

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES  
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Via Webex  
June 9, 2021  
9:31 a.m.

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**TRANSCRIPT OF QUARTERLY MEETING**

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The quarterly meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children was held on the 9th day of June, 2021, via Webex, commencing at 9:31 a.m.

APPEARANCES

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN  
COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cynthia Daniels-Hall, Chairperson

Sara Bigley  
Diane Coffey  
Aimee Combs  
Elizabeth DeBiasi  
Jennifer Grady  
Christy Grant  
Kristen Hodges  
Virginia Moorefield  
Lisa Phillips  
Kenya Pope  
Matthew Potter  
Kimaree Sanders

STAFF:

Kelley Blas  
Amanda Byrd  
Lauren Holahan  
Matt Hoskins  
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: So it's 9:31,  
3 Alexis. Do we want to go to 9:35 waiting because  
4 do we still -- I don't think we still have a  
5 quorum. 13 is a quorum, so---

6 MS. UTZ: Let's see. We just had---  
7 One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight.  
8 Yeah, we only have eight council members logged on  
9 right now. I mean we kind of can do it out of  
10 order and we can welcome our new guest Elizabeth.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So  
12 Ms. Elizabeth -- I'm not sure about the last name,  
13 Alexis.

14 MS. UTZ: I think it's DeBiasi.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: DeBiasi. Okay.  
16 Welcome and thank you for joining the Council and  
17 being willing to engage in this important work.

18 MS. DeBIASI: Thank you. Are you  
19 able to hear me?

20 MS. UTZ: Yes.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

22 MS. DeBiasi: It's DeBiasi, which is  
23 a challenge.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: DeBiasi. Okay.

25 MS. DeBIASI: Thank you for inviting

1 me, and I'm looking forward to getting started and  
2 digging in.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

4 Welcome. Is Senator Ted Alexander on the call?

5 MS. UTZ: I do not see his name.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. And,  
7 Ms. DeBiasi, we will be sending a welcome package  
8 out to you. So thank you, thank you, and welcome.  
9 So that's our new council member. Any others?

10 MS. UTZ: Not new. Diane and Christy  
11 Hutchinson did get reappointed by the State Board.  
12 So---

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Diane,  
14 and -- well, Christy's not here, but thank you,  
15 Diane, for your willingness to continue to  
16 participate and engage in this important work.

17 MS. UTZ: We're up to ten.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: We're moving in the  
19 right direction.

20 MS. UTZ: Oh. I just realized I did  
21 not add the minutes into the meeting. So let me  
22 do that really quick.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we're all  
24 going to take a few minutes to review the minutes  
25 from the last meeting.

1 MS. UTZ: Hold on. My computer is  
2 being slow. Okay. I don't know where it went.  
3 This is my issue this morning of why some people  
4 might have had issues logging in because  
5 everything -- everything decided to update as soon  
6 as -- oh, no, you can't do that. You have to  
7 update first.

8 So you should be able to see it on  
9 your screen now.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. Yes, we can.

11 MS. UTZ: [Inaudible] Google Drive.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Can everyone see  
13 it?

14 MS. GRANT: We can see the agenda.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. You can't  
16 see the minutes -- the summary of actions yet. It  
17 will be in a Google Drive.

18 MS. UTZ: It will be in just a few  
19 minutes.

20 MS. GRANT: I can see the summary of  
21 actions now.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we'll  
23 review those. Any additions, changes,  
24 corrections, please let us know now.

25 **(Review of Summary of Actions from**

1                   **March 2021.)**

2                   MS. UTZ: It should be in your Google  
3 folder now. Kenya, I will email it to you in just  
4 a second.

5                   MS. POPE: Thank you.

6                   THE CHAIRPERSON: So are we at 13 yet  
7 for our quorum?

8                   MS. UTZ: So let me just make sure I  
9 have everyone. One, two, three, four, five, six,  
10 seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven. We have 11.

11                   THE CHAIRPERSON: So we're going to  
12 do a welcome to council meeting and we're going to  
13 call this meeting to order. Do you think we need  
14 to do a roll call and introductions?

15                   MS. UTZ: That's up to you. I was  
16 just doing the highlighting so I could try to keep  
17 count of how many we had.

18                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure. So let's  
19 do -- because we have a new member joining us,  
20 let's do introductions.

21                   I'll start. Cynthia Daniels-Hall.  
22 I'm from Wake County. I have children on the  
23 autism spectrum and I'm a parent.

24                   MS. UTZ: All right.

25                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Shanna?

1 MS. UTZ: I don't see her name. I  
2 don't see Leanna's name.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Diane would be  
4 next.

5 MS. UTZ: Yeah.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Diane?

7 MS. UTZ: She's here.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: She may be having  
9 connection issues. Okay. Next person?

10 MS. UTZ: Leanna. I don't see  
11 Leanna's name.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. And Abby's  
13 not here.

14 MS. UTZ: Kristen is here.

15 MS. HODGES: Good morning. This is  
16 Kristen Hodges. It's good to speak with you. I  
17 am a parent of three children. One has an IEP for  
18 academic needs, one has an IEP for speech, and one  
19 has a 504 plan.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Good  
21 morning.

22 MS. UTZ: I don't see Jennifer.  
23 Christy Grant is here.

24 MS. GRANT: Yes. Good morning. My  
25 name is Christy Grant. I am the Executive

1 Director for Student Services and Special  
2 Education with Nash County Schools. I'm the  
3 traditional LEA rep.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Christy.

5 MS. UTZ: All right. I don't see  
6 Anthony. I don't see Marge. Christy Hutchinson  
7 cannot join us today. She has her leadership  
8 retreat. Aimee Combs is here. She is our new  
9 representative for ECAC. So, Aimee, if you would  
10 like to say a few words.

11 MS. COMBS: Can you-all hear me?

12 MS. UTZ: Yes, we can.

13 MS. COMBS: Okay. Good. Webex is a  
14 platform I'm not very familiar with, so I'm  
15 learning as I go. But my name is Aimee Combs, and  
16 I am here today as the representative from our  
17 State Parent Training and Information Center,  
18 otherwise known as ECAC, the Exceptional  
19 Children's Assistance Center, and I am the PTI  
20 Assistant Manager.

21 But I'm also a parent, but my kids  
22 are all old. I've got three adult children. One  
23 is a special [inaudible] on the autism spectrum,  
24 and one is just finishing up at UNC Charlotte,  
25 and I'm also a grandmom to three little girls.

1 And I'm really excited to be here. I've always  
2 wanted to check out one of these meetings. So  
3 this is my first time, and so I'm looking forward  
4 to hanging out with you-all.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Welcome and thank  
6 you.

7 MS. COMBS: Thank you.

8 MS. UTZ: All right. Before we go to  
9 Jennifer, Diane, do you want to try to talk again?  
10 Yeah, we still can't hear you. So she's having  
11 audio -- I mean she did send me a message, but for  
12 whatever reason, we can't hear her.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, there you are.

14 MS. COFFEY: Can you hear me now?

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

16 MS. UTZ: Yes.

17 MS. COFFEY: Okay. Sorry about that.  
18 I don't know what was going on with my audio.

19 But, anyway, I'm Diane Coffey, and I am a parent  
20 of two exceptional children in Watauga County.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Welcome. Thank  
22 you. And thank you for your willingness to  
23 continue with the Council.

24 MS. COFFEY: Thank you for allowing  
25 me to.

1 MS. UTZ: All right. Jennifer Grady,  
2 I believe I saw your name.

3 MS. GRADY: Yes, I'm here. I'm  
4 listed as a business rep. I work for Blue Cross  
5 and Blue Shield of North Carolina. I'm in Wake  
6 County, and I have two teenagers, one who is  
7 autistic.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.  
9 Welcome.

10 MS. UTZ: All right. I do not---  
11 Oh, yep, Matthew popped on here.

12 MR. POTTER: Hi, everybody. Can you  
13 hear me?

14 MS. UTZ: Yes.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Uh-huh.

16 MR. POTTER: Hi. I am Matt Potter.  
17 I am a recipient of services with the CAP/DA  
18 Program, and I am here representing those with  
19 lived experience, and I live in Forsyth County.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Welcome and thank  
21 you.

22 MS. UTZ: All right. I do not see  
23 Selene or Senator Alexander. We've heard from  
24 Elizabeth. I do not see Representative  
25 Strickland. Ginny is on.

1                   And, Ginny, I saw your message. This  
2 will be your second term, so according to the  
3 bylaws, this would be your last term and your last  
4 meeting.

5                   MS. MOOREFIELD: Oh, okay.

6                   THE CHAIRPERSON: And, Ginny, thank  
7 you for your service on the Council.

8                   MS. MOOREFIELD: Somebody let  
9 Representative Moore know because he just sent me  
10 a letter a couple -- a couple of months ago. So  
11 I'm Ginny Moorefield. I'm the parent of a child  
12 with multiple cognitive and physical disabilities  
13 in Wake County.

14                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So I  
15 think we have a quorum. So if we go back to  
16 reviewing the March minutes or summary of actions,  
17 and if we could get a motion to approve that  
18 summary.

19                   MS. GRANT: I make a motion to that  
20 we approve the summary of the minutes as written.

21                   THE CHAIRPERSON: So do we have a  
22 second?

23                   MS. COFFEY: I'll second.

24                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Any discussion?

25                   **(No audible response.)**

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

2 (No audible response.)

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Anyone opposed?

4 (No audible response.)

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: And all in favor?

6 (Multiple council members responded  
7 aye.)

8 MS. UTZ: I'll edit that later during  
9 a break.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.

11 MS. UTZ: Oh, I just put that in the  
12 wrong thing, I think.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: That was the  
14 agenda, yeah.

15 MS. UTZ: All right.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: So did everybody  
17 review the agenda for today?

18 MS. GRANT: Yes.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So can we get a  
20 motion to approve the agenda?

21 MS. GRANT: Yes. I make a motion to  
22 approve the agenda.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Second?

24 MS. COFFEY: I'll second again.

25 MS. UTZ: All right.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

2 (No audible response.)

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Anyone opposed?

4 (No audible response.)

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: All in favor?

6 (Multiple council members responded  
7 aye.)

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Thank  
9 you all. Is Lauren here?

10 MS. UTZ: She is.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Lauren?

12 MS. UTZ: So, Lauren and Kelley, if  
13 you just want to do a quick introduction, and then  
14 you can jump into your -- your stuff.

15 MS. HOLAHAN: Awesome. Well, thanks  
16 so much for having us, for your interest in our  
17 State Performance Plan and Annual Performance  
18 Report. Glad to be with you.

19 My name's Lauren Holahan. I am the  
20 coordinator for our State Systemic Improvement  
21 Plan, which is one of 17 indicators in our State  
22 Performance Plan, which is the mechanism by which  
23 we annually report to the Office of Special  
24 Education Programs about our progress across those  
25 17 different indicators.

1           And with me, I have the amazing Kelley  
2 Blas. Kelley, would you like to introduce  
3 yourself?

4           MS. BLAS: Well, that was a good  
5 introduction, Lauren. My name is Kelley Blas. I  
6 am the IDEA Part B Data Manager and currently  
7 fulfilling the role of the SPP, or State  
8 Performance Plan, coordinator. So I am grateful  
9 to be here with you guys today. Thank you.

10          MS. HOLAHAN: And so just to be clear  
11 on what I think is the request and just so we  
12 don't like jump right into telling you all the  
13 things that we're really enthusiastic about, my  
14 sense is that you-all are interested in sort of a  
15 summary of the work that's been done to date as we  
16 develop our new State Performance Plan and give  
17 you an overview of what our stakeholders have said  
18 back to us so far. Is that about right, Cynthia?

19          THE CHAIRPERSON: That is correct.

20          MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. Well, I just  
21 want to say if at any point while we're talking,  
22 sharing, if there are questions, comments,  
23 concerns, I am so happy to be interrupted,  
24 corrected, just jump right in.

25          Am I able to share my screen, Alexis?

1 MS. UTZ: Sorry. I was having a  
2 conversation and I was on mute. You should be  
3 able to now, Lauren.

4 MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. I'm up at share  
5 and it doesn't--- Oh, now I'm a presenter. Let  
6 me try again. Okay. Let's try this. Can you see  
7 a letter there?

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

9 MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. So this is what  
10 is linked in the agenda, and I just want to --  
11 this will kind of take us through the work that  
12 has been done to date and where we're headed and  
13 what we're up to, and then I want to give you a  
14 tour of the website that we have developed for  
15 this process, and then Kelley's going to give us  
16 an overview of what we've learned so far.

17 And so we are embarking on a several-  
18 month process to develop a new State Performance  
19 Plan. Nancy Johnson -- the wonderful Nancy  
20 Johnson retired in -- I guess it was -- was it  
21 March or April? But one of the last things she  
22 did was submit our final State Performance Plan of  
23 the last cycle on February 1st of this year.

24 So that closed out a six-year cycle,  
25 and now we have to develop a new State Performance

1 Plan, and that is -- the work of that is to select  
2 baseline data, select new targets, identify  
3 improvement strategies, and identify how we're  
4 going to -- like what methods we're going to use  
5 to measure our progress across those 17  
6 performance indicators.

7 And if you are interested in what  
8 those are, each one of them, a description is  
9 linked there where it says "17 performance  
10 indicators."

11 So as part of that, the way that --  
12 we are really excited to have an opportunity to  
13 invite a broad range of stakeholders to the work.  
14 We have some new requirements from OSEP, the  
15 Office of Special Education Programs, in terms of  
16 reporting on our stakeholder participation in the  
17 development of this new State Performance Plan.

18 We will be required, for each  
19 indicator, to report on specifically the number of  
20 parents of students with disabilities, some of the  
21 diversity demographics of those parents and their  
22 students, and so you'll see some of that data that  
23 we've already started collecting.

24 So one of our objectives in talking  
25 with you-all this morning is, one, to make sure

1 that you know about these meetings, that you're  
2 making space for them on your calendar, and that  
3 you're sharing the opportunity to participate.  
4 These are open to anyone. They're completely  
5 public meetings.

6 As you can see, we are holding two  
7 virtual or online meetings that are two hours long  
8 each month. We started in April. One is on a  
9 Tuesday morning -- and I'll kind of walk through  
10 what we've done since April -- and then another is  
11 on a Thursday evening. They're identical  
12 meetings. They're duplicates. So you only have  
13 to participate in one in order to engage in the  
14 process, but we wanted to have a couple of  
15 different options to meet different schedules.

16 And so what we've done since April,  
17 you can see over here in this far right column.  
18 We are kind of working through one or two  
19 indicators each month giving you a history of our  
20 data or our performance over the last six years,  
21 talking through any changes that OSEP has made to  
22 that indicator, either how it's calculated or what  
23 data source is used or any of the business rules.

24 So we're giving an overview of our  
25 old data, any changes, and then giving folks an

1 opportunity to provide feedback on what we use as  
2 our baseline, what targets are we going to choose,  
3 and again, what improvement strategies are we  
4 going to use to meet those targets and how are we  
5 going to measure our progress over time.

6 So you can see in April we looked at  
7 Indicators 1 and 2, and at the same time, we're  
8 also conducting a pretty sweeping self-assessment  
9 of the EC Division at the Department of Public  
10 Instruction, and as we do that self-assessment,  
11 we're sharing that information with stakeholders  
12 and especially having them say, "Yeah, that sounds  
13 like the EC Division we know" or "We really see  
14 that differently in terms of your strengths, your  
15 needs." And so we're getting feedback on that  
16 infrastructure analysis or self-assessment also as  
17 we work through this process.

18 In May, we looked at Indicator 3.  
19 And I'm sorry. I should have said Indicator 1 is  
20 graduation -- the graduation rate for students  
21 with disabilities, and Indicator 2 is the dropout  
22 rate. We moved onto Indicator 3 in May and looked  
23 at the reading and math proficiency for students  
24 with disabilities, and then we also continued the  
25 work on our self-assessment or infrastructure

1 analysis and got into much more detail with that  
2 with stakeholders.

3 And now in June, next week will be  
4 our first June meeting. We're going to actually  
5 not be looking at Indicator 4. We're going to be  
6 looking at Indicator 14. I need to change that.  
7 We've just had a very recent change on that. So  
8 we're going to be looking at Indicator 14, which  
9 is postschool outcomes, and then Indicator 7,  
10 which is preschool outcomes, and then, again,  
11 continuing to get feedback on our self-assessment  
12 or that infrastructure analysis.

13 And I'm not going to go too much  
14 further through the details of that, but you can  
15 see that we've kind of laid out a plan for looking  
16 at all of the indicators now through all the way  
17 through November. So that when we get to  
18 November, we will have a draft of both our new  
19 State Performance Plan and our new State Systemic  
20 Improvement Plan, hoping to have a draft --  
21 probably it's going to be more like December --  
22 for all stakeholders, including the Council, to  
23 give us feedback on.

24 So I'm just going to pause there to  
25 see if there are any questions.

1 MS. UTZ: Lauren, I have one  
2 question. When will Indicator 4 be addressed  
3 since it's not going to be in June?

4 MS. HOLAHAN: Wherever we---

5 MS. UTZ: The 14 that was at the  
6 bottom?

7 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah, where we -- yes,  
8 it will be in October that we look at Indicator 4.

9 MS. UTZ: Okay. Thank you.

10 MS. HOLAHAN: Yep. Really good  
11 question. And part of the reason we made that  
12 change is we are getting ready to talk next month  
13 in July about our Indicator 17, our State  
14 Identified Measurable Results, and we wanted to  
15 ensure that we have covered with our stakeholders  
16 all of the possible indicators which inform -- can  
17 potentially inform the selection of a State  
18 Identified Measurable Result.

19 There are only four indicators really  
20 that we can connect our State Systemic Improvement  
21 Plan to, and that is Indicator 1, Indicator 3,  
22 Indicator 7, and Indicator 14. So we wanted to  
23 make sure we gave everyone an opportunity to see  
24 those data before we start talking about the State  
25 Identified Measurable Result. That was one reason

1 for the switch.

2 Any other questions?

3 MS. UTZ: There's none in the chat.

4 MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. I'm just curious  
5 if any council members have participated in any of  
6 the meetings to date.

7 MS. COFFEY: Lauren, this is Diane  
8 Coffey, and I have actually.

9 MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. Excellent. I  
10 just -- I want to be sure that you-all know this  
11 is going on and that you -- we really need broad  
12 participation. So I hope that many more of you  
13 will be able to join in future meetings.

14 MS. UTZ: I did have one question  
15 that just said yes, but there's not a question.  
16 It's one of our guests that are attending. So I  
17 don't know if you want to ask her something or if  
18 you're going to type it. Oh, okay. It was typed.  
19 How will you measure outcomes when a student might  
20 be expelled or suspended or dropped out? They  
21 would not be participating in the measures of the  
22 other indicators.

23 MS. HOLAHAN: That is true. So they  
24 would not be part of the -- we wouldn't have data  
25 to use for that student. I think I'm probably not

1 answering the question very well.

2 MS. UTZ: All right. I sent you the  
3 question so you can see it, if that will help.

4 MS. HOLAHAN: There isn't -- the  
5 answer, I guess, is there isn't a way to measure  
6 outcomes once a student is no longer enrolled.

7 MS. BLAS: Yeah. This is Kelley. I  
8 think it just depends on the indicator that you're  
9 measuring, and when the student is suspended, of  
10 course, expelled, or dropped out, they would be  
11 included in the Indicator 2 dropout. However, if  
12 they are unable to participate in outcome measures  
13 such as assessments or any other indicator that  
14 they would be missing due to being suspended or  
15 expelled, their information would not be included  
16 in the data for that year.

17 MS. HOLAHAN: Right. Any other  
18 questions on sort of this schedule and--- So  
19 you'll want to hold onto this link because these  
20 also include the times, the links to get into the  
21 meeting. I also want to say that we have sign  
22 language interpreting -- live sign language  
23 interpreting that's happening during these  
24 meetings, live captioning, and then we are also --  
25 and live captioning is offered in English and

1 Spanish. We are really trying to make this  
2 accessible to as many stakeholders as possible.

3 So the other thing that we're saving  
4 about this link is there's also a link to the  
5 website where I'm going to take us now. Actually,  
6 let me just open it here in your view.

7 And so what we have here is, again, a  
8 description of what the State Performance Plan is,  
9 some background information. If you click on one  
10 of these -- either one of these tables, it will  
11 take you to that invitation letter that I just  
12 showed you that has all the meeting links. You  
13 can always reach out to me. There's a mailing  
14 list if you want to get on the SPP mailing list so  
15 that you're getting any updates that we're sending  
16 out.

17 But then I think what's most helpful  
18 about this site is there's a link for each  
19 month -- like I'll take you to May -- for the  
20 PowerPoint presentation that was used, the  
21 recording of the meeting that you can listen to in  
22 case you didn't get to participate in the live  
23 meeting, the feedback tool, then the transcripts  
24 from the meetings, and then a description of the  
25 improvement strategies that stakeholders select.

1           So you can see for each month we've  
2 got all the resources housed there so that, again,  
3 if folks aren't able to attend one of the live  
4 meetings, we've got everything stored here.

5           Kelley, I'm curious, are the links  
6 for the previous months' feedback tools -- are  
7 they still live? Somebody at this point, could  
8 they still give feedback?

9           MS. BLAS: I want to say for May at  
10 least we did turn off the feedback tool. So if  
11 somebody wanted to go in and give some feedback,  
12 they're absolutely welcome to.

13          MS. HOLAHAN: Okay.

14          MS. UTZ: Lauren, I don't know if you  
15 have your chat pulled up. Can you drop that  
16 website link? I don't have it. I looked at it,  
17 but I can't find my link to it.

18          MS. HOLAHAN: Yep, I'm putting it in  
19 the chat right now.

20          MS. UTZ: Thank you.

21          MS. HOLAHAN: Except I want to send  
22 it to everyone. Can I send it to all?

23          MS. UTZ: Yes.

24          MS. HOLAHAN: So any other questions?  
25 Ideas for making this process better? Ideas for

1 helping us increase particularly our parent  
2 participation especially as we go along?

3 **(No audible response.)**

4 MS. HOLAHAN: I'm going to shift over  
5 here to some -- let me start at the beginning.  
6 And, Kelley, take it away. Kelley's going to give  
7 us an overview of the April and May meetings and  
8 the data from stakeholders based on that, and so I  
9 think I can start presenting now.

10 MS. BLAS: Thanks, Lauren, yes. And  
11 we're going to start with our April meetings, and  
12 again, that was Indicator 1 and 2, and we have  
13 graduation and dropout, and then Lauren will go  
14 over the SWOT with you, which is our Strengths,  
15 Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

16 MS. HOLAHAN: It's just a little bit  
17 hard to hear you, Kelley.

18 MS. BLAS: Oh. I'm sorry. Can you  
19 hear me any better now?

20 MS. HOLAHAN: I think so.

21 MS. BLAS: And I'll just try to --  
22 I'll try to speak up a little bit. So looking at  
23 our April meeting, we had -- our participants by  
24 race, we had a total of 85 participants. And when  
25 we say "participants," that is the number of

1 students -- number of students -- number of  
2 stakeholders that responded to our feedback  
3 survey.

4 So we have compiled all of the  
5 feedback and information into a Qualtrics survey  
6 tool, and that is how we're tracking our  
7 participation. And we gathered demographic data,  
8 and one of those demographics is race. And so you  
9 can see the breakdown of our participants by race  
10 on this chart, and we would love to see some  
11 increase in other areas on our -- for all  
12 participants, not just by race, but also  
13 especially by parents.

14 MS. HOLAHAN: Yes.

15 MS. BLAS: You can move onto the next  
16 slide. And then I think our next slide shows us  
17 the roles, and so these are the participants by  
18 roles, and as you can see---

19 MS. MOOREFIELD: Excuse me, Kelley.  
20 Hey. Going back to that previous slide -- this is  
21 Ginny Moorefield -- the percentages there of the  
22 various race breakdowns, is that the -- like is  
23 that taken as -- just for example, the American  
24 Indian, is that two percent of the responses was  
25 American Indian or--- You know what? I just

1 answered my own question. Never mind.

2 MS. BLAS: Okay.

3 MS. MOOREFIELD: Never mind. I'm  
4 sorry.

5 MS. BLAS: No problem. And for our  
6 role for participants, you can see that 73 percent  
7 of our participants were actually NC DPI staff,  
8 and then followed by 14 percent were parents and  
9 advocates, and then we had some public school  
10 units and other roles participating, but we  
11 definitely want to increase our external  
12 stakeholders as well.

13 And then this is our participation  
14 breakdown throughout the state, and we are  
15 encouraged that we have participation from across  
16 the state. Again, 40 counties have been  
17 represented in North Carolina with our highest  
18 number concentrated in Wake County.

19 And then we look at our parent  
20 participation. So we're looking at parents of  
21 students with disabilities, and we also asked them  
22 to report on what their student's disability is,  
23 and our highest breakdowns were parents of  
24 students with intellectual disabilities and  
25 autism. So we had three on each of those. And

1 then again -- and I'll just say, so our total  
2 number of parents for our April stakeholder  
3 meeting was ten.

4 And this is the breakdown by the type  
5 of school that the students with disabilities were  
6 attending, and nine -- nine reported that they  
7 were a traditional public school, one in  
8 homeschool, and one was not enrolled in school.

9 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah. And the reason  
10 these numbers are different -- like it says ten  
11 here and 11 here -- is that of the 11, one may not  
12 have responded to this question.

13 So I just want to give you a sense of  
14 the infrastructure analysis. This is really to  
15 help us figure out in a self-assessment and then  
16 stakeholder reflection process -- to help us  
17 figure out the extent to which our organization,  
18 our human resources, our tools, our capacity, our  
19 talents -- do we have what we need in order to  
20 improve outcomes on all 17 of these indicators,  
21 are we working effectively and efficiently as the  
22 Exceptional Children Division within the  
23 Department of Public Instruction.

24 And then we are also, at the same  
25 time, wanting to ensure that we have all of the

1 infrastructure we need to meet our strategic plan  
2 goals. And, of course, we want those two things,  
3 meeting the State Performance Plan indicator  
4 targets and the strategic plan goals, to align.

5 So this is kind of the process  
6 through which we're working through this  
7 infrastructure analysis or self-assessment. We  
8 did kind of an overview Strengths, Weaknesses,  
9 Opportunities, and Threats process internally back  
10 in March. We got stakeholder feedback on that in  
11 April, and then we're doing a much more in-depth  
12 and detailed infrastructure analysis really kind  
13 of built around the general supervision framework.

14 And then this fall, we'll look at --  
15 based on all these data we've gathered about who  
16 we are and how we're functioning as the Division,  
17 are we equipped to really make progress on our  
18 State Performance Plan and our strategic plan.  
19 And I am not going to go through the details in  
20 this, but there was some -- after we did the  
21 internal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and  
22 Threats, we came up with some themes for those,  
23 had pretty strong agreement from stakeholders that  
24 those themes were correct, but also got lots of  
25 feedback. And this is probably more of interest

1 to you-all which is this was our internal kind of  
2 list of strengths, and then based on stakeholder  
3 feedback, you can see things were added.

4 So we will make this PowerPoint  
5 available to you-all. After we get done, I'll put  
6 the link in the chat, but there's quite a bit of  
7 detail here. I'm not sure that we have time  
8 necessarily to go through all the detail, but you  
9 will have access to this. But as we're looking at  
10 these, if something really jumps out, please feel  
11 free to ask a question or comment.

12 I think what's important for you-all  
13 to see is that we really did take seriously the  
14 stakeholder input that we got on this, and we used  
15 this information from our stakeholders to design  
16 the more in-depth self-assessment that we're doing  
17 right now.

18 With that, Kelley, I'll bounce it  
19 back to you so you can get us up to speed on  
20 Indicator 1.

21 MS. BLAS: Okay. Hopefully, you guys  
22 can hear me better. I switched to a headset.  
23 Does it sound better, Lauren?

24 MS. HOLAHAN: At least on my end,  
25 it's still pretty faint.

1 MS. BLAS: Okay. Okay. I am sorry.  
2 Let me just try to speak loudly. I want to make  
3 sure everybody can hear me. So you can move onto  
4 the next slide.

5 We're looking now at the stakeholder  
6 feedback for Indicator 1, and what we did was we  
7 shared at least five years of data with our  
8 stakeholders and talked to them about setting a  
9 baseline, and we had options from OSEP for our  
10 baseline. We could either use the most current  
11 year, which would have been our '19-20 year, which  
12 is also the year that COVID impacted our data the  
13 most, or we could go back to the '18-19 year and  
14 use data that we felt was more stable because  
15 COVID hadn't started yet.

16 So out of 65 responses, 94 percent of  
17 our stakeholders, after reviewing the data, felt  
18 like we should use the '18-19 year as our  
19 baseline, and you can see that that baseline for  
20 '18-19 for Indicator 1 was 77.02, and so that's  
21 77.02 percent of students with disabilities who  
22 graduated with a regular high school diploma.

23 And you can move on, Lauren. Okay.  
24 And then we talked about setting targets. So we  
25 have to set targets on a six-year cycle, and they

1 had options to either set the target -- keep the  
2 same target as the baseline until the end of the  
3 six-year cycle and then bump it up, do an  
4 incremental increase every year, or keep baseline  
5 targets of 80 percent as we had in the past  
6 SPP/APR or use new ESSA targets.

7 And 57 percent of our stakeholders  
8 felt like incremental increases should be used,  
9 and 23 percent of our stakeholders felt like 80  
10 percent should be our target for all five years,  
11 and it's really a six-year cycle, so we should  
12 update that.

13 Okay. And then for improvement  
14 strategies, we gave them several different  
15 improvement strategies, and the three that rose to  
16 the top were access to CTE courses or career and  
17 technical education courses for students with  
18 disabilities, using the early warning system in  
19 ECATS and Power School and social self-  
20 determination and life skills instruction. And  
21 along with these improvement strategies, we  
22 provide our stakeholders with a description and  
23 deeper information about what these improvement  
24 strategies are within the tool and during our  
25 conversations in those meetings.

1                   Okay. You can move onto the measures  
2 of progress. And then the final part that we have  
3 to report on is how we're going to measure  
4 progress towards our targets and towards our  
5 goals, and so the three that rose to the top was  
6 the graduation calculation based on students with  
7 disabilities and their exit data. We would  
8 continue to look at the four- and five-year cohort  
9 graduation rate that DPI puts out.

10                   That was our previous measure that we  
11 were using for Indicator 1, and OSEP has changed  
12 that so now we're looking at our students with  
13 disabilities exit data, and then number 3 was  
14 looking at progress monitoring on course credit  
15 accrual. And that was our feedback that we  
16 received from stakeholders for Indicator 1.

17                   So I'm going to pause right there  
18 before we move into Indicator 2 feedback and just  
19 see if there's any questions.

20                   **(No audible response.)**

21                   MS. BLAS: Okay, Lauren. And so  
22 Indicator 2 is the percentage of students with  
23 IEPs dropping out of high school, and we did the  
24 same kind of method. So we looked at the  
25 baseline. We talked about the difference between

1 '18-19 and '19-20, and we just saw a significant  
2 decrease in '19-20 of students with disabilities  
3 dropping out of high school, and we felt like  
4 COVID had a big impact on our graduation rate and  
5 on our dropout, and we kind of saw the difference  
6 when you looked at both of those measures.

7           So our stakeholders agreed and felt  
8 like -- 95 percent of stakeholders felt like  
9 '18-19 should be our baseline for Indicator 2, and  
10 again, they also felt like an incremental increase  
11 for the -- I'm sorry -- decrease. So with  
12 Indicator 2, we're looking at decreasing our rate  
13 of dropouts, so we start with our baseline, which  
14 would be 11.44 percent, and we start decreasing  
15 that incrementally and hoping to get to a final  
16 target. And I don't have my targets right in  
17 front of me to tell you what that final five years  
18 is, but it would be linked in the website that  
19 Lauren showed you if you wanted to look at those  
20 PowerPoints and look at the data itself.

21           So 86 percent of stakeholders felt  
22 like incremental decreases should be used, and ten  
23 percent felt like we should just start with 11.44  
24 percent and then just decrease in the final year.  
25 And you can see those charts, again, in the

1 presentation that we shared with our stakeholders  
2 in April.

3 Okay, Lauren. And, again, for  
4 improvement strategies, the three that rose to the  
5 top for dropout was culturally responsive  
6 practices, social and behavioral interventions,  
7 and parent and engagement strategies.

8 You can move onto the next one. And  
9 then our measures of progress were, again, the  
10 dropout rates for all students compared to  
11 students with disabilities, and the dropout  
12 calculation---

13 MS. MOOREFIELD: Kelley?

14 MS. BLAS: Yes?

15 MS. MOOREFIELD: I'm sorry. This is  
16 Ginny Moorefield again. Can you go back to the  
17 previous slide?

18 MS. BLAS: Sure.

19 MS. MOOREFIELD: The graph about what  
20 the -- the improvement strategies, what -- like  
21 are these going to be implemented K-12 or like  
22 where are these improvement strategies going to be  
23 focused, what grade level?

24 MS. BLAS: Lauren, I do not have  
25 our -- probably they're on the -- on our website.

1 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah. So these -- when  
2 we're thinking about dropout, you know, what the  
3 evidence tells us is that if you wait to think  
4 about working on dropout until high school, you've  
5 waited too late, right?

6 MS. MOOREFIELD: Well, that was going  
7 to be my point, that, you know, if we are only  
8 focusing on high school students, then we're not  
9 going to get any improvement. Okay. So I'm glad  
10 to see that you guys are kind of thinking along  
11 the same lines.

12 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah. Yeah. We know  
13 that certainly late elementary and middle school  
14 are -- for these kinds of improvement strategies  
15 are really critical both for graduation and  
16 dropout. We know that transition from eighth to  
17 ninth grade is -- literature tells us that that is  
18 a super vulnerable year, right? That transition  
19 is incredibly important.

20 And so making sure that we are  
21 setting students with disabilities up for success,  
22 that we are attending very carefully to that  
23 particular transition so that -- my sense is that  
24 these improvement strategies are really going to  
25 be critical in middle school especially.

1 MS. MOOREFIELD: Well, I just want to  
2 throw this out there for consideration, that it  
3 might be even beneficial to start -- to go ahead  
4 and start as soon as -- you know, in kindergarten  
5 or whenever the child is identified because if --  
6 you know, when we're talking about especially the  
7 parent engagement strategies, you know, if parents  
8 start out -- you know, that's when we're engaged  
9 because that's when we're young enough to have the  
10 energy to be engaged, is when our kids are  
11 younger. The older they get, the more tired we  
12 get.

13 And, you know, if they -- if we start  
14 at the elementary level, then the parents will be  
15 used to being engaged and involved by the time the  
16 kid gets to middle and high school, and the parent  
17 may even be more likely to demand better and  
18 demand more engagement and more improvement  
19 strategies, you know, as their child -- you know,  
20 as they're used to, you know, as their child goes  
21 through the K-12 system.

22 MS. HOLAHAN: That's really helpful  
23 to hear. Thank you.

24 MS. THOMAS: Lauren?

25 MS. HOLAHAN: This is Sherry. If I

1 could jump in just a second. One of the things we  
2 were very intentional with when we started our  
3 State Systemic Improvement Plan five years ago,  
4 six years ago was looking at the continuum of  
5 transition, so starting with that pre-K student  
6 all the way through graduation. So we are right  
7 there with you. We've got to start early and  
8 often and can't wait till high school to do this.

9 And so much of our work has been  
10 built in the last five years around ensuring kids  
11 are making good transition and good progress from  
12 one transitional time -- so preschool to  
13 kindergarten, kindergarten up into regular  
14 elementary school, elementary to middle, and  
15 middle to high. And so we've worked really hard  
16 with districts to keep that focus on what it looks  
17 like from the beginning to the graduation piece.

18 What you said just absolutely  
19 validated that that is a need we need to continue.  
20 So thank you.

21 MS. BLAS: Thanks, Ginny. And I'll  
22 just say that that's exactly the type of  
23 conversations that we hope to have in these  
24 stakeholder meetings. So it just shows even more  
25 why we need you-all on these calls and to just

1 share your perspective. So thank you, Ginny.

2 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yes. And I do have  
3 your list of meetings, and it is in my plan. Life  
4 is just a bit much right now.

5 MS. BLAS: I understand. So we'll  
6 move onto our stakeholder feedback for Indicator  
7 3, which is participation and performance of  
8 children with IEPs on statewide assessments. And  
9 this indicator changed significantly from OSEP, so  
10 we had some breakdowns in the way that we're  
11 reporting our exams. Again, we did not have any  
12 testing -- federally-mandated testing reported for  
13 '19-20. So we are looking at the '18-19 school  
14 year for our baseline.

15 And the first indicator is Indicator  
16 3a, and that is participation of students on the  
17 statewide exams, and in the past, our target was  
18 equal to or greater than 95 percent participation,  
19 and as you can see, our stakeholders  
20 overwhelmingly said that they wanted to keep that  
21 target of equal to or greater than 95 percent. We  
22 had a few stakeholders that felt like our  
23 participation should be greater than 95 percent,  
24 and we had some comments regarding COVID, and you  
25 can review those in the slide.

1                   And then we started looking at the  
2                   breakdown of -- so one of the changes that OSEP  
3                   made was we -- in the past, we reported our  
4                   performance of students with disabilities on exams  
5                   from grades 3, 4 -- grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and  
6                   then high school. In the new performance package,  
7                   we're only reporting on grades 4, 8, and high  
8                   school. So we did break down the data for those  
9                   exams.

10                   And the other change that they were  
11                   making is, in the past, we reported the grade  
12                   level exam and the alternate exam, the NC Extend  
13                   1, together in one indicator. So in the new  
14                   package, those are broken down into separate  
15                   indicators. So for 3b we report on the grade  
16                   level -- the grade level test, which is our fourth  
17                   grade EOG, by itself. So we're not including  
18                   students who took the alternate exam in this data.

19                   And so the options were to increase  
20                   the target from the baseline in the final year,  
21                   increase the target from the baseline  
22                   incrementally -- and we'll talk a little bit about  
23                   what the incremental increase looks like -- reuse  
24                   targets from our previous SPP/APR package, or use  
25                   targets from the current Every Student Succeeds

1 Act plan. And, again, a large majority of our  
2 stakeholders felt like incremental increases from  
3 the baseline would be more beneficial for our  
4 students with disabilities in the fourth grade  
5 EOG.

6 And you can move forward to the  
7 eighth grade.

8 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah. Can I just add,  
9 Kelley, that the way we calculated those  
10 incremental increases was to ensure that there  
11 would be a closing of the gap between proficiency  
12 for students with disabilities compared to all  
13 students.

14 MS. BLAS: That's right. That's  
15 right. And so Indicator 3d, which you don't see  
16 here, we do have to report on the gap between  
17 students with disabilities and all students taking  
18 the grade level exam. And so we calculated that  
19 gap, showed it in our data to our stakeholders,  
20 and we used that for our incremental increase.  
21 And so it will not only address -- if we choose to  
22 go with our incremental increase, it will not only  
23 address 3b, but it would also address what we have  
24 to report on for 3d, which is that gap.

25 And this is eighth grade, and you can

1 also see that our stakeholders felt like the  
2 incremental increase -- and you'll see that  
3 throughout the whole presentation -- to high  
4 school, they also chose the incremental increase.

5 And then for improvement strategies,  
6 once again, our research-informed practices group  
7 worked really hard on choosing improvement  
8 strategies for this -- specifically for this  
9 indicator, and the top flyers for that were  
10 Foundations of Math and Reading Research to  
11 Classroom Practice, followed by specially designed  
12 instruction with a multi-tiered system of support,  
13 and data-based individualization.

14 And, again, if you want to know more  
15 about what these improvement strategies are, go to  
16 the website that Lauren provided you, and you go  
17 to the May meeting and you can see the attachment  
18 that talks specifically about the improvement  
19 strategies for this indicator.

20 And then for our measures of  
21 progress, our number one was progress monitoring  
22 and then our EOG and EEOC proficiency data,  
23 followed by our attendance and discipline early  
24 warning system data from Power School and ECATS.

25 And for Indicator 3c, again, I'll

1 just remind you that OSEP has broken out our exams  
2 to look at grade level exams, and then for  
3 Indicator 3c, we're just looking at our alternate  
4 achievement exams, and these are the students that  
5 are taking the NC Extend test. And, once again,  
6 they had the same options for setting different  
7 targets, and they chose the incremental increase  
8 for fourth grade and eighth grade as well and high  
9 school.

10 And then, Lauren, I don't know if you  
11 want to go over the meeting feedback or I can -- I  
12 can share on it.

13 MS. HOLAHAN: Sure. We didn't have  
14 this available in April, but it will be -- the  
15 final part of their feedback in May and then going  
16 forward, just to get some sense of how people who  
17 participated in the meetings and/or listened  
18 online -- just how they felt in terms of  
19 communication prior to the meeting, the  
20 organization, the welcome and inclusion spirit of  
21 the meeting, if the questions were answered, just  
22 a general sense of how their -- what their  
23 experience in participating in these meetings was  
24 like.

25 And you can see that there's good

1 strong agreement from folks. We got good feedback  
2 about them, and so we'll continue to ask these  
3 questions at the end of each meeting to make sure  
4 that we make any adjustments that we need to. So  
5 I don't -- I have not been looking at the chat  
6 because I'm sharing my screen. I'm going to stop  
7 sharing now, and---

8 MS. UTZ: There has not been anything  
9 added.

10 MS. HOLAHAN: I think there was sent  
11 to me privately a question about -- just to  
12 clarify that in terms of the alternate assessments  
13 are now removed from these reported stats. In the  
14 past, we reported the performance of students who  
15 took the alternate assessment and the grade level  
16 assessment -- we reported them all together. Now  
17 we are reporting them separately. So we are still  
18 tracking and very much paying attention to all  
19 students regardless of the test type that they  
20 take, but we just report those separately.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: So there was no  
22 questions? Alexis, there's no question?

23 MS. UTZ: No.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: So thank you,  
25 Lauren and Kelley.

1 MS. BLAS: Thanks for having us.

2 MS. HOLAHAN: Yes, thanks so much for  
3 having us.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: So next we have  
5 Sherry and Matt for agency updates.

6 MS. THOMAS: Good morning, everyone.  
7 I hope this finds you-all well and looking forward  
8 to -- hopefully the next time, we'll be able to be  
9 back in the building face-to-face. But thank you  
10 for all your diligence during the pandemic and our  
11 adjustments around COVID to continue to support  
12 our students with disabilities and all exceptional  
13 children's program and to continue to meet and  
14 work as you have done as the Council.

15 Thank you, Alexis, for pulling that  
16 up. So Matt and I have combined our presentation  
17 today to bring this to you in, hopefully, a rather  
18 fluid method. Are you going to put it in  
19 presenter mode?

20 MS. UTZ: If I do that, then I can't  
21 see [inaudible].

22 MS. THOMAS: Okay. That's fine. I  
23 just didn't know if I needed to wait for you to do  
24 that.

25 MS. UTZ: No. I think we're good as

1 long as you guys can see it. Is that okay?

2 MS. THOMAS: Yes. I think you also  
3 linked it, didn't you, into---

4 MS. UTZ: I did.

5 MS. THOMAS: Okay. So it's linked  
6 in. All right. This shows the four topics that  
7 came to us for updates today from the Division are  
8 around School Extension Learning Recovery and  
9 Enrichment Programs, which was, as you know, the  
10 legislative summer enrichment camp. Some  
11 districts are calling it that. The federal  
12 increases that we are receiving because of the  
13 Americans Recovery Plan dollars that were added to  
14 IDEA. Some information on social and emotional  
15 learning. And then, finally, we have received our  
16 monitoring report as of the 18th of May, and so  
17 I'm going to talk a little bit about that.

18 You can move ahead, Alexis. So this  
19 legislation that required parents to have the  
20 option to send their children to a summer learning  
21 program has criteria that should be met by the  
22 student to put them at risk, and all students on  
23 an IEP are not at risk. If they are making good  
24 progress on their IEP goals, if they are making  
25 expected progress related to their grade-level

1 standards with an IEP, they may or may not be a  
2 student that would be a first tier in summer camp.  
3 But then it's -- once they've reached the  
4 capacity -- once they've reached all students who,  
5 in that district, meet the at-risk criteria, if  
6 there are other vacancies, then any student can  
7 attend whether they meet that at-risk criteria or  
8 not.

9 A couple of things to remember that's  
10 been really important for us to clarify for our  
11 directors is that this is not an extension of the  
12 school year. So this is not a required  
13 participation attendance. Therefore, special ed  
14 services are not required to be delivered during  
15 the summer programs. If students are to receive  
16 Extended School Year or Compensatory Education  
17 Services, those cannot occur concurrent with that  
18 summer program if students are involved in that  
19 program.

20 So if Alexis is in the summer program  
21 because she's met that criteria for at risk, she  
22 has to get her Extended School Year or her  
23 Compensatory Ed, if that is something that is  
24 required for her individually, after that  
25 schooltime is over, whether it's later in the day

1 or whether it's in the weeks where this extended  
2 summer program is not being offered. But it can't  
3 be commingled, in other words.

4 And I put that statement there.

5 Students with disabilities are eligible to attend,  
6 but it's not just a requirement that because you  
7 are a student with special needs, a student with  
8 an IEP, that you would automatically be in this  
9 loop for the summer extended learning. There  
10 should be modifications and accommodations  
11 included in that learning if it's appropriate and  
12 if they have been routine for those students,  
13 whether they have a 504 plan or whether they have  
14 an IEP.

15 And then, additionally, a lot of  
16 districts are kind of going above and beyond, and  
17 many of them are creating a summer camp experience  
18 for students who are on the Extended Content  
19 Standards because they recognize that those were  
20 the students who were really the hardest sometimes  
21 to serve in that virtual setting if it was a  
22 district that was extensively in a Plan B or a  
23 Plan C delivery of school over the last school  
24 year.

25 You know, we've gotten -- we get a

1 lot of email, as you know, and an interesting  
2 email that I wanted to share is a parent who was  
3 actually advocating for her student, who is on the  
4 Extended Content Standards, with significant  
5 disabilities, to be able to attend virtual public  
6 school again next year in a school district's  
7 academy because she has been successful. It had  
8 been appropriate for her, and so the parent  
9 advocated for that virtual learning for the coming  
10 school year, and of course, the district has  
11 accommodated that.

12 And all that to say, I believe we are  
13 now in a totally new frame of mind of how we look  
14 at delivering special education services, how we  
15 look at what the least restrictive environment  
16 might be for some students, and how we can ensure  
17 FAPE in maybe a way that we have not previously  
18 thought about doing that. So I think there's  
19 going to be some great opportunities moving  
20 forward.

21 I think this summer learning is going  
22 to be a great boost to kids, and I think our  
23 districts are really working hard to make those  
24 additional provisions to provide that additional  
25 support engagement. We're trying not to call this

1 recovery because what it really feels like is more  
2 of an enhancement and that additional dose that we  
3 talk about in the MTSS world of getting  
4 instruction to our kids because of the year  
5 they've had with COVID.

6 Okay, Alexis. So I'm happy to share  
7 some really exciting news. We just got this last  
8 week. We were notified earlier in the spring that  
9 our regular IDEA 611 Grant, which is the school-  
10 age six through -- up to 22 IDEA grant funding for  
11 North Carolina, is going to be \$377,384,354, a lot  
12 of threes in there. That was our regular  
13 allotment, which was an increase from last year,  
14 and traditionally, it does go up, you know, a  
15 little bit every year. It has over the last  
16 several years.

17 We received the notice that our  
18 supplemental award through the Americans Recovery  
19 Plan, or ARP as they're calling it, was an  
20 additional 81.3 million. So North Carolina's  
21 total award for the '21-22 fiscal school year is  
22 \$458,700,000 plus. Of note of that is that our --  
23 in our grant, there is always a percentage and  
24 it's at about, I think, five percent or so of the  
25 total grant award. The formula sets a maximum

1 amount that we may set aside for administration,  
2 and that covers salaries. I mean that is -- that  
3 is where we fund our salaries that are under  
4 federal -- federal provisions.

5 So our administration of 6.4,  
6 something like that, million will be coming out of  
7 the three seventy-seven. There will be no  
8 administrative costs coming out of the 81.3  
9 additional million dollars. All of that will go  
10 to LEAs. So LEAs are going to get that extra bump  
11 of grant funding this year because of that  
12 supplemental award.

13 And then you can go to the next  
14 slide, please. And this shows the breakdown from  
15 our preschool EC grant, which is IDEA 619 Grant.  
16 The same scenario. The regular award was  
17 announced earlier in the spring and notification.  
18 This is the supplementary additional funding for a  
19 total -- and the same rules apply here, no  
20 administrative costs will come out of that six  
21 million.

22 So North Carolina has had a nice  
23 additional supplemental amount that has been  
24 awarded. It's at about 67 million over all, those  
25 two funding streams, and so we are very excited to

1 be able to push that out to our LEAs because we  
2 know that additional services are going to  
3 continue to be needed. Adjustments are going to  
4 need to be made based on how they're providing  
5 services, and hopefully, this will be helpful to  
6 them.

7 All right. Next slide, Alexis. And  
8 I'm going to turn it over to Matt now.

9 DR. HOSKINS: Thanks, everyone. Good  
10 morning. As always, I appreciate that this is a  
11 topic of interest of the Council and am super  
12 excited to share.

13 Last time I know that I walked  
14 through the mental health policy, the website that  
15 we have, and all the resources that are available  
16 there for districts and parents, and we are now at  
17 the point where districts are submitting those  
18 plans. Those are due on July 1st, and we had a  
19 lot of dialogue and conversations with districts  
20 and provided a lot of supports to them as they've  
21 been in the development of those plans.

22 So I know that the specific request  
23 was social and emotional learning, but I want to  
24 talk about social and emotional learning within a  
25 broader context, and we'll then go into some

1 details around specifically what's happening  
2 around SEL.

3 One of the first things that I want  
4 to talk about is Project AWARE. This is an  
5 \$8.8-million grant that we have with the Substance  
6 Abuse and Mental Health Services agency. This is  
7 specifically focused on supporting mental health  
8 for students within the context of schools and  
9 then with building better partnerships with our  
10 community providers for the primary purpose of  
11 ensuring that we don't have kids that are slipping  
12 through the cracks of the mental health system,  
13 knowing that the school is a unique place to be  
14 able to provide services, but also the most  
15 accessible place that kids can access mental  
16 health services, and the stronger partnerships we  
17 have and availability there increases their access  
18 to that.

19 We're doing this in a time where we  
20 know that just recently there was a report from  
21 the CDC that we're seeing about a 31 percent  
22 increase in emergency department/emergency room  
23 visits for children and adolescents for either  
24 suicidal ideation or suicide attempts. And so  
25 this is an incredibly important readiness

1 component that schools are going to have to be  
2 facing as we move back into face-to-face  
3 instruction, knowing that kids have experienced  
4 trauma and will need the supports and  
5 identification and referrals when it can't be  
6 addressed within the school system.

7           So with Project AWARE, we feel like  
8 we have a really strong protocol and model for  
9 doing that across different districts that look  
10 differently in terms of geography and  
11 demographics, and so we've really been working  
12 hard to scale this across the state. They've been  
13 the ones that have informed a lot of the mental  
14 health policy, a lot of the work that we've done  
15 in terms of looking at social and emotional  
16 support recommendations during the pandemic and  
17 virtual school and then reentry into that.

18           And then we're also really excited  
19 that now that we've had a couple of years of doing  
20 this and we're starting to see some of the results  
21 that we're really seeing that there's a large  
22 number of students that are benefitting from this  
23 from a number of different kind of short-term and  
24 long-term outcomes. We see that there are a lot  
25 of kids that are receiving access to services, but

1 not only that, we're seeing things that were in  
2 our long-term outcomes in terms of things like  
3 disciplinary measures, removals -- removals from  
4 school, that those are decreasing and improving  
5 within the sites there.

6 And then we're also excited to say  
7 that we've heard recently from our -- not  
8 recently -- several months ago that we were able  
9 and eligible to apply for a concurrent Project  
10 AWARE grant to bring three more sites on board.  
11 We've applied for that, and I feel like we have a  
12 strong application, and we look forward to hearing  
13 back from SAMHSA, to bring on three additional  
14 sites and continue to scale that work across the  
15 state.

16 I also feel like with some of the  
17 movement that we have moving forward that this is  
18 going to be work that's continued to be scalable  
19 once we move beyond having access to grant funds,  
20 that we've just learned an incredible amount from  
21 these districts. Other districts are very clearly  
22 interested in the work and applying that and then  
23 investing in that with fiscal resources that they  
24 have. So really excited about that.

25 Also, want to share some of our work

1 that we have done to align with the State Board  
2 our strategic plan, which we have shared, and this  
3 is very specific. It's based on educational  
4 equity, but very specifically focused on  
5 significant disproportionality in EC, so looking  
6 to see when we have disproportionality across  
7 races related to the continuum of placement, the  
8 identification category, and then in discipline.

9 Again, we've had multiple sites that  
10 we have brought into another grant opportunity  
11 that we have that, again, is referred to as ARISE.  
12 We've had a number of sessions with them where  
13 we've worked through systematic problem-solving  
14 models, plan developments, looking systemically at  
15 what kind of things need to happen, not just in  
16 special education, but also in general education  
17 to really work on prevention of significant -- of  
18 disproportionate placements and discipline and  
19 then identification as well.

20 So having good success with the sites  
21 that we've worked with that and are now moving to  
22 scale that with other sites that are on our  
23 warning list and on our significant  
24 disproportionality list. We learned the things  
25 that work well, what are the things that we

1 need -- that didn't work as well, and then how can  
2 we apply that to work with other LEAs and  
3 districts. And so I'm excited about that work  
4 moving forward.

5 And so I just kind of want to say  
6 that social and emotional learning really sits at  
7 the core and the universal support that is part of  
8 all three of these areas, and so it really plays a  
9 critical role. We're fortunate that we have a  
10 group of folks at DPI that are across divisions  
11 that have a really good deep knowledge of the  
12 research behind SEL and how to implement it well.  
13 And so I'm going to talk through just some of the  
14 plans that we have for that, what we've done, and  
15 what the plans for moving forward are.

16 Alexis, if you can go to the next  
17 slide. So we have developed and really worked  
18 with a national partner in the development of  
19 what's referred to as the theory of action. So,  
20 basically, if we do X, Y, and Z activities, how do  
21 we expect that would impact associated outcomes  
22 with that. And so the major key areas that are a  
23 part of this are around building a foundational  
24 support plan, strengthening adult SEL competencies  
25 and capacities.

1           So what we've seen from the research  
2 is really clear that before we go into deep work  
3 with students, that we need to ensure that there's  
4 a clear understanding of what those social-  
5 emotional competencies are and that they are  
6 modeled and shared by adult staff members. That  
7 then we begin promoting that for students, and  
8 then we engage in ongoing continuous improvement  
9 and evaluation.

10           And so just in terms of some of the  
11 highlights of what's happened in North Carolina in  
12 regard to this theory of action, North Carolina  
13 has developed a vision and goals for SEL. We've  
14 also began to do some -- or have completed some  
15 standards mapping with social and emotional  
16 learning and so something that really has been  
17 critical with this work, and what we hear from  
18 parents and from the field is that this can't be  
19 something that's done separate and apart from  
20 everything else that's happening in school on a  
21 daily basis.

22           So rather than developing a set of  
23 standards for North Carolina related to social and  
24 emotional learning, essentially what we've done is  
25 looked at those self-competencies and how can

1 those be embedded into other standards so that  
2 they're occurring continuously throughout the day  
3 and embedded within the academic instruction  
4 that's occurring.

5 Also have been working a lot on  
6 modeling and sharing the 3 Signature Practices of  
7 social and emotional learning which include making  
8 sure that there's an opening activity for anything  
9 that occurs that allows for engagement and for  
10 everybody to be ready and in a good space to  
11 participate in a lesson or participate in the  
12 course of the day, engagement strategies that are  
13 evidence-based throughout the course of that, and  
14 then, also, closing each activity with a question  
15 or item that has an optimistic closure in terms of  
16 what the next steps will be. That's something  
17 that we have begun embedding in our meetings at  
18 DPI, with our Division, also when we're working  
19 with districts, and have had a lot of success with  
20 that.

21 We also have been able to -- as part  
22 of the -- well, the ARISE project has supported  
23 this to some extent as well as Project AWARE --  
24 begun an North Carolina SEL and Equity project.  
25 Again, this is focused a lot on districts who have

1 had -- been on the warning list or the significant  
2 disproportionality list where we've provided  
3 ongoing support and coaching on the standards  
4 mapping, the signature practices, and different  
5 ways to embed social and emotional learning within  
6 the context of the day. We have 42 PSUs that have  
7 been involved with that who are reporting good  
8 outcomes from that, and we're excited about  
9 continuing to scale that work as well.

10 If you'll go to the next slide. I  
11 did want to make you aware of just some resources,  
12 again, that are available on our current website.  
13 If you just go to the NC DPI website search, which  
14 you will see at the top of the screen here, social  
15 and emotional learning, we have -- it will bring  
16 you to this page that has a number of resources  
17 that include both national and state resources.

18 And if you'll go to the next slide,  
19 Alexis. There are a number of state resources  
20 that have been developed by folks here related to  
21 arts education that focuses on a number of things  
22 that can be done through art, a self-care series,  
23 also integrating SEL into the content areas that I  
24 just described previously and some webinars  
25 related to that, the actual standards mapping

1 document and the table around that and then also  
2 some of the realignment with those standards with  
3 the Core SEL Competencies that have been  
4 identified by the national organization and  
5 through their research.

6 And this is just an example of one of  
7 those resources which is -- that you'd be able to  
8 download from that website, which is the actual  
9 standards mapping final document. You can see the  
10 content areas that are there, then the resources  
11 that are available in PDF, and guided  
12 communication around different connections that  
13 can be made with the SEL competencies and within  
14 that specific content area and ways that this  
15 could be embedded within the class.

16 And you can see also that a lot of  
17 these are -- they're done by grade level to ensure  
18 that those competencies are aligned to the level  
19 of the content that's being shared and that those  
20 are appropriately aligned.

21 So I want to -- that's some of the  
22 major work that's happening with SEL right now,  
23 but I really would love to hear some feedback from  
24 this Council in terms of this work, what you're  
25 experiencing, your recommendations. All of that

1 would be super helpful as we continue to evolve  
2 and promote this work.

3 MS. THOMAS: Matt, I thought you were  
4 hopping in there to cover [inaudible]. All right.  
5 And I don't know, Alexis, if we have questions  
6 already, if we need to stop for that because I am  
7 not seeing the chat either.

8 MS. UTZ: I have no questions in the  
9 chat right now.

10 MS. THOMAS: Okay. Super. All  
11 right. Then, we'll launch into here. So I  
12 believe, Alexis, this has been shared with the  
13 Council?

14 MS. UTZ: Yes, it is in their Google  
15 folder.

16 MS. THOMAS: The Google folder.  
17 Okay.

18 MS. UTZ: And I think it's -- yeah,  
19 it is linked in the agenda as well.

20 MS. THOMAS: Okay. Super. So I'm  
21 going to try to give you a very high-level review  
22 of just the corrective actions that resulted. I'm  
23 going to start with a little bit of background  
24 since some of you may not have been on the Council  
25 when this process actually started.

1                   So if you'll go to that one. So  
2 North Carolina was notified in probably October or  
3 so of 2019 that we would be receiving a  
4 differentiated monitoring and support visit. I  
5 think our last monitoring visit from OSEP had been  
6 2009 or 2011. It had been a long time, and so we  
7 were due.

8                   And they had some criteria, and as  
9 you look at that report, one of the things you  
10 will see is where they've listed some of the  
11 criteria that raised us up to the level of getting  
12 a monitoring visit, and one of the things was that  
13 we had a new EC director within two years, that we  
14 have a large number of charter schools, that we  
15 have a large grant allotment amount from OSEP.

16                   And so there were some things listed  
17 that kind of raised us up to the level of having  
18 that monitoring visit, and so I wanted to explain  
19 that. It's not that we necessarily did anything  
20 to cause that part. It's just, as they review  
21 data, as we review monitoring of LEAs, there are  
22 sometimes that we have those that are brand-new,  
23 for example, that we go in to make sure we monitor  
24 the first year. So all that was pretty ordinary  
25 and up front.

1                   So our visit was the week of January  
2 27th through the 31st. They were in the building  
3 for three and a half days and then spent two days  
4 out in LEAs. There was a team that went to a  
5 charter school, there was a team that went to a  
6 district in this region, and a team that went to a  
7 district in the Southwest Region. And so for two  
8 days, they visited with school teams. They  
9 visited a high school, a middle school, and an  
10 elementary school, and they had meetings with  
11 their central office staff.

12                   We had staff that accompanied them  
13 but did not sit in on any of those internal  
14 meetings with the elementary, the middle, or the  
15 high school staff or the central office staff. So  
16 we were there just to provide support, to be able  
17 to answer any questions that they may have after  
18 those meetings, but we were not as staff engaged  
19 in those meetings with OSEP and the LEAs.

20                   We were given a timeline that we  
21 should have a report back in about 90 days. That  
22 obviously did not occur. It was a year later and  
23 almost 90 days. So we would get additional  
24 questions throughout the last year. We've  
25 provided additional clarification. We've provided

1 additional documentation on the areas that they  
2 were focused on reviewing.

3 And as you look in the report, you  
4 can see they hit some specific areas, looking at  
5 our physical monitoring process and our  
6 subrecipient funding and monitoring, which is  
7 where we push our IDEA dollars out to the local  
8 districts. They looked at our general supervision  
9 from a compliance standpoint and, in particular,  
10 with the due processes that we have in place.  
11 They looked at MTSS as it related to the  
12 eligibility for SLD and the whole functionality of  
13 the MTSS framework in North Carolina, the  
14 requirements, any barriers, any problems, any  
15 hiccups, whatever.

16 And then we had gone to OSEP back in  
17 2017 and asked for technical assistance and  
18 guidance around some issues we were having where  
19 private residential psychiatric treatment  
20 facilities in other states, and in one state in  
21 particular, were reaching out to us at the  
22 Department asking for funding for students from  
23 North Carolina, who were North Carolina residents,  
24 that had been placed in those private  
25 residential -- private psychiatric residential

1 treatment facilities.

2 I'm going to call that PRTF from now  
3 on. Hopefully, you'll understand what that means,  
4 but I get -- it gets tangled when I try to get all  
5 that terminology out.

6 So PRTFs in other states where  
7 students have been placed not by an IEP team, not  
8 by a school setting, not a recommendation from the  
9 school, and many times the schools really don't  
10 know that student has been moved to that  
11 residential treatment facility. So that's what  
12 has been happening.

13 So we asked for guidance. We asked  
14 for guidance again in 2018 when I became the  
15 director or the interim director. We asked for  
16 guidance again in 2019 after I was director. So  
17 multiple, multiple asks of OSEP for guidance, for  
18 clarity, for alignment to IDEA, to give us the  
19 policy piece that would give us the guidance.

20 We never got that. They instead put  
21 that on the monitoring visit as areas they were  
22 going to investigate. And so they talked to  
23 school districts about how students are placed in  
24 a private residential -- psychiatric residential  
25 treatment facility, a PRTF. We've had multiple

1 calls with them since their monitoring visit  
2 throughout 2020 with the Department of Health and  
3 Human Services, our partners there, because they  
4 manage the PRTFs in North Carolina. They license  
5 the PRTFs in North Carolina. So we were using  
6 their guidance to look at what other states might  
7 require, how students are getting into those  
8 facilities in other states.

9 All that to say, we started this with  
10 asking for guidance, and they included that topic  
11 in the monitoring report and now have given us  
12 corrective action. So, in essence, we still don't  
13 have guidance. We still don't have clarity. We  
14 will be writing a response to the report probably  
15 next week, getting that out to them, and then we  
16 have a call with OSEP on Friday, I believe, the  
17 18th to talk through this monitoring report, to  
18 discuss any areas where we have questions or  
19 concerns or need additional clarity.

20 So that was a lot of background, but  
21 I do know we have some new council members and I  
22 wanted you to at least have that whole story and  
23 picture. So, as you will see in the report, we  
24 have corrective action that is due 90 days from  
25 the receipt of that report, which was May 18th, so

1 that puts our corrective action at about the 12th  
2 of August.

3 So the first corrective action is  
4 that we have a process in place to ensure that  
5 reallocations of the IDEA Part B funding is going  
6 to serve students who may be in an LEA that has  
7 elected not to apply for funds. There's already a  
8 practice in place within our School Business  
9 Division because this is really not something we  
10 have control over, can control, distribute. We  
11 don't allot.

12 We give them the list of districts  
13 that have completed -- or LEAs that have completed  
14 their grant -- and I'm talking about all LEAs,  
15 charter and traditional -- and then they create  
16 the funding formula. They send out the  
17 allotments. They create the planning allotment.  
18 They do all that business work. We just ensure  
19 that that has gone out, that they have the  
20 appropriate information. So there's already a  
21 process in that they redistribute those funds. In  
22 particular, we usually have -- if someone chooses  
23 not to complete the grant and access those federal  
24 funds, it's -- I've never seen a traditional  
25 district do that. It's typically been a few of

1 our charter schools. And so those funds from that  
2 LEA would go back to that LEA to serve students.

3 So while it's been done, they  
4 couldn't find it in writing anywhere that was that  
5 explicit in the procedure in the policy manual for  
6 our funding. So that has been a corrective action  
7 that we will be working on with our School  
8 Business Division to get that language  
9 appropriately in the guidance documents to clarify  
10 that. So that will be Corrective Action Number 1.

11 Go to the next one, Alexis. Number 2  
12 was that we submit a sample template that includes  
13 the subrecipient awards -- so that's the federal  
14 money that we flow through to the LEAs -- with the  
15 grant award number that's called the GAN. So  
16 every year when we get the IDEA grant to the  
17 Department, it has a number that identifies it as  
18 IDEA funds and it also helps track what the year  
19 of those funds are. So when federal dollars  
20 through IDEA grants are released to an agency,  
21 they have a 27-month shelf life, for lack of a  
22 better term. So those funds are live, useable,  
23 available up to 27 months for both the state and  
24 the district.

25 And so this template -- this report

1 that they've asked us to create is not specific to  
2 just IDEA. There was actually a state audit  
3 finding that no federal programming in North  
4 Carolina DPI was getting that consistent letter  
5 like we get from OSEP that says this is the GAN  
6 number, this is the availability of the years of  
7 these funds. That's already been done. That's  
8 already in place.

9 It is going to be tied to our new  
10 grant system, and it will also come out from  
11 School Business. But we have to ensure that that  
12 is done. We have to send them a copy, but this is  
13 being done for all federal programs in DPI. It's  
14 just an additional step that needed to be done in  
15 the notification system, and so that will be -- is  
16 in the process, and that will certainly go out --  
17 as the awards are granted for the '21-22 IDEA  
18 grant years, they will receive this template and  
19 this document. So we can kind of check that one  
20 off our list as well.

21 Corrective Action 3 had to do with  
22 follow-up around the SEA state complaint that was  
23 filed around the absence of Child Find being  
24 implemented due to MTSS. And so they basically  
25 repeated all of the corrective actions we had

1 already put in place for the agency and the  
2 requirements that we need from LEAs to ensure that  
3 those practices are in place.

4 So we had to detail the status of  
5 implementing -- interestingly, we've already  
6 provided them the entire corrective action plan so  
7 they already had this, but it has, again, been  
8 included in our report. So ensuring that we've  
9 implemented the corrective action statewide with  
10 all LEAs.

11 That we can demonstrate that problem-  
12 solving teams have discussed any child currently  
13 in any tier of intervention whether or not they  
14 need to be considered for referral, and that's  
15 looking back to data pre-COVID to ensure that we  
16 haven't lost kids during the pandemic and the  
17 adjustment of school to virtual to hybrid, however  
18 school was done for the last year and a half.

19 And then documenting and  
20 demonstrating that the child's parent or parents  
21 have been involved in the problem-solving team's  
22 discussions because part of that state complaint  
23 was that even though we have put that in guidance  
24 through MTSS training, through webinars, and  
25 technical assistance that our division has

1 provided, we still found some instances where  
2 parents had not been included in those problem-  
3 solving discussions.

4 And so there is a form to document to  
5 submit that is required now, and so, again, we've  
6 got these corrective actions already in place, but  
7 we will be responding to these corrective actions  
8 as well in our reporting back by August 12th.

9 Corrective Action 4 was that we  
10 create and then submit to OSEP a mechanism to  
11 ensure that due process hearing decisions are  
12 implemented within a time frame that was  
13 prescribed by the hearing officer. We typically  
14 get that information, and we get the information  
15 from the LEA or from the parent if the due process  
16 corrective actions have not been in place, but we  
17 have not had, basically, a follow-up letter like  
18 we do with our state complaints.

19 Once we complete a state complaint  
20 investigation, we send out a letter and a report  
21 that capsulizes the complaint, the investigation,  
22 the data, the documentation that was provided, and  
23 then if there is a finding of noncompliance, what  
24 that corrective action is. We have not had that  
25 in place with due process hearings because we

1 really have no engagement in a due process  
2 hearing, but this corrective action is requiring  
3 us to create and do a follow-up, which will  
4 probably be a very similar follow-up letter with  
5 the corrective action rolled out that was ordered  
6 by the hearing officer and the time frame  
7 included.

8 If there wasn't a time frame, then we  
9 are being required to create that in our  
10 procedures as we do that follow-up as well. So  
11 that is something that Carol Ann and her team, I  
12 think, are already actually working on to meet  
13 that corrective action item.

14 Go to the next slide. And then this  
15 goes back to the private residential --  
16 psychiatric residential treatment facilities. So  
17 we have two sets of corrective actions for this  
18 item. We have to identify, locate, and evaluate  
19 students with disabilities who may be in a PRTF in  
20 another state but are -- their domicile or their  
21 state of residence is North Carolina, their  
22 parents are still in North Carolina.

23 We have to find those kids across the  
24 country in any state that has been placed there.  
25 We have to determine if they were publicly placed.

1 So if DHHS, which is a state agency, placed these  
2 students, if a local management entity who is  
3 working in a contract relationship with a local  
4 DSS or a local health department have placed these  
5 students, if the judicial system has placed these  
6 students, those would all be state-placed  
7 decisions.

8 So we have to identify those  
9 students. We have to determine if they were then  
10 placed by that public or that state entity, and if  
11 so, we have to ensure that FAPE is being provided  
12 to that student placed in a PRTF outside of North  
13 Carolina.

14 If you'll go to the next slide. The  
15 second phase of this corrective action is that we  
16 also provide a detailed description of the steps  
17 that we have taken to identify, locate, and  
18 evaluate, the steps we have identified and put in  
19 place to ensure that students are identified and  
20 FAPE is available and then any additional steps.  
21 So, in other words, what is our new procedure for  
22 tracking these students to ensure they are  
23 receiving FAPE.

24 So that looks like a lot when we  
25 really get it down to a granular level. I feel

1 like most of this was already in process or in  
2 place or was being taken care of. So I feel like  
3 there are very few corrective actions that we have  
4 to put in place, but the biggest concern we have  
5 is with the PRTFs because we still don't believe  
6 they have at OSEP a clear understanding that these  
7 students are not being placed by a state agency,  
8 and we have no way of knowing where those students  
9 are because there's no mechanism and no  
10 requirement for the State to be notified or for  
11 the district to be notified if it's not from an  
12 IEP team placement.

13 So we're going to have that further  
14 conversation on the 18th and hope we get a little  
15 more clarity with them, and we will update you if  
16 there any adjustments to this Differentiated  
17 Monitoring and Support Report. And now I will  
18 pause, because I've been talking for a long time,  
19 to see if we have any questions.

20 MS. UTZ: There are none in the chat  
21 box.

22 MS. THOMAS: Then, I either bored you  
23 to death or I gave you way too much information or  
24 it was clear enough that you don't have questions  
25 now. If you do later, please feel free to shoot

1 those to me through Alexis or to me directly. I'm  
2 happy to respond to any of your questions. I can  
3 take--- I'm sorry. Do we have a question?

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: No questions.

5 MS. THOMAS: Okay. Can I give you  
6 one more kind of exciting update---

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

8 MS. THOMAS: ---that I don't think  
9 we've included anywhere? Besides getting lots of  
10 federal money for the LEAs -- that was a big  
11 celebration -- we are moving forward with plans to  
12 have our conference on exceptional children  
13 face-to-face this November in Greensboro.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent.

15 MS. THOMAS: It will be our  
16 seventieth conference on Exceptional Children.  
17 Over the last 72 years, we've missed two years of  
18 providing this conference. And so we're going to  
19 celebrate that platinum anniversary, so to speak,  
20 of our conference and look forward to having  
21 council members be a part of that. We also will  
22 include parent sessions and strands devoted to  
23 parents.

24 So we'll look forward to working with  
25 you to get those developed and would love any

1 ideas you have on any of those presentations that  
2 we might have. We'll be doing calls for proposals  
3 very shortly, but it feels good to be able to  
4 celebrate that. Also that we're getting back to a  
5 little bit of normalcy with what we've provided  
6 out to the field.

7 So thank you for the time today, for  
8 letting me be here, and give you this information.  
9 And appreciate all you do and your dedication to  
10 this group and to this work.

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

13 MS. UTZ: So last meeting Marge asked  
14 for the -- her timing of -- time on the agenda for  
15 the subcommittee work, but Abby and Marge aren't  
16 here. So I don't know if anyone from that group  
17 can give us an update, but I'd also -- so I don't  
18 know.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So is anyone here  
20 from that group to give us an update on what you  
21 discussed in the group and what you need to share  
22 with us? Anyone?

23 **(No audible response.)**

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I don't have a  
25 list before me of the members of that group,

1 Alexis.

2 MS. UTZ: One second. Policies and  
3 Procedures. Oh. My note was it was about group  
4 norms and social media, and it looks -- I don't  
5 know who was present. Kristen's on there, but I  
6 don't think she was part of that discussion.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Right. Marge is  
8 not here.

9 MS. UTZ: No.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Anthony's not here.

11 MS. UTZ: Christy was going to be  
12 logging back in, but I don't think she's gotten  
13 back on yet. Oh, Lisa. Lisa has a question, I  
14 think. Lisa, go ahead.

15 MS. PHILLIPS: No, I don't have a  
16 question.

17 MS. UTZ: Okay. I've never seen the  
18 icon that's next to your name in participants, so  
19 I wasn't sure what it was.

20 MS. PHILLIPS: Oh, really. I guess  
21 I'll take a look. I don't know what it is---

22 MS. UTZ: It's a question mark in a  
23 bubble. So I didn't know if you asked a question  
24 or had a question. I don't know.

25 MS. PHILLIPS: I did ask -- I did ask

1 what the dates were for EC conference when we were  
2 talking about that. So maybe that's why there's a  
3 bubble there still.

4 MS. UTZ: Did she answer---

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: She did give us the  
6 dates. Did you see the question before they left?  
7 Okay. I think Alexis can get back to us on that.

8 MS. UTZ: Yes, I can. I don't know  
9 the dates yet either. It might be that it's  
10 not--- Oh, Sherry.

11 MS. THOMAS: Hi. Those dates are --  
12 the dates of the conference -- our institutes will  
13 be November 16th, and then the conference will be  
14 the 17th and a half day on the 18th. So November  
15 17th and 18th is the conference.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

17 MS. PHILLIPS: Great. Thank you.

18 MS. THOMAS: Sorry I didn't tell you  
19 that earlier.

20 MS. PHILLIPS: No, no, no. I think I  
21 might like to attend this year.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: So that's November  
23 16th for the preconference and November 17th and  
24 18th for the full conference.

25 MS. UTZ: She coughed and I couldn't

1 hear the end date.

2 MS. THOMAS: One more time---

3 MS. UTZ: No, we're good. She got  
4 it.

5 MS. THOMAS: She got it. Okay.  
6 Good, good, good.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Since  
8 we don't have anybody from the Policy Committee to  
9 work share, I will tell you that I have just about  
10 finished the draft of the annual report for the  
11 board. So we are going to send that out to you.  
12 I'll send that out to you -- I'll send that out to  
13 Alexis, and she'll get that out to you for input  
14 from your various committees.

15 And we're still looking for someone  
16 to chair the Reports and Data Committee, so please  
17 consider that. And all members of the Council  
18 should serve in one committee. So if you haven't  
19 yet signed up for a committee, really consider  
20 that. I'd like to have, you know, full board --  
21 full council participation on the committees. And  
22 so all our new people, think about that.

23 And, Alexis, has kindly put up a list  
24 of all of our different committees.

25 MS. UTZ: Okay. And I do not have a

1 break built into our agenda. I figured we could  
2 take a natural break whenever it fell.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, okay.

4 MS. UTZ: So I don't know if we need  
5 to take a break or---

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Do we want to take  
7 about a five-minute break -- five- or ten-minute  
8 break, and then we have one public comment to be  
9 read, shared?

10 MS. UTZ: Yeah.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. Did we have  
12 any others come in?

13 MS. UTZ: No.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. A ten-minute  
15 break now.

16 MS. UTZ: Okay. That's good.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.

18 **(A brief recess was taken from 11:24**  
19 **a.m. to 11:33 a.m.)**

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: So are we coming  
21 back, ladies and gentlemen?

22 MS. UTZ: All right. Do you want to  
23 do the public comment?

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

25 MS. UTZ: Okay. So we received an

1 email from Public Speaker 1. Whoops. I'm  
2 supposed to take her name off. Sorry. Oh, it's  
3 there anyway. I put it up on your screen. She is  
4 Public Speaker 1. She is a Global National and  
5 State of NC Ambassador and advocate for children  
6 with long COVID syndrome. She lives in North  
7 Carolina, is the mother of a 12-year-old,  
8 postacute COVID-19 daughter.

9 She is encouraging the Council to  
10 consider a plan of actions and safety net within  
11 each school district -- for each district, school,  
12 and EC department. There are none for these  
13 children. As a medical career of 26 years, this  
14 is not my first pandemic. We are also learning  
15 about how postacute COVID-19 affects children.  
16 Children who are asymptomatic or with mild acute  
17 COVID infections, mostly females, are at high risk  
18 to develop pediatric postacute COVID-19, and the  
19 variants increase the risk of transmission and  
20 seriousness of the SARS-CoV-2 for children,  
21 adolescents, and those adult teachers that are  
22 just starting out.

23 Honestly, my district did not know  
24 how to handle my child's medical diagnosis.  
25 Children should not have to worry about their

1 education and their health impacts from long  
2 COVID. So I comment today to learn about  
3 pediatric postacute COVID-19 transmission/variants  
4 in order to meet the needs of these children and  
5 families. And that was the only email that we had  
6 received today.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. And while  
8 she requested a comment, we as the Council cannot  
9 comment or opine on the various comments that we  
10 receive. What we can do is possibly ask for a  
11 presentation on children -- on how we're dealing  
12 effectively with chronic childhood issues in  
13 school in general.

14 Any other thoughts?

15 MS. COFFEY: Cynthia, I second that.  
16 We probably need to know what is there before we  
17 even -- because it could end up being an unmet  
18 need, but until we know what's already in effect,  
19 it would be hard to know that. So we would need  
20 that almost first.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

22 MS. MOOREFIELD: And wouldn't  
23 children who -- who are affected by this long  
24 term -- wouldn't they also fall under -- like if  
25 their health affected their learning, wouldn't

1 they also fall under a 504? Or is this mother  
2 saying that, you know, those children that have to  
3 be out of school for a long term because of  
4 illnesses such as COVID? I'm not really sure what  
5 she's asking.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: So she's not really  
7 clear about what she's asking, but she seems to  
8 say that her school district seems not to have any  
9 idea of how to help her -- her child. And I  
10 looked it up because I honestly did not know the  
11 impact of this long-term -- long COVID syndrome,  
12 and some of the things are fatigue, shortness of  
13 breath, joint pain, chest pain, memory and  
14 concentration problems. So I thought that might  
15 have an educational impact.

16 MS. MOOREFIELD: It seems, though,  
17 that there are several other, you know, diseases  
18 and syndromes with similar impacts. So I'm not  
19 sure what it was that her district was not -- you  
20 know, was confused on how to handle.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: And that's it,  
22 Virginia. That's why I thought we might get a  
23 presentation on what we're doing in general  
24 overall to handle children who have different  
25 chronic needs.

1 MS. MOOREFIELD: Because it sounds to  
2 me like that would be similar to, you know,  
3 Ehlers-Danlos syndrome with the joint pain and  
4 things like that, and you know, those students  
5 have a 504, correct?

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Right.

7 MS. MOOREFIELD: Isn't that the  
8 difference between an IEP and a 504? The 504  
9 makes---

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Access.

11 MS. MOOREFIELD: Yeah, more access to  
12 the learning, and the IEP has a little bit more  
13 teeth in it to provide additional services. But  
14 it sounds like -- I mean there will definitely be  
15 kids with these long-term effects. They call them  
16 long-haulers, I know, for adults. But it seems  
17 like this should already be kind of addressed in  
18 the systems that we already have.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Right. And that's  
20 why a presentation on what we already have in  
21 place and what we already do for children who have  
22 those types of chronic needs -- medical needs.  
23 Any other comments or thoughts?

24 MS. COMBS: Cynthia, when you say "do  
25 a presentation," to do that, is the intended

1 audience families?

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: So the presentation  
3 might be to the Council so we can share that out  
4 to our networks and the places that we're  
5 involved.

6 Aimee, you're from ECAC. So  
7 certainly something ECAC might want to think about  
8 if this is a concern across the actual state of  
9 North Carolina for these children who have this  
10 particular syndrome and any general chronic  
11 disorder.

12 MS. COMBS: We don't specifically get  
13 a lot of calls on stuff like this. We have in the  
14 past had a few such as like the condition of  
15 PANDAS where there's just a lot of unknowns and  
16 unfamiliarity -- I can't say that word -- with the  
17 condition. But, you know, certainly if we were  
18 talking to a parent about this, obviously, we  
19 would need more information.

20 Because if they had an IEP, then they  
21 would already be covered under Section 504, but  
22 then we would say, you know, "Take a look at the  
23 IEP. You might want to revisit it with the team.  
24 There's a spot that asks is there any medical  
25 conditions or any relevant medical information

1 that we need to know more about, and then the team  
2 could work together to say how they want to  
3 address it."

4 Some students will have an IEP and an  
5 individualized health plan. So if one of those is  
6 not -- you know, like most things, it really  
7 depends and it's not a one-size-fits-all, but it's  
8 things that schools should have in place, you  
9 know, whether they have healthcare plans, a 504,  
10 an IEP, it should be -- it should be that there's  
11 already things in place.

12 It may be that the confusion is we  
13 haven't heard of this, which would make sense.  
14 COVID's new for pretty much all of us, and so that  
15 folks are still finding their way. And we're still  
16 learning about some of the long-term effects, but  
17 it doesn't mean that there isn't already things in  
18 place that could address it.

19 But, yeah, not a bad idea to get  
20 something together to give folks the information  
21 they need to make informed decisions on how they  
22 want to address such a thing.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I'm thinking a  
24 presentation from someone from the EC Division and  
25 then possibly maybe a little blurb in the news

1 letter that goes out every month.

2 MS. MOOREFIELD: Cynthia, do you  
3 think we would be able to get anyone like -- I  
4 guess they would fall under infectious disease  
5 experts that might be doing research on how COVID  
6 affects children long term. I know that the news  
7 has been talking to one of the professors over at  
8 Duke, but you know, reaching out to either Chapel  
9 Hill or Duke -- they both have infectious disease  
10 research facilities there -- to see if -- you  
11 know, to see if they have any findings or if  
12 they're seeing anything or if they're doing any  
13 studies, or whatever, that might tell us a little  
14 bit how -- you know, what we can be looking for as  
15 far as how this affects kids long term.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. And who's  
17 handling that? Is the Department of Health and  
18 Human Services in North Carolina doing some of the  
19 work of getting the information out to us that  
20 comes through the CDC about the impact of COVID?

21 MS. MOOREFIELD: I'm guessing Mandy  
22 Cohen. Isn't that the -- isn't that our kind of  
23 medical person statewide?

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

25 MS. UTZ: Yeah, and that's Health and

1 Human Services.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. So if we can  
3 just get maybe, possibly a presentation from  
4 somebody from her office or the recommendation  
5 from Virginia of the infectious disease experts,  
6 just to get us more knowledgeable.

7 Any other comments, thoughts?

8 **(No audible response.)**

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I did send you,  
10 Alexis, the draft of the 2020-21---

11 MS. UTZ: It's actually the '19-20.  
12 It's always one year behind.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I'm a year  
14 ahead.

15 MS. UTZ: I did rename it so it says  
16 '19-20. I did link it up in the agenda, and it is  
17 also added into the Google folder. If you don't  
18 see the link, you might need to refresh the  
19 agenda.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thanks for  
21 renaming. So if you'd take a look at that, have  
22 any input from your committees or just input from  
23 you-all. I'm going to ask Alexis to add in our  
24 two minutes from the September meeting -- summary  
25 of actions from the September meeting and the

1 March meeting, and then the agendas from today's  
2 meeting.

3 So September and December of 2020,  
4 those summary of actions, the agendas from March  
5 and today, and I'm going to add a blurb about the  
6 training that we received in September of 2020 --  
7 the Council received training. And then if you'd  
8 just give me any other input, I will be happy to  
9 add that.

10 MS. UTZ: So do you want them to work  
11 on that now during the subcommittees and then---

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Whatever the  
13 pleasure of the Council. Do you want to work on  
14 it now as subcommittee work, or do you want to  
15 just send that information into me or into Alexis?  
16 Sorry.

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

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: And she can get it  
19 to me. Council?

20 **(No audible response.)**

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: And don't we have  
22 to be in---

23 MS. UTZ: The breakout room, yeah.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: No. Isn't it the  
25 policy and procedure for our public comment to

1 wait until 12:00 -- that they have until -- or was  
2 that only when we were in person?

3 MS. UTZ: No. They have until 12:00  
4 to log in to register. Our guest from earlier  
5 today is not here anymore, and I asked her if she  
6 wanted to be added for public comment, but she  
7 didn't say she wanted to be added.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

9 MS. MOOREFIELD: So, Cynthia, you  
10 just need information from each committee about  
11 what we want to add into the annual report?

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely, yes.

13 MS. UTZ: And, actually, I can pull  
14 that up if you guys want to see it. I don't want  
15 to scroll too fast. I don't want to make you guys  
16 sick, but there are, I think, if I remember  
17 correctly, various sections here that asks each  
18 committee to just state what they have done.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So list any points  
20 or bulleted items that you've done or completed  
21 for 2019-20 and then any business that you have  
22 for going forward.

23 MS. COMBS: I just have a question  
24 about the subcommittees since it is my first time  
25 here. I know Terri Leyton, my colleague,

1 previously was on the Reports and Data Committee,  
2 but I'm not sure if that's the one I want to be  
3 on.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, you can pick  
5 any one.

6 MS. COMBS: Okay. That's not my  
7 favorite stuff, but I'm very interested in the  
8 Unmet Needs Committee.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Diane?

10 MS. COMBS: How does it--- Okay.  
11 That's what I wanted to see -- that document that  
12 kind of gives the description of what they do.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, uh-huh.

14 MS. COMBS: That will help me decide.  
15 Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: And so actually a  
17 plug for the Reports and Data Committee, for the  
18 first time in many years, you actually have  
19 something to work on in terms of the OSEP report,  
20 advising the Council -- not the Council but the  
21 state education agency, which is DPI, the EC  
22 Division, on developing that corrective action  
23 plan and addressing any identified findings in the  
24 federal monitoring report. So we haven't had that  
25 in many years as something to actually advise on.

1                   So it's the Council's decision. Do  
2 you want to go into committees, separate breakout  
3 rooms, or are you just willing to share that  
4 information with Alexis so she can forward it to  
5 me and we can get this report completed in a  
6 timely fashion?

7                   MS. COFFEY: This is Diane. I think  
8 we probably need to go into committees because  
9 that way we can come together as one versus being  
10 so scattered on the ideal concept.

11                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. All righty.

12                   MS. UTZ: Let me get that set up for  
13 you.

14                   MS. POPE: Hello?

15                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes?

16                   MS. POPE: Yes. This is Kenya Pope.  
17 I just have a question. I am fairly new to the  
18 Council. I've participated in some meetings. I'm  
19 on the Reports and Data, and I remember our last  
20 meeting -- Ms. George, I think, had been on that  
21 committee before, but we didn't have a  
22 chairperson, and I can't remember the other young  
23 lady that was in the meeting.

24                   But we were all kind of confused as  
25 to what we were to report on, and I know you just

1 mentioned some things now. But at our last  
2 meeting, you would get some guidance, you know, to  
3 kind of guide us, because we were new to the  
4 subcommittee, as to what we were supposed to be  
5 doing. And I know who's on the call that's in the  
6 subcommittee today that I would be meeting with so  
7 that -- you know, just so that---

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Kenya, this  
9 differentiated monitoring and supports report that  
10 we have that's in the Google docs---

11 MS. POPE: Right. And I don't have  
12 access to Google docs. Miss Alexis has just  
13 emailed me some things. I haven't had an  
14 opportunity to look at anything prior to today.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So that's  
16 basically what that committee does. It looks at  
17 the Reports and Data that come out every year. We  
18 get reports from what's going on in terms of state  
19 complaints, the facilitated IEPs, the due process  
20 hearings. All of those things are things that the  
21 Data and Reports Committee looks at.

22 We look at things like the number of  
23 students in special ed across the state. All  
24 those things that are reported, that are data that  
25 the EC Division collects and reports out, those

1 are the things we look at. But our key point is  
2 that we really are looking at the OSEP, any  
3 corrective actions, and like I said, this is the  
4 first time in many years that we actually have  
5 something to look at and actually develop some  
6 type of informational report.

7 It might not go into this particular  
8 annual report to the Board, but it might be  
9 something that going forward that we're looking at  
10 and we're reporting on.

11 MS. POPE: So we're all meeting or  
12 will the ones that want to meet meet and then  
13 others maybe review things on their own and then  
14 report back to you?

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: That would be fine.

16 MS. POPE: Okay. Thank you for the  
17 clarity.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So are  
19 we going to adjourn the meeting in order to break  
20 out?

21 MS. UTZ: That would be wonderful  
22 because then Becky won't have to stay on and wait  
23 for us.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. Okay. So can  
25 we get a motion to adjourn? Anyone still here?

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MS. COFFEY: This is Diane. I motion we adjourn and go into committee work.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Diane. A second?

MS. HODGES: I second that motion. This is Kristen Hodges.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

**(No audible response.)**

THE CHAIRPERSON: Anyone opposed?

**(No audible response.)**

THE CHAIRPERSON: And all in favor?

**(Multiple members responded aye.)**

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Alexis, for breaking us out into the breakout rooms and thank you all and have a wonderful summer.

**(At 11:54 a.m., the proceeding 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 ninety-seven, 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 20th day of July, 2021.



Rebecca P. Scott