a district, our teachers  
15 would be a lot more freaking out than they really  
16 are. Because it's been those panic moments, we've  
17 been able to pretty much---

18 I've had to twice say, "Carol Ann, we  
19 need some help. I just can't figure this out, and  
20 we can't get an answer quickly." Most of the  
21 time, the turnaround is very quick when we put it  
22 in ZenDesk. When we got with DPI, I think they  
23 have the same mind-set about that. They're trying  
24 really hard. There were a lot of what I would say  
25 kind of glitches at first, but it has been a quick

1 work through. I mean things we've seen go  
2 through.

3 So the teachers are excited. They're  
4 less anxious now, the more they put it in. The  
5 first year's going to be a lot because you're  
6 having to enter a lot of information, but once  
7 they enter that information once, it's there and  
8 they'll never have to again. So we're hearing  
9 grumblings now, but it's getting better as each  
10 day goes.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: Like are support  
12 service providers, the therapists, do they also  
13 have access to go ahead and enter their  
14 information before we get to the meeting?

15 MS. GRANT: Absolutely, yes, they do.

16 MS. MOOREFIELD: Well, here's hoping  
17 we're under two hours this year.

18 MS. HUTCHINSON: Ditto on everything  
19 on you said. So Carol Ann's got a pretty good  
20 read, and we have talked prior to now. So the  
21 other thing that you and I -- about people moving  
22 their cheese, you're going to hear and we're all  
23 going to feel a little freaked out because  
24 [inaudible] new. From an administrator's  
25 perspective, the reports are snappy, snappy,

1 snappy, and that main screen is---

2 MS. MOOREFIELD: I love that  
3 dashboard.

4 MS. HUTCHINSON: ---all the time, and  
5 it's really easy to shoot Bob a quick email saying  
6 "I notice there's three kids that are red. Can  
7 you tell me about that?" But I've had to be aware  
8 that when they're doing transition meetings, the  
9 previous IEP didn't come in as written  
10 necessarily. Sure, the service delivery time,  
11 area of exceptionality, and accommodations seemed  
12 to be very, very accurate. Limited challenges  
13 with that.

14 But if they were to do a transition  
15 meeting for new students coming in that we were  
16 not aware of and able to do before, that's been  
17 either a choice of going ahead and doing the  
18 annual review or enter a whole bunch of data to be  
19 able to. So we discussed this year is going to be  
20 a -- every single one you get in is one more you  
21 can progress monitor in the system, and at this  
22 point next year, you have 100 percent of  
23 everything in. So it's kind of like a year  
24 transition from where you're looking, not like a  
25 two-month transition, not like Power School where

1 we turned off SIMS and turned on Power School or  
2 whatever. But this is going to be like a year  
3 transition to getting -- the report part of it,  
4 though, is exceptional.

5 MS. GRANT: I think we -- it's got  
6 built-in compliance measures in it, so we're going  
7 to have a lot more compliancy with our IEPs. We  
8 also have been able to just -- been able to catch  
9 a lot kids that the parents may not have checked  
10 EC when they enrolled or had an IEP or received  
11 special ed, and when the other school sent  
12 their -- school district sent their paperwork,  
13 nothing EC was in there. So we've actually been  
14 able to catch kids pretty quick and jump in with  
15 services because we know those that come in now  
16 anywhere in the state with EC services.

17 MS. MOOREFIELD: Like if a kid moves  
18 into your district, it's automatically in there?

19 MS. GRANT: Yes, and we know about  
20 it. That's been one of our like---

21 MS. HUTCHINSON: We've had the  
22 opposite, so---

23 MS. POPE: I wanted to comment as  
24 well. I'm just piggybacking off of what you-all  
25 said, but being in Juvenile Justice, we have

1 students that are very transient and coming in  
2 from all different parts of the state. So it's  
3 been -- the system is very user-friendly to us  
4 because everything is right there because a  
5 student coming from Wake County, an IEP would look  
6 very different from somebody coming from New  
7 Hanover County.

8 So now everything is looking the  
9 same, and our reports from the teachers is that  
10 it's user-friendly. They like the access of  
11 having everything right there, but just as you-all  
12 were saying, some of our facilities have students  
13 that stay for longer periods and then some  
14 students are there for maybe a month or so.

15 So we have some people that are --  
16 even with CECAS that didn't get a lot of practice  
17 with it. So we're doing ongoing trainings  
18 one-on-one in our facilities and whole groups, so  
19 that's going to be ongoing for a while. But just  
20 the general feedback is that it's a good database  
21 to have.

22 MS. HUDGENS: So Jennifer Degen from  
23 Charlotte has some comments she would like to  
24 offer, and Jennifer, I've taken you off mute if  
25 you're ready to go.

1 MS. DEGEN: Can you hear me?

2 MS. HUDGENS: Yes. Thank you.

3 MS. DEGEN: At CMS, we did have our  
4 training last week or two weeks ago before school  
5 started, and I will say that we're all freaking  
6 out a little bit just because it's -- it's  
7 different. EasyIEP -- we went through this with  
8 that a couple of years ago. So it's all a new  
9 process. I will say that it's been beneficial for  
10 my case managers. They're able to tag their gen  
11 ed teachers, and gen ed teachers now have access  
12 to the IEP at a glance, parent contacts that we've  
13 made, EC contacts. So there is a lot of data.

14 My assistant principals and  
15 principals use it now so that they are more  
16 familiar with what the progress is. So it's  
17 really helpful that the people in the building  
18 have access to it, so we're not always kind of  
19 running around. You know, we're still trying to  
20 work out glitches with accommodations and things  
21 like that. There's still some things that are  
22 difficult, but I feel like we're working through  
23 them.

24 There is a Facebook page for teachers  
25 of North Carolina with ECATS, and it's actually

1 very helpful. So I actually stumbled through a  
2 DEC-7 yesterday and someone answered some  
3 questions. So that's been helpful, you know, just  
4 having different resources out there to use.

5 But just be patient with your EC  
6 teachers that are new at this because it is -- I  
7 think someone just said -- I'm not sure who was  
8 speaking, but you know, we just started two weeks  
9 ago. So inputting all this information, it is a  
10 lengthy process to try to get it all in there. So  
11 just be patient with your educators. Thank you.

12 MS. HUDGENS: Thanks, Jennifer.

13 MS. GRANT: This is Christy. I just  
14 have one more thing. We were in the pilot, so we  
15 actually kind of started this and knew this  
16 process awhile ago. So we've been planning --  
17 we're kind of like maybe a year -- a year -- I  
18 mean we've really been putting these processes in  
19 place.

20 MS. THOMAS: It was a year and a half  
21 ago.

22 MS. GRANT: Yeah, a year and a half  
23 ago. So I just wanted to say that disclaimer. We  
24 have had a little bit longer than a lot of  
25 districts have.

1 MS. MOOREFIELD: Well, anything new  
2 is going to -- especially when it's this big and  
3 with this many moving parts and people, it's going  
4 to take time, but I mean it sounds like, just from  
5 what you guys are describing, that there haven't  
6 been any glaring problems.

7 MS. THOMAS: It hasn't crashed.

8 MS. MOOREFIELD: Hey, it's a good  
9 day -- if you have a statewide program that  
10 doesn't crash on the first day, it's a good day.

11 MS. HUTCHINSON: We haven't lost any  
12 kids.

13 MS. GRANT: No.

14 MS. MOOREFIELD: An even better day.

15 MS. HUDGENS: In full transparency,  
16 there have been some things that needed to be  
17 added to drop boxes for more selections. The  
18 accommodations were -- the way the system was  
19 designed, it was force choosing some  
20 accommodations across other areas that needed to  
21 be deselected. So we've worked on troubleshooting  
22 that item.

23 On the reevaluation, if you're just  
24 doing a reevaluation from programming, you're not  
25 dealing with eligibility. And so we're working on

1 that right now, not to force the eligibility tab  
2 to fire. So that is in production right now.  
3 Just some things that were not anticipated until  
4 we got it into the users' hands, but where we've  
5 been allocating our time is, as those questions  
6 are coming in, in responding to questions, if it's  
7 an actionable item that we can take action on,  
8 we're diverting our efforts to doing the action  
9 maybe than answering the question so that there's  
10 a handful of folks that are triaging this on a  
11 daily basis.

12 And so we're allocating our efforts  
13 to the solution sometimes ahead of the response,  
14 and so we're asking LEAs to be patient with us  
15 because if it's something that is not as  
16 predicted, we escalate that for intervention. But  
17 as far as the system as a whole, it is operating  
18 as we expected.

19 MS. THOMAS: If I could add -- this  
20 is Sherry -- one of the things we've tried to do  
21 too, instead of sending messages all week long to  
22 directors, to give updates on what's been fixed  
23 where we've identified problems, we started this  
24 Monday message. And so every Monday by -- usually  
25 by 2:00, 3:00 in the afternoon, we send out a

1 blast through our listserv to directors with this  
2 update weekly of what -- where the targeted  
3 problems have been, where the fixes have been,  
4 things that we've corrected, things that we've  
5 found, more information, and that seems to be  
6 helping to lessen some of the anxiety and some of  
7 the questions because we're getting regular  
8 information out. So I think that's been helpful.  
9 I'm going to look to my local people to see,  
10 but---

11 MS. GRANT: Absolutely.

12 MS. HUTCHINSON: I take the Monday  
13 message and shoot it out to people that I've  
14 gotten emails from saying this eligibility issue  
15 when they started the reeval or they just fixed  
16 the read aloud accommodation. So I just grab the  
17 parts that I need and send it out to them.

18 MS. THOMAS: And we're regularly  
19 updating the FAQ, but sometimes that's laborious  
20 to go through to find. So that message, we're  
21 hoping, is -- so good. That's good feedback. We  
22 were hoping that would be---

23 MS. HUTCHINSON: Two thumbs to the  
24 Monday message.

25 MS. HUDGENS: Okay. I think my time

1 is done.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. We've  
3 completely missed lunch now.

4 MS. MOOREFIELD: I think Leanna's  
5 getting cranky.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm just teasing.  
7 It is what it is. Thank you for all the  
8 information and for all the questions. I think it  
9 was very good information for us really as  
10 parents, as administrators what to expect. Let's  
11 see.

12 We're supposed to -- during lunch and  
13 afterwards have review of the annual report. I  
14 might be pushing that to December, just because my  
15 timing has kind of gone out the window this  
16 summer. I don't know where it went, but we'll  
17 discuss that after lunch.

18 We'll try to reconvene here probably  
19 by 12:50. That gives us about 20 minutes, a  
20 little bit short, but we can eat while we're  
21 sitting here in committee after our public  
22 comments as well.

23 Our guests that are in the back, we  
24 have always had a policy where you're welcome to  
25 join us for lunch. We have food back there,

1 usually too much. So we'd like to get to know you  
2 better and find out how we can support you and  
3 things like that. So, once again, thank you for  
4 coming and we'll break for lunch. Does that sound  
5 good to everybody?

6 (A luncheon recess was taken from  
7 12:33 p.m. to 1:10 p.m.)

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. We've got  
9 three people signed up for public comment. Did we  
10 have any written public comment for the month?

11 MS. COFFEY: There was one.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: There was one  
13 regarding the autism changes. Okay.

14 The first person on public comment  
15 that signed up was [name redacted].

16 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: I'm going to read  
17 my notes because my memory is terrible. It's my  
18 understanding that the key role of the Department  
19 of Public Instruction is to ensure that federal  
20 and state education law and policy is implemented.  
21 It's also my understanding that this Council is  
22 set forth in federal regulations and established  
23 as an advisory council to the State Board of  
24 Education.

25 As parents, we trust the education of

1 our children to schools and school districts.  
2 However, when a problem arises and the needs of  
3 the child are not being met, there are certain  
4 mechanisms written into federal law to ensure that  
5 the rights of our children under FAPE. The  
6 Department of Public instruction is part of that  
7 process, and parents should trust that the system  
8 in place will appropriately safeguard them.

9 I'm here today to tell you that my  
10 son was denied a free and appropriate education by  
11 his school district. I won't bore you with the  
12 details, but I want you to know that his school  
13 failed to evaluate him for a suspected disability  
14 and that decision led us into a two-year battle  
15 that we did not ask to be a part of. His school  
16 failed to comply with federal and state policy and  
17 gave us misinformation at every turn.

18 As a parent, I took on the full-time  
19 role of a special education advocate for my son in  
20 the fight that ensued. I'm sure you're fully  
21 aware that the formal complaint process is  
22 designed to ensure that local educational agencies  
23 comply with special education rules and  
24 regulations as set out in IDEA and the North  
25 Carolina statute. It was my understanding that

1 LEAs are required to comply with decisions that  
2 are made, which are final.

3 We filed complaints with the  
4 Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights,  
5 and the North Carolina Department of Public  
6 Instruction, Exceptional Children Division. Both  
7 found the school district in violation, and in May  
8 2019, the North Carolina Department of Education  
9 issued the conclusion of their investigation  
10 report and issued their decision.

11 The plan set forth a list of  
12 corrective actions which were to be completed by  
13 July of this year. We are still waiting. The  
14 corrective action plan is not complete. The  
15 school district is not compliant, but no one is  
16 willing to tell me what happens next.  
17 Communication from within the DPI is dismal.  
18 Emails are not returned and phone calls go  
19 unanswered.

20 As a result of being forced to  
21 advocate for my son -- for my son, a group of five  
22 frustrated moms connected a year ago this month.  
23 We all had stories to tell about dyslexia and a  
24 common theme with the DPI. Sadly, our  
25 conversations are usually about school districts

1 appearing to work to keep children out of special  
2 education and regularly misinforming parents of  
3 policy or procedural law. Any attempt to get  
4 correct information from the DPI was usually met  
5 with confusing or conflicting statements.

6 The same group of moms has now grown  
7 to 208 as of today, and the Triangle Area Dyslexic  
8 Advocacy is growing from [inaudible]. We  
9 connected with other frustrated parents from  
10 Guilford County, who are now 103 strong, and  
11 together we are working -- we are now working with  
12 Decoding Dyslexia North Carolina and their 2885  
13 members. That is a lot of frustrated parents with  
14 lots of stories to tell, and we are talking to  
15 each other.

16 As council members, I would like you  
17 to realize that the frustration parents are  
18 feeling towards the DPI. When school districts  
19 are not compliant with policy and parents are  
20 desperate, there's little uniformity or  
21 consistency between schools, and parents are being  
22 misled on a daily basis. The DPI has a  
23 responsibility to ensure that local education  
24 agencies are complying with education law and  
25 adhering to state policy.

1 We are telling you loud and clear  
2 that that is not happening. We would like to make  
3 it clear to you, as the advisory council to the  
4 State Board of Education, that it is not  
5 happening. Every child has a right to a sound  
6 basic education and every child deserves an  
7 appropriate education. Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: I'm just going to  
10 applaud you because, as a mom, girl, I feel you.

11 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: Thank you.

12 MS. MOOREFIELD: DPI is huge. I've  
13 always received responses from them, but I applaud  
14 you and your moms because you're frustrated and  
15 you did something about it.

16 PUBLIC SPEAKER 1: Thank you.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: And we have [name  
18 redacted] -- is that [name redacted]?

19 PUBLIC SPEAKER 2: Uh-huh.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

21 PUBLIC SPEAKER 2: Hi. Good morning.  
22 I'm a little bit different than [name redacted].  
23 I didn't write anything to say to you. Part of  
24 the reason why I didn't write anything is because  
25 I didn't know what I was going to say. I've never

1       been here. I didn't know what you talk about. I  
2       didn't know anything about what was going to  
3       happen here today.

4                   And after sitting through it, for the  
5       amount of time that I did, I think what I want to  
6       tell you today is that what you think is happening  
7       and what you hope is happening and what you want  
8       to believe is happening, it is not happening. It  
9       is a battle zone. Special education is a  
10      nightmare. These children are suffering.

11                   There are systems in place for  
12      parents to try to get help for their children. At  
13      IEP meetings, they go to the computer and they  
14      print off the definition of the disability. My  
15      children are dyslexic. How are you going to  
16      remediate a dyslexic if you do not know what it  
17      is? If you cannot identify it, how can we  
18      possibly expect them to remediate it? It is  
19      systemwide. It is systematic. It is an absolute  
20      travesty what is happening.

21                   There's 39.6 percent proficiency  
22      ratings in the state of North Carolina. That is  
23      failing by anyone's standards, certainly by mine.  
24      If you can only teach 39.6 percent of the children  
25      in this state that do not have a disability how to

1 read, then you do not know how to teach reading  
2 because, clearly, surely, they are not all  
3 dyslexic. We are failing. We are failing. We  
4 are failing.

5 And parents are begging you to do  
6 something about it. I am personally begging you.  
7 I have begged my school district. They do not  
8 follow the law. They don't know the law. How can  
9 you follow it if you do not understand it and do  
10 not know it? It's impossible. This is an  
11 impossible situation.

12 It's impossible as long as we  
13 continue the status quo. Status quo is  
14 unequivocally absolutely not working, not working  
15 at all, not only for dyslexic, but SLD, reading,  
16 writing, math. These children are not receiving a  
17 free and appropriate public education. It's not  
18 okay. It's not all right.

19 There is a way to teach reading, and  
20 it's through structured literacy. Anything other  
21 than structured literacy is a civil rights  
22 violation to our children. When my daughter  
23 started kindergarten and we sent her in, no one  
24 knew that she was dyslexic, but we could all rest  
25 assured that if they were using a balanced

1 literacy or a whole word curriculum, any dyslexic  
2 is not going to be able to progress in that  
3 situation. They can't. They cannot. We are  
4 excluding them.

5 So we can have reading words, and we  
6 can all debate whether we should use structured  
7 literacy, balanced literacy, or whole word, but  
8 the fact of the matter is, is that balanced  
9 literacy and whole word should come off the table  
10 because even if they advance some, which right now  
11 we have 39.6 percent, you are excluding any child  
12 who is anywhere on the continuum of dyslexia, SLD.

13 There's thousands of them. You're  
14 excluding them. You're not giving them an  
15 opportunity. You're not giving them a free  
16 appropriate public education, identified or  
17 unidentified, and many of them are never  
18 identified, and when they are, they don't receive  
19 proper remediation. Please help us. We don't  
20 want to be your adversary. We want to do it with  
21 you.

22 It takes all of us. He takes us and  
23 it takes you and it takes the legislators and it  
24 takes the teachers, and it takes the person -- the  
25 janitors, and it takes the person running the

1 state of North Carolina. It takes all of us, and  
2 we all have a stake in this game. It's children  
3 and it's literacy.

4 Please help us. Please. Please help  
5 my children and please help all the other children  
6 that are struggling and the families that are  
7 struggling because it's a travesty what's  
8 happening. Thank you.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. And we  
10 have [name redacted]. I'm guessing I pronounced  
11 that right. [Name redacted].

12 PUBLIC SPEAKER 3: [Name redacted.]  
13 I married into that problem.

14 MS. HUDGENS: Would you make sure  
15 that you move the microphone a little closer so we  
16 can hear everything clearly?

17 PUBLIC SPEAKER 3: Oh, okay. Plus I  
18 am quiet. My notes are a mess. You'd think this  
19 would get easier asking for help. It doesn't. My  
20 name is [name redacted]. My family lives in  
21 [redacted], North Carolina, and my children attend  
22 Wake County Public Schools. I was born here and  
23 raised here and educated here, and my mother and  
24 grandmother were teachers who spent 50 years  
25 educating.

1 I have a 14-year-old neurotypical son  
2 who is starting his freshman year of high school,  
3 and I have an 11-year-old autistic daughter that  
4 is in the fifth grade. (Cries.) This is  
5 embarrassing. She was diagnosed at 18 months and  
6 was part of your early intervention preschool  
7 services, and it was always a smooth ride, but we  
8 saved a life together, Wake County and I, and did  
9 exactly what your program set out to do.

10 We saved one whole human life, so  
11 before I talk bad about you, I'd like to thank you  
12 for that. And I would like to talk to you like my  
13 daughter talks. Our math programs in secondary  
14 education in Wake County are a disaster, and I've  
15 been speaking out at the Wake County Board of  
16 Education since April with many other parents  
17 you've seen on the news probably when they  
18 instituted the Mathematics Vision Project for high  
19 school, Open Up Resources for middle school, and  
20 EL Education in the English department, but I  
21 don't have time to fight the English.

22 I am fighting the math because I  
23 can't seem to get around that, and I can talk all  
24 day as to why I think that came here, why we have  
25 these bad programs, why my legislators and NC DPI

1 and my teachers and Wake County cannot agree  
2 whether or not we have common core math standards  
3 to even start from, but I do know that the  
4 programs my children are using are written by the  
5 creators of common core, and if it were my  
6 daughter standing here as a mother with autism,  
7 she would not be able to reconcile that glaring  
8 discrepancy.

9           These programs are based on group  
10 discovery learning. Children are expected to  
11 struggle together in groups while learning  
12 brand-new math topics. After they have struggled  
13 long enough, they are then refocused into direct  
14 instruction where they are eventually taught and  
15 shown the correct ways to solve basic math  
16 problems, every single day over and over.

17           And I'm sure that I don't need to  
18 explain to you what the chaos of 35 middle school  
19 students loudly discussing separate math topics  
20 simultaneously would do to sound-sensitive  
21 children on the spectrum. It would bother us as  
22 adults. And that is every single day at every  
23 phase of math learning in middle and high school.

24           We fought for two years to find out  
25 as to why my neurotypical child was doing so

1 poorly in math, making bad grades. He did so that  
2 bad, he had to retake half of his quizzes and  
3 exams without me even knowing it, where he could  
4 only score 70 percent in every unit test. He was  
5 coming home unable to complete homework since no  
6 math resources or materials were provided by Wake  
7 County. He came home in tears. He called himself  
8 stupid. He hated himself. He started to mistrust  
9 teachers.

10 And my husband and I asked simply,  
11 "Does my child have the resources to learn the  
12 math content that he's responsible for learning in  
13 middle and high school? Why is a teacher unable  
14 to assess my child's math comprehension in these  
15 programs," and that is a very simple ask. "Show  
16 me what material he was learning, so I can see why  
17 he didn't comprehend it. I'm the mother of an  
18 autistic child. I can figure this out."

19 I was using the most basic assessment  
20 of myself and my husband as barometers. If we as  
21 parents could look at the information he was given  
22 and figure out the solutions, then, so should he.  
23 Not one person in Wake County or in North Carolina  
24 can show me the content that we are using to teach  
25 any middle and high school classes, not one, and

1 the resources we are giving to them are workbooks  
2 and two-minute videos.

3 And I would like you to imagine  
4 taking your old algebra and geometry textbooks and  
5 ripping out the glossary and the index so you have  
6 no reference information, rip out all work  
7 problems as well as half of the regular practice  
8 problems, take out the odd answers in the back of  
9 the book so you are unable to check your  
10 comprehension, remove all definitions, all math  
11 theorems, and every single standard math equation  
12 such as distance formula and radius of a circle  
13 and so on until you are left with just questions.  
14 And I want to repeat that. The only resource that  
15 middle and high school students in Wake County are  
16 provided is a workbook that contains questions  
17 only.

18 After the struggles academically and  
19 emotionally that my son went through, I imagined  
20 what that experience will be like for my autistic  
21 daughter. I was told by the principal of my  
22 school that they could not worry about problems  
23 that might happen; they can only worry about  
24 problems that have happened and I would have to  
25 wait, since she is mainstreamed and not supported

1 by an IEP, until she got into the sixth grade,  
2 spend a quarter, fail, get broken, and then they  
3 would do something about it.

4 In two years at my middle school,  
5 they didn't do one single thing for my son, and I  
6 have the empathy with the mother as a teacher  
7 [sic] to know that they couldn't because the  
8 programs don't have anything for you to see. I'm  
9 lost. Without clear math content resources in our  
10 math curriculum, I'm removed from my children's  
11 academic equation completely, and that is  
12 petrifying with an autistic daughter who is about  
13 to start the sixth grade in one year.

14 At one point in my daughter's autism  
15 diagnosis, her therapists were unsure if she would  
16 ever speak again, ever be able to attend school,  
17 or take care of herself. I didn't know if she  
18 would see me or love me or make a friend. Her  
19 progress to date is nothing short of a miracle. I  
20 can see her having a family, attending college,  
21 and I can't believe that the obstacle in her way  
22 is not being able to make a passing grade in the  
23 middle and high school math class because she's  
24 not allowed to have any visual math resource  
25 material.

1 I know that you may not be able to  
2 solve these problems, but Wake County has been  
3 less than helpful in pointing me in the direction  
4 of the people who can make these changes and stop  
5 Wake County from continuing to use curriculums  
6 that don't have visuals.

7 So I'm going to sit in the back, and  
8 if you bring me your email, I can send you any  
9 information that you want, and if you know of  
10 anyone that I should be talking to, you can  
11 hopefully come find me and help me go yell at the  
12 right people to make these changes. Thank you.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, [name  
14 redacted]. Most of the Council by legislative  
15 requirements are parents. We're required to have  
16 50 percent parent participation or membership.  
17 We're actually in the process of -- I'm not sure  
18 where we are in the membership process right now.  
19 I know we have some vacancies that have opened up,  
20 and we can discuss that, if that's something you  
21 might be interested in. We're always looking for  
22 strong parents, strong advocates.

23 Each one of us parents, we all have  
24 our stories, I'm sure, we could tell you and it  
25 would not sound that different from yours. So I

1 encourage you to keep connected with us, and we  
2 will work on making sure -- you know, if you're  
3 interested in being part of the Council on a  
4 formal basis, help you to go through the process  
5 for that to happen.

6 But thank you for your courage. I  
7 know it's nerve-racking to get up before a group  
8 of strangers and share your stories and your  
9 concerns. You did fantastic. And as a parent, we  
10 can relate. Most of us are parents. Even some of  
11 our educators here are also parents of people with  
12 special needs. So we relate to you and we hear  
13 you loud and clear. But thank you for bringing  
14 your concerns to us because that's what we need.  
15 We need that reminder every now and then. So  
16 thank you.

17 Do you want to quickly gloss over the  
18 one written comment or---

19 MS. COFFEY: We did have one written  
20 comment. It was concerning the ASD policy  
21 changes. I mean she had very specific  
22 [inaudible], but most of them have been addressed  
23 at this point.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: She participated in  
25 the ASD Stakeholder Committee and---

1 MS. COFFEY: Yes.

2 MS. HUTCHINSON: I was just going to  
3 ask, can you tell us the date of that comment?  
4 Because things have happened so fast.

5 MS. COFFEY: Yeah. This was back,  
6 actually, in July. This was even prior to the  
7 [inaudible] going back out to the parents. So  
8 this parent has been involved, I think, very much  
9 in the process since then. So that's why I don't  
10 feel like it's -- so much has changed, going  
11 through her information, at this point, it's not  
12 really relevant now since it was a July date.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: There are some  
14 things -- we're about to go into committees -- and  
15 our parent guests that are in the back, if you  
16 hear a committee you might want to participate in,  
17 you're welcome to join us for the day, see what we  
18 do, and provide your input with some of your  
19 concerns.

20 We are you, you are us, we are one,  
21 you know, because we're all fighting to -- or  
22 working to make this a better system for our  
23 teachers, for our students so that we're all  
24 better coordinated together for the success of who  
25 we're working for, which is the student. We're

1 very student-focused here.

2 I was looking at the bylaws earlier,  
3 and I actually went over -- or too long with my  
4 chairmanship, and so I will not be up for  
5 appointment for chair for another season. So we  
6 will be, at our next meeting, opening up the  
7 floor. So consider it, pray over it, whatever you  
8 do. I've got a recommendation. I think Virginia  
9 Barefoot -- Ginny Moorefield -- I called you  
10 Barefoot -- Chad Barefoot is also here somewhere.  
11 I think you'd be fantastic as chair. I think  
12 Christy would be fantastic as chair. I mean every  
13 one of you would be fantastic as chair. So think  
14 about it because I did not realize that my time  
15 was up two years ago or almost two years ago. So  
16 that's that.

17 We had the autism stakeholder  
18 meeting. That went very well, very active  
19 conversation. I felt like DPI listened to our  
20 voices and good strategy was made. We all came  
21 together well and with the best interests of the  
22 students in mind that are going to be impacted,  
23 and that's an ongoing process. I'm sure Sherry  
24 will probably talk more about that here in a  
25 little bit.

1                   One other thing is, we might want  
2 to -- and Abby could not be here. She's our  
3 policy chair.

4                   MS. HUDGENS: She's online.

5                   THE CHAIRPERSON: She's online. One  
6 thing that I had mentioned to her earlier that we  
7 might want to look toward doing is, we had  
8 problems coming up with a quorum for our letter to  
9 the State Board of Education. I wonder if part of  
10 it is, right now we are like right smack-dab in  
11 the middle of a membership changeover or rotation  
12 or something like that because we had two or three  
13 members, I know, that have dropped off the  
14 Council.

15                   We haven't welcomed, quote, unquote,  
16 "replacement" members onto the Council yet. So I  
17 think that made it a challenge to reach our  
18 quorum, which is 13 individuals. So that's  
19 something we'll be working on later is discussing  
20 if we want to go to like 15 -- not 15 -- to a 50  
21 percent quorum versus a numerical set number  
22 quorum because it's kind of hard to count somebody  
23 that's here because they're not supposed to be  
24 here anymore. So we ran into that. I think if we  
25 had those two members, we would have been fine

1 because I can think of two of them exactly that  
2 had rotated off. But that's where we are with  
3 that. That's in the policies.

4 MS. MOOREFIELD: Do we also know who  
5 our new legislature representative is because I  
6 don't---

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: We haven't seen  
8 Chad in forever because I know he was -- went off.

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: Because didn't he --  
10 yeah, hasn't he left?

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: I think he's left  
12 across the street, yeah. I'm not sure about  
13 Mr. Blackwell.

14 MS. HUTCHINSON: I was just pulling  
15 up our legislative appointments and when  
16 they're--- So Blackwell is Region 7, not that we  
17 have to replace him with a Region 7---

18 MS. THOMAS: But it keeps your  
19 balance. That's one of the reasons that---

20 MS. HUTCHINSON: Right. Right.  
21 Maybe it would benefit us to reach out to the new  
22 representatives in the area that would potentially  
23 commit to coming to the meeting because I mean  
24 that's the beneficial thing right there. There's  
25 a reason they're on the committee.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm not sure how --  
2 I'm not sure how those appointments work as far as  
3 the people across the street. I would imagine it  
4 would be somebody who might be working with  
5 education in one of their departments or, you  
6 know, how they have the committees for---

7 MS. THOMAS: So I can tell you that,  
8 actually. So for any legislative appointments,  
9 because this is a council that is advisory to the  
10 State Board, we have to go through the State Board  
11 legislative coordinator as well as the  
12 superintendent's legislative coordinator. So  
13 Cecilia and now Wade. So I actually talked to  
14 Tish at break because we've got a couple that we  
15 should have had appointments in June, and so I  
16 will get with them on this immediately to get --  
17 to get them to work on that on your behalf, but  
18 that's the process we have to take.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: I imagine or hope  
20 it would be somebody that has a background in  
21 education and a passion for the kind of work we do  
22 here, not just someone, you know, that's a melon  
23 farmer from Sampson County, who I loved to death,  
24 he's a nice guy, but yeah, you know what I'm  
25 saying.

1 MS. HUTCHINSON: Because if we look  
2 at this sheet, we have three or four very active  
3 members---

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: That have rotated  
5 off.

6 MS. HUTCHINSON: June 30,  
7 technically, they need to be reappointed.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Exactly. So that's  
9 what we're working on there. So our committees,  
10 we have our Unmet Needs Committee headed up by  
11 Diane Coffey. Raise your hand, Diane, so everyone  
12 sees you. We have our Data Committee, and Cynthia  
13 is not here with us, but she should be online on  
14 the phone system. And we have our Policy  
15 Committee, and that's Abby, who's also on the  
16 webinar with us today. So we'll figure out how to  
17 negotiate that. That's going to be interesting,  
18 two committees on one webinar line.

19 MS. THOMAS: They might have to do a  
20 cell phone---

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: They might. Hey,  
22 that will work. So let's break for committees,  
23 and then we'll come back at 2:15.

24 (Committee work was conducted from  
25 1:37 p.m. to 2:26 p.m.)

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right,  
2 everybody. I know Abby Childers wanted to report  
3 in. Was anybody from the Data Committee wanting  
4 to report in too?

5 MS. HUTCHINSON: So the Data  
6 Committee -- I hung up with Cynthia. I think  
7 she's probably still on the line.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yep. I see her  
9 name.

10 MS. HUTCHINSON: Oh, so sorry. I  
11 hung up with Cynthia on the real phone, and I  
12 think she's still on the line, and she is our  
13 reigning czar for our team.

14 MS. HUDGENS: Is she sharing out?

15 MS. HUTCHINSON: Huh?

16 MS. HUDGENS: Is she going to be  
17 sharing out because I'll open her---

18 MS. HUTCHINSON: I wrote down the  
19 notes. I can do that. Is that okay?

20 MS. HUDGENS: Sure.

21 MS. HUTCHINSON: If she's good with  
22 that. It took a little while to get her phone  
23 number, so that might be a little delay. But  
24 Cynthia had asked for somebody to replace her as  
25 the chair of that little team, and so I'll do

1 that. And we were going to get in touch with  
2 Nancy Johnson and possibly either Carol Ann or  
3 Sherry to look at the disproportionality.

4 I know the letters just came out with  
5 the warning list, and so we wanted to look at the  
6 statewide trends and plot them out on the map and  
7 see if there was any sort of themes or trends  
8 before the December meeting so that we can use our  
9 time in December effectively when we have  
10 committee time. And I thought Nancy would be the  
11 best one to get that data from.

12 MS. THOMAS: She is, and I would just  
13 say go ahead and email her and request that.

14 MS. HUTCHINSON: Yeah, that's exactly  
15 what I---

16 MS. THOMAS: She's got it. I mean  
17 she's run the reports already, so she should be  
18 able to provide that.

19 MS. HUTCHINSON: I think that was  
20 really what we talked about, and then in December,  
21 we're going to focus our efforts on the  
22 disproportionality, and if there's any like trends  
23 across the state that we can focus our efforts on  
24 in certain areas.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. That

1 sounds good. Do you want to report for Unmet  
2 Needs since you're the Chair of the Unmet Needs or  
3 I can because I was there.

4 MS. COFFEY: I think the notes are  
5 mostly on yours, but maybe we can tag-team it. We  
6 were talking somewhat for the report and the  
7 vision of what we wanted to be able to do, and  
8 within that was talking in the concern that we're  
9 not really meeting a lot of unmet needs because  
10 we're not getting work time to actually figure out  
11 what we need to do and how to move forward.

12 We're also still not getting a lot of  
13 public comment. Trying to figure out some pieces  
14 of that. So we were talking in terms of maybe --  
15 you may need to fill that piece.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, we're looking  
17 at kind of redoing how our meeting schedule goes,  
18 our meeting agenda goes. We're looking at  
19 possibly doing -- for the presentation pieces,  
20 we'll have our presentation. Then we might have  
21 ten to 15 minutes for Q&A with the expert  
22 presenter who's presenting, and then ten to 15  
23 minutes of a debrief within the Council so like,  
24 you know, she said this and I thought that was  
25 interesting. Do we need to make a recommendation

1 on that?

2 Like, for example, we mentioned the  
3 suicide protocols that some of the school systems  
4 have in place. It sounds like some school systems  
5 don't. Should we make that as a recommendation  
6 that all districts need to have a suicide protocol  
7 in place for identifying children at risk and  
8 making sure that we're getting them connected with  
9 the services they need, you know, because this is  
10 a life-or-death situation for some of these kids.  
11 That was a recommendation that we kind of came up  
12 with out of the presentation this morning. So  
13 that was part of it.

14 The other part of it was, because  
15 there seems to be not much time for committee work  
16 by the time we get to committee at the end of the  
17 day, the possibility of using the webinar system  
18 to be able to meet as a group outside of this  
19 larger group, outside of these meetings. I spoke  
20 with Tish about it. The biggest thing that she  
21 said that we needed to do is try to make it as  
22 structured as possible. Like if we want to do it  
23 on the third Thursday of the month at 3:00, that  
24 would work as long it was consistent so that they  
25 could post it for public comment purposes. But it

1 makes it easier for her schedule as well with the  
2 webinar because that webinar account fills up  
3 quickly. You blink and it's gone. So that's the  
4 challenge we have there.

5 I don't know if every committee would  
6 be interested in something like that. The Unmet  
7 Needs Committee is. So as committee leaders who  
8 are listening, Christy, or Abby on the computer,  
9 feedback on that when you-all get a chance.

10 But we had added recommendations for  
11 the suicide protocol to the annual report as well  
12 as recommending that all districts offer some form  
13 of program similar to -- it doesn't have to be  
14 Mental Health First Aid, but to make sure that our  
15 teachers and our staff are getting some exposure,  
16 some training in that regard to be able to support  
17 our students.

18 MS. HUTCHINSON: So I know our  
19 teammate from Department of Health and Human  
20 Services isn't here today, but I know that like  
21 with the crisis team, there are requirements  
22 through that with the mental health. And I wonder  
23 if coming from Exceptional Children, if the better  
24 thing to do, instead of sending it straight on to  
25 the State Board, is to send it to that group and

1 see what they have in their requirements. They  
2 actually met today.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

4 MS. HUTCHINSON: So I don't know if  
5 it would work better coming from -- I mean it's  
6 more aligned with their work.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. We might  
8 make a meeting about that.

9 MS. HUTCHINSON: Because it's not  
10 about exceptional children; it's about---

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: All children. The  
12 same way with the suicide protocol. 80 percent or  
13 more of our children are in regular education and  
14 regular settings. So, you know, it's not just---

15 MS. HUTCHINSON: Oh, yes. I'm just  
16 saying it's not about just our population; it's  
17 about---

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: I totally agree,  
19 and maybe that might be something we might want to  
20 look into as a future meeting topic. I need to  
21 write that down. So thank you for that. So I  
22 think that was it. Is that everything we had,  
23 Diane?

24 MS. COFFEY: Yeah, I think. Yeah,  
25 that was the gist of what we had.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: I know Abby wanted  
2 to chime in from---

3 MS. HUDGENS: Abby, you're unmuted  
4 now.

5 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Great. So I  
6 have a couple -- let me start with just one  
7 question since you guys were just talking about  
8 possibly doing a webinar. I couldn't hear  
9 everything. But do I need to add that to  
10 policies?

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm not sure. We  
12 can look into the bylaws and that, if necessary.  
13 That might be something the Bylaws Committee, if  
14 we decide to do that, can do. I know we formally  
15 meet four times a year. I think webinar meetings  
16 are kind of -- I won't say ad hoc, but they are  
17 scheduled.

18 MS. THOMAS: And you're not doing  
19 that as a public meeting because it's a public --  
20 it wouldn't be a public meeting, so you don't have  
21 to publicize those webinars. It's a committee  
22 meeting.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm not sure  
24 because I've heard both things in the past. Where  
25 it has to be -- if it has so many people of the

1 Council involved. So it gets tricky. So we'll  
2 sort that out.

3 MS. CHILDERS: Carol Ann, I hate to  
4 put you on the spot. Is there any way you can  
5 pull up the bylaws? Do you have access to that,  
6 or no?

7 MS. HUDGENS: I do have access to it.  
8 Let me see if I can get to it from our web page.  
9 So maybe you might want to do your committee  
10 report out while I'm trying to pull this up.  
11 Would that be a good use of our time?

12 MS. CHILDERS: Yes, that's fine.  
13 Well, I just wanted -- I'm basically just going to  
14 report on the bylaws and possibly changing a few  
15 things. It states on here, it looks like, that  
16 the last time they were looked at was---

17 MS. THOMAS: We lost you.

18 MS. GRANT: 2016.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. It's been a  
20 year or two.

21 MS. HUDGENS: Abby, we lost you for a  
22 second.

23 **(Pause.)**

24 MS. HUDGENS: So, Abby, I have you  
25 unmuted on our side. You might check your

1 settings.

2 Okay. I see what you're saying,  
3 Abby. Let me see if I can mute you and unmute you  
4 and see if that will give us a connection again.  
5 Hold on. All right. Try now, Abby.

6 All right. Does someone have Abby's  
7 phone number from the committee meeting and would  
8 you mind holding your phone to the mike? Abby,  
9 we're going to go old school and Christy's going  
10 to call you with her phone. Christy, you can sit  
11 right there and just hold it to your mike.

12 Christy's going to hold the phone to  
13 the mike so that you can share out. I'm sorry for  
14 the difficulty. Just hang on just for a second.

15 MS. CHILDERS: Hello.

16 MS. GRANT: Hey. Okay.

17 MS. CHILDERS: All right. Can  
18 everybody hear me? I'm so sorry. I don't know  
19 what happened. Can everybody hear me?

20 MS. THOMAS: Yes.

21 MS. HUDGENS: Yes.

22 MS. CHILDERS: I'll try to talk as  
23 loud as I can. Okay. So I wanted to go over a  
24 few of the things on the bylaws. If you will  
25 scroll down, Carol Ann, to where it says

1 [inaudible]. We'll start with that one, and it  
2 says "Carry out any other responsibility as  
3 designated by federal law or the State Board," and  
4 we talked about that today because the parents who  
5 came into today -- obviously, it was very gut-  
6 wrenching hearing what they had to say, and the  
7 parent that stated about the changes that should  
8 have been made by July 2019, I think she stated.

9 My question for you is, if that  
10 states, "Carry out any other responsibility as  
11 designated by federal law or the State Board," is  
12 there a way for us to be able to help with that  
13 and see which districts have things that have not  
14 been done in time to help with the accountability  
15 process of that?

16 MS. HUDGENS: Do you want to answer  
17 that?

18 MS. THOMAS: I'm not sure I'm even  
19 clear on the question. This is Sherry. If you  
20 can restate that. I'm sorry. I'm not sure if I  
21 understand your question.

22 MS. CHILDERS: That's okay. So  
23 basically where it says "Carry out any other  
24 responsibility as designated by federal law or the  
25 State Board," with that -- for example, the mom

1 that stood up today and spoke and stated that the  
2 state recommended changes were supposed to be  
3 due -- excuse me -- the district changes needed to  
4 be made by July 2019, if I remember that  
5 correctly. If that's the case and it still hasn't  
6 been done, is there a way for us to be able to see  
7 those kinds of things when you-all are presenting  
8 different items to us when we have our meetings?

9 I know a few months ago, I think,  
10 Carol Ann did, you know, a big presentation of all  
11 the different stuff for the past year. Sherry,  
12 actually, that might have been you. I'm sorry.  
13 But where you basically were telling us like all  
14 of the different things from districts that you  
15 had over the past year and went down that list.

16 Is there a way we could get that for  
17 the districts when it comes to them being -- to be  
18 held accountable for these types of [inaudible]?

19 MS. THOMAS: So you were talking  
20 about the parent discussing the dispute resolution  
21 and the corrective action was not corrected by  
22 July. That's part of our due process process, to  
23 be repetitively redundant.

24 And I'm going to let Carol Ann  
25 address that because we don't just ignore that.

1 We have to respond to that, and that comes under  
2 Carol Ann's supervision within her section. So  
3 I'm going to let her address that.

4 MS. HUDGENS: So a couple of layers  
5 to respond to your answer [sic]. First of all,  
6 under this requirement, item 6 here, just in  
7 general, the State Board or the federal government  
8 would have to specifically give you the authority  
9 to act in a particular way. That's what this item  
10 6 means. So the State Board of Education would  
11 have to specifically say that this Council is  
12 responsible for doing A, B, or C. The federal law  
13 says that we have to have a council to advise the  
14 State Board of Education, and so that is the  
15 responsibility that the Council has by federal  
16 statute.

17 So to have some other organized  
18 activity identifying unmet needs and advising the  
19 State Board, the State Board would have to  
20 dispense that authority to this board to act in  
21 that capacity. So that's just getting number 6  
22 tied up with your question about do you have  
23 authority or do you have some actionable  
24 opportunities through item 6.

25 Now with regard to the information

1 the parent shared about the corrective action  
2 timeline, because there was a state complaint  
3 involved, we have not left that situation. We are  
4 involved in that case until that case is closed.  
5 So our office follows up on that information, and  
6 we take action at the local level regarding the  
7 timeliness of those completions.

8 Now the worst-case scenario, if there  
9 are things that continue to be in a prolonged  
10 state, we can look at, in child-specific cases,  
11 that the LEA cannot be allocated funds based on  
12 the fact that the child's issue has not been  
13 resolved in a timely fashion. So I could make  
14 that recommendation to the Director. Sherry would  
15 review that, and then it would just have its own  
16 process about whether or not the LEA needs to have  
17 some kind of consequence in that manner.

18 Prolonged situations of unresolved  
19 noncompliance, holistically, if this is a pattern  
20 not only with state complaints but with other  
21 issues in the LEA, then the cumulative effect of  
22 that is, we could make a recommendation for formal  
23 sanctions, which is when you publicly notice that  
24 the LEA is out of compliance, and they have to  
25 come to the State Board and pretty much explain

1 themselves about why they are not in compliance  
2 and what their plan is to resolve that. So there  
3 are mechanisms that we do, and we are charged with  
4 that responsibility by the State Board to follow  
5 up -- and federally -- to follow up on what is  
6 noncompliant in the LEAs.

7 The other piece of your question is  
8 about can we share that information with the  
9 Council. Well, we can share aggregate information  
10 regarding patterns of noncompliance, but because  
11 this issue is involving a particular child, for  
12 confidentiality reasons, I wouldn't be able to  
13 share the particulars.

14 MS. THOMAS: This is Sherry. Let me  
15 jump in. What Carol Ann just described is the  
16 absolute worst-case scenario, but under the  
17 general supervision requirement with the federal  
18 government that we must address every year when we  
19 submit our grant for our IDEA funds, we have to  
20 ensure that general supervision is being upheld  
21 and we are ensuring that is happening.

22 So they have not left this case just  
23 because the school may not have done an item they  
24 were supposed to do by July; we won't leave  
25 that -- we won't take them off that corrective

1 action. They will not be able to just walk away  
2 from that, but that's under our general  
3 supervision charge.

4 Getting to the delay of funds or  
5 sanctioning, it takes a lot to get there, so that  
6 doesn't happen with just a one-incident kind of  
7 thing. I wanted to make sure we were clear that  
8 we're not -- we're not like the sheriff in town  
9 coming to get you because you missed a date, but  
10 it does cause a conversation, and I can assure you  
11 that there are probably multiple people on our  
12 staff already working with that district to ensure  
13 that they get that compliance in place.

14 MS. CHILDERS: All right.

15 MS. THOMAS: But I appreciate that  
16 effort.

17 MS. CHILDERS: I was wanting to just  
18 kind of get that clarified. So thank you very  
19 much. Now I think I understand that better.

20 Okay. Will you scroll down again  
21 to -- I think it's G -- it's under G and I think  
22 it's--- Okay. Yeah. So we'll start -- G3 and  
23 G4, I wanted to kind of talk about. So we were  
24 talking about this past summer where we, you know,  
25 had a lot of the different autism policy changes

1 going on, and there were a few phone conference  
2 calls about that, and if I'm correct, there were  
3 only about, I think, an average of eight to nine  
4 people that actually were able to come onto that  
5 call. Is that correct?

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Roughly that. I  
7 mean, when we had the largest meeting, I think we  
8 had like eight people, and then we had absentee  
9 voting and had like three more responses.

10 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. So on number 4  
11 [inaudible], the bylaws may be amended by a  
12 two-thirds vote of those present at a council  
13 meeting." I was thinking we should take out the  
14 two-thirds vote, and we could just put in quorum  
15 [inaudible], and we can decide on how many people  
16 that quorum is. It doesn't have to be a specific  
17 number.

18 I was going to say and propose  
19 nine -- the bylaws be amended by a nine-person  
20 quorum, if that would be something that you-all  
21 are interested in. If you guys think it should be  
22 more, that's great. I just kind of wanted to go  
23 with something that maybe -- something that was  
24 kind of -- I guess that would be appropriate,  
25 considering what we had this summer present.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: I think the bylaws  
2 need to maintain a stringent change -- requirement  
3 to change as far as having a good majority, not  
4 just the bear majority.

5 MS. HUTCHINSON: But the quorum, it  
6 says is---

7 MS. THOMAS: I believe the definition  
8 of quorum is more than 50 percent.

9 MS. HUTCHINSON: ---one more than 50  
10 percent, which is 13, I think.

11 MS. THOMAS: One more than 50  
12 percent. And I think that's something that would  
13 have to -- it would certainly have to go through  
14 the State Board attorneys. The State Board has  
15 those requirements that we follow as far as  
16 advisory councils and guidelines, and I doubt they  
17 would approve that.

18 MS. HUTCHINSON: The origin of the  
19 problem is people attending the meeting and being  
20 active.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

22 MS. HUTCHINSON: And that's the whole  
23 purpose of bylaws is not to---

24 MS. THOMAS: Yes.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. The part

1 that I was -- the quorum being at least 13  
2 members, being 50 percent plus one possibly of  
3 current members. Because we had a situation this  
4 past summer where we had several people cycled off  
5 [inaudible] and hadn't had new people come on yet,  
6 so it made it challenging to get the number.

7 So that's the change that I am -- or  
8 I think needs to be considered in that regard, and  
9 we can bring this up at our next meeting. Because  
10 we'll need to hash it out as a whole Council. I  
11 would love to do it after we get our new  
12 membership on board because, once again, we need  
13 to have a two-thirds vote as well because it would  
14 be a change to the bylaw.

15 MS. THOMAS: And you would need State  
16 Board legal counsel to approve that.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah, as well.

18 MS. HUDGENS: So you may have just  
19 said this and I missed it, and I apologize if I  
20 did, but you have item number 2 there which  
21 provides an option for absentee voting. So that  
22 may be---

23 MS. THOMAS: They exercised that, I  
24 believe.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: We exercised that

1 this summer, and we only got like three responses  
2 on it including -- because I kept the people who  
3 had cycled off on my email hoping [inaudible]  
4 almost third year, fourth year as chair. But  
5 we'll work through that as well.

6 But I see where you're going, and I  
7 think that's -- you know, but I think bylaw  
8 changes need to be very stringent with the  
9 majority -- a large majority of the Council, not  
10 just 50 percent plus one.

11 MS. GRANT: Is that 13? Is that  
12 number 13, 50 percent plus one?

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: I think we're  
14 required to have, what, 24 members on the Council.  
15 I mean I'm sure I've seen that bylaw somewhere  
16 with the---

17 MS. GRANT: Yeah, it's 24.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: ---with at least 50  
19 percent---

20 MS. THOMAS: There is an at least  
21 number in there, I believe, is how it's written.

22 MS. BYNUM: There's a minimum of 24.

23 MS. THOMAS: A minimum of 24. So you  
24 can exceed that. So that is 13. 13 would be a  
25 quorum.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: This past summer we  
2 had like 20.

3 MS. GRANT: You were thinking because  
4 three haven't been appointed to cycle back on, we  
5 really don't have 24---

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: No.

7 MS. GRANT: ---at that time we met?

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Exactly.

9 MS. GRANT: I see what you're saying  
10 now. So you were proposing maybe changing it from  
11 at least 13 to the percentage of current  
12 membership?

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

14 MS. THOMAS: Again, I'm going to  
15 advise you to check with---

16 MS. CHILDERS: [Inaudible].

17 MS. THOMAS: ---the School Board  
18 attorney because they will have very specific  
19 guidelines that they have to ensure. I'm sorry,  
20 Abby?

21 MS. CHILDERS: Did I hear Sherry  
22 state that we have to go by the way the State  
23 Board does their quorum? Because, if so, then we  
24 do have to go by 50 percent.

25 MS. THOMAS: I said that the State

1 Board attorney would have to advise and approve  
2 your bylaws because you are an advisory to them.  
3 Therefore, they need to align. The State Board  
4 worked---

5 MS. CHILDERS: [Inaudible].

6 MS. THOMAS: ---on the last bylaws.  
7 Yes, yes.

8 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, so that's not  
9 going to align because they do have a--- Okay.

10 MS. THOMAS: It's 50 -- it's 50 plus  
11 one, I think, is their quorum, right?

12 MS. CHILDERS: That is what -- yeah.

13 MS. THOMAS: That's pretty standard  
14 in any advisory board or nonprofit board---

15 MS. HUTCHINSON: School boards.

16 MS. THOMAS: ---that's a pretty  
17 standard protocol.

18 MS. GRANT: But I see what you're  
19 saying, and I guess, if we mainly made sure that  
20 the members stayed current and the three that --  
21 like the people that came off in June, if there  
22 was somebody that came right back on, we wouldn't  
23 have had the issue.

24 MS. THOMAS: Exactly.

25 MS. HUTCHINSON: Which would mean

1 that we would need to nominate folks and elect  
2 folks in the March -- is it March or April? So  
3 that they were here and active in June.

4 MS. THOMAS: Yes. Yes.

5 MS. COFFEY: It's a minimum of 24, so  
6 you could have the cross-over.

7 MS. HUTCHINSON: We have 23 listed  
8 right now.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: And some of them --  
10 it was like, okay, she's still on and she's moved,  
11 she's still on, she cycled off, so yeah. We're in  
12 that waiting-to-be-updated stage.

13 Was there anything else, Abby? I  
14 don't mean to shortchange your ideas, but I  
15 mean---

16 MS. CHILDERS: If Christy heard  
17 everything, I can talk to her later because I can  
18 barely hear anybody.

19 MS. GRANT: No, we're good.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Abby.

21 MS. CHILDERS: Thank you.

22 MS. GRANT: Thanks, Abby.

23 MS. CHILDERS: You-all have a great  
24 day.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sorry for the

1 delay, Miss Sherry.

2 MS. THOMAS: That is okay. I just  
3 thought I'd stand here and I'd be ready. It let  
4 me answer some of those questions too.

5 So good afternoon. It's good to see  
6 everybody. It's good to be here. I've got a few  
7 updates for you, and so I'm going to start with  
8 following up on -- I did send you the email with  
9 the proposed revised policy around ASD  
10 eligibility, and then I sent you a communication  
11 to let you know that that had indeed passed.

12 And I did that because the Board has  
13 a new procedure now where they move everything  
14 that is for a vote into one vote. They aren't  
15 individually voting on each item, and sometimes  
16 things get lost and people aren't sure if  
17 things -- if a proposal or a policy or a  
18 recommendation has passed. So I wanted to make  
19 sure that you were all aware that it did pass.

20 We are working on that implementation  
21 plan, and so we actually had our implantation plan  
22 done ahead of our schedule, but our target is  
23 November 1 to have the resources ready for the  
24 guidance documents. I sent that request out to  
25 the Council as well as the stakeholder group that

1 met with us on August 22nd, and I've had about 12  
2 or 15 people respond that they would be willing to  
3 review the documents and give feedback.

4           So our plan is that -- the  
5 consultants are working right now to develop those  
6 documents -- those guidance documents, and there  
7 will be one for administrators. I think that's  
8 actually going to be either a YouTube or a  
9 PowerPoint with a voice-over guidance for  
10 principals because we know they need something  
11 quick, easy to look at and grasp that information,  
12 and move on. Sending them a 20-page document,  
13 they may not get through that, but if they can  
14 watch something for ten or 15 minutes, that's  
15 probably much more efficient and probably a better  
16 rate of us getting them to look at it.

17           So administrators, that would be for  
18 directors, for principals, for whomever needs to  
19 look at that, so that's targeted for early  
20 November. We are looking to have a guidance  
21 document for gen ed and special ed teachers and  
22 then one for parents. And so what my plan is, is  
23 to take all the folks that have volunteered to do  
24 a review and to give feedback on those guidance  
25 documents, I'm supposed to get those about the

1 15th of October, and my goal is to have our  
2 internal leadership team look at those, Carol Ann,  
3 Matt, other folks on our leadership team, other  
4 section chiefs.

5 So that within a week, we are going  
6 to be able to send out to that stakeholder group,  
7 then, the documents and ask you to review one of  
8 those. I'm not going to ask you to review all  
9 three because that's a lot for any person. But  
10 our goal will be within about a two-week period of  
11 time, then, to have all your feedback back to us,  
12 make any changes that are recommended that we  
13 can -- because what we're looking for is clarity,  
14 and we want to make sure that these documents are  
15 very clear in guidance for whomever is reading  
16 them or using them.

17 Then the goal is to have those ready  
18 by the first part of November, and we will do  
19 training using those documents -- talking about  
20 the policy at our November conference. We'll have  
21 a couple of sessions on that. All that training  
22 will also be embedded -- the policy part will be  
23 embedded in all of our ongoing training around  
24 students with autism, and then we'll be ready to  
25 roll out the policy on January 1.

1 I am going to come back to the State  
2 Board in December to give them an update, to let  
3 them see what we've developed, to give them a  
4 timeline of what we've accomplished since the  
5 August 4th meeting so that they can stay on board.  
6 They've also shared, if we don't feel like we're  
7 ready to roll this out, if something happens and  
8 we don't get those guidance documents done, then  
9 certainly we'll ask to delay that implementation  
10 till later, but our goal is to have that ready for  
11 January.

12 So that's kind of a quick update.  
13 Most of that, I think, I sent in an email, but any  
14 questions? Is that clear? Does that feel good?

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Uh-huh.

16 MS. THOMAS: Okay. It felt good to  
17 me. It feels like we've done the right thing.  
18 And I will tell you that's the best stakeholder  
19 group I've ever participated in, and I've been in  
20 education a very long time. I think this is year  
21 34 for me, with a gap there in the middle with my  
22 youngest when she was born. So to be able to sit  
23 in a stakeholder group and get honest reflective  
24 feedback on the topic and us be able to come out  
25 with a change that everybody could agree on was a

1 pretty cool experience. And Leanna was there, and  
2 it really was a good day.

3 It gave me hope that we can actually  
4 get stakeholders back engaged because we've done  
5 that, and what happens is, we start with a very  
6 large group, and by the time we finish whatever  
7 work we're doing, we're down to just a few, and  
8 that kind misses the purpose and intent of doing  
9 the stakeholder group, when you're down to just a  
10 few people who are showing up to help you  
11 problem-solve. So it gave me renewed hope that  
12 we're going to get people reenergized about being  
13 a part of that.

14 We've set some priority for our  
15 division work, and I talked a little bit about  
16 this is in June. I just want to give you an  
17 update that we are having our second round of  
18 meetings with our adapted curriculum work and  
19 trying to get not only clarity around teacher  
20 expectations, but what that curriculum should look  
21 like, what the tools are that teachers need, what  
22 support they need. If they've come out of  
23 preservice program that maybe did not address  
24 working with students with more significant needs  
25 and if they don't feel prepared, then how can we

1 help them access that. So that's been on the  
2 radar.

3 We talked about the AU policies  
4 stakeholder group. We're going to ask that group  
5 to stay together as well to give us feedback as we  
6 move into looking more around instruction and best  
7 practices and ensuring we're doing a good job with  
8 the curriculum piece once we've identified those  
9 kiddos as well.

10 We will be looking at some cleanup in  
11 our policies. We know we've got some editing to  
12 do. There's always a typo that we miss, you know,  
13 even though we've looked at it 50 times. But we  
14 do have -- our policy on specific learning  
15 disabilities that was passed back in 2016 --  
16 2015 -- October of '15, which moves us away from  
17 using a discrepancy model where you compare the  
18 student's IQ to their achievement level on those  
19 academic assessments to looking at a response to  
20 intervention model or did they respond to the  
21 intervention that was provided, has there been  
22 progress monitoring, have we used the right  
23 interventions, so really getting back to how that  
24 eligibility was in the law in 1975 that we kind of  
25 turned into some other ways of interpretation.

1           But right now our policy has that in  
2 there as a -- it will become effective on July 1,  
3 2020, and we've got to clean up the policies. So  
4 we'll be doing some cleanup. I don't think we  
5 have an intent at this point to do major changes,  
6 but anything that does come up that we need to  
7 look at will certainly come before this Council  
8 prior to us moving forward to the State Board.  
9 You have my word on that.

10           Conference, I mentioned that earlier.  
11 Just a reminder that our conference is November  
12 20th and 21st at the Koury Center in Greensboro.  
13 We have a day and a half, five different breakout  
14 sessions, plus a plenary, plus we honor our  
15 Educators of Excellence. And if you've never been  
16 there for that, it is a great time to watch  
17 teachers being celebrated.

18           Teachers, therapists, anyone who  
19 works with students with disabilities is eligible  
20 to be nominated if they are an employee of a  
21 school district, and so that notification just  
22 went out this week around making the nominees from  
23 districts for that Educator of Excellence. We  
24 accept one nominee from each of the traditionals,  
25 one from each region for charters, plus our

1 state-operated programs, and we usually have about  
2 100 nominees. So it's a fun time.

3 This year, I also -- suddenly, I've  
4 created a real focus around parent engagement  
5 because we've seen that, through this AU policy,  
6 we don't have good mechanisms in place to reach  
7 out to parents, or what we've done in the past is  
8 no longer effective. Social media is a great tool  
9 until it becomes a tool used for negativity, so  
10 we're trying not to do everything through  
11 Facebook. We do have a Twitter account.

12 But one of the things I want to do  
13 this year, and my dear registration team -- poor,  
14 Tish. I moved her cheese again, but they're  
15 working with me. And so my goal is to contact all  
16 of our parent advocacy groups in the state and  
17 offer them up to five free registrations for  
18 parents that they have within either their group,  
19 their contact group, on their board, just to try  
20 to increase our parent engagement at the  
21 conference.

22 And so I wanted to make you aware of  
23 that as well. So I will be reaching out to, you  
24 know, First Resources, ECAC, Families First --  
25 there are so many, I can't rattle them all off --

1 Easterseals, ASNC, TEACCH, any organization that  
2 has that parent focus and offering them up to five  
3 registrations. So there will be communication  
4 going out to those agencies around that, which  
5 brings me to my next item.

6 We've also created a parent listserv,  
7 and this information went out yesterday to our  
8 local directors and charter directors, and it also  
9 went to every agency we could find that is  
10 involved in any way with parents and children with  
11 disabilities.

12 And I asked Carol Ann to pull this up  
13 so I can walk you through it. So where it says  
14 "Sign Up for Updates," it's on the home page of  
15 Public Schools. When you click that, it takes you  
16 to a page where you can either -- it says "Email."  
17 You can also do that drop-down, I believe, and  
18 have it sent as a text message, if that's how you  
19 want to receive your update. You hit "Submit --"  
20 You put in your email address or phone number, hit  
21 "Submit," and then it will -- Carol Ann's going to  
22 do it so we actually see it live -- then it will  
23 take you to a page where you can select the new  
24 listserv we've set up.

25 So you have to do this. If you get the

1 State Board of Ed's updates or you get the  
2 Superintendent's updates, this is coming from the  
3 same portal. So Carol Ann has put in her  
4 information.

5 MS. HUTCHINSON: What information  
6 will go out through this? Because I'm wondering,  
7 if we already get the EC Division one -- like it  
8 would be nice to know -- this is what parents are  
9 getting?

10 MS. THOMAS: I'll tell you. Since  
11 we've started the login here, I want to--- And so  
12 when you go in and log in and put in your own  
13 personal information and you scroll down, it's  
14 under "Resources," and it says, "Exceptional Child  
15 Information for Parents." Once that is clicked,  
16 then you have to go to the bottom and hit  
17 "Submit," and that registers you.

18 So what will be coming through here  
19 are things like we're having public comment on an  
20 AU policy that nobody got out to the field or few  
21 parents knew about. So it's going to go directly  
22 to those parents who sign up or to those agencies  
23 who sign up and then send it out to their  
24 listserv.

25 So as a council member -- I'm going

1 to take that back. Not as a council member, as  
2 the Director of EC, you're going to get everything  
3 we get, but when we're talking about your Educator  
4 of Excellence, we're not going to send that to a  
5 parent because that's not relevant, but anything  
6 that deals with instructional practices,  
7 opportunities, conferences, policy changes,  
8 resources for parents, those things will go  
9 through that listserv out to anyone who registers.  
10 But the key is, they have to sign up. So we've  
11 asked all those agencies that we sent that out to,  
12 to forward that to their listserv or to be  
13 committed to signing up and then forwarding the  
14 information out.

15 So one use I can think of is, if you  
16 are looking for council members, that would be  
17 something we could use to send out to say, if  
18 you're interested in sitting on the Council, then  
19 here's what you do. So it gives us a vehicle to  
20 kind of help support you with some of your work as  
21 well, and I'm actually pretty excited about that.  
22 I feel much better about that than trying to shoot  
23 everything out through social media, quite  
24 frankly, because we know they're going to get  
25 accurate information because we're sending out the

1 details to them that we're sending out to  
2 districts. So districts may send it out and then  
3 we may send it out again. So I guess, if you get  
4 it twice, it's better than not getting it at all,  
5 which is our hope.

6 Any feedback from that? Any  
7 comments?

8 MR. HOSKINS: Just in addition to, I  
9 anticipate that oftentimes communications will  
10 have opportunities for structured feedback. So  
11 that it's not just going to be a one-way type of  
12 communication vehicle, but there will be  
13 opportunities for two-way communication.

14 MS. THOMAS: Thank you. I forgot  
15 that part, but yes. So we'll look for feedback,  
16 stakeholder group involvement surveys. I think  
17 it's going to be a good tool for us to use to  
18 really improve communication. I talked to the  
19 chairwoman of the Special Education Committee for  
20 the State PTA. She's already signed up. So she's  
21 ready to send anything we do out.

22 MS. HUTCHINSON: It's good to know  
23 [inaudible], but I was thinking, if I get it as a  
24 parent and then just forward it out to my parents  
25 of students with special needs that they don't

1 have to sign up that way.

2 MS. THOMAS: That's true. That's  
3 right. If you have a listserv, it's to be shared,  
4 and it will say that every time, please share  
5 whatever we sent out so that it's---

6 MS. HUTCHINSON: And it will be in  
7 parent language.

8 MS. THOMAS: Yes.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: And I've already  
10 seen that on ECAC's Facebook page, and I posted it  
11 this morning on ASNC or I think somebody else  
12 posted it on ASNC. So it's getting out there.

13 MS. THOMAS: It is, and it will be --  
14 you know, it takes us days to get things on our  
15 web page, but it will be on the main page, and  
16 then it will also be on the parent page on our  
17 website. I popped it up in LinkedIn today because  
18 you never know who's going to see it. So I  
19 figured it was a good place to announce that.

20 We also -- I don't know if Carol Ann  
21 was going to talk about this, but I'll steal her  
22 thunder. We also have a new parent liaison coming  
23 on board. It's been awhile, and she's tried  
24 diligently and has had several people turn her  
25 down, and finally, somebody came back and said, "I

1 really do want that job." So we're excited and I  
2 believe she starts Monday.

3 MS. HUDGENS: She does.

4 MS. THOMAS: And so once we get --  
5 I'm not going to hit her with this on Monday, but  
6 once she's in and settled and really kind of into  
7 her -- understanding her role, this will become --  
8 this listserv will become owned by that parent  
9 liaison, which will, I think, help us build -- I  
10 mean that's the whole purpose of having that  
11 person there, is to improve our communication and  
12 our outreach. So it's the logical place for that  
13 to be.

14 I think that was everything I had on  
15 my updates. Last but not least, I want to  
16 introduce officially our Assistant Director for  
17 our division. He came on board July 1, and it's  
18 Dr. Matt Hoskins, who has been with our division  
19 in a couple of different roles and left us for a  
20 very short time to go work over in Integrated  
21 Academic and Behavior Support, but saw the light  
22 and came back across to EC.

23 I don't know if you have anything you  
24 want to say, Matt, but I just wanted to introduce  
25 him to the group and let you know he's here to

1 support you as well.

2 DR. HOSKINS: Good afternoon. I know  
3 most of everybody in the room. I'm just  
4 incredibly excited about serving the students of  
5 North Carolina in this role. I think we're poised  
6 at a really unique time to really improve results  
7 for students with disabilities across the state.  
8 We have a lot of really great things happening, as  
9 described in the priorities that Sherry just  
10 shared, with ECATS, with the SLD policy, with the  
11 work that we're doing around specially-designed  
12 instruction, the State Systemic Improvement Plan.  
13 We're really poised to improve results, and I'm  
14 really excited to be part of that work.

15 And if I can be of any service to  
16 this Council at any point in time, don't hesitate  
17 to reach out and let me know. I'm happy to be  
18 here and happy to see everybody.

19 MS. THOMAS: So do you have questions  
20 or comments for us today?

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Not that I know of.  
22 Just so that everyone remembers that the November  
23 council -- not council -- conference,  
24 historically, we've always had free admission to  
25 that conference as members of the Council. So be

1 sure to take that opportunity because it's always  
2 awesome.

3 MS. THOMAS: You get free  
4 registration.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: You have to pay for  
6 your own hotel room. I'm sorry.

7 MS. HUTCHINSON: Tish, can you speak  
8 to that just a little? Because we had some kind  
9 of code last year.

10 MS. BYNUM: That's why I jumped up.  
11 At the bottom of your agenda is a special code for  
12 only council members. So you may go -- once our  
13 registration is up -- we're probably about a week  
14 to ten days out from it being posted --  
15 registration being posted on our website. So give  
16 us about seven to ten days.

17 Go on when registration is open. One  
18 of the very first choices is "I have a code." So  
19 you will select that box, and you will put in this  
20 code as a council member, and what you'll get in  
21 return is like a paid -- a zero invoice. But now  
22 you do get free registration for the general  
23 conference. If you elect to attend an additional  
24 institute, you will need to pay for that  
25 separately, and that will be \$75, if you elect to

1 attend an institute. But come on. That would be  
2 good.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yay. Thank you.  
4 It's been a couple years since I've been. Any  
5 other discussion that we need to have?

6 I don't know if I mentioned it  
7 earlier. We were doing some looking, and I cannot  
8 rerun for--- I already said that, didn't I?  
9 Okay. So I don't need to go over that again.

10 MS. THOMAS: But may I ask a  
11 question?

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

13 MS. THOMAS: Because we're going to  
14 do a better job of staying on top of this. We  
15 have three members who are eligible for another  
16 four-year term, and I need to know if they are  
17 willing to run -- to be proposed for another  
18 four-year term because I'd like to get this to the  
19 Board at their special meeting this month and get  
20 this done so that you have those assured active  
21 members.

22 And then, if it's all right with you,  
23 I will reach out to our legislative liaisons to  
24 tell them that we need those four positions  
25 filled.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: I know Jennine  
2 Vlasaty has moved. She's cycling off. She's  
3 still on this list.

4 MS. THOMAS: Okay. So that you have  
5 a need in Region 3?

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. I'm staying.  
7 I think Cynthia Daniels-Hall is staying. Ginny,  
8 are you staying or leaving?

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: I'll stay if you'll  
10 have me.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: I think we'll have  
12 you.

13 MS. MOOREFIELD: If you need an  
14 obnoxious big mouth.

15 MS. HUTCHINSON: We need a new  
16 representative and senator.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

18 MS. THOMAS: Yes. Do you know who  
19 nominated you?

20 MS. BYNUM: We're missing -- we're  
21 missing Region 8 altogether.

22 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yes. It was -- I  
23 believe it was Barefoot's office, I think. I'll  
24 have to look at the list. I got a phone call from  
25 the Speaker's Office last week. That's all I

1 know.

2 MS. THOMAS: Last week?

3 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yeah. And they said  
4 that they would get back with me, and I haven't  
5 heard anything.

6 MS. THOMAS: Okay. So they're on it.  
7 So they know -- if they contacted you, that means  
8 they recognize that they need to renew that  
9 recommendation for you. So that's good. Did  
10 somebody ask me a question?

11 MS. HUDGENS: Yes. So Cynthia,  
12 participating virtually, would like to continue  
13 for another term.

14 MS. THOMAS: Okay. So it looks like  
15 there needs to be a nomination for Region 3, and  
16 you said 8, Tish?

17 MS. BYNUM: Yeah, 8 is not  
18 represented at all.

19 MS. THOMAS: 8 is not represented at  
20 all.

21 MS. MOOREFIELD: Do you know, off the  
22 top of your head, what areas are in those -- like  
23 what counties are in those regions?

24 MS. THOMAS: Region 8 is the far  
25 west -- lower part of the west, so Asheville down.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: My daughter's in  
2 school in Marion. Is she Region 8? I'm just  
3 kidding. I mean I'm just in a weird situation,  
4 but yeah. But I think it's good to have a parent  
5 that has a situation like mine too, though,  
6 because it's just a different situation.

7 MS. HUTCHINSON: It's unique.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. I think  
9 we're adjourned. Any other burning questions?  
10 Oh. Tish has something.

11 MS. HUTCHINSON: Tish, this is  
12 different than you've ever done before. Can you  
13 tell us what you want us to do?

14 MS. BYNUM: I know. That's why I  
15 raised my hand. In the back of your packet, you  
16 should have some items stapled together. One of  
17 them is the travel reimbursement form, the second  
18 page is an electronic payment form, and the third  
19 one is a substitute W-9.

20 Now I can tell you that since July 1,  
21 DPI's Accounts Payable area has just been through  
22 tremendous changes. That's all I'm going to say  
23 about that. So why these papers are stapled  
24 together is, I did want to have them all together  
25 so we could just kind of go through them step-by-

1 step so that you-all can get reimbursed.

2 So for the top page, the travel  
3 reimbursement, if you could just complete your  
4 name, address, and sign it under "Claimant." That  
5 should get you on the first page.

6 MS. HUTCHINSON: Do we need to put  
7 parking on that page too?

8 MS. BYNUM: We'll get to parking in  
9 just a second. But just on page 1, if you could  
10 just do your name, address, and sign it. Are we  
11 good?

12 All right. The second page says,  
13 "Electronic Payment Form." DPI's Accounts Payable  
14 does not want to issue hard checks to folks  
15 anymore. They want to deposit them into your  
16 checking account. So that is the purpose of this  
17 second page, which will have very sensitive  
18 information on it, and a voided check is  
19 necessary.

20 MS. MOOREFIELD: So if we don't have  
21 a checkbook with us at this moment, then, there's  
22 no point in this, right?

23 MS. BYNUM: Correct. Correct.

24 MS. POPE: I'm sorry. You said -- I  
25 have a checking account, but I don't use checks.

1 Is there way I can [inaudible] the other  
2 information?

3 MS. BYNUM: Yes is going to be my  
4 response. I'm on the same page with you.

5 MS. POPE: Okay.

6 MS. BYNUM: I am truly on the same  
7 page with you. But, again, since July 1, our  
8 accounts payable area has gone through an enormous  
9 amount of changes, and these are part of the  
10 requirements for them to issue a check to anyone,  
11 is basically what the bottom line is.

12 MS. HUDGENS: I wonder if there's  
13 something in your online checking account that you  
14 can print off the routing slip because that's the  
15 evidence that they want. They want those numbers  
16 at the bottom. So there might be a feature in  
17 your personal checking that allows you to print  
18 that off for like other things like if you want to  
19 order checks or something like that.

20 MS. HUTCHINSON: You can also print  
21 like an electronic check and void the electronic  
22 check.

23 MS. POPE: Okay.

24 MS. BYNUM: I mean Carol Ann is  
25 right. What they are looking for is the bank

1 account and routing number so that the payment can  
2 go directly into your checking account.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Just in case they  
4 read your handwriting wrong.

5 MS. BYNUM: And then this last  
6 page does tend to get tricky. Everything like  
7 number 1, 3, 4, 5 -- all that gets kind of  
8 self-explanatory. Where people get tripped up at  
9 is number 12 and number 13. In the number 12  
10 area, you can just put "individual/sole  
11 proprietor," and under number 13, you can put  
12 "other individual."

13 Now to top all of that off, we need  
14 to have these things -- they will not take them  
15 over 30 days old. So we need to get them back  
16 ASAP if you want to get reimbursed. Now for your  
17 parking receipts that you'll get today out of the  
18 machine when you leave, please staple that,  
19 include that with your paperwork. So if we have  
20 the parking receipt and all these pretty little  
21 forms stapled together, we can issue you the  
22 money.

23 MS. THOMAS: If you hold your mouth  
24 right, spin around three times---

25 MS. BYNUM: Your blood type and your

1 first born.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: And your left  
3 kidney, right?

4 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yeah, parking ain't  
5 worth all that. If I had mileage or something  
6 like that, I'd put forth the effort, but---

7 MS. TERHAAR: And who do we mail it  
8 to?

9 MS. BYNUM: You can mail it to us,  
10 and I actually have some preaddressed envelopes.

11 MS. POPE: I'm not sure about number  
12 3. It says---

13 MS. BYNUM: Don't worry about number  
14 3 because you're an individual. So up under  
15 number 1, you're going to check Social Security  
16 number and you're going to provide that Social  
17 Security number under the number 2 section. The  
18 number 3 is like for corporations.

19 MS. POPE: Oh, okay. Thank you.

20 MS. TERHAAR: Can you repeat what you  
21 just said about putting it under -- Social  
22 Security -- under number 2 in that space? Is that  
23 it?

24 MS. BYNUM: Right. On the sub W-9  
25 form, number 1 is required. You're going to check

1 "Social Security number." Under number 2, that's  
2 where you would write your Social Security number.  
3 Number 4 is your name. You can skip 5 and 3.  
4 Number 6, that's your address, line 1, line 2.  
5 Number 8, "Contact Name," that's you again.  
6 "Phone number," that's you. Number 12 is going to  
7 be an "Individual," and number 13 is going to be  
8 "Other," and you can just write "Individual."

9 MS. TERHAAR: Thank you.

10 MS. BYNUM: Now going forward, since  
11 you would have already submitted the electronic  
12 deposit form as well as the sub W-9, from here  
13 forward, you should just be able to do just the  
14 travel reimbursement. That's all I've got to say  
15 about that.

16 MS. HUTCHINSON: Tish, is it  
17 possible -- I know we have to [inaudible] the  
18 parking, but is it possible to leave this with you  
19 with our Social Security number on it so I don't  
20 have to drop that in the mail?

21 MS. BYNUM: Tell me that again.

22 MS. HUTCHINSON: Is it possible to  
23 leave this one with you so we don't have to drop  
24 this in the mail with our Social Security number  
25 on it?

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MS. BYNUM: If you want to. If you want to.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Do you know what I mean?

MS. BYNUM: I know exactly what you mean. But, yes, if you want to leave something with us now, I'm perfectly fine with that.

MS. HUDGENS: Leanna, would you like to formally adjourn the meeting?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Is there any further business? Since I've gotten stopped twice, I think.

**(No audible response.)**

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. We are adjourned.

**(At 3:23 p.m., the quarterly 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  
195, are a true record of the proceeding to the  
best of my knowledge and belief;

That I am neither related to nor  
employed by any of the parties or counsel employed  
by the parties hereto, nor interested directly or  
indirectly in the matter in controversy, and am  
not financially or otherwise interested in the  
outcome of the action.

Certified this 1st day of November,  
2019.



Rebecca P. Scott