

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Via Webex
March 10, 2021
9:30 a.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF QUARTERLY MEETING

The quarterly meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children was held on the 10th day of March, 2021, via Webex, commencing at 9:30 a.m.

APPEARANCES

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cynthia Daniels-Hall, Chairperson
Christy Hutchinson, Vice Chairperson

Anthony Baker
Sara Bigley
Diane Coffey
Jennifer Degen
Christy Grant
Jennifer Grady
Kristen Hodges
Selene Johnson
Terri Leyton
Virginia Moorefield
Lisa Phillips
Kenya Pope
Matthew Potter
Kimaree Sanders
Marge Terhaar

STAFF:

Kelley Blas
Kim Evans
Matt Hoskins
Nancy Johnson
Danyelle Sanders
Sherry Thomas
Alexis Utz

COURT REPORTER:

Rebecca P. Scott

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1 Thereupon, the following proceeding was held:

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So good
3 morning and welcome, everyone. Thank you for
4 sharing your time for children across North
5 Carolina and especially thank you for
6 participating in this very beautiful day.

7 So we're going to do introductions,
8 and Alexis, if you could help me with that.

9 MS. UTZ: Sure. So you should see on
10 your screen a list of council members. I have
11 tried to keep up with them, but we'll go in this
12 order. So, Cynthia, we'll start with you.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I'm Cynthia
14 Daniels-Hall. I'm a parent and I'm from Cary,
15 North Carolina. I have children on the autism
16 spectrum.

17 MS. UTZ: All right. It does not
18 look like Shanna or Joanne are on the call right
19 now. So I'll go to you, Diane.

20 MS. COFFEY: Hello. I'm Diane Coffey
21 and I'm from Watauga County, and I have two
22 children with special needs.

23 MS. UTZ: All right. I don't see
24 Leanna right now. I don't see Abby or Kristen.
25 So let's go to Jennifer D.

1 MS. DEGEN: Hey there. I'm Jennifer
2 Degen. I represent the Charlotte-Mecklenburg
3 School System. I've been teaching in special
4 education for 20 years, and thanks for having me.

5 MS. UTZ: All right. Christy G.?
6 She's here and I saw her unmute, but---

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. She might be
8 having some technical difficulty.

9 MS. UTZ: Yes.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

11 MS. UTZ: We'll come back to her and
12 see if we can get that to work in a little bit.
13 Next we'll go to Anthony.

14 MR. BAKER: Hello. I'm Anthony
15 Baker. I'm an assistant principal for the
16 Alamance-Burlington School System in Elon. I'm
17 also a former EC teacher and EC chair.

18 MS. UTZ: All right. How about
19 Marge?

20 MS. TERHAAR: Hello. This is Marge.
21 Good morning, everyone. I am the representative
22 for the IHE, professor at Meredith, coordinator of
23 the graduate programs, and a parent of two young
24 men with disabilities.

25 MS. UTZ: All right. Christy H.?

1 DR. HUTCHINSON: Hi. Christy
2 Hutchinson. EC Director for Lincoln Charter
3 Schools. On this committee, I represent Charter
4 Schools, and I believe I've been in special
5 education about 22 years. So happy to serve and
6 look forward to a good meeting.

7 MS. UTZ: All right. Terri?

8 MS. LEYTON: Hi. This is Terri
9 Leyton, and I represent the Exceptional Children's
10 Assistance Center in North Carolina. And I am
11 also a parent to a daughter with Down syndrome,
12 and a little boy not on any spectrum. I didn't
13 want to leave him out, but I didn't know how to
14 introduce him.

15 MS. UTZ: All right. Next, we have
16 Matthew.

17 MR. POTTER: Hi, everybody. This is
18 Matthew Potter. Sometimes I go by Matt so that's
19 what I'm going to use here today. It doesn't
20 matter. They're both good. I am an individual
21 with lived experience with disabilities.
22 Specifically, I have cerebral palsy.

23 There's no need to change the name,
24 by the way. I was just commenting on that just so
25 people didn't look at that and be like confused by

1 what was in the participant list.

2 MS. UTZ: You're good.

3 MR. POTTER: Anyway, so it is me. It
4 is not another Matt or Matthew because that is an
5 extremely common name, which is really why
6 mentioned it. Anyway, like I said, I am an
7 individual with lived experience. I have cerebral
8 palsy, to be specific, and I am here to help bring
9 the perspective of someone who directly lives a
10 lot of the things that we talk about, albeit more
11 from a physical perspective than some of the other
12 types of disabilities that we discuss. But still,
13 hopefully, it is helpful and insightful and
14 valuable for everybody. And as always, it's good
15 to be here.

16 MS. UTZ: Thank you. All right.
17 We'll go to Ginny.

18 MS. MOORE: Hi. I'm Ginny Moorefield
19 here in Wake County. I have a son with traumatic
20 brain injury, and I'm also an interpreter for the
21 deaf and a regular ed teacher.

22 MS. UTZ: All right. It looks like
23 next will be Kenya.

24 MS. POPE: Good morning. Can
25 everyone here me?

1 MS. UTZ: Yes.

2 MS. POPE: Good morning again. I'm
3 Kenya Pope. I'm the EC Instructional and
4 Compliance Specialist with North Carolina
5 Juvenile Justice. Glad to be here this morning.

6 MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right. I
7 always pronounce your name wrong. I think it's
8 Sara.

9 MS. BIGLEY: It's all good. It's
10 Sara.

11 MS. UTZ: Sara.

12 MS. BIGLEY: Yes, I know. "Sar" like
13 car. It looks like Sara, but thank you.

14 MS. UTZ: And I know it's not Sara,
15 and that's why I always end up saying it wrong.

16 MS. BIGLEY: I appreciate it. Thank
17 you. My name is Sara Bigley, and I'm the State
18 Education Agency Foster Care Point of Contact.
19 This is under ESSA for [inaudible] for students in
20 foster care. Thank you so much. I'm always
21 excited to be with this group. It's a great
22 group.

23 MS. UTZ: Thank you. All right. And
24 Lisa?

25 MS. PHILLIPS: Good morning. I hope

1 you can hear me. My name is Lisa Phillips. I'm
2 the State Coordinator for the North Carolina
3 Homeless Education Program, and I am under Federal
4 Program Monitoring and Support, and I'm located at
5 the University of North Carolina at Greensboro
6 with Sara [inaudible] technical assistance center.

7 MS. UTZ: Thank you. All right. It
8 looks like Jennifer G. has joined us, if you want
9 to say hello.

10 MS. GRADY: Hi. Yes, this is
11 Jennifer Grady. I am a parent of a child with
12 autism, and I think I'm also listed in the Council
13 as a business rep. I work for Blue Cross and Blue
14 Shield of North Carolina.

15 MS. UTZ: All right. Thank you.
16 And, Christy G., I unmuted you. See if you can
17 talk now.

18 **(No audible response.)**

19 MS. UTZ: All right. Well, Christy
20 Grant is here with us. We'll see if her volume or
21 her audio works later, but hopefully, you can hear
22 us. You can send me a message in the chat, if you
23 need to.

24 But, Cynthia, it looks like we do
25 have 14 present. So we can go ahead and do

1 motions and all that good stuff.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Great.

3 MS. GRADY: Can you hear me now?

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

5 MS. UTZ: Yep, barely hear you.

6 MS. GRANT: There's evidently
7 something wrong with my microphone. I'll continue
8 to try to work on that. But I'm Christy Grant.
9 I'm the Executive Director for Student Services
10 and Special Education in Nash County Public
11 Schools and the traditional LEA EC director
12 representative.

13 MS. UTZ: Cynthia, before you go on,
14 I should mention that we also -- I am Alexis. I'm
15 the Parent Liaison with the EC Division. We also
16 have Danyelle present. So, Danyelle, if you want
17 to say hello.

18 MS. SANDERS: Hello, everyone. I'm
19 Danyelle Sanders, the Administrator for Policy,
20 Monitoring and Audit.

21 MS. UTZ: All right. We also have
22 Becky.

23 MS. SCOTT: Good morning, everybody.
24 Glad to be here.

25 MS. UTZ: All right. And joining us

1 today, we have two, I guess, presenters/visitors.
2 We have Kelley Blas.

3 MS. BLAS: Good morning, everyone.
4 I'm sorry. I was trying to unmute. This is
5 Kelley Blas, and I'm the IDEA Part B Data Manager
6 for the Exceptional Children Division.

7 MS. UTZ: All right. And then we
8 also have Kim Evans joining us today. She will be
9 our first presenter in a few minutes.

10 MS. EVANS: Hi. This is Kim Evans,
11 and I work at DPI in the Department of Educator
12 Preparation.

13 MS. UTZ: All right. And it does not
14 look like anyone else has joined us. So, Cynthia,
15 it's all yours.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: So thank you.
17 Welcome. We're going to do a quick review of this
18 current agenda and see if we have any questions,
19 any additions, or anything of that nature. Take
20 about a minute or two to review the agenda.

21 MS. UTZ: I should ask, as you're
22 doing that, does anyone need the link for the
23 agenda? Everyone should have it, but just in
24 case.

25 MS. GRANT: Can you hear me better

1 now?

2 MS. UTZ: Yes, we can.

3 MS. GRANT: Okay. Thanks. I joined
4 by phone. Thank you.

5 **(Council members reviewed the**
6 **agenda.)**

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any questions, any
8 suggestions of changes or anything on the agenda?
9 And if not, can I get a motion to approve the
10 agenda?

11 DR. HUTCHINSON: This is Christy
12 Hutchinson. I motion that we approve the agenda.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Can we get a
14 second?

15 MS. COFFEY: This is Diane Coffey. I
16 second to approve the agenda.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: So can we take a
18 vote? Those who are -- who approve the agenda?

19 **(Multiple council members responded**
20 **aye.)**

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any opposed?

22 **(No audible response.)**

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

24 **(No audible response.)**

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I think the

1 agenda is approved.

2 Do they have the December agenda --
3 the minutes from December? Sorry.

4 MS. UTZ: If they have the agenda
5 pulled up, they should be able to click on the
6 link, but I will put that in the chat box.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So if you
8 could take another minute or two to look at the
9 December meeting note minutes, and any changes or
10 corrections or additions to those minutes, please
11 let us know.

12 **(Council members reviewed the**
13 **December 2020 Summary of Actions.)**

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Can I get a
15 motion to approve the December 2020 meeting
16 minutes?

17 MS. UTZ: Lisa motioned to approve.

18 MS. GRANT: I'll second.

19 MS. UTZ: And that was Christy G.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: So all those who
21 approve?

22 **(Multiple council members responded**
23 **aye.)**

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any opposed?

25 **(No audible response.)**

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

2 (No audible response.)

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: So it looks like
4 that has passed as well. So we're going to move
5 on to our first presenter, Kim Evans.

6 MS. UTZ: All right. And let me just
7 give her presentation mode really quick --
8 presenter. All right. Kim, you should be able to
9 share your desktop and take it away.

10 MS. EVANS: Sorry. I'm not seeing
11 where I--- Oh. It's right here. I'm sorry about
12 that.

13 MS. UTZ: No, you're fine.

14 MS. EVANS: Good morning, everyone.
15 Can everyone see my PowerPoint?

16 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

17 MS. EVANS: Okay. Great. Great.
18 I'm Kim Evans and I'm a Program Coordinator, and I
19 work in the Division of Educator Recruitment and
20 Support and in the Department of Educator
21 Preparation, and I help oversee PEPSC, which is
22 the Professional Educator Preparation and
23 Standards Commission. So they provide policy and
24 rule recommendations to the State Board around
25 licensure and teacher/educator standards.

1 And I just wanted to come today and talk
2 to you a little bit about what's going on with
3 licensure update-wise that pertains to, in
4 particular, EC-GC, or the exceptional children
5 general license, and then also what's going on
6 with diversifying the teacher pipeline because
7 even though that doesn't necessarily say EC in
8 name, it will affect EC.

9 So I'm going to go through a slew of
10 information this morning, so if you have
11 questions, if you can type them in the chat box, I
12 will be happy to answer questions at the end, and
13 even if you think of questions after I'm gone, if
14 you can just relay those to your point of contact
15 here, then I would be happy to answer those
16 through email as well.

17 And, first, I'm going to tackle
18 licensure exam updates, and there was a request to
19 go into pass rates, in particular, for EC exams,
20 and then also Foundations of Reading, that test is
21 part of the licensure exam for EC-GC, that
22 license, and elementary education. And so that
23 test is being updated by the State of
24 Massachusetts as one of their requests through the
25 vendor. So I'm going to go into that as well.

1 And also a copy of this presentation and then also
2 some other supplemental -- like a report and some
3 other things will be sent to you [inaudible].

4 So I just want to just review really
5 quickly what the licensure exam requirements are
6 for EC-GC. There is a Reading Subtest, and that's
7 the one that has been updated that I'll get to a
8 little bit later. There's a Math Subtest, and
9 then there's a EC-specific test, which is the Core
10 Knowledge Praxis II Test, and I put a link in here
11 that will go directly to Licensure 003, which is a
12 state board policy that will list that for you, if
13 you do want to review that.

14 And the reason I focused on EC-GC is
15 because that is one of the most popular licensure
16 areas for exceptional children, and so I wanted to
17 get the pass rate data to you as an example of
18 what you would see for these types of licensure
19 exams. However, EC-GC and in this case elementary
20 education, they are more of the exception because
21 they have the Reading Subtest and the Math Subtest
22 in addition -- well, in this case, this one has
23 the EC Core Test.

24 So I want you to notice that there
25 are two different colored bars here, and the blue

1 bar is the first attempts bar. So that's letting
2 me know that from January 1st, 2018, to December
3 31st, 2020, that this data looked at the first
4 attempts for that time period. This is not cohort
5 data but a certain time period. And then also the
6 best attempts, which is the white or the grayish
7 colored bar.

8 And you'll notice that the Reading
9 Subtest and the Math Subtest for the first
10 attempts versus the EC Core Test, the pass rate is
11 quite a bit lower as well as also the best
12 attempts, and then overall the first attempts is
13 lower than the best attempts. So you will see
14 that the EC Core licensure exam has a much higher
15 pass rate than the Reading Subtest and the Math
16 Subtest.

17 I also -- I had also looked at EC-AC,
18 the adapted curriculum, because you can take
19 the -- one of the EC-specific tests there too, and
20 that was also in the nineties. So, in particular,
21 the licensure exams where they're struggling to
22 pass those are the Reading Subtest and the Math
23 Subtest in contrast to the EC Core Test.

24 And then I wanted to let you know how
25 many test takers there were. There were 1056 for

1 each of these tests, and then you can see how many
2 passers there were for the first attempt pass rate
3 and then also what the percentage is here. This
4 is just a different way of showing that
5 to you so that you can see the numbers of test
6 takers and passers. And then also for the best
7 attempt, this also spreads it out the same way,
8 and you'll see that EC Core comes out ahead both
9 times.

10 So I'm going to go right into
11 Foundations of Reading Test, and that test is
12 being updated for these five different reasons,
13 and I'm going to provide you with supplemental --
14 a crosswalk with the dyslexia standards and then
15 also a comparison between the current Foundations
16 of Reading Test and the updated Foundations of
17 Reading Test.

18 There's a chart that Pearson is
19 providing -- they have provided to DPI so that we
20 can look at this test. So PEPSC has a group of
21 experts in the field looking at this test and
22 comparing the current test with the updated test
23 as far as these two charts, and I'm going to give
24 these to you as far as the supplemental data
25 for -- that goes with my presentation. And

1 they're looking at -- these experts are looking at
2 whether this test should remain as the Reading
3 Subtest and is still meeting the needs of North
4 Carolina as far as licensing elementary educators
5 and EC-GC educators.

6 So these are the five areas that the
7 update is around, and you'll notice this in the
8 chart that contrasts the current test and the
9 updated test -- I'll let you go through that when
10 I hand that over to you after the presentation,
11 but I wanted to make you aware that these were the
12 five areas and, in particular, because the State
13 Board has expressed interest on making sure that
14 things are aligned with the Science of Reading,
15 that this new test update does align with the
16 Science of Reading.

17 This next part is about diversifying
18 the teacher pipeline in North Carolina, and I'm
19 going to look at these five areas. The first four
20 are four different groups that have focused on
21 diversifying the teacher pipeline, and I'll go
22 through each one and where exactly they are
23 focusing on that diversification.

24 So the first one is the DRIVE Task
25 Force, and I happen to be a member of the DRIVE

1 Task Force, and they're a group of educators and
2 educator representatives from across the state in
3 different areas and facets of education. And we
4 were charged with -- by the Governor's Office to
5 research and think about how diversification is
6 happening in the state, what else needs to happen,
7 and where we need to really focus how we're
8 diversifying the teacher workforce.

9 And so I'm going to give you the
10 final report from the DRIVE Task Force. I'm going
11 to give you a little more information about it in
12 just a few minutes. And in the back in the
13 appendices, you will see the licensure exam data,
14 and that is actually cohort data, and you'll be
15 able to see -- even though it's not just special
16 education or special children data, you will see
17 from -- I think it's 2017 to 2020 the licensure
18 exam pass rates. So that is towards the back in
19 one of the appendices. So I just wanted to bring
20 that out and talk to you a little bit about that
21 during the presentation and -- or highlight that.

22 And then the State Board gave
23 particular goals, and I'll highlight the one that
24 has to do diversification of the workforce. And
25 then Stride Working Group -- so the beauty of

1 these four organizations or groups is that they
2 have been working together. So you will see a lot
3 of overlap between members of DRIVE and the
4 members of the State Board or the members of
5 Stride Working Group and DRIVE. So there's been a
6 lot of overlap on what the ideas have been because
7 there's a lot of collaboration across all four
8 groups.

9 And so the Stride Working Group met
10 regularly, and they came up with recommendations,
11 and actually, a lot of their recommendations
12 overlap with the DRIVE Task Force recommendations,
13 and some of the DRIVE Task Force recommendations
14 also focused on what PEPSC has been doing with
15 their own subcommittee work around diversification
16 of the teacher pipeline.

17 So I'll start with the DRIVE Task
18 Force, and I talked a little bit about how they
19 came to be. It was through an Executive Order,
20 and I'm not going to read the slide to you, but we
21 were charged with really looking at how diverse
22 the educator pool was versus the percentage of
23 students and different -- with different racial
24 backgrounds and what we needed to do to really
25 diversify that educator pool, not just in the

1 larger districts but across the state.

2 And so we really had to hone in on
3 different programs, and we even had people from
4 other states come and visit and give
5 presentations, and we had a partnership with DPI
6 focusing on data and really seeing what holes
7 there were around that diversification.

8 And this all started -- before the
9 Executive Order for the DRIVE Task Force, there
10 was the DRIVE Summit, and so the Executive Order
11 was presented at the DRIVE Summit to then create
12 the DRIVE Task Force. So the summit brought
13 together educators with different backgrounds, and
14 they were able to talk about how they worked with
15 diversifying the field, especially through
16 educator preparation and training of teachers from
17 diverse backgrounds, and the need for that as
18 well.

19 Then our meetings happened starting
20 in May and ended in December because the final
21 report was due to Governor Cooper January -- in
22 January 2021, and so we were able to submit that
23 to the Governor in December 2020. So it was a lot
24 of hard work and on a regular basis, but we were
25 able to get that done through three different

1 subgroups: recruitment and then preparation and
2 then also retention.

3 So we focused on each of those areas,
4 and as you look through that report, you'll be
5 able to see what of the three areas those
6 recommendations -- what they have to do with those
7 three aspects. So some of them might have to do
8 with recruitment and preparation or they might
9 only have to do with recruitment, but it shows you
10 where it belongs in the teacher pipeline and then
11 also who would be responsible to help make this
12 happen.

13 And then the Stride Working Group, I
14 had mentioned them a little bit earlier. Best NC,
15 which is a nonprofit that brings businesses
16 together to support education, they hosted the NC
17 Stride Working Group, and they called it Stride
18 because it means Strategic Teacher Recruitment
19 with Intentionality, Diversity, and Excellence
20 Working Group.

21 And so they had regular meetings to
22 engage in teacher recruitment that would be
23 strategic and also at the same time being able to
24 diversify the teacher workforce, and Best NC has
25 been helping with the recruitment platform for the

1 State, which is TeachNC, and so that ties right in
2 with their expertise around helping with
3 recruitment. And so in the end, they came up with
4 a slew of recommendations, and as I said earlier,
5 a lot of them overlap with what the DRIVE Task
6 Force had been doing.

7 And then State Board of Education has
8 really been focusing in on increasing the number
9 of educators of color in schools across North
10 Carolina, and so that's one of their goals that
11 they will be able to do that as part of "Eliminate
12 opportunity gaps by 2025." I'm sorry. It's
13 Objective 6 to go with that to help them be able
14 to eliminate those opportunity gaps. And so there
15 were state board members that were a part of the
16 DRIVE Task Force and then also part of Stride
17 Working Group as well so that they had State Board
18 voices in there.

19 And then PEPSC, which is the
20 commission that I help oversee, we started talking
21 about diversifying the workforce through educator
22 preparation because the legislature had let us
23 know that we needed to -- through statute that we
24 needed to come up with an EPP, or Educator
25 Preparation Program, weighted accountability model

1 because they wanted to see what PEPSC would come
2 up with and then would the State Board -- but the
3 State Board then in the end also approved it
4 because the accountability model that they have
5 right now is very -- is very straightforward.
6 It's not as nuanced and this is much more nuanced
7 and weighted. And so they had -- because we have
8 EPP representation on PEPSC, then we were able to
9 put together a weighted model, and one of the
10 pieces that the State Board wanted and that PEPSC
11 plugged into the model was diversity and showing
12 the percentage of students of color around teacher
13 candidates and making that part of the
14 accountability for EPP.

15 And then on top of it, PEPSC
16 subcommittees have also been working on the
17 Preprofessional Skills Test Committee examining
18 the Praxis Core Academic Skills Test, and this is
19 an entry test into an EPP. And one of the
20 recommendations from Stride as well as the DRIVE
21 Task Force was to eliminate that test because this
22 test -- it blocks students of color especially
23 from getting into Educator Preparation Programs.

24 And this test focuses on reading,
25 writing, and math, and it's something that is

1 legislatively mandated. However, we don't -- we
2 don't know if it has any positive effect on
3 getting through and successfully competing an EPP
4 or not because that type of data has not actually
5 been put forward. So the purpose the test itself,
6 other than it being a barrier to get into the EPP,
7 is not quite clear. So that's what the
8 subcommittee was working on, on the Praxis Core.

9 And I got a little ahead of myself.
10 So it's required by Senate Bill 599 to enter the
11 EPP, and I said that it focuses on reading,
12 writing, and math. And it's a traditional pathway
13 for teachers, so teachers that go through two
14 years of a four-year institution and they start
15 their two years and they get into their EPP
16 program and go through student teaching for 16
17 weeks. That's what -- they would have to take the
18 test before they could get into the EPP program
19 itself.

20 And then there's alternative ways to
21 fulfill the requirements. You can enter ACT
22 scores, enter SAT scores as well as already have a
23 bachelor's degree, if you were going to do, say,
24 an MAT program, a master of art in teaching.

25 And like I said earlier, nationally,

1 which this includes North Carolina, Hispanic and
2 black candidates, they fall behind their white
3 counterparts for pass rates around the Praxis
4 Core, and you will see that in the DRIVE Task
5 Force final report, and I also mentioned that it
6 restricts entry into EPPs.

7 And also the purpose and the
8 predictability of the exam is unknown, and it does
9 not -- it does not predict educator quality in the
10 end as far as we have seen, and we have also seen
11 that licensure exams are also a poor predictor for
12 educator quality in the end. So that's why this
13 test is being looked at to be eliminated as an
14 entry requirement.

15 So I know that you were looking for
16 some recommendations around helping with pass
17 rates, and other than -- I have four different
18 things here, but I think that -- I wanted to let
19 you know that some of the recommendations will be
20 to really look at what's going on with PEPSC and
21 the State Board because there is a new licensure
22 pathway that is being explored right now, and the
23 State Board has charged PEPSC with developing
24 that.

25 And so that will -- that is an area

1 that PEPSC will really look at and, through the
2 subcommittee work, be able to really think about
3 what's working and what's not working with the
4 licensure system now and how to develop that. So
5 that's something that I wanted to bring to the
6 table. And then also beginning teacher support,
7 especially if a teacher has not completed their
8 licensure exam before they are licensed for
9 traditional students.

10 And then, of course, residency
11 students, they would have to be going through
12 beginning teacher support through the residency
13 program experience for that license for
14 [inaudible], but really figuring out what the LEA
15 is doing to help with beginning teacher support
16 and then also how -- for the residency folks, how
17 they're partnering with the EPPs around beginning
18 teacher support. So not just the program within
19 the LEAs, but for residency, how EPPs are
20 supporting residency license holders because that
21 is -- that is part of that type of support.

22 And then also using the free
23 resources, the Praxis guidebooks. So I have a --
24 I have a link right here to some of the Praxis
25 guidebooks for North Carolina, and those are free

1 resources. And for each test, they have that. It
2 breaks down what the test is. They have some
3 sample questions. The areas -- they have an
4 outline of the areas that each test is about.

5 And then also when I say "Timing the
6 test" here, I'm talking about individuals taking
7 the test as soon as they finish that content work
8 or before they even start their -- or during their
9 EPP program so that it's fresher in their minds
10 because the longer that an individual waits, the
11 less likely they're going to pass their licensure
12 exam and then there's a lower pass rate.

13 So these are some recommendations.
14 In particular, I really wanted to stress the
15 updates from PEPSC and the State Board, and I just
16 want to thank you guys for letting me come and
17 present today. And I'll make sure that you have
18 all the materials that I just presented and talked
19 about, and please let me know if you have any
20 questions.

21 MS. TERHAAR: I have a question.

22 MS. EVANS: Sure.

23 MS. TERHAAR: Since the licensure
24 tests are a poor predictor, what measures are
25 being taken to address that issue in finding

1 alternatives to those very licensure tests rather
2 than just to continue keeping the licensure tests
3 in place with such high failure rates?

4 MS. EVANS: So at this point right
5 now, that is a legislatively-mandated requirement
6 to hold a license in North Carolina as a teacher,
7 that you have to pass one of the subject area, and
8 then EC-GC, you have to have the Reading and Math
9 Subtests along with the EC Core. So that would
10 have to be a legislative change.

11 But we are working on the
12 alternative -- these licensure pathways through
13 the PEPSC work that we'll be talking about --
14 actually, has been talked about for the past month
15 at the State Board and PEPSC, but then also it
16 will be talked about again tomorrow during PEPSC.

17 So that is where we will be working
18 on what requirements we think are working and what
19 requirements we think aren't working. Also, if we
20 do have licensure exams, what else can we have as
21 an additional -- or not an additional requirement,
22 but additional options to give people choices.

23 MS. TERHAAR: One thing that I would
24 suggest in that discussion is, since the licensure
25 tests are a poor predictor, in our state, we do

1 have the Reading Research to Classroom Practice
2 training and the Foundations of Math training
3 which have actually shown positive outcomes for
4 students with disabilities in reading and in math.
5 In fact, that's something that is pretty
6 well-known across our country. So we have this in
7 our backyard, so to say.

8 But the other concern here, of
9 course, is if we present alternatives which are
10 actual training that show positive outcomes for
11 students, we will have to be able to address this
12 diversity issue because there seems to be a
13 conflict between having licensure standardized
14 tests and what kind of cultural biases might be
15 implicit in those tests.

16 And to what extent has that issue
17 been investigated by these different groups? Is
18 there evidence to support that there's a lack of
19 cultural biases in those licensure tests
20 themselves? Because it seems like -- since our
21 goal is to increase diversity, to what extent are
22 we shooting ourselves in the foot with bias
23 checks, and has that been looked at either in our
24 state or in other states?

25 MS. EVANS: I think it's actually

1 been looked at nationally, and so in the DRIVE
2 final report, you'll read that -- I believe
3 licensure exams are also included with the Praxis
4 Core around cultural bias. The one test I wanted
5 to say that is not included in this that is
6 included as a requirement is edTPA, which is the
7 pedagogy assessment.

8 And so we have less data around that.
9 That might be a better predictor around teacher
10 quality in classrooms, but we don't actually know
11 that fully yet because it has been -- it hasn't
12 been around as long, and also, North Carolina
13 hasn't been using it as long as either. It's a
14 more recent implementation.

15 MS. TERHAAR: And since we -- our
16 charge is to advocate for students with
17 disabilities, it's very interesting how the EC
18 test has the higher success rate in the nineties,
19 whereas the reading and the math do not. And is
20 there any exploration of that and, in fact,
21 eliminating the reading and math and keeping it as
22 [inaudible]?

23 MS. EVANS: So I can see the
24 reasoning behind that. That is also a legislative
25 mandate to have the reading and math, and in fact,

1 we added -- was it a year ago? I think it's about
2 a year ago or a little more -- it might have been
3 a year and a half ago that we added a second math
4 subtest choice.

5 So we went through experts in the
6 field to really investigate CKT, and I think the
7 pass rates for that is better than the Pearson
8 one. That math -- math in general has been a
9 struggle [inaudible] elementary education and
10 EC-GC has been more of a struggle.

11 MS. TERHAAR: I mean that's a
12 national, and so that's all the more reason to
13 look at the Foundations of Math training, which
14 again has produced positive outcomes when teachers
15 who have been trained in it, and that's again
16 something I would like to be forefront in the
17 dialogue when you're talking about alternatives to
18 biased testing for licensure, which has yet to
19 establish any -- any educational benefit for the
20 students [inaudible] those people.

21 MS. EVANS: Right. We are very aware
22 of those courses, and I'm make sure that's --
23 because that's something that will be thought
24 about, and I'll make sure to mention that to our
25 subcommittee because there's a professional

1 learning piece around this new licensure pathway,
2 and so that could be part of what might be a
3 requirement for particular licenses or license
4 areas -- licensure areas. That hasn't been
5 developed yet, but that is a good point.

6 MS. TERHAAR: And then I have one
7 final question.

8 MS. EVANS: Sure.

9 MS. TERHAAR: The Science of Reading
10 that I noticed was one of the items that the
11 Foundations of Reading Test is going to consider.
12 Can you tell us what that's about?

13 MS. EVANS: So I'm not an expert
14 around the Science of Reading, but I have been
15 reading a little bit about it, and it is --
16 reading, I believe, had become more whole language
17 and abandoned phonics more, and it needs to have a
18 really strong phonemic background for the kids to
19 be able to really hone in on how to read and
20 sounds that letters make in order to sound out
21 words. And so the phonics part has to really be
22 strong around that, and I think they're really
23 trying to focus on that around the Foundations of
24 Reading.

25 I will say that the Foundation of

1 Reading Test is a better predictor of teacher
2 quality in classrooms. It is the one subtest
3 or -- sorry -- licensure exam that does predict
4 that. And EPIC through UNC Chapel Hill and
5 Dr. Kevin Bastian -- he provided that data at one
6 of the State Board meetings.

7 MS. TERHAAR: It's interesting
8 because that test has a very -- has been
9 crosswalked with the Reading Research to Classroom
10 Practice, and there is a strong correlation there.
11 What I'm concerned about is the Science of Reading
12 is also being used now as part of that \$12-million
13 funding for Science of Reading, which is a program
14 that a corporation is behind. I would suggest it
15 be called evidence-based reading.

16 MS. EVANS: I see what you mean.

17 MS. TERHAAR: See what I'm saying?
18 Because when I [inaudible], oh, is this a done
19 deal already? This is interesting. So they may
20 want to reconsider and called it evidence-based
21 practices.

22 MS. EVANS: I've noticed that across
23 the nation that it is being called Science of
24 Reading, and obviously, the State Board is not
25 talking about the company or the corporation.

1 But, yes, I could -- I could see that confusion
2 there.

3 MS. TERHAAR: Thank you very much.
4 You did a great job. I really appreciate---

5 MS. EVANS: Oh, thank you.

6 MS. TERHAAR: ---the work that you're
7 doing here.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you. And I'll make
9 sure to send the report and the crosswalk.

10 MS. TERHAAR: I appreciate that.

11 MS. EVANS: Any other questions?

12 MS. LEYTON: I have a question. This
13 is Terri Leyton. When you were talking about the
14 State Board of Education goals and one of them
15 being to increase the numbers of diverse teachers,
16 do you know by how many or a percentage or what's
17 their benchmark?

18 MS. EVANS: I'm not sure that they
19 have one set yet. I'm not sure. I would have to
20 talk to my contacts at the State Board.

21 MS. LEYTON: Okay. Well, if they
22 don't, I would suggest them setting one because,
23 otherwise, how will they know when they've been
24 successful?

25 MS. EVANS: That is a very good

1 point. A very good point. I know that they were
2 working on particular details around the goals
3 because they had released the goals and presented
4 them, and then they were saying that they were
5 still working on particulars around those goals.
6 So that might be one that they were focusing on.

7 MS. LEYTON: And then regarding the
8 licensure, I know we just talked about it quite a
9 bit, but if licensure is eliminated, how would
10 that impact meeting the requirements of IDEA for
11 teachers who -- special education teachers who are
12 supposed to be like, you know, certified to---

13 MS. EVANS: So I want to be clear
14 that licensure would not be eliminated.

15 MS. LEYTON: Okay.

16 MS. EVANS: PEPSC is just working on
17 a recommendation that would go to the legislature
18 eventually, but it would have to go through the
19 State Board first, to develop a different
20 licensure pathway. So there would still be
21 licenses; it would just go through -- possibly be
22 called something different.

23 There would be more facets for the
24 licenses. There's more tiers or steps to the
25 licensure process as far as what licenses you can

1 get and more entryways. So there's licensure. I
2 didn't want to confuse -- I hope I didn't
3 confuse---

4 MS. LEYTON: Okay. Sorry. That
5 might have been my misunderstanding. Thank you.

6 MS. EVANS: That's okay. Sure.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: So thank you all
8 and thank you so much---

9 DR. HUTCHINSON: Cynthia, can I ask
10 one more super quick question? I know we're over
11 time on our allotment.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure.

13 DR. HUTCHINSON: But I appreciate
14 your time, and I think probably if this whole
15 entire presentation was wrapped up into two
16 sentences, the fact that there's no good
17 correlation between people passing that test and
18 producing high-quality instruction and educational
19 gains for our students is like the pivotal of
20 everything, and there's no correlation that's been
21 able to be drawn between the percentage -- the
22 folks that do pass and those staying in the field
23 more than three years and changing into a
24 permanent license.

25 I understand your goal of increasing

1 the diversity in teaching and in the pipeline for
2 teaching. Has there been any breakdown -- I saw
3 the breakdown in those that passed the math and
4 the reading the first time and then consequential
5 times. Has there been any breakdown in that --
6 looking at race specifically or even gender?
7 Because if your goal is to increase the pipeline
8 of those coming into the field, I think that---

9 Anyways, go ahead. I'll let you
10 answer that.

11 MS. EVANS: So that was done in the
12 DRIVE Task Force from the dashboard that was done
13 through DPI. So in the appendices [inaudible]
14 licensure pass rates, and it's not just EC-GC but
15 it's pass rates overall, and it will break it down
16 by race, by year as well, and it's a cohort base
17 so the exact same people each year, whereas this
18 one was a period of time for any test taken -- for
19 any of the tests taken.

20 So let me know if you have any
21 questions after you look at any of the reports or
22 supplemental materials.

23 DR. HUTCHINSON: Thank you.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you so much,
25 Kim. We're going to---

1 MS. EVANS: You're welcome.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: We're going to move
3 on to State Performance Plan and Annual
4 Performance Reports and Nancy Johnson or Kelley
5 Blas.

6 DR. JOHNSON: Yes. Good morning.
7 This is Nancy Johnson. How is everyone this
8 morning?

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning,
10 Nancy.

11 DR. JOHNSON: As you may recall, I
12 spoke with the Council at our December meeting
13 regarding the FFY, Federal Fiscal Year, 2019 State
14 Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report
15 that we submitted February 1st of this year, 2021.
16 You can see there's almost a two-year difference
17 in the timeline. And briefly about the new
18 package for the next six years, Federal Fiscal
19 Year 2020 and 2025.

20 This morning I'm just going to give
21 you along -- well, Kelley is going to have to
22 leave, but I want to introduce her in just a
23 minute -- to give you some updates around what
24 we're -- some things I wasn't able to share with
25 you about what we submitted February 1st of 2021,

1 and then how we're moving forward to do the work
2 for the next six-year plan. So I'll be spending
3 more time with that. And I know my time is
4 probably a little short here, so I'm going to
5 share which slides I think are most important.

6 Alexis, or whoever's moving the
7 slides for me, you can move to the next slide.
8 So, again, I just shared this -- our update. I
9 did want to share on the one that we just
10 submitted some information about Indicators 8 and
11 13 because I didn't have that data in December and
12 talk to you about the next steps that go along
13 with that. So you'll see that even though we've
14 submitted, there are still things to be done.

15 And then for the new package that we
16 will be submitting February 1st of 2022, which
17 seems like a little ways off, but there is a lot
18 to be done. I'm going to go over some of the
19 general requirements, the changes to some of the
20 indicators, and the next steps, which we are
21 anticipating and hoping that each of you as
22 council members will be very involved in giving us
23 input into that.

24 Next slide. Indicator 8, we were
25 still working with the parent survey, but I had

1 mentioned to you that we had a revised survey from
2 a lot of work we had done with stakeholders about
3 revising the survey, and we changed it from 25
4 questions to the 17 most important questions that
5 parents and others felt like we should include in
6 the survey.

7 It increased our response rate
8 greatly. We had over 3000 responses this time,
9 and because we changed the survey and the
10 calculation a little bit with the survey because
11 of how we changed the survey, this data that we
12 submitted for the 2019-20 school year is
13 considered a new baseline and will be our starting
14 point for setting targets in the next six-year
15 plan.

16 Our rate, which I didn't have the
17 information for you at the time, was 49.36
18 percent, which meant that 49 percent -- and we do
19 our survey by a sample, but it meant that 49 -- a
20 little over 49 percent of the parents who
21 responded to the survey about parent involvement
22 in those questions answered the majority of their
23 questions with "strongly agree" or "very strongly
24 agree," and that's a calculation rate that was
25 similar to what we used in the past, similar

1 standards.

2 And this is a similar rate that we've
3 gotten in the last several years. We've always
4 been in the forty-some percent range, and our
5 target was 50 percent. So we were very close.
6 This is a little bit higher than what it was the
7 previous year by about five percentage points, but
8 we have been as high as 48 percent in past years.

9 Next slide. Our indicator that is
10 the most challenging was our Indicator 13, which
11 is our transition component on the IEP, and this
12 is a compliance indicator. We dropped by 24.42
13 percentage points. We were up at about 80
14 percent, and this is -- this rate of 56.42
15 percent, I'm going to talk briefly about why we
16 think this happened and what this is about.

17 It's really looking at, through our
18 monitoring process, IEPs of students who have
19 transition components in their IEPs and making
20 sure that all the parts of the transition part of
21 the IEPs are in compliance. So our monitoring,
22 it's not a sample per se, but it's all the
23 monitoring visits we do for a given year, all the
24 districts that are monitored and transition plans
25 that they look at.

1 One of the reason for our slippage is
2 that monitoring was suspended in mid March. We
3 all know that we had a big impact from COVID-19,
4 and so 22 of our LEAs -- and most of those were
5 our traditional LEAs. We had already done a lot
6 of our charter schools, which are smaller and have
7 fewer IEPs to review. But 22 of our LEAs were not
8 monitored. That had to be postponed because of
9 the Governor's stay-at-home order and schools
10 closing.

11 So we had a decrease of about 35
12 percent of the number of IEPs we normally review
13 for transition. So that impacted our data, and we
14 had to make a statement in the APR because it was
15 related to COVID. And so any indicator that was
16 impacted by COVID, we had to make a special
17 statement in the APR. But we also had a change in
18 the IEP form in our new Every Child Accountability
19 and Tracking System, ECATS, which you've probably
20 heard much about the ECATS system that collects
21 our IEP data and all of our data for our special
22 ed students.

23 And that change in the form --
24 because of the change in the form and probably
25 related to COVID, because we weren't able to do as

1 much training in person and some of the training
2 became virtual -- but related to that, districts
3 did not always include the required component
4 related to transition assessment, and there's a
5 component related to the fact that your goals need
6 to be based on transition assessments.

7 And because of the change in the way
8 we did the form, some of the districts missed that
9 requirement, and therefore, they were out of
10 compliance, and that impacted our rate greatly as
11 well. So they are putting some things in place
12 related to Canvas opportunities for training and
13 some other things about other -- following up with
14 districts to ensure that they are addressing that
15 required component in the future.

16 Next slide. And then the next steps
17 in this process for the submission of this APR,
18 the clarification period. A clarification period
19 is something that OSEP, US Office of Special Ed
20 Programs, allows us to do. After they've had a
21 chance to review our APR that we've submitted,
22 they respond in the platform with comments,
23 questions they have, anything they need us to
24 clarify, or if we have a need to clarify any of
25 our data, we can do that as well.

1 This clarification period will open
2 on April 15th and be open for two weeks, and we
3 will be required to respond to anything OSEP has
4 asked questions about. We will also have an
5 opportunity to have a phone call with them to make
6 sure we're clear about what their questions are.
7 You're only allowed to participate in this
8 clarification if we submitted our APR by the due
9 date, which was February 1st. We did. We
10 submitted it on time, so we will be allowed to
11 participate in the clarification period.

12 Once that happens, we will be posting
13 our LEA public reports, which is a report of each
14 LEA and how they did related to the targets in the
15 APR, along with our full report. That's required
16 120 days from the date of submission, so if you're
17 calculating in your head from February 1st, that
18 is always by June 1st each year. That will be
19 posted on our ECATS website.

20 And then, lastly, related to this,
21 the US Office of Special Education Programs does a
22 determination for states about meeting
23 expectations, meeting requirements, needing
24 assistance, et cetera. Much of their
25 determination is based on the APR, but there are

1 also other components to it. And they have
2 indicated this time that the determinations will
3 be issued to states by June 24th, and when they
4 say "by June 24th," it will probably be issued
5 that evening of June 24th, 2021.

6 I will share with you, these dates
7 that I shared for the clarification period and the
8 determination period is the first year -- in the
9 15 years we've been doing these APRs, this is the
10 first year we've ever been informed ahead of time
11 of what those dates are. It's always been
12 sometime in April for the clarification period and
13 sometime in June or July for the determination.
14 So we're glad to know what those dates are so we
15 [inaudible].

16 I am ready for the next slide. We
17 are going to allow for some questions near the
18 end. So if you'll just jot your questions down.
19 This slide -- I did share with you at the last
20 meeting that the work -- we have a lot of work --
21 you can see several steps -- we have a lot of work
22 throughout this next year -- this current year of
23 2021 for our submission of our new package
24 February 1st, 2022, and I'm going to go over some
25 of these things more specifically.

1 But at this point, I do want to share
2 that Kelley Blas, our Part B Data Manager -- and
3 she was on the call with us but had to leave for
4 another meeting -- our Part B Data Manager will be
5 helping lead this effort along with Lauren
6 Holahan, who is our coordinator for our Indicator
7 17, the State Systemic Improvement Plan, and I've
8 been working with them, but they're working very
9 hard and coordinating all of this effort. So some
10 of these things I'll be sharing with you, they
11 will be following up with you in future months.

12 You can go ahead and move on to the
13 next slide. We're very fortunate to have both of
14 them. Some of the general requirements -- and
15 this is very important and very important to all
16 of you because you are part of our stakeholder
17 involvement. It has been expanded for this next
18 six-year package to include broader parent
19 involvement, and it's going to be required to have
20 descriptions in our APR about our activities and
21 timelines, how we're target setting, how we're
22 receiving input from stakeholders on target
23 setting, analyzing data, improvement strategies,
24 evaluating progress, and how we're going to share
25 all of that information with the public. So I'm

1 going to go into that a little bit later in this
2 presentation.

3 We also have to set new targets for
4 each of the indicators through fiscal year 2025.
5 So we will be setting -- through this process and
6 input from our stakeholders, we will be setting
7 targets for six years -- for each of the six
8 years -- setting those targets during this year to
9 submit in the next plan, even though it's a
10 one-year submission, there will be targets for six
11 years, and those targets must show improvement
12 over baseline data with some exceptions.

13 For example, participating in
14 statewide assessments, our state historically has
15 been over the 95 percent rate of participation for
16 students with disabilities in statewide
17 assessments, and 95 percent has always been our
18 ESSA target and the required -- and what the US
19 Department of Education requires you to be at.
20 And so they've allowed us to keep it at that.
21 Even though our rate has gone over that, they're
22 not going to make us set a rate of 99 or 100
23 percent.

24 But most of our targets will have to
25 be over wherever our baseline is. So you noticed

1 I indicated that Indicator 8, our parent
2 involvement, from this past year will become our
3 new baseline at 49 percent -- 49.36 percent, I
4 believe. So our ending target over the six years,
5 we can move incrementally or we can maintain that
6 target, but our ending target will -- at the end
7 of the six years will have to be more than 49.36
8 percent for that indicator. And, of course, then
9 we'll have to include in the APR the description
10 of any stakeholder input that we had.

11 And then Indicator 17, I mentioned,
12 the State Systemic Improvement Plan, has always
13 been due -- in the six years that we've been doing
14 it, it's always been due on April 1st. So it's
15 never due at the same time as the February 1st
16 date, but it is going to be tough. So we have
17 less than a year for it because this year it is
18 due April 1st, and then we have to turn around and
19 do that indicator and make sure it's ready to go
20 by February 1st of 2022 like the other indicators.

21 I'm ready to move to the next slide.
22 I am not going to go over this chart completely,
23 but it is a chart that you can revisit at your
24 will with each of the indicators and where there
25 are changes and what type of a change it is. The

1 first two columns, "No changes," "Minor
2 Changes/Clarifications," there really aren't any
3 so you don't really have to pay attention to
4 those.

5 I'm going to go over a few of the
6 indicators today that have some of the other
7 changes like a change to the age or grade group or
8 the other columns where there's a change to the
9 data or data source or where it has a new
10 component. I'm just going to briefly touch on
11 some of those.

12 So Indicators 1 and 2 -- and, again,
13 I'm going through this pretty quickly because I
14 want to get to my last slide -- there is a new
15 data source. We won't be using -- calculating
16 graduation rates and dropout rates the same -- not
17 that we can't calculate that way, but using them
18 the way we've used in the past, we have to change
19 in the new package.

20 We will be using our exit count data
21 for both of those rates. I'm not going to go into
22 what all that means right now because when you're
23 participating in the sessions that will go over
24 these indicators specifically, you will get all
25 that information, but it does mean that these two

1 indicators will have new baseline data starting
2 next year.

3 Next slide. Indicator 3a through d
4 is going to be a big [inaudible] for us because
5 for the past several years, we've only been
6 reporting for participation rates and our
7 proficiency rates for each grade level based on
8 all of our assessments combined, regular
9 assessments with and without accommodations and
10 assessments on alternate academic achievement
11 standards, so our alternate assessments.

12 There have been significant changes
13 to Indicator 3a through d. We now have four areas
14 where we're going to have to provide targets, and
15 they are changing to -- we're going to be
16 reporting not on each grade level, but grade 4, 8,
17 and our high school data. And then we're also
18 going to be reporting our data separately by those
19 students who are taking -- in each of those grade
20 levels, math and reading will be reported
21 separately and reported separately for those
22 students taking the regular assessment and then
23 those students separately who are taking the
24 alternate assessment, if you will. And I'm
25 [inaudible] about all of the language, but the

1 regular assessment separately and the alternate
2 assessment so that we can really see a little bit
3 better about how students are doing.

4 And then this last bullet talks about
5 reporting -- it will be Indicator 3d. This is a
6 brand-new indicator that we'll have to report on,
7 and it will be looking at the proficiency rate
8 gaps individually for math and then individually
9 for reading by each of those grade levels -- 4, 8,
10 and high school -- and it will be the rate of
11 children with IEPs and how they scored above -- at
12 or above proficiency on the regular assessments
13 subtracted from the rate from all students,
14 including those without disabilities, and how they
15 scored to look at what that gap is between those
16 proficiency rates. So that is a new indicator for
17 us, and again, when you participate in the
18 upcoming meetings during the year about Indicator
19 3, you'll hear more about this and see the actual
20 data.

21 I'm ready to move on. Indicators 5
22 and 6 are about least restrictive environment for
23 school-age and preschool children. This change,
24 we have been preparing for because OSEP now has us
25 report this year, for the first time, five-

1 year-old who are in kindergarten get reported with
2 school-age children. In previous years, they've
3 been included with preschool children. So now
4 preschool -- the preschool indicator will only
5 include five-year-olds who are actually in
6 preschool and not include those five-year-olds who
7 [inaudible]. So it will -- it will change our
8 data.

9 Indicators 8 and 14, which are our
10 sampling plans, there are no changes to how we're
11 calculating the data, but there will be changes to
12 what we have to report related to response rates
13 and representativeness. In other words, for
14 Indicator 8, the parents who are responding, are
15 they representative of the demographics of our
16 state; and for Indicator 14, are the students
17 representative of the demographics of our state --
18 or of our population of those students who exited.

19 The newest thing for us is the first
20 bullet. We'll have to compare our response rate
21 from this current year to the previous year.
22 We've never had to do that before. We do have
23 those rates because we report those each year, but
24 we've never had to compare them to see if we're
25 making improvements in how many people are

1 responding.

2 The other strategies to increase
3 response rates, how we analyze the extent of the
4 representativeness by -- it does indicate by 2023,
5 which we have to submit in this next plan in 2022
6 how we'll be doing this by 2023 -- about the
7 demographics must include race and ethnicity and
8 at least one other demographic like type of
9 disability the student has, gender, one or the
10 other.

11 For all of those last three bullets,
12 we have always reported in our APR. I've learned
13 that other states weren't always reporting those
14 things, but we have reported by race and
15 ethnicity, by disability category, and by gender,
16 and in Indicator 14, by type of exit, if the
17 student exited by dropping out or if they exited
18 by graduation. We've always reported by those
19 things, so we don't have a lot of additional work
20 in that area to do other than comparing the
21 response rate from one year to the next.

22 You can move on. Indicators 9 and 10
23 is our disproportionate representation for how
24 students are identified for special education and
25 then for six of our specific disability

1 categories. Because of the change of five-year-
2 olds being counted with kindergarten children,
3 they will now be included in these two indicators.
4 In the past, those two indicators only looked at
5 students the age of six through 21, and they will
6 now include only the five-year-olds in
7 kindergarten.

8 Indicator 17 is our State Systemic
9 Improvement Plan, and again, the timeline for
10 submission has moved to February 1st for the next
11 submission. So because we're submitting this
12 year's by April 1st, it gives us, for this year,
13 less than a year to work on the new requirements
14 and related [inaudible].

15 One other thing that OSEP's documents
16 that they had provided -- directions they provided
17 to states indicates is that Indicator 17 was kind
18 of phase-in where the first year, six years ago,
19 we had to do phase 1, which was an analysis of our
20 data and all of our infrastructure, and then phase
21 2 and what our plan was basically, and then phase
22 3 is the implantation and evaluation plan. Then
23 after that, each year, we had to include phase 3
24 and then any slight changes -- if we were making
25 any slight changes to anything else.

1 They have made it clear, if we're
2 making any changes or any revisions to our state-
3 identified measurable results -- for us in North
4 Carolina right now, for the last six years, that
5 has been our five-year cohort graduation rate. If
6 we just continue as is and move on and continue
7 making progress and don't want to make any changes
8 to that, we will only have to include phase 3, in
9 essence, which means if we want to make any
10 changes or revisions to that -- as an example, if
11 we wanted to stay with graduation rate but we
12 wanted to use our exit data because that's now
13 what we're going to have to use for Indicator 1
14 and we didn't want to use our five-year cohort
15 rate any longer, we would then have to go back in
16 and look at our infrastructure and all of our data
17 again or if we wanted to change [inaudible].

18 But that's something that would be
19 decided as we move through this whole year
20 process, as we look at all our data, if we have to
21 tweak our state-identified measurable results, but
22 it is a new requirement that we would have to look
23 at as part of this package.

24 On to the next slide. The
25 opportunities for stakeholder engagement and

1 feedback. This is where I wanted to share with
2 you -- because this is where you're going to be
3 very involved. We have to share each of these
4 indicators with a breakdown of the data and
5 looking at trend data and looking at where our
6 targets were and where we might want our targets
7 to be over the next six years.

8 So it's going to take quite a number of
9 meetings throughout the year to do this. So our
10 folks are setting up meetings and working behind
11 the scenes to structure opportunities for feedback
12 not only from the advisory council but from other
13 stakeholders. We have to broaden our stakeholder
14 engagement to ensure that we have diversity in our
15 stakeholder groups and to allow parents who might
16 not be part of groups to be able to give input and
17 participate, and we have to document all this.

18 So we are planning two meetings
19 starting in April, and the two meetings would be
20 repeat sessions to ensure that -- for example, we
21 might have one meeting in the morning and another
22 meeting in the late afternoon or early evening to
23 make sure that parents and other stakeholders have
24 opportunities to participate, so they would be
25 repeat sessions. So each month, you would only

1 need to participate in one of the meetings.

2 And we'll be looking at our
3 Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats -- what we call a
4 SWOT threats or challenges -- analysis about our
5 infrastructure, then our data analysis, our target
6 setting, our improvement strategies, and our
7 measures of progress, and all the things -- those
8 are those things we have to get input from, from
9 stakeholders.

10 We will be chunking our indicators
11 into groups so that you can see here, it's got a
12 plan to at least start. In our April meeting,
13 we're going to look at our SWOT analysis and
14 Indicators 1 and 2 because we have that data
15 already for Indicator 1 and 2 for the coming year
16 since it's based on our exit data.

17 In May, you're going to really focus
18 on Indicator 3 because that is a big one, and then
19 in June, they'll start with -- they'll look at
20 Indicator 5 and 6. So you can see each month,
21 we're going to be taking a different indicator or
22 some indicators to review.

23 On to the next slide. This will give
24 you time -- by doing it that way, time to really
25 digest each indicator as needed. We're going to

1 allow opportunities for stakeholder engagement by
2 providing an online feedback tool called
3 Qualtrics, and it will allow you to access the
4 data analysis/charts and graphs that are being
5 shared at these meetings, but it will also be in
6 this Qualtrics instrument for you to access.

7 So you can look at them either after
8 a meeting, or if you weren't able to participate
9 in the meeting that month but still want to
10 respond, you'll be able to respond through the
11 feedback tool without participating in the
12 meeting. Our preference is that you participate
13 in the meeting so you can hear the nuances and the
14 questions that are asked, but you will still have
15 access to all the same information.

16 And you will be providing through
17 this tool feedback on the four areas of
18 stakeholder engagement: the target setting,
19 improvement strategies, the data -- target
20 setting, data analysis, the improvements
21 strategies, and evaluating the progress. And with
22 those, there will be -- within this tool, you will
23 be provided some choices of things that are in
24 there and then also opportunities to make comments
25 if you would like to see something different than

1 what might be proposed.

2 OSEP has also asked us to we pay
3 particular attention to the diversity of our
4 engagement, and so in the survey, there are
5 demographic questions about race and ethnicity and
6 gender and whether or not you're a parent of a
7 student with a disability and what type of
8 disability your child may have. However, there is
9 nothing in the survey that will track a survey to
10 you so that these surveys are done anonymously.
11 We'll be then looking for representativeness, if
12 you will, from all of the input we receive as to
13 how it compares to our students with disabilities
14 population. Is it representative, in other words,
15 of female to male students, as an example.

16 With that, I'm just going to do a
17 summary of the next steps. The EC Division with
18 the lead of Kelley Blas and Lauren Holahan are
19 finalizing a plan that includes the activities,
20 rules, and timelines for us to submit the six-year
21 plan February 1st of 2022. They are preparing the
22 schedule for meetings with stakeholder groups, and
23 while I don't have the specific dates to give you,
24 know that a meeting is coming up in April, and
25 they're going to be first looking at the SWOT and

1 Indicators 1 and 2.

2 And at that time, they will also be
3 sharing the Qualtrics tool that folks will have an
4 opportunity to give their feedback on, and each
5 tool -- they will do the tool each month because
6 the tool will be specific to the indicators in
7 that month.

8 They are looking at the timelines for
9 presenting the indicator data. They have some of
10 that fleshed out for the first few months, and
11 they will be working through the remaining months,
12 receiving the feedback that we need to receive on
13 these four areas. So you as council members will
14 be receiving an invitation to the initial
15 stakeholder meeting opportunity to be held in
16 April and then all of the future meetings that
17 will be held each month, and we truly value your
18 input and hope that you will be able to
19 participate in those meetings.

20 All meetings right now, as you know,
21 are being held virtual, so that meeting will be
22 virtual. And we do hope you're able to
23 participate in one of the two meetings, because
24 they will be repeat sessions each month, but if
25 you're not, then, you will get access to the

1 Qualtrics tool so you can read the data. And I
2 know Lauren and Kelley will both be happy to take
3 any of your questions. We have a lot of staff who
4 are supporting them and working with them.

5 And I am -- I will close -- I think
6 I've tried to scoot through this quickly. I will
7 close and allow questions, but I am sharing this
8 with you this way by saying they will be leading
9 this, they will be doing this as if I'm removed
10 from it because I am. I do want to say that
11 before we open this up for questions -- I didn't
12 think I was going to get emotional -- it's been an
13 honor to work with all of you. I am -- my final
14 day is March 31st. I am retiring as of April 1st.

15 So you are in great hands with Kelley
16 and Lauren, and I want to thank each of you for
17 being wonderful to work with over all these years.
18 I have really enjoyed my work with the advisory
19 council each year. I apologize for getting
20 emotional. I did not mean to. But the work will
21 continue and you're in great hands. So now I'm
22 going to stop there, and I think I might have a
23 few minutes for questions if there are any.

24 MR. POTTER: First of all---

25 DR. JOHNSON: I have to say -- I did

1 get emotional. I have to say that this is the
2 first actual meeting that I've actually announced
3 that I am retiring -- I mean our staff knows, but
4 where I've actually had to indicate that I am
5 retiring, and I think that's why I got so
6 emotional. Thank you.

7 MR. POTTER: First of all, never
8 apologize for being emotional in situations like
9 that. This is -- this is extremely rewarding
10 work, but it's also extremely hard work. And, you
11 know, I turned 34 in January, but I've been at
12 this, on some level, since I was about 16 years
13 old. So, you know, even though I'm, quote,
14 unquote, "only" 34, if you really think about it,
15 I've been at this job, on some level, for the
16 better part of 20 years, and so, you know,
17 sometimes I feel like a grizzled veteran as it
18 were.

19 And there are days that I wish that I
20 could retire early, but I know I can't. I know
21 that when that day comes, whenever it is, I'll
22 most certainly be more emotionally gripped than
23 you were in that moment, so don't apologize for
24 that.

25 But my question is -- now you have to

1 forgive me because a lot of the data, I'll be the
2 first person to admit -- I'm relatively new to
3 this appointment and everything, so a lot of the
4 data kind of went over my head a little bit or a
5 lot a bit, depending on, you know, what the data
6 was. And it's not down to your explanation; it's
7 just down to the fact that the number of acronyms
8 and numbers that I've learned has melted my brain
9 pretty much, and so hearing more of those is very
10 confusing.

11 But a very general question, given
12 the fact that you're getting ready to sort of pass
13 the torch of sorts, I would like -- if you'd be
14 willing to share, I would like some general
15 insights from you as far as one thing that you
16 think is on a very, very good trajectory and one
17 thing that you would really like to see improve on
18 a specific front for you as a personal individual
19 since you're getting ready to retire.

20 And I feel like you've had to speak
21 as a representative for something, so I want to
22 give you an opportunity to speak as yourself in
23 answering this question if you'd be willing and/or
24 interested and/or willing to do so. Thanks.

25 DR. JOHNSON: Thank you very much.

1 Yes. And, again, I would encourage you, first of
2 all, to -- as many of the monthly meetings that
3 are coming up related to your APR -- to
4 participate in those meetings if you can because
5 the data for at least each of our indicators will
6 be shared and shared pretty in depth, and you will
7 have a better understanding of that whole
8 [inaudible] and what each one of those indicators
9 looks at and how the data is calculated for how we
10 set targets, that kind of thing.

11 And I would say -- and I have worked
12 for many years -- since the time I was in high
13 school, I started working with students with
14 disabilities and had a child myself who had a
15 disability who is deceased. From all of my
16 work -- and I guess I'm a little bit emotional
17 because I love my work. I love what we do. I
18 love the collaboration with everyone. I love not
19 only the interaction, I just love the passion and
20 the caring and the quality.

21 I have worked in two states, North
22 Carolina for almost 30 years, but I was the State
23 Director of Special Ed in West Virginia and did my
24 teaching experience and things like that in West
25 Virginia. But I will say, from working in my

1 years in North Carolina, which is where I'm
2 retiring from, the level of compassion and passion
3 and work and expectations for students with
4 disabilities and parent involvement and
5 stakeholder involvement has been phenomenal from
6 my perspective. And we get recognized for that a
7 lot nationally, and people may not always realize
8 that, but when we're in meetings.

9 And just the caliber and expertise of
10 staff that we have not only in our Division and
11 our Department, but out in the field in our local
12 special ed directors and teachers and parents --
13 parents who are passionate and give us input and
14 help us understand what their children's needs
15 are. So all of that collaboration and work, and I
16 know we have high expectations.

17 I would say this year has been --
18 certainly, as we all know, a very challenging year
19 related to COVID, but we've also learned some
20 things that we can use to move forward in terms of
21 partnerships with parents and that kind of thing.
22 My biggest concern, if I just say it based on
23 looking at our data, is the alignment of our
24 academic proficiency for students with
25 disabilities. Our data, in some instance, is

1 still very low in that area, and I know that our
2 students can -- we can have and should have high
3 expectations for what they can learn and how they
4 can move forward, and our APR does address that.

5 We are doing a lot of state -- things
6 in our state related to high-leverage practices
7 and our LEA self-assessment, where districts are
8 digging down into their data to tell us what their
9 challenges are and where they need to focus their
10 efforts to improve, to ensure that when students
11 are graduating from high school, they are
12 graduating with the knowledge and experience and
13 skills that they need to go on and be productive
14 in society.

15 So I guess I would -- from my
16 perspective, I would like to see us really
17 focus -- and you'll see when you attend the
18 meetings -- particularly when they look at
19 Indicator 3, you'll be able to see some of the
20 data that I'm referring to where our students
21 don't always perform as well on academic
22 assessments.

23 And maybe part of that is that we
24 need to think about -- we can't for the APR, but
25 we might be able to in other things that we do --

1 look more at growth of students in their academic
2 performance. So that's just something that I
3 would -- I would like to focus more on, if it were
4 me. I'm not sure I answered your question
5 exactly, but---

6 MR. POTTER: You did. Thank you very
7 much. I appreciate it. And thank you. Thank you
8 for your service.

9 DR. JOHNSON: Thank you.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: So any other
11 questions for Nancy?

12 MS. UTZ: Nancy, just to say, I don't
13 know if you saw the chat box, but you did get some
14 congratulations and well deserved and enjoy your
15 retirement and the next chapter.

16 DR. JOHNSON: Thank you-all very
17 much. Again, it is bittersweet because I've
18 enjoyed all the work that I have done, and I've
19 always enjoyed coming and being with the advisory
20 council members. And so sorry that we can't do it
21 in person. I was used to meeting with you-all in
22 person over the years. But please continue all
23 the great work that you're doing. My heart will
24 be with you. I'm excited about retirement, but
25 I'm also a little bit sorry about having to leave,

1 but it is time. So thank you very much.

2 And continue -- you're in great hands
3 with Lauren and Kelley. They've been working --
4 we've all been working together for several years
5 with this data and with this report and those
6 kinds of things. Kelley Blas will be the go-to
7 person for a lot of the things that I've done with
8 the APR and significant disproportionality, and
9 she's been our data manager for 13 or 14 years.
10 So she's worked with all of this data a lot and is
11 very knowledgeable.

12 Again, my best to all of you. Thank
13 you.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you so much,
15 Nancy. On behalf of the entire Council, we'd like
16 to thank you and say we so appreciated over the
17 years all the extra work that you've done on
18 behalf of our students and our children with
19 disabilities. Thank you.

20 DR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Cynthia.

21 MS. UTZ: All right. And, Cynthia,
22 it looks like the next part is Matt and Sherry,
23 and they're not on yet. So I propose that we take
24 a break so we can get drinks and a potty break and
25 then wait for them to log in.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.
2 So we're on break. How long are we on break for,
3 Alexis?

4 MS. UTZ: They should be here by
5 11:15, so at least the next five minutes, but I
6 mean we can [inaudible].

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

8 MS. UTZ: All right. We'll see you
9 then.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

11 **(A brief recess was taken from 11:09**
12 **a.m. to 11:18 a.m.)**

13 MS. UTZ: All right, Matt. So
14 nothing like throwing you right into it, but we
15 are ready to go whenever you are, Matt.

16 MR. HOSKINS: I am ready. Is it
17 possible that I can share my screen, Alexis?

18 MS. UTZ: Yes. I will make you a
19 presenter.

20 MR. HOSKINS: And good morning,
21 everyone. I'm super excited to have the
22 opportunity to talk through the school mental
23 health initiative work this morning. Also excited
24 because just this week -- or it was actually late
25 last week -- Healthy Schools has put up a new

1 website specifically devoted to the school mental
2 health policy and components of it and the
3 supports that we have for schools and
4 stakeholders. So I'm excited to be able to share
5 that with you-all this afternoon.

6 So give me just a second and I will
7 begin sharing my screen. Alexis, in this kind of
8 webinar format, where is the share screen button?

9 MS. UTZ: Good question. For me, it
10 was always front and center. Do you have the menu
11 bar at the top where it says "Share"?

12 MR. HOSKINS: I don't. The other
13 option is I can also just put the link in the
14 chat.

15 MS. UTZ: I mean either one. It
16 doesn't matter. You do have presenter rights. I
17 don't know what your screen looks like.

18 MR. HOSKINS: Here we go. Are you
19 able to see my screen now?

20 MS. UTZ: Yes.

21 MR. HOSKINS: Sorry for that delay.
22 I wanted to talk through the school mental health
23 policy. As many of you-all probably know, this
24 has been longstanding work really beginning in
25 about 2014 with a group of stakeholders that were

1 not only at DPI but across state agencies, parent
2 advocacy groups, attorneys, local mental health
3 providers, IHE members, really a wide faction of
4 individuals who were concerned about -- access
5 was -- the biggest kind of cause that the group
6 was working on was access to high-quality mental
7 health resources.

8 And what we saw from the research was
9 really that in terms of accessibility that school
10 was one of the best places for kids to be able to
11 access services, and that came not only from what
12 we saw in the national research, but also around
13 that time, we also did what we refer to as an
14 environmental scan, where we had about a little
15 over 3000 respondents describing their experiences
16 with mental health systems across the state, and
17 those respondents varied from school staff to
18 community providers as well as parents.

19 And what we saw was there was a lot
20 of barriers and gaps in the course of mental
21 health services across the state in terms of
22 either making it to appointments within the
23 community, having people in the community that can
24 provide those services, and then also integration
25 with other school services that were going on.

1 So that was really the intent, at
2 that point in time, was to create what this group
3 referred to as a continuum of mental health
4 services which really included, at the core
5 universal level, social-emotional learning,
6 resiliency strategies, coping strategies, knowing
7 that prevention is possible for mental health
8 outcomes, and focusing that they're ensuring that
9 all kids have at least a universal access to that.

10 As well as when you see that there
11 are concerns that can be addressed within the
12 realm of the school with our -- especially our
13 instruction support personnel -- so school
14 psychologists, school nurses, school counselors,
15 school social workers -- that we ensured that we
16 could identify who those students were and quickly
17 be able to get them the services that were needed.

18 And then just as importantly, making
19 sure that we had more [inaudible] systems between
20 the school and community providers through
21 formalized memorandums of understanding. So if a
22 student was exhibiting a need that exceeded the
23 capacity of the school to meet a mental health
24 need, they were able to make a quick referral, and
25 not only that, have stronger communication with

1 that community provider, ensuring that the needs
2 of the student would be met both at home and
3 within the school as well.

4 So if you go to our North Carolina
5 Department of Public Instruction -- our website
6 and just type in "North Carolina Healthy Schools,"
7 they have their own web page and it will be the
8 first thing that comes up. And there, we also
9 have a link to all the school-based mental health
10 policy components.

11 So this was actually borne out of
12 some session law that happened in June of 2020
13 that required the North Carolina Department of
14 Public Instruction to develop a school-based
15 mental health policy. That policy was then
16 developed or adopted by the State Board in
17 November of 2020, and I'm just going to speak
18 briefly to the summary of the major components of
19 that. You can read on in the policy in terms of
20 more of the details about it.

21 But, basically, what this plan
22 requires is that we must address, as I said
23 previously, a continuum of mental health and
24 social-emotional supports, which includes
25 universal promotion of mental and social-emotional

1 wellness and prevention through core instruction,
2 curriculum, and environment, and that also
3 includes a mental health training program that
4 all -- what is defined in the statute as staff who
5 work directly with children -- must have access
6 to.

7 So I'll talk in just a little bit
8 about what trainings we have made available for
9 folks across the state. It also includes early
10 intervention as part of that intervention system,
11 and that referral, treatment, and reentry is
12 required, that those connections are made with
13 local providers.

14 In addition to that, it also requires
15 that each LEA has a formalized suicide risk
16 referral protocol that's in place and that there
17 is training involved with that, that there are
18 guidelines for students who may be at risk of
19 suicide, and once a risk is established, that
20 there are procedures and referral sources in place
21 to address that.

22 The rest of the policy really goes
23 into a lot deeper dive into each of those three
24 areas that are required, but I wanted to go down
25 here to share that, again, this does require a

1 memorandum of understanding that LEAs must have
2 with their local LMEs or managed care providers,
3 so these are the folks within their region that
4 are the administrators of community-based mental
5 health.

6 That there is suicide risk referral
7 protocol that I had spoke to just a minute ago and
8 then also stakeholder engagement, and that as each
9 LEA or PSU develops their own plan for engagement,
10 that they have to include relevant stakeholders in
11 the development of that plan, which includes
12 families, students, and community providers and
13 cross-system partners.

14 So the timeline for that is that this
15 is going to be implemented over this current
16 school year, and by July 1st of 2021, that each
17 LEA must adopt -- I'm going to make this just a
18 little bigger too -- adopt a plan that they're
19 going to use for promoting student mental health
20 and well-being, begin implementation of that plan,
21 and then also begin the training of staff.

22 The rest of this really discusses the
23 requirements of DPI to be able to support the
24 implementation of this plan. We were required
25 to development training programs that are free and

1 available to all LEAs across the state that focus
2 on youth mental health, suicide prevention,
3 substance use, teenage dating violence, child
4 sexual abuse and prevention, and sex trafficking
5 prevention.

6 There's also some reporting features
7 that we have in here. Again, the target audience
8 are those who work directly with students and the
9 different modes in which that training can be
10 provided, and we do have a wide range of
11 modalities in which those trainings can occur from
12 face-to-face, in-depth, ongoing coaching to
13 virtual training for things more like around
14 school mental health awareness.

15 And so I also just wanted to bring to
16 your attention on the website as well that we have
17 models with a lot of the different things that are
18 required of the policy on this particular website.
19 So we discussed specifically what their local plan
20 components must be, and then for each of the
21 components of those plans, we tried to provide
22 them with resources that they can use in the
23 development and implementation of that plan.

24 And also have some examples of MOAs
25 and MOUs that have been used across the state with

1 local -- that LEAs have had with their local MCOs
2 and LMEs. So there's just some examples of what
3 some of that looks like and also sample MOAs and
4 MOUs for things like day treatment and other
5 entities that may be occurring within the district
6 as well. We have samples for the suicide risk
7 referral protocol.

8 And there will also be some reporting
9 that is required by September 15th of each year
10 that they provide us information about the plan
11 that they're implementing, the number of students
12 that are being impacted. With that, we've given
13 them some resources to some data sources that they
14 can share with us during that reporting
15 [inaudible] also with that reporting including
16 that in some other reporting that LEAs are
17 required to submit through Healthy Schools on an
18 annual basis so that they're submitting all of
19 that reporting at one time.

20 So we are super excited that we have
21 the strength of a statute and now policy and now
22 these resources that have really been a
23 collaboration not only at DPI but also with DHHS
24 and their Division of Mental Health and community
25 providers across the state, that we're hopeful

1 that this will be one step in beginning to
2 minimize some of the gaps that we see with mental
3 health for students.

4 So I know I've said a lot in a brief
5 period of time, but I'd love to answer any
6 questions or talk through any thoughts or concerns
7 that folks have about the statute, the policy,
8 DPI's response, anything that I can -- anything
9 that I can help with.

10 MS. DEGEN: Hey, Matt. This is
11 Jennifer Degen. I'm from Charlotte-Mecklenburg
12 Schools. I have just a question. You know,
13 obviously, mental health has been a huge issue
14 this year. I mean I've had almost -- I think nine
15 in and out of, you know, treatment facilities this
16 year.

17 I feel like our school-based team --
18 and my husband works for CMS and lots of friends,
19 so I know in multiple schools, especially at the
20 high school level, our teams are strong with the
21 school-based mental health using, you know, our
22 psychologists and support staff in mental health.

23 I think where the breakdown is, is
24 once they go into a treatment facility, the
25 feedback to the schools is very difficult. So

1 we're having difficulty getting any records,
2 understanding what we're supposed to do. You
3 know, we've brought students back to full-time
4 learning that are having mental health issues, but
5 there's just that breakdown.

6 And I didn't know if any of this --
7 is there going to be some support between the two
8 or with the requirements of -- you know, I don't
9 know if that's something that's totally different.
10 It's just the school-based teams are doing a great
11 job, but then there's a breakdown of when the kids
12 are referred and how we're supposed to help them
13 at the school level, if that makes sense.

14 MR. HOSKINS: It does, and you know,
15 making sure that -- one is that, you know, schools
16 and community-based mental health providers work
17 in slightly different -- different models and have
18 different outcomes and expectations at some point,
19 and so that's really where the requirements for
20 the MOUs that have come into place.

21 I can also say that we are working
22 with a couple of sites pretty in-depth on
23 developing partnerships with local community
24 providers to really make a determination of what
25 is the role of those facts and how can we better

1 support them, to understand what the needs of the
2 school are, and the teams that are providing those
3 supports within the school and the need for, you
4 know, community providers to be in frequent
5 communication with the teachers or IEP teams or
6 problem-solving teams.

7 And so those are the types of things
8 that are captured in those MOUs. There are also
9 things that through the North Carolina School
10 Mental Health Initiative, we have some regional
11 networks that -- we're really fortunate to have
12 representatives from the MCOs on quite a few of
13 those that were able to just provide some thoughts
14 in terms of what the needs of the school are and
15 how we can better collaborate there.

16 So I do think that we have two
17 different systems that both have similar goals,
18 but they work in very different ways, and then
19 trying to bridge those gaps is definitely, I
20 think, a part of both the statute and this policy
21 and then the plans that schools are developing or
22 districts are developing.

23 MS. DEGEN: Awesome. Thank you.

24 MR. HOSKINS: Yeah.

25 MS. UTZ: Okay. Matt, Terri has a

1 question. I unmuted you, Terri, so you can ask
2 it.

3 MS. LEYTON: Okay. Great. Thank
4 you. Thank you, Matt. My question is less about
5 the plan going forward and more about this year
6 and how the State is supporting students' mental
7 health, as we're seeing information about
8 particularly middle and high school students being
9 really impacted -- their mental health by remote
10 and hybrid learning.

11 How is the State supporting LEAs and
12 even at the individual school level for the
13 students this year?

14 MR. HOSKINS: Yeah, that's a great
15 question and something that we anticipated early
16 on even before there were data about the impact
17 that remote learning would have on students, and
18 what we're seeing -- the data that are coming back
19 are pretty clear that we're seeing higher
20 incidents of depression and anxiety and then also
21 just some underreporting of some things, that a
22 lot of times things get found out at school that
23 aren't happening when students are away from
24 school.

25 So we've done a couple of things

1 around that. We have a Social-Emotional State
2 Team that has developed a number of strategies for
3 how to support kids not only during remote
4 learning but also now during the reentry process.
5 We've been fortunate to fund some of that through
6 one of the -- a grant that we have through the
7 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services agency.

8 But we're really trying to develop
9 the best practice for reentry. From that, we've
10 also developed a website and what we are referring
11 to as practice guide -- and I can put that link in
12 the chat in just a minute -- that basically looked
13 at all of the evidence-based practices that we
14 know in the terms of meeting students' mental
15 health needs in the circumstances that we're in
16 right now, and we got this in partnership with
17 Rockingham County Schools, Cleveland County
18 Schools, and Guilford County Schools based on some
19 work that they were doing that provides,
20 basically, some protocols on how can we check in
21 on students and ensure that we're meeting their
22 mental health needs on a regular basis; what do we
23 do when we have concerns that come up; what are
24 our next steps for that; and then also during
25 reentry, what are some things we need to do at a

1 school level to understand that this has really
2 been a collective trauma for all of us, and what
3 do we need to do to address that even virtually
4 across -- with all kids to help process through
5 that.

6 Those are some resources that we sent
7 out to the schools and had a number of different
8 webinars and trainings on that with some of the
9 districts who wanted to work more intensely with
10 the state SEL Team, Social-Emotional Learning
11 Team. I think we have 14 or 15 districts right
12 now, but that's really something that we're
13 continuing to learn from and trying to scale up.

14 MS. LEYTON: Great. Thank you.

15 MR. HOSKINS: Uh-huh. And if the
16 Council ever has any questions around
17 social-emotional learning or mental health, don't
18 ever hesitate to reach out. I'm always happy to
19 have conversations about it, get stakeholder
20 input. It's incredibly important to the work that
21 we do around this.

22 MS. UTZ: All right. I'm not seeing
23 any more questions in the chat box for you.

24 MR. HOSKINS: Okay.

25 MS. THOMAS: Thank you, Matt. And hi

1 to all the council members. It's good to be able
2 to meet with you today, and one day soon, we're
3 going to all be back face-to-face. So that's
4 exciting news, as we are making, it sounds like,
5 really good progress in the state of North
6 Carolina not only in containing but continuing to
7 wear masks and continuing to do those metric-
8 reducing items like washing hands and social
9 distancing.

10 And I think there was just an
11 announcement about there's been an agreement
12 reached between the Governor and the General
13 Assembly on the bill to return back to school
14 fully, so I think we're making good progress. I
15 have no details on that because I was on this
16 call, but I got a feed on phone. So I'll be
17 curious to see how they settled. I think it was
18 around the social distancing and making sure our
19 high school kids were safe. So that was the issue
20 that was controversial between the two entities.

21 So I'm going to spend just a few
22 minutes today -- one of the asks that you had was
23 to talk about the state -- the SEA, or the state
24 education agency, complaint that was a systemic
25 statewide complaint for all of our LEAs to respond

1 to with corrective action.

2 Alexis, I'm seeing your agenda and
3 not the PowerPoint. There we go. We actually
4 presented to the State Board because there had to
5 be a policy change per our corrective action
6 order, and so I thought it would be just
7 beneficial to talk through that presentation
8 because that really has a lot of the information
9 in it around the state complaint.

10 So if you don't mind moving that
11 forward, Alexis, and thank you for running this.

12 MS. UTZ: Hang on. I'm trying.

13 MS. THOMAS: I know. I know. Okay.
14 So we had to go to the State Board to request that
15 we make a policy change because, even though we
16 have about 90 percent alignment of our policies
17 governing services for children with disabilities,
18 exactly as the language from IDEA is stated, there
19 are also places where we have some leeway from the
20 federal regs where we can make adjustments.

21 One example is that North Carolina
22 had a 90-day timeline. When the regs came out
23 requiring a 60-day timeline from referral to
24 replacement, we could stay with our 90-day
25 timeline because we had encompassed everything in

1 that. It's referral to identification of
2 placement to services, and so that's one place
3 North Carolina differs.

4 Our developmentally delayed, for
5 example, categories -- that goes up to eight or
6 until the student is enrolled in the third grade.
7 Federally, the Register says age nine, but it also
8 gives us the flexibility to use age eight. So
9 those are just a couple of examples of where we
10 vary. But pretty much our language is pretty
11 tight with the federal regs. And so what we did
12 as part of one of these corrective action items
13 was to actually go back to the exact language at
14 34 CFR 300 that was around Child Find.

15 And so next slide. So there was a
16 state complaint that was filed by the Literacy
17 Moms, and that's the entity they are using, so I'm
18 not using that in an off -- response term. That's
19 a term they have aligned themselves to. When they
20 file state complaints, they are filing them as the
21 Literacy Moms NC.

22 And so they filed a complaint around
23 Child Find procedures and, in particular, students
24 who may have stayed in tiers of intervention for
25 too long and not been moved forward by the IEP

1 team to determine whether or not there was a true
2 disability there rather than an intervention, so
3 kids that had been stalled in the intervention
4 process.

5 Another piece of the complaint
6 referenced parents not being aware that at any
7 time in the intervention process, they could make
8 a referral and that a referral can be made
9 anytime. They cited an example at a district at a
10 school level where the school required only the
11 MTSS Team to make referrals at Tier 3, and that's
12 not at all what the law says. There should be
13 parent referral at any time.

14 And so because we saw this as a
15 potential risk, we treated this as a typographical
16 error, meaning we didn't have to go back to rules
17 and get the policy change approved for a lengthy
18 process because what we've done is just recaptured
19 exactly what it says in IDEA and the Federal
20 Register.

21 And this is really critical because
22 our SLD policy change took effect July 1, and we
23 want to make sure we are not having children who
24 are being delayed their due process, and a lot of
25 this we can monitor through our compliance

1 monitoring, but the MTSS side isn't under special
2 ed. It is under general ed, it's all ed, it's a
3 whole school improvement model.

4 And, Alexis, I don't know if it's my
5 screen or yours, but I'm seeing some really funny
6 stuff all of a sudden. There you go. That's
7 better. That's fine.

8 So here was the change we requested
9 with the State Board. The federal regs you'll see
10 on the screen on the left side, and the part
11 that's highlighted is the part that we asked to
12 insert into our policy, so to strike-through what
13 we had "Following a referral from school personnel
14 or a parent, if additional data is sought for
15 determining a child's eligibility, parental
16 consent must be obtained and the public agency,"
17 blah, blah, blah. It went on.

18 That was not clean and that was not
19 clear. That had been kind of a combo of two
20 pieces of regulation. So we've gone back to just
21 following IDEA completely, and you'll see that the
22 right side from the red down matches the left
23 side, and it's our new policy, then, which really
24 talks about a parent can request a referral at any
25 time.

1 We had to do some training on that
2 phrase because a referral means you must be
3 considered for a referral. It does not mean
4 testing has to immediately happen. And so we had
5 some panic out in the field that that means every
6 child we now are testing and we're behind and we
7 can't catch up because of COVID and now we've got
8 more referrals.

9 And that is not at all what the law
10 says. The law says you must consider a referral.
11 The IEP Team must make that consideration, but
12 that is not an automatic referral that means the
13 child's parent provides immediate permission and
14 the child immediately gets a thorough evaluation.

15 Next slide. So the state complaint
16 did list any particular children in that state
17 complaint, and the state complaint number is
18 20-043, I believe. I hope I got that number
19 right. But it said there are children who may
20 have been impacted. So no children were
21 specifically identified in this state complaint
22 that the SEA, the state agency, found against
23 itself as being out of compliance and, therefore,
24 requiring corrective action.

25 There have been other state

1 complaints that have been filed with particular
2 children identified. There has been a finding of
3 noncompliance in those other complaints, and that
4 happened before this state complaint and it has
5 happened after this state complaint. In those
6 cases, there has been corrective action ordered
7 and, in some cases, above and beyond what has been
8 ordered for the statewide corrective action.

9 But one of those corrective actions
10 was to go in and look at all those students who
11 may have been, for an extended period of time, in
12 a tiered intervention without making progress, and
13 that's the key. Because a student could be in an
14 intervention for two years or three years and
15 making progress to the point they don't need
16 special education if that gap is closing and they
17 are making good progress and they're getting the
18 intervention that is needed to catch them up in
19 whatever area -- academic area or behavioral area
20 they're struggling in.

21 But when kids aren't making good
22 progress, aren't making progressive aims toward
23 closing that gap, then we shouldn't be letting
24 those students continue at an intervention phase
25 without the consideration of the need for special

1 ed. So that corrective action is already in place
2 in the state complaint where districts have to go
3 through all the students that have been in that
4 tiered intervention, and they have to meet to
5 evaluate whether that is a child that needs to be
6 referred and whether they've held up that referral
7 with that intervention process.

8 And then we've had the Child Find
9 procedures posted, written. Districts know the
10 rules. They have to do Child Find every year.
11 They get documents and information and pamphlets
12 to do that. They have to post that at their
13 schools. We have to post it on our website. And,
14 you know, there's still going to be gaps. We're
15 going to still have some folks who don't push that
16 at the level it needs to be, for whatever reason.
17 That's not a judgment. That's just -- that's just
18 the way things are.

19 If we -- if our school systems with
20 all the rules and regulations functioned at a
21 hundred percent, there would be no need for us,
22 for monitoring, for our general supervision. So
23 we know that just based on human error that we're
24 going to have gaps, but our goal is to catch those
25 gaps and close those as quickly as possibly and

1 train and inform and educate so that a school or a
2 district doesn't continue to repeat that bad
3 practice.

4 So, again, while there have been kids
5 that were identified that were caught up in that
6 loop, that corrective action has addressed those
7 students. This state complaint just didn't
8 address particular students because there were no
9 students named in this particular state complaint.

10 Next slide. So we have done some
11 very extensive work with our corrective action
12 plan. Carol Ann Hudgens has led this work. She
13 has been the point person for the corrective
14 action. We've started with webinars, and we had
15 two webinars where each district -- we had two
16 different webinars -- the same webinar but offered
17 two different times -- where every public school
18 unit or every LEA, every charter, every lab
19 school, every public school, and the IFC school --
20 every school entity of the public schools of North
21 Carolina were requested to be at one of those two
22 webinars.

23 I think we have about ten districts
24 that we cannot confirm someone from their district
25 attended, and so we have reached out to them

1 because we'll either provide them the training
2 that was captured with a script that they can go
3 through and then confirm that they've done it, or
4 we'll schedule a third training to provide it to
5 that last small group of folks.

6 What we're thinking is the people
7 registered but didn't either log in the correct
8 school or didn't make that clear. They just put
9 in a county name, which sometimes with a charter
10 school. So we just need to make sure we have a
11 clear understanding of who did not attend.

12 We have provided a ton of materials
13 and tools for the districts to then go back and
14 train staff. So we've provided training videos.
15 We've provided scripts with those training videos.
16 We've provided checklists. We provided sign-off
17 sheets. We've provided a draft letter to parents
18 notifying them that their child is being moved
19 into an intervention process and what that looks
20 like and what's the data behind that.

21 There's a requirement for a lot more
22 formal documentation that we can go check off and
23 ensure that it has been done because another piece
24 of the complaint was about the communication with
25 parents, that parents didn't know when a child had

1 been moved into a tiered level of intervention in
2 some places.

3 I am not going to say that is
4 statewide because we have some districts who are
5 doing an incredible job with the communication
6 piece with parents with their intervention
7 process, with keeping kids from being
8 misidentified as having a disability when what
9 they need is solid intervention to get them caught
10 up and move on. So it is not a broken system, but
11 it is -- there are places where it is not
12 following all best practices. And so that's what
13 this state complaint is working on, is to try to
14 level that out and get everybody into a best
15 practice mode.

16 I'm trying to think of some other
17 things. We've created Google Docs where they can
18 go in and have access to all this. We have done
19 updates over several weeks, and then we held
20 office hours for people to join the call, ask
21 questions, problem solve. Those went through
22 February. We've got another one scheduled about
23 mid March to kind of do a checkpoint.

24 We provided a timeline for when all
25 of this must be completed, and we had set one

1 early timeline in early March. That was before
2 the Governor and Secretary Cohen came out three
3 weeks ago now and said we want you to start
4 working on getting all kids back to school at
5 least the elementary level.

6 So we've given LEAs a little
7 breathing room with that timeline of March about
8 who they have to train and when they have to
9 train. We've given them a little wiggle room.
10 It's still well within our timeline. In a state
11 complaint, you have one year to complete your
12 corrective action. The finding for the state
13 complaint was issued in November, and our plan is
14 to close the state complaint by the end of June.

15 So we have shortened our own timeline
16 to get this work done because it's critical that
17 we don't let this carry on and we don't fix those
18 bad practices that might be out there as quickly
19 as possible. So our goal is, by the end of this
20 school year, this will be done. People will be
21 back on track, documentation will be better in
22 place so parent communication is better in place,
23 and we've got a cleaner system moving forward.

24 Next slide. I got ahead of myself,
25 but this is just, again, a summary of some of the

1 things we've done to support this corrective
2 action. So we didn't ask districts or LEAs to go
3 back and create their plan. We created the plan.
4 We provided the materials, we provided the
5 information. They just had to then implement that
6 at the local level so that statewide everyone is
7 getting the same information, the same training,
8 the same communication.

9 We have looped in superintendents,
10 chief academic officers, MTSS coordinators, our
11 regional case managers as well as our EC
12 directors, our division, and the Integrated
13 Academic and Behavior System Team that does the
14 MTSS work. So it has been a total collaborative
15 effort between those two groups, EC and MTSS. The
16 MTSS folks have been a part of our office hours.
17 We have participated in their regional MTSS
18 meetings, and we are being very clear and
19 intentional on the same message.

20 And so going back to the State Board
21 last week, what we asked for was this technical
22 change to make this change with the policy. They
23 did approve that. We will be going back to clean
24 up the rest of our policies because there is a new
25 rulemaking piece in place now where every time we

1 make a policy in State Board, it has to go back to
2 this overall, state-level rules authority for
3 approval.

4 And so since so much of our guidance
5 already in our policies governing services for
6 children with disabilities is a repeat of the
7 federal regs, we're going to try to go in and
8 do -- just to separate out what is specific to
9 North Carolina and get that through rulemaking to
10 get us kind of back on track with that group.
11 It's not duplicating the policy word for word when
12 we're just going to cite the policy to begin with.

13 Next slide, Alexis. And so we are
14 working now -- these are our next steps. They did
15 approve the policy. We are working to get that
16 policy change updated on the website, and we are
17 also working to -- to try and get our new policy
18 manual back in line so we can get -- people are
19 needing new policy manuals. So we've got to get
20 this inserted and get it up on the website so
21 people can download that.

22 When we are ready to take that full
23 policy of whatever we're doing with the Rules
24 Commission, that will certainly come before you
25 for your input and for your feedback.

1 And I think that's everything I had
2 on that, Alexis. If there are any questions, I'll
3 be happy to take those now.

4 MS. UTZ: There is nothing in the
5 chat box so far.

6 MS. THOMAS: Okay. Great. Then,
7 I'll move on to the strategic plan, and I am happy
8 to say this is the final version of the strategic
9 plan for the Exceptional Children Division. Some
10 of you did use the opportunity to provide us
11 feedback when we asked for that from all of our
12 stakeholder groups, and I greatly appreciate that.

13 And, in particular, one item that
14 came from a council member -- and it was all
15 anonymous, but if you are on this call and you're
16 the person that did this, I want to personally
17 thank you because we try to make sure we don't use
18 acronyms. But what we've found is that we still
19 use terms or titles -- on this page you're looking
20 at, for example, where it says, "coaching
21 continuum," that we don't necessarily explain as
22 we've used it here. So people reading this may
23 not know what the context is.

24 And so one of the things from your
25 feedback we did was -- and we'll get to it in a

1 minute, but we created a glossary at the end where
2 we have explained the terms, the titles, the
3 courses, anything that we thought a user not
4 deeply embedded in special ed or a reader not
5 deeply embedded in special ed would wonder what
6 that was, and there's a really cute little tool.

7 Alexis, can you hover over where it
8 says "coaching continuum" and click on that? So
9 we have this--- It went away. Try it again.
10 There's a link that's been connected so that when
11 you hover over a term that we've defined, the
12 definition pops up for you. There you go. So
13 it's going to give the reader context as they go
14 through, and then at the end, there is the full
15 glossary.

16 So I provided this to Alexis to share
17 with you. I shared this with our State Board.
18 And I apologize. I need to take two seconds. If
19 you'll give me seconds.

20 MS. UTZ: Sure. And as Sherry is
21 doing that, we do have a number that just joined
22 us that is not on the Council. Laura, I see
23 you're logged in. Are you here for public
24 comment?

25 **(No audible response.)**

1 MS. UTZ: Laura, can you hear us?

2 (No audible response.)

3 MS. UTZ: All right. Well, we'll try
4 again in a little bit.

5 MS. THOMAS: I'm back. Can you hear
6 me?

7 MS. UTZ: Yep. Go ahead.

8 MS. THOMAS: All right. So I have
9 provided this to Alexis. We did try to clean up
10 some of the language. This is very broad because
11 it is the Division's targeted plan, and then I
12 have asked each section to take the actions and
13 the indicators or evidence of success and create
14 their section plan that aligns to where they see
15 their work impacting these objectives and these
16 actions in our overall strategic plan.

17 So, for example, the second bullet
18 under "Actions" is applying the full coaching
19 continuum. We as a division went through training
20 last year on the full e-coaching continuum, and so
21 everything we are doing as far as technical
22 support is taking the lens of coaching -- now
23 we're not just coaching because people have been
24 through Reading Research to Classroom Practice or
25 our significant disabilities literacy work. It's

1 they're being coached anytime we provide PD,
2 anytime we provide technical assistance.

3 So our program improvement and
4 professional developmental folks that have done
5 Reading Research to Classroom Practice [inaudible]
6 to that action item with their e-coaching around
7 that reading course or the Foundations of Math.

8 Dreama McCoy's section of Supporting
9 Teaching and Related Services that has the
10 significant disabilities work, they're going to
11 report on how they're supporting that literacy for
12 significant disabilities. So each section will be
13 able to customize their responses to the actions,
14 the indicators, and the evidence, and then they
15 are submitting those plans to me so that we really
16 do have a very broad casting of the net of how we
17 are approaching this work to ensure that we're
18 providing equity and access for all kids.

19 And if you were able to review this,
20 you'd see that this is very heavily aligned with
21 the State Board's strategic plan, and there's a
22 huge focus on equity. We are now in the Office of
23 Equity. My new supervisor is Dr. Catherine
24 Edmonds, and our whole area that reports to her is
25 focused on equity as part of the reorganization

1 with Superintendent Truitt coming on board.

2 So I shared this with the State Board
3 as just an item they were going to send out
4 because they knew we were working on it. We have
5 since been asked to present on our strategic plan
6 at the April board meeting to show them where
7 we've aligned and what our focus is around equity,
8 and I'm really excited about that because I feel
9 like we did some really good work in putting the
10 priorities in place in this plan, to keep guiding
11 our division, to keep us all focused on equity.

12 And that happened before we got moved
13 into the Office of Equity. So sometimes things
14 just align appropriately, and you don't have any
15 clue that that's happening, but I feel like we're
16 in a good place. We've also been doing work
17 within our division on equity, and we chose to
18 work on disability and race equity. Those two
19 areas, we feel, impact our work the most.

20 So staff are going through some
21 professional development from an outside source
22 and we're having conversations. We're looking at
23 everything through this lens of equity so that we
24 can then better support our districts as they try
25 to do the very same thing.

1 So I'm not going to go through the
2 whole plan. I know it was shared with you. You
3 will get this final plan. You will also get the
4 PowerPoint that we just went through, but I am
5 happy to take questions about the strategic plan
6 if you have those.

7 MS. UTZ: And for those of you that
8 have the agenda pulled up, if you refresh your
9 agenda, these links are linked into the agenda.

10 MS. THOMAS: Oh, thank you, Alexis.
11 And, again, if you are the person that said please
12 define these terms, thank you, thank you, thank
13 you. That's why we need stakeholder input. In
14 our world, we know what those things are, but
15 everybody doesn't, and that was a huge help for
16 us.

17 MS. UTZ: And, Sherry, I'm not seeing
18 any questions that have come up in the chat box.

19 MS. THOMAS: Okay. Well, if there
20 are later, you-all know how to find me, and I am
21 always happy to get your emails and -- or make a
22 phone call and talk through any questions you may
23 have. Thank you again.

24 MS. DEGEN: I'm sorry. Sherry, can I
25 ask one question?

1 MS. THOMAS: Absolutely.

2 MS. DEGEN: This is Jennifer from
3 Charlotte.

4 MS. THOMAS: Hey, Jennifer.

5 MS. DEGEN: Hi. Thank you for all
6 this information. I think it's so great. I know
7 that our whole school has already taken the videos
8 and they were very helpful. My principal keeps
9 commenting about the MTSS video. He's like, "I
10 learned so much." So he really did get a lot from
11 those, so he's excited to learn a lot.

12 But my question is, as far as like
13 the equity, you know, there's some different tiers
14 when you look at -- so I know -- and I think it's
15 a statewide requirement that, you know, if a
16 parent presents with a private psychological eval,
17 you know, that they've paid for and they bring it
18 to the school, technically, we are supposed to
19 open it up with a -- you know, with a referral
20 process to see if we need to move forward with the
21 EC process, you know, and test.

22 If a parent requests testing, we run
23 concurrent with MTSS, and then looking at
24 equities, you see so many students who have either
25 language issues because [inaudible] just different

1 levels like maybe a parent doesn't speak English
2 or you have maybe a poverty area where a parent
3 isn't as educated to say, "Hey, I'm requesting
4 testing" or "I can't afford a private eval," and
5 those kids are then going through the MTSS
6 process.

7 And in some districts -- you know,
8 I'm going to admit that some of them have gotten
9 lost in my school. I think we have a great
10 program, but you know, at the high school level,
11 sometimes it does -- you know, it gets stuck. So
12 where is that equity being addressed as far as,
13 you know, the language barrier and the financial
14 part when you're looking at a parent who is
15 working and not -- doesn't know the system? Those
16 kids are getting stuck in MTSS, but if you have a
17 parent that's knowledgeable and just goes ahead
18 and says, "I want testing," or comes in with a
19 private eval, they're skipping all that part.

20 And I just -- that's a huge concern
21 for me. I know we open all these kids with these
22 private evals that come in, and I feel like, you
23 know, it's -- there are kids I want to say, "Hey,
24 Mom, go ahead and request testing," but you know,
25 I know that that's not appropriate to do either

1 for some of these lower income families, but they
2 don't know the system. So how is that being
3 addressed, if that makes sense?

4 MS. THOMAS: Yeah, it does make
5 sense. And so part of that corrective action is
6 that that is -- that's an issue. That was one of
7 the issues, that there may be parents who don't
8 have that access or that knowledge. They're not
9 being told.

10 And so the communication -- some of
11 the communication documents that we've provided
12 are in English and Spanish because that's the
13 primary second language that we deal with.
14 Anything else -- schools have the responsibility
15 to translate into the appropriate language that is
16 needed by that parent or to have an interpreter
17 there. That's always been a requirement for
18 access.

19 And, hopefully, this notification
20 when they say "Your child is going into
21 intervention," it also states in there, "At any
22 time, you may request an evaluation," and that had
23 to be -- that was one of the pieces that had to be
24 put in writing, that while it was out there, it's
25 in policy, it's in the regulations, and there are

1 a lot of school sites -- it's on their website.
2 It wasn't on every school website.

3 So one of the corrective action items
4 is to say you have to inform parents and you have
5 to keep that documentation that you informed that
6 parent in their native language that they have the
7 right to request a referral.

8 MS. MOOREFIELD: Sherry, this is
9 Ginny Moorefield. I just wanted to put a bug in
10 your ear and anyone else on this Council here
11 that, you know, when we make -- you know, we're
12 making all these strides to make sure that our
13 parents are aware and we're putting things in
14 different languages and we're offering all these
15 different language services for bilingual
16 families, I just want to put a bug in your ear
17 that deaf families, English is usually their
18 second language, and of course, American Sign
19 Language does not have a written form.

20 So, you know, your office may
21 consider, when they're creating these documents,
22 to have a link to an interpretative video of the
23 information and then, you know, include that as a
24 QR code or include that as a link for deaf
25 families to have access to that information.

1 MS. THOMAS: That is a great idea.
2 We have talked about the braille piece of this,
3 but that's -- I'm surprised Sherri Vernelson
4 hasn't already told me I needed to do that. She
5 is usually on top of that, but that is a great
6 idea and that is certainly something we can add
7 and add in that toolbox for districts. That's a
8 great idea. Thank you for that.

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: No problem.

10 MS. THOMAS: I will also tell you one
11 of the things we are working on, not related to
12 this, but I have been pushing very hard, and
13 pushing hard doesn't move it faster or it doesn't
14 move it as fast as I want, but we are very close
15 to having full translation within ECATS, which
16 will make a huge difference for all of our
17 parents. So districts can stop interpreting or
18 translating at that point.

19 So we're trying to get that
20 accessibility there as well, and to your point,
21 trying to use closed captioning as much as we can,
22 and I think some of those -- I think the videos we
23 prepared for schools were supposed to have closed
24 captioning on them. That's not going to parents,
25 but it's trying to capture staff as well.

1 MS. MOOREFIELD: Excellent.

2 MS. UTZ: Sherry, there is a
3 question, "Are there videos for the MTSS for
4 families and where are they?"

5 MS. THOMAS: There are posted videos
6 that I think ECAC has done or is working on. I
7 don't know if the MTSS website has any of those
8 videos or not, so that's a question I am happy to
9 follow up on.

10 MS. UTZ: I'm trying to think if I
11 know the answer too, but nothing comes right to
12 the front of my head either.

13 MS. THOMAS: There are some old
14 videos that we did, oh, probably back in 2009 when
15 I was doing RTI, which is now MTSS, and we did
16 videos for families at that point, but it was on a
17 four-tier process, which is very much not what
18 we're doing now. So I'll check on that. I know
19 that -- I know that ECAC was working on some. I
20 don't know if those are up or not.

21 And I love all the comments and the
22 questions. So thank you for those.

23 MS. UTZ: And Terri shared -- Terri,
24 who is from ECAC, shared that she's not sure
25 either. So we definitely will have to check on

1 that.

2 MS. THOMAS: Yes, we will. I know
3 there was something done around MTSS for SLD
4 eligibility. I just don't know what else has been
5 done. So I will check on that and get that back
6 to you, Alexis, to share with Council.

7 MS. UTZ: Sure.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: So any more
9 questions, Alexis?

10 MS. UTZ: Nope, that was it.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: So thank you so
12 much, Sherry, and thank you, Matt.

13 MS. THOMAS: You are most welcome.
14 Thank you for your time today. I think I went a
15 little over, but I hope it was helpful
16 information.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Very helpful.
18 Thank you.

19 MS. THOMAS: Uh-huh. Bye-bye.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: So we are at 12:13.
21 We're actually early. So what's our official they
22 have to be signed in for public comment by?

23 MS. UTZ: By 12:00. And I did get
24 communication from the Laura that was in. She's
25 not here for public comment. So we don't have to

1 worry about that. We just had the one that was
2 emailed into us.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: And we had no
4 sign-ups?

5 MS. UTZ: Nope.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Diane, would
7 you like to read the public comment that we got in
8 email form?

9 MS. COFFEY: Yes, I can. It actually
10 is a very short one. It was two questions. It's
11 "What measures are in place to notify parents of
12 absences?" and "What responsibilities are in place
13 for application an of IEP?" And that is literally
14 all that's on the email.

15 MS. UTZ: Can you read it one more
16 time for me?

17 MS. COFFEY: Okay. And I can send it
18 to you, if that would make it easier, but it's
19 "What measures are in place to notify parents of
20 absences?" And then, "What responsibilities are
21 in place for application of an IEP?"

22 DR. HUTCHINSON: I'm not sure if
23 they're referencing absences of the student or
24 absences of the instructional staff or related
25 service providers.

1 MS. COFFEY: Yes, I agree. It's very
2 vague.

3 DR. HUTCHINSON: I guess absences of
4 students -- there's compulsory attendance laws
5 that state that the school has to notify parents
6 when a student has three, six, and then nine
7 unexcused absences, and each school might do that
8 a different way.

9 And notifications for parents of
10 absent teachers and service providers -- Sherry
11 might be able to speak to this, but we don't have
12 any obligation to notify parents when a service
13 provider is absent or a special ed teacher is
14 absent for a limited number of days unless we're
15 doing a long-term sub, but maybe Sherry could
16 speak to that a little. I'm not sure -- I don't
17 know if we're addressing the question, though.

18 MS. UTZ: Sherry is no longer here.
19 She had another meeting. But, technically, you --
20 I mean you don't have to respond to comments to
21 answer them. But I feel like this is a specific
22 question that is not necessarily for this like
23 audience, if that makes sense.

24 MS. COFFEY: I agree, Alexis. I
25 think -- I don't know -- I mean the person didn't

1 even sign it or anything. There's not -- it's
2 just literally those two questions. I'm wondering
3 if it was sent multiple places to try to get the
4 answer.

5 MS. UTZ: Yeah. I was going to say
6 or, Diane, just forward it to me and I can reach
7 out to this person individually and answer that
8 question.

9 MS. COFFEY: All right. I'll be glad
10 to do that.

11 MS. UTZ: I mean I don't really think
12 the Council has anything to do with it per se.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: And if the Council
14 can agree, we can talk about the committees and
15 reporting and goal setting now.

16 DR. HUTCHINSON: Cynthia, are you
17 suggesting we do the goal setting and committee
18 stuff first and then not have a break for lunch
19 and then just be done and break for lunch after?

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

21 DR. HUTCHINSON: I'm in support of
22 that.

23 MS. UTZ: So is Terri.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: So is anyone not in
25 support of it?

1 (No audible response.)

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So I have
3 from Alexis the committee reports from the Policy
4 Committee, from the Unmet Needs Committee, and
5 also from the -- what's our other committee?

6 MS. UTZ: Executive? Is that what
7 you said?

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: I don't have the
9 Executive Committee because I haven't done one,
10 but I do have -- I do have the reports from the
11 Policies and Procedures, from the Unmet Needs, and
12 that's it, I think.

13 MS. UTZ: Reports and Data is the
14 last one.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Right. And we
16 don't have a chair for that, and if we could just
17 have you think about -- if nobody on the call
18 right now wants to volunteer to chair that
19 committee, all council members are required to be
20 on one of our committees. So if you haven't
21 joined a committee, this is a good time to think
22 about joining a committee. And if you have a want
23 or interest in the Reports and Data Committee, we
24 have a vacant position for chair.

25 MS. UTZ: And just as a reminder, if

1 you guys forget, I just pulled up the list of
2 people -- the list of the committees.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: And any of those
4 members who are new to the Council, the members of
5 any committee are very supportive. So it's not
6 hard, we don't bite, and we're very welcoming.

7 As we're developing the report to the
8 State Board of Education, one of the things that
9 they've asked over the years is that each of us
10 come up with a suggestion or recommendation for
11 them. So in your committees, if you could think
12 about a recommendation that we'll propose for the
13 State Board of Education.

14 MS. UTZ: I'm sorry, Cynthia. Say
15 that again. I was responding to something else.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh. No problem.
17 The State Board of Education has asked that we,
18 the Council, provide recommendations for them. So
19 if we, in each of our committees, could review and
20 think about and maybe even suggest recommendations
21 for the -- proposed recommendations for the State
22 Board of Education.

23 MS. UTZ: All right. Thank you.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Policies and
25 Procedures, in your report from 9/2/2020, you

1 spent your time on two issues that were proposed
2 to your group, group norms and social media
3 presence. Is anyone here that wants to talk about
4 where you are on that?

5 MS. TERHAAR: I can speak to that
6 first issue in terms of norms.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

8 MS. TERHAAR: And that is that we
9 discussed how there have been meetings in which we
10 need to adhere to some of the guidelines that
11 [inaudible] in our handbook in terms of, you know,
12 the participation of members, particularly in
13 situations when people -- when there's a public
14 forum. And so we thought it would be helpful if
15 we had those succinctly stated and reviewed before
16 we go to the public forum so everyone is aware of
17 what our role is during those sessions.

18 And then the other thing we thought
19 would be helpful is, we came up with a set of
20 proposed group norms that we might want to start
21 at the beginning of all of our meetings as a
22 reminder of some guidelines for participation and
23 what our role is on this committee. However, I
24 don't have access to that -- to that drive.

25 I'm having some technology issues

1 today, but is there anyone here in our group who
2 has that who could kind of take over? And we
3 thought we might want to have at our next meeting
4 the opportunity to get people's input about these
5 norms so that we can come up with a consensus.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, did you
7 capture that?

8 MS. UTZ: I'm about to yes. So the
9 next meeting, you want to be on the agenda; is
10 that what I heard?

11 MS. TERHAAR: Yes. And if no one on
12 our committee wants to speak to that second issue,
13 my recollection on that one is that what we want
14 to do is discuss having a group or a person on our
15 committee -- on our council -- on the advisory
16 council who would deal with keeping up with our
17 presence on social media, and we had some ideas
18 about what social media is more heavily utilized
19 by our parents. So that could be put on the
20 agenda as well.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. TERHAAR: You're welcome. Anyone
23 in my group, feel free to speak if I didn't
24 [inaudible].

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Unmet Needs, if

1 you'd like to speak a little bit about the work
2 that your group is doing.

3 MS. COFFEY: I need to pull our thing
4 up real quick, Cynthia.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Certainly.

6 MS. COFFEY: Yes. And I'm going to
7 apologize, Ginny. I think you've probably got a
8 better handle on the last couple of meetings
9 because I had some family things that had me out
10 during some of that.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: I'm looking through
12 the last -- the last notes I have are from June.
13 Let me dig a little bit more because I think I put
14 them in the wrong folder. Okay. I've got them.
15 Well, nope, I don't got them. Those were just my
16 notes from the meeting itself. Matt, do you
17 have---

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, do you have
19 the Unmet Needs Subcommittee reporting from
20 9/9/2020?

21 MS. UTZ: If they're in the folder.

22 MS. COFFEY: They should be because I
23 sent them in.

24 MR. POTTER: I can tell you that our
25 conversation was very informal because it was the

1 first meeting that I had been able to attend as a
2 member and our chair was not in attendance. So it
3 was sort of a -- not necessarily a blind-leading-
4 the-blind situation, but obviously, I didn't step
5 in and sort of take charge. But also since our
6 chair was not in attendance, we sort of talked
7 productively but informally about---

8 MS. MOOREFIELD: Okay. I've got it
9 now, Matt. I've got them---

10 MR. POTTER: Got it. Okay.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yeah, I've got it
12 pulled up now.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Matt.

14 MR. POTTER: No problem.

15 MS. MOOREFIELD: So in December, it
16 was just me and Matt, and we were kind of talking
17 about -- I was sort of getting him caught up with
18 some of the stuff that Diane and I had talked
19 about in previous meetings of this committee, and
20 so--- Let me see. So, yeah, I got Matt caught
21 up.

22 We are -- you know, we're still
23 looking at ways to address some of the
24 transportation issues for children with
25 disabilities as far as the law goes and it being

1 legal to pass school buses that are contracted and
2 holding our contract companies accountable for --
3 you know, for making sure that their fleets meet
4 those transportation regulations as far as the
5 actual buses.

6 So the cars, the vans, you know,
7 things like that, they can pull into driveways, so
8 that's not an issue, but the actual buses, we need
9 to hold our companies accountable for making sure
10 they are -- that they have all three of those
11 requirements: the swing out stop sign, the
12 flashing lights, and "Official School
13 Transportation" on at least three sides of the
14 vehicle.

15 We also talked about -- I think I
16 brought Matt up to speed on what we were talking
17 as far as the -- like the emergency plans that we
18 have been discussing and how to make sure that
19 there are safety measures and transportation for
20 all kids with disabilities, that we had talked
21 about on the Council with, you know, kids who may
22 have processing disorders or autism that may not
23 respond verbally, kids who are in -- who are
24 nonverbal and in wheelchairs, you know, how to
25 keep them safe, how to transport them off campus,

1 things like that.

2 So that's what I caught Matt up on,
3 and then we decided that we wanted to add the
4 following to that list. We wanted to add, you
5 know, maybe an establishment of support groups for
6 parents with exceptional children and support
7 groups for the kids themselves, you know, inasmuch
8 as that's feasible.

9 And then we wanted to, you know, try
10 to find a way to check on the mental health of
11 parents, students, and teachers within our EC --
12 our EC community, and I was thinking about that
13 as -- oh, what was the guy's name who was
14 discussing the mental health from DPI?

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Matt Hoskins.

16 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yes, Matt. As Matt
17 was giving his presentation, I kept thinking to
18 myself, you know, so I'm glad that we're getting
19 the ball rolling, we're getting things established
20 to keep a better check on our kids, but is anybody
21 keeping check on teachers and on our staff -- our
22 support staff.

23 And then we also added, you know,
24 just to kind of check in see what our technology
25 needs are like augmentative communication devices,

1 which is computers, voice out readers,
2 interpreters for Zoom classes. We were concerned
3 that, you know, at home with remote learning, kids
4 may or may not have access to that technology and
5 so various support materials and interpreters.

6 So that was more of a question that
7 we had if anybody knows. I know that for my son
8 our AT has been out a couple of times delivering
9 various pieces of equipment for us, but I also
10 wondered is that the same, you know, in your
11 districts and also how are our mainstream classes
12 handling interpreters during this -- you know, the
13 Zoom classes.

14 And Matt and I talked that we
15 hadn't -- we hadn't really heard ourselves of any
16 specific needs that have come up during the
17 pandemic that are not being met. So we kind of
18 tried to put ourselves in our students' shoes and
19 in our EC teachers' shoes and in our parents'
20 shoes as to what possibilities might be out there
21 that haven't been recognized yet.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Ginny.

23 MS. MOOREFIELD: Uh-huh.

24 MS. COFFEY: And I can go back a
25 little bit. I've pulled the 9/20 notes -- yeah,

1 the 9/20 notes also. And at that meeting, we
2 really were talking about how to promote the
3 Council as a whole, to make sure information is
4 being shared out with families and some ideas --
5 which, of course, social media is a big piece of
6 that.

7 That we were talking about of how we
8 can use that to get information out to families,
9 but also maybe looking at some of the other groups
10 that are already out there doing family groups in
11 general -- looking at some of those organizations
12 too to help get the information out. But then
13 also we talked about just making sure our board is
14 more equity balanced too in the aspect that we're
15 representing, you know, across the board different
16 disabilities, not just one or two disabilities on
17 the board itself.

18 So we were talking about some things
19 like that too. So it plays right into what Ginny
20 and them were talking on the next level too, but
21 it just definitely was staying in that same
22 conversation.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: And you had one
24 point there that was very interesting to me. Try
25 to get parents to come to these meetings -- to our

1 council meetings as guests just to see what we're
2 doing and to see if they're interested in doing --
3 joining the Council or getting more engaged.

4 MS. COFFEY: Right, because they
5 can't understand what they need to join, if they
6 haven't come to a meeting at least as a guest.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Exactly, yes.
8 Okay. Thank you so much for all that work that
9 you do on these committees. The EC Committee, we
10 meet once a month, and mostly what we're doing is
11 addressing any issues that the EC Division brings
12 to us to consider and thinking about guests for
13 meetings.

14 So if you have a guest or you have an
15 interest that you want to see a presentation on or
16 more information on from the EC Division, please
17 let Alexis know so that she can bring that to us
18 in the EC part of the Council, and that's all.
19 Thank you so much.

20 So now, Alexis, do we need to then
21 have the subcommittees meeting after this?

22 MS. UTZ: That is totally up to you
23 guys.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, subcommittees,
25 do you think that you need to meet after this

1 meeting?

2 DR. HUTCHINSON: This is Christy H.
3 At our Executive meeting, we usually meet
4 [inaudible] the only thought that I had kind of
5 following Matt's presentation and then Ginny's
6 comments was, as students are returning to the
7 classroom buildings, whether it be March or be
8 August, if there are resources available to the
9 general ed and special ed population for
10 trauma-focused practices.

11 Trauma comes in lots of different
12 forms, and knowing what our students have
13 experienced over the last year, whether it be
14 death and loss and grief or loss of a job or, you
15 know, transient households, even those students
16 who are in the most stable physical environments,
17 I suspect that there's elements of trauma that
18 kids have experienced.

19 And so if there's any organizations
20 that have such offerings, it might be beneficial
21 for us to just be aware of those resources.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent. Thank
23 you, Christy.

24 MS. UTZ: And Terri just said she can
25 give some information from Data and Reports.

1 Sorry. I had you muted again, Terri. You're
2 unmuted.

3 MS. LEYTON: Yeah, thank you. No
4 problem. Okay. So the committee members that met
5 in December were Leanna George, Kenya Pope, and
6 myself. I think we were all new to the committee,
7 possibly Leanna had been on it before. We were
8 trying to even understand what kind of
9 recommendations we are charged with making as a
10 committee.

11 And at the time, we said that we
12 would kind of dig into the SPP/APR data and look
13 at some things like graduation rates and things
14 like that. But we had questions, like I said,
15 what kind of evaluations would be doing, what type
16 of reporting do we need to do. We really needed
17 some clarity. Maybe because we don't have a
18 chair, that's why.

19 And so we were just digging into data
20 during that last meeting trying to determine what
21 we could -- what kind of information and
22 recommendations we could even provide.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Alexis, could
24 you -- are the previous reports from Data and
25 Reports in the Google Drive? Do you know?

1 MS. UTZ: So the only information I
2 have is what's right here.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Okay.

4 MS. UTZ: So Reports -- and actually
5 Unmet Needs just disappeared from there, so -- but
6 I mean this is the one I have. I don't know when
7 it's from. There's no date. This might be the
8 one you're talking about. Well, it's dated up
9 here from the 12/9 one. So this was just the only
10 one that's in there.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: So really and
12 truly, as the Reports and Data, you're looking at
13 all the reports and data that the EC Division
14 provides. I would go to the EC website and take a
15 look at that. I would certainly look at what
16 Nancy presented to us earlier, where the changes
17 are going to be. I would certainly look at the
18 parent -- I think it's Indicator 8, the parent
19 survey that goes out, that kind of information.

20 It's just taking a look and being
21 able to propose to the Council and then possibly
22 to the State Board ways that we can improve maybe
23 data collection, getting the data out so that
24 people in the community, as well as just everyone
25 can see what's going on in North Carolina.

1 Because I think so often parents are concerned
2 because they have no knowledge of what's going on,
3 and they just go with what they're assuming is or
4 is not happening.

5 MS. LEYTON: Okay. Okay. Thank you.
6 So based on that, I'm not really sure that we have
7 any recommendations at this time to put forth
8 because I don't know that -- Kenya -- I know she
9 was on earlier. I don't know if she's still on
10 now.

11 MS. UTZ: She is.

12 MS. LEYTON: Okay. If you want to
13 have any additional comments.

14 MS. POPE: Yes, hello. This is
15 Kenya. I'm still here. I had myself muted. I
16 agree with what you were saying. It was my first
17 time being on the committee -- serving on a
18 committee, and I was kind of at a loss as to what
19 we were supposed to be doing. So I could also use
20 some guidance.

21 And I was listening to what you were
22 saying about reviewing, you know, the data, the
23 information on the EC website, but I'm still
24 unsure about -- I mean we're reviewing it, but
25 what are we -- what are we reviewing it for, what

1 are we reporting out on, and what
2 recommendations -- you know, are we supposed to
3 make recommendations of things that we're -- I
4 could just really use some more guidance there.
5 Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Alexis, would
7 it be okay for me to email just this committee --
8 subcommittee?

9 MS. UTZ: Sure.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Then, I'll
11 do that. I'll email you guys. And is anyone --
12 even though you're all new to the committee, is
13 anyone thinking that they'd like to chair the
14 committee? So, Terri, are you on -- are you---

15 MS. LEYTON: I actually am not sure
16 if I -- my role at my job expanded, and I'm not
17 sure whether I'm staying on this committee. We
18 may roll that over to another staff member at ECAC
19 in the near future like for the June meeting. So
20 we're looking at that, so I don't -- I hate to
21 commit to that right now.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure. Okay. Thank
23 you. Kenya?

24 MS. POPE: Yes, I'm sorry. I'm still
25 here. My apologies. I have a puppy that may

1 start to bark. I would also piggyback off of what
2 Terri said. There's been a lot of times where my
3 duties call for me to fill in, in different areas,
4 you know, and I would not want to commit to being
5 the chair, number one, because I don't know what
6 we're supposed to be doing, but---

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Right, right.

8 MS. POPE: ---but two, because I
9 don't know if I will continue to be the person
10 attending.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you so
12 much. Any other council members out there?

13 **(No audible response.)**

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I think it's
15 something I want to have you all consider, and by
16 June, I'd like to have a volunteer or we're going
17 to volunteer Leanna George because she wasn't
18 here.

19 MS. LEYTON: But I would definitely
20 welcome you emailing our little small group with
21 some additional information and maybe some places
22 where we can look for all these reports.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Exactly.

24 MS. LEYTON: Yeah, that would be
25 awesome. Thank you.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: So now that we've
2 got every -- I think every committee has kind of
3 spoken and reported on their work, is it the
4 opinion of the Council that we need to, then,
5 close out this meeting and have a separate meeting
6 for the committees, or do we think we're okay at
7 this point?

8 And what I'm going to do as the
9 Chair, I will be sending out a draft of the report
10 that we're going to give to the State Board of
11 Education by August. And is that okay, Alexis, to
12 send it to you and you then send it out to the
13 group?

14 MS. UTZ: Yeah, that's fine.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

16 MS. COFFEY: Cynthia, this is Diane.
17 With what we've already got there, do you have
18 enough to get that draft of the report done
19 because---

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: I think I do.

21 MS. COFFEY: I don't know that we
22 need to meet as far as my group since you've got
23 the information to put in the report at this point
24 unless there's something we really need to address
25 that I'm not aware of, but---

1 MR. POTTER: I would defer to my
2 chair on that one [inaudible].

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I think we do
4 have enough. So I think that we can get a
5 motion -- I think we're at that point -- a motion
6 to adjourn.

7 MR. POTTER: So moved.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: A second?

9 DR. HUTCHINSON: This is Christy
10 Hutchinson. I would second that motion.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any opposed?

12 **(No audible response.)**

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstaining?

14 **(No audible response.)**

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, I didn't do all
16 in favor. All in favor?

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

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So no one opposed,
20 no abstained?

21 MS. UTZ: Nope.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you so much,
23 everyone, for all of your time today on this
24 beautiful sunny day. Enjoy the rest of your day,
25 and we'll meet again in June, and be safe.

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(At 12:45 p.m., the quarterly meeting
adjourned.)

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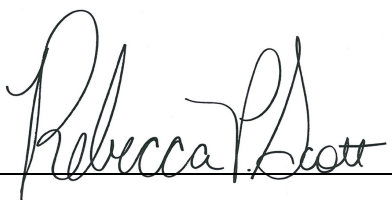
CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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 135, 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 25th day of March, 2021.



Rebecca P. Scott