

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Via Webex
December 8, 2021
9:31 a.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF QUARTERLY MEETING

The quarterly meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children was held on the 8th day of December, 2021, via Webex, commencing at 9:31 a.m.

APPEARANCES

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cynthia Daniels-Hall, Chairperson
Christy Hutchinson, Vice Chairperson

Anthony Baker
Sara Bigley
Joanne Caratelli
Abby Childers
Diane Coffey
Aimee Combs
Jennifer Degen
Jack Denton (Representative Strickland)
Elizabeth DeBiasi
Jennifer Grady
Christy Grant
Kenya Pope
Matthew Potter
Tameeka Williams-Burchette
Maegen Wilson

STAFF:

Kelley Blas
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: Good morning,
3 everyone. So we can go ahead and do the roll
4 call, Alexis.

5 MS. UTZ: Okay. So we'll just go
6 down the list here. We'll start with you,
7 Cynthia.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning,
9 everyone. I'm Cynthia Daniels-Hall. I'm a
10 parent, I'm out of Wake County, and have children
11 on the autism spectrum.

12 MS. UTZ: Okay. Shanna, are you on
13 with us today? Are you with us today?

14 **(No audible response.)** .

15 MS. UTZ: And, Joanne, I know you
16 were on.

17 MS. CARATELLI: I'm here. Do I have
18 to introduce myself, or are you just taking
19 attendance?

20 MS. UTZ: That's completely up to
21 you.

22 MS. CARATELLI: I'm Joanne Caratelli.
23 I am a teacher, but I serve here as a parent. My
24 son is a high school junior and he has Down
25 syndrome. He's a rock star, by the way. In my

1 teacher role, I've been an advisor to a huge
2 successful unified sports program and served on
3 our county's parent advisory committee as well.

4 MS. UTZ: Welcome.

5 MS. CARATELLI: Thank you.

6 MS. UTZ: All right. Diane?

7 MS. COFFEY: Good morning. My name
8 is Diane Coffey, and I'm a parent out of Watauga
9 County.

10 MS. UTZ: Welcome. Sorry. I
11 scrolled the wrong screen here. Leanna?

12 **(No audible response.)**

13 MS. UTZ: All right. Is it Maegen or
14 Maegen?

15 MS. WILSON: Maegen.

16 MS. UTZ: Thank you.

17 MS. WILSON: And I'm a parent out of
18 Wayne County.

19 MS. UTZ: Welcome. Tameeka?

20 MS. WILLIAMS-BURCHETTE: Hi,
21 everyone. I'm Tameeka Williams-Burchette from
22 Vance County. I'm a parent. In my professional
23 role, I'm a licensed professional school
24 counselor.

25 MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.

1 Kristen?

2 (No audible response.)

3 MS. UTZ: All right. Jennifer Degen?

4 I see you there.

5 MS. DEGEN: Hi [inaudible].

6 MS. UTZ: I see you there.

7 MS. DEGEN: [Inaudible] now?

8 MS. UTZ: It was cutting in and out.

9 I heard you say hi and you cut out again. I know
10 she's here.

11 All right. Anthony, I saw you pop on
12 here.

13 MR. BAKER: Yes. Good morning.
14 Anthony Baker. I am an assistant principal for
15 the Alamance-Burlington School System, and I am
16 the LEA rep for the Council.

17 MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.
18 Marge?

19 (No audible response.)

20 MS. UTZ: All right. Christy?

21 DR. HUTCHINSON: Good morning,
22 everyone. Christy Hutchinson, EC director at
23 Lincoln Charter School. So for the Council I
24 represent the Southwest and charter schools.

25 MS. UTZ: All right. We'll jump to

1 Abby.

2 MS. CHILDERS: Hi. I'm Abby
3 Childers. I'm a parent.

4 MS. UTZ: All right. Welcome.
5 Aimee?

6 MS. COMBS: Good morning, everyone.
7 My name is Amy Combs, and I -- I am a parent. I
8 have a 24-year-old son with autism, and he is also
9 a rock star in my eyes. But I'm here in my
10 professional role as the PTI manager at ECAC, the
11 Exceptional Children's Assistant Center.

12 MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.
13 Jennifer Grady?

14 MS. GRADY: Hi. I am the parent of
15 an autistic teen in Wake County, and I'm also, I
16 believe, listed as a business rep on the Council.
17 I work for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North
18 Carolina.

19 MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right. Matt?

20 MR. POTTER: I'm here. I was just
21 unmuting. I am a Matt Potter. I am a community
22 advocate person with lived experience. I am the
23 son of a very staunch parent advocate. Whether or
24 not I'm a rock star, you'd have to ask her. Yeah.

25 FEMALE SPEAKER: I think you are.

1 MR. POTTER: Thank you. I appreciate
2 that. So I'm here to represent the population
3 with lived experience, but also, I turn 35 next
4 month so I kind of -- I represent what --
5 hopefully, what an effective product of an
6 inclusive educational system looks like. So
7 that's the perspectives that I'm here to
8 hopefully have.

9 MS. UTZ: Thank you. Selene?

10 **(No audible response.)**

11 MS. UTZ: Senator Alexander had sent
12 me a message he would not be able to attend today.
13 So we'll go to Elizabeth?

14 MS. DeBIASI: Hi. I am Elizabeth
15 DeBiasi. I live in Wilmington, North Carolina,
16 which is New Hanover County. I have a son named
17 [redacted], who is 20, and he's severely
18 intellectually delayed, also known as cerebral
19 palsy and autism, and he is a rock star. I'm so
20 proud of him because just this year, he --
21 although he still attends high school, he has
22 moved into an AFL relationship, which is
23 alternative family living.

24 In my professional life, I'm a
25 banking consultant, and I also serve on the Board

1 of Easterseals UCP of North Carolina and Virginia.

2 MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.

3 Representative Strickland is not -- I think that
4 he did send a representative. Jack, I don't know
5 if you want to say anything or if you just want to
6 kind of be quiet in the background.

7 Oh. His mike doesn't work. Okay.

8 Well, welcome. All right. Chris?

9 **(No audible response.)**

10 MS. UTZ: All right. I always mess
11 this up. Kimaree?

12 **(No audible response.)**

13 MS. UTZ: Kenya?

14 **(No audible response.)**

15 MS. UTZ: [Inaudible] here. All
16 right. How about -- and I mess your name up all
17 the time too. I know it's not Sara, but I mess it
18 up.

19 MS. BIGLEY: It's okay. I'm happy to
20 be here. My name is Sara Bigley, and the state
21 education agency's foster care point of contact.
22 So thank you. I'm glad to be here.

23 MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right. And
24 Lisa?

25 **(No audible response.)**

1 MS. UTZ: All right. So it does look
2 like we have our 13, so we can go ahead and do the
3 approval of the agenda and summary of actions.

4 Oh. Well, I'm here obviously. Becky
5 Scott is here. You might see her flash up. She
6 is our court reporter. Danyelle Sanders is here.
7 She is one of the admin that helps support the
8 Council, and Lauren Holahan and Kelley Blas are
9 also present, but I'll let them introduce
10 themselves when they give their presentation in a
11 few minutes.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you
13 very much, everyone. We're going to go ahead --
14 has everyone had the opportunity to review the
15 agenda for this December meeting?

16 **(No audible response.)**

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. And if
18 everyone's had that opportunity to review the
19 agenda, can we get a motion to approve the agenda?

20 MS. WILSON: This is Maegen. I'll
21 make a motion to approve.

22 MR. POTTER: This is Matt Potter.
23 I'll second.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any opposed?

25 **(No audible response.)**

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THE CHAIRPERSON: Anyone abstaining?
(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: And all in favor?
(Multiple council members responded aye.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MS. UTZ: All right. I'll add the---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Also -- also, we have the September summary of actions. Has everyone had an opportunity to review that?

(Multiple council members responded affirmatively.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Then, a motion to approve?

MS. CHILDERS: I make a motion to approve.

MR. BAKER: I'll second the motion.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Who was that that seconded?

MR. BAKER: Anthony.

MS. UTZ: Anthony seconded.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Anthony.

MS. UTZ: Anthony seconded. Who made the motion?

MS. CHILDERS: I did. Abby did.

1 MS. UTZ: Thank you.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So any
3 opposed?

4 **(No audible response.)**

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

6 **(No audible response.)**

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: All in favor?

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

10 MS. UTZ: I am getting them in the
11 chat as well.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Great. Okay. So
13 we're going to welcome Lauren Holahan to do our
14 presentation on the SPP and APR report for us for
15 a draft review.

16 MS. HOLAHAN: Good morning and
17 welcome, everyone. I am joined with my teammate
18 and colleague, partner in crime, Kelley Blas.
19 We're here together to bring you an overview of
20 the work we've done with our stakeholders over the
21 last eight months to develop baselines and targets
22 for all of our State Performance Plan indicators.

23 I've put the link to the resource
24 that we'll be viewing in the chat. I encourage
25 you to click that and let it download to your

1 computer. It will do that automatically. And
2 there are lots of links within this resource that
3 will take you to various additional resources
4 related to our State Performance Plan. So I just
5 encourage you to download that and save it and
6 refer back to it as -- as needed.

7 My name is Lauren Holahan. I am the
8 coordinator of our State Systemic Improvement
9 Plan, which is one of our indicators, and then my
10 [inaudible] who I'll let her introduce herself,
11 she takes care of all the other 16 indicators.

12 MS. BLAS: Good morning, everyone.
13 My name is Kelley Blas. I am the IDEA Technical
14 Consultant, and I am happy to be here with you
15 today.

16 MS. HOLAHAN: So just to draw your
17 attention to a couple of things. First, the link
18 in the upper right-hand corner, "Visit the NC
19 SPP/APP website," that's a live link. That will
20 take you to---

21 Is it okay, if I share, Alexis?

22 MS. UTZ: Yes. I was just going to
23 ask you if you wanted me to -- if you wanted to
24 control.

25 MS. HOLAHAN: I think that I can flip

1 around -- yeah, just because I already have this
2 pulled up.

3 This website is linked in that
4 resource. Confirming that you can see a purple
5 banner website, Alexis?

6 MS. UTZ: Yes.

7 MS. HOLAHAN: This was built for our
8 stakeholders, which includes you-all, lots of
9 background on what the State Performance Plan is,
10 the approach that we've taken with our stakeholder
11 engagement, the schedule of meetings that we've
12 been through, how to join our mailing list.

13 The thing that's of most interest to
14 you-all or at least the best resource for you-all
15 is that across these eight months of meetings, we
16 have stored all of the -- each month has its own
17 page, and I didn't get that hyperlinked. So let
18 me just go to it, and I'll fix that in a minute.

19 So the presentation that we've used,
20 the PowerPoint, the recording of the meeting, if
21 you want to listen instead of reading a PowerPoint
22 quietly, the transcripts of the meetings and the
23 supplementary document, which is what we're going
24 to go through today, each month, you can see it
25 has all of those resources there. And we will

1 continue to use this site as we -- even after we
2 submit the State Performance Plan on or before
3 February 1st.

4 We want to continue the stakeholder
5 engagement as we implement, not just setting the
6 targets and -- but also just -- we want to just
7 continue this collaboration so that we can kind of
8 get your feedback on our -- essentially, on our
9 progress.

10 So with that, I'm going to move back
11 to this resource, and this is just an overview of
12 what the State Performance Plan is again. This
13 resource is going to outline the baselines and
14 targets that we've set with stakeholders for this
15 plan that we'll -- fiscal years 2020 through 2025
16 equal calendar years 2022 through 2027. The
17 Office of Special Education Programs, OSEP, marks
18 time in a different way than the rest of us do.

19 So we will be submitting the FY 2020
20 report in -- well, hopefully, we're going to get
21 it done in January. We don't want to go right up
22 to the deadline. So we're just going to work
23 through this morning quickly [inaudible] where
24 we've been with stakeholders, who they are, and
25 then Kelley's going to walk us through the

1 baselines and targets for most of these
2 indicators.

3 As I mentioned, we've been working
4 since April with our stakeholders to discuss -- to
5 look at longitudinal data on each of the
6 indicators and then look at different options for
7 new targets. And it's worth noting, as we go
8 through this, that you'll see different --
9 different indicators have baselines that were set
10 in different years, and we'll talk about that in
11 just a minute. But it can be a little bit
12 confusing to see some of these baselines that are
13 from like 2004 and then other indicators have
14 baselines from 2018.

15 So across these eight months, we've
16 had more than 340 stakeholders participate in
17 these twice monthly meetings, held one on a
18 Tuesday morning each month and one on a Thursday
19 evening. You can see sort of the breakdown of who
20 participated. We want to continue to shift these
21 ratios particularly with -- we want to see that
22 percentage of parents participating grow. We've
23 certainly been working with ECAC on ways to think
24 about that.

25 But you can -- you can see we've had

1 good robust participation from our -- our staff at
2 DPI, but we really would love to see this parent
3 percentage grow. Overall, though, we're really
4 excited about stakeholders that we've had
5 involved.

6 And just knowing and been on recent
7 calls with some of our national TA providers in
8 other states, we feel very, very fortunate and
9 grateful for the engagement we've had in North
10 Carolina. This has not been the experience of
11 other states, and we're really excited about the
12 interest, and hope that only grows.

13 As you'll see as we get into the
14 indicators, our stakeholders consistently chose
15 targets across indicators that had either an
16 incremental increase or decrease from baseline to
17 our 2025 target. Enough to say we had lots of
18 different options, but it just seemed to make the
19 most sense to our folks for there to be increments
20 of change rather than a big change at the end or
21 just -- you know, just any other variety, that
22 kind of year-by-year, sort of consistent change
23 over time.

24 You'll see that some indicators, we
25 want that percentage to go up like graduation for

1 students with disabilities, and then some
2 indicators, we want that percentage to go down.
3 Like with Indicator 2, dropout rate, we want to
4 see that go down. So we'll just keep you alerted
5 to which -- which direction is a good direction as
6 we go.

7 You can see here this is the
8 distribution we've had of stakeholders across the
9 state, the numbers, the darker the color, the more
10 participants from that county. You can see
11 Charlotte and -- Mecklenburg and Wake Counties
12 were strong supporters of the work. You can kind
13 of see a breakdown of that in a table if you click
14 on this hyperlink. I'm not going to do that right
15 now.

16 But we have more than 50 percent of
17 counties in North Carolina represented. We do
18 know for those counties that were not represented
19 in this process, we're certainly going to target
20 those for additional work, particularly as we get
21 into some of our root cause analysis for our new
22 State-identified Measurable Result. We now know
23 where we need to do active recruitment of
24 stakeholders based on this -- on this data.

25 The other thing, if you scroll down

1 to the bottom of the second page, there are,
2 again, the websites linked here, and then there's
3 a summary spreadsheet of all of the indicators and
4 baselines. I'm not going to go to it because it
5 will be kind of a lot of screen shifting and
6 scrolling, and I want to save you that.

7 But if you click here, it will just
8 take you to a nice compact collection of all
9 indicators and all of the annual targets as well
10 as the end target. So that's just a nice kind of
11 like, like I said, compact package.

12 If you want to see our previous
13 years' State Performance Plans and Annual
14 Performance Reports, this link will take you to
15 that website where they go back, I think, all the
16 way -- in the current website, I think they go
17 back all the way to 2014.

18 And then if you want to get really
19 into the details, the technical aspects of what
20 we're talking about today, the measurement table
21 provided by OSEP describes in very clear detail
22 what each of the 17 indicators are and the
23 requirements for how we calculate our data related
24 to that particular indicator. And this is just a
25 place where you can see some of the acronyms

1 spelled out.

2 What I want to be clear about
3 specifically, before Kelley gets into the
4 indicators, is a baseline is -- that's where we're
5 working from. It's the calculation for each
6 indicator that -- and you'll see there are
7 origination years, again, that are different
8 across indicators. We can only change baselines
9 if OSEP changes how they want us to do the
10 measurement or if we initiate a process with
11 stakeholders to say we'd like to change our
12 baseline and here's why.

13 It could be because we've had a
14 business rule at DPI in terms of how we collect or
15 analyze data or it could be like we know -- we may
16 want to go back and revisit Indicator 3 in a
17 couple of years after we sort of see a
18 stabilization in our data. Indicator 3 is our
19 reading and math achievement for students with
20 disabilities.

21 We know COVID has had sort of an --
22 we don't know what the impact COVID has been for
23 students with disabilities, and we may not know
24 for several years. And so that's one of the
25 indicators we know we may want to go back and set

1 new targets with you-all after some of that data
2 stabilizes.

3 And speaking of targets, again, they
4 can increase or decrease. We've listed the ones
5 here -- right here, these are the ones that we
6 want to see decrease or go down, the percentages
7 to get smaller. All of the other indicators, we
8 want to see those -- those percentages go up.
9 Some of the targets, we don't have a choice in
10 setting. OSEP sets them for us. These are what
11 are called compliance indicators rather than
12 outcome indicators. And for those -- most of
13 those compliance indicators, OSEP tells us what
14 our target should be, and you'll see that as we
15 get going.

16 So I just want to pause there before
17 Kelley gets into the actual overview of the
18 indicators to see if there are any questions with
19 any of the language or the approach that we've
20 used with stakeholders, any -- anything that
21 you-all need clarification on or want to reflect
22 on before we move forward?

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Lauren, besides
24 ECAC, what other opportunities are you taking to
25 do parental outreach?

1 MS. HOLAHAN: Right. Yes. So
2 these -- the stakeholder meetings, right, we -- at
3 the beginning of the process in April and May and
4 June, we pushed pretty hard with our local EC
5 directors to get the word out to their parents
6 locally. We provided all of the links and the --
7 you know, the meeting schedule, how to log on. So
8 that was -- that was the main push early on, was
9 through our local EC programs because of their
10 connection with their own parents.

11 Kelley, can you think of other
12 avenues we've pursued with the parent population?

13 MS. UTZ: I can tell you that we
14 published it in the parent newsletter as well.

15 MS. HOLAHAN: Oh, yeah. Thank you.
16 Yes.

17 MS. BLAS: That was kind of what I
18 was going to say, is that we -- we continue to ask
19 our parent folks that were attending the meetings
20 and the calls to forward it out to anybody in the
21 population. Alexis was very helpful in that.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

23 MS. HOLAHAN: Cynthia, did you have
24 other ideas for us about that?

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: I do and I'll

1 certainly send those along to you, Lauren.

2 MS. HOLAHAN: That's awesome. We'd
3 love that. Any other thoughts or good questions?

4 MS. CHILDERS: Is there any way,
5 Cynthia, or for you-all to be able to send that
6 out to everybody so that we can actually see what
7 the -- what your opinions are, Cynthia, or what
8 ideas that you have?

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: I think I can do
10 that. Alexis, would that be all right?

11 MS. UTZ: Yes.

12 MS. CHILDERS: And then I actually
13 did have one question. I know that you don't -- I
14 know that you said at the very end, there's really
15 no percentages yet of how the children did being
16 virtual, that kind of thing. Is there any -- is
17 there any idea of probably what direction that
18 you're going with that or we're going with that?

19 MS. HOLAHAN: Can you -- can you be a
20 little more specific? Like in terms of---

21 MS. CHILDERS: You're saying you
22 didn't -- if I heard correctly, I was hearing that
23 there really wasn't any documentation yet on how
24 the kids did as far as virtual goes. Is that
25 correct?

1 MS. HOLAHAN: So in terms of like --
2 I think what I'm hearing your question is, how are
3 we calculating learning loss as a result of---

4 MS. CHILDERS: Yes. I'm sorry. I
5 should have said that.

6 MS. HOLAHAN: No. I just want to
7 make sure I'm responding to your---

8 MS. CHILDERS: You are. Yes, you
9 are. I'm sorry. I didn't quite say it right.

10 MS. HOLAHAN: No, it's all good,
11 Abby. And that's a national conversation right
12 now.

13 MS. CHILDERS: Right.

14 MS. HOLAHAN: The first is, can we
15 actually measure that, how do we measure that, and
16 I think for students with disabilities, that's --
17 that's going to be a very -- like everything else
18 we do with students with disabilities, it's going
19 to be very individualized. And I think we're --
20 what we're -- where we're going to see that for
21 each student is in our updating of students'
22 present levels of performance, right?

23 MS. CHILDERS: Right.

24 MS. HOLAHAN: And -- but in terms
25 of -- you know, it's going to be -- there's going

1 to be some lag in our statewide data, particularly
2 with our reading and math achievement, before we
3 actually see the impact.

4 And I think -- Kelley, I don't know
5 what your perception is, but I think it's going to
6 be two or three years before we actually see this
7 stabilized.

8 MS. BLAS: Absolutely, and especially
9 since we have some changes to the reading exams,
10 we are anticipating to see some fluctuation in how
11 students are doing overall. And that's -- that's
12 part of the reason we'll come back together most
13 likely on Indicators 3, our performance indicator,
14 and reset targets, not only because COVID happened
15 and we don't have any data for the '19-20 school
16 year, but because we know that there were some
17 changes to the exams, and that could really impact
18 the way those targets [inaudible].

19 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. I think that
20 that helps answer it. I needed to hear -- that's
21 what I was hoping to hear, was the resetting of
22 targets.

23 MS. HOLAHAN: Absolutely, yes. That
24 is definitely a part of our plan.

25 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. That was what I

1 was kind of hoping to hear. So -- and then with
2 that, will there -- will there come like ideas of
3 being able to help parents understand better as
4 well? I feel like that that's something that I've
5 been hearing a lot about, is parents -- you know,
6 they -- they see their children aren't doing well,
7 but they don't really understand -- not all of
8 them really understand why.

9 They just blame it on one specific
10 thing and that kind of thing, and I just feel like
11 there's so much confusion, and I feel like there's
12 so much education needed for parents as well.

13 MS. HOLAHAN: So that brings up a
14 [inaudible], I think, exciting opportunity, which
15 is our new State-identified Measurable Result is
16 going to be focused on fourth grade reading. And
17 one of our first -- I don't know that we'll have
18 time today. Maybe we'll come back and kind of
19 walk through our -- our plan for 2022, Alexis,
20 maybe at a future meeting.

21 But we are going to do a very
22 thorough and broad root cause analysis of why we
23 have such disparity between students with
24 disabilities and all students, between subgroups
25 of students with disabilities for that particular

1 grade level in reading. But I think that's the
2 kind of investigation we're going to have to do,
3 and it's not -- it's not just us educating
4 parents; it's parents educating us.

5 MS. CHILDERS: Right.

6 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah.

7 MS. CHILDERS: Right.

8 MS. HOLAHAN: So that root cause
9 analysis is going to allow for that two-way
10 communication and education.

11 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. I think that's
12 great.

13 MS. HOLAHAN: Good questions. Thanks
14 so much.

15 MS. CHILDERS: Thank you.

16 MS. HOLAHAN: All right, Kelley---

17 MS. BLAS: Okay.

18 MS. HOLAHAN: ---turning it over.

19 MS. BLAS: Thank you. So we're going
20 to walk through the indicators, and I just want to
21 give you an idea. So when Lauren shared with you
22 the links on the previous page, those are going to
23 be really important to you because what you're
24 viewing right now, as we're walking through the
25 indicators, is really just a snapshot of where we

1 are or where we've been, depending on the year of
2 our baseline, and then where we're going at the
3 end of the SPP/APR.

4 So in between that, you're going to
5 have a ton of questions. What does the data look
6 like before? How are you calculating these
7 targets? And all of that information is provided
8 to you in the links that are there, whether you
9 look at the past SPP/APRs to look at the data,
10 which there's trend data in all of those, or if
11 you go into our presentations that we shared with
12 stakeholders in April, those are broken down by
13 the different indicators, and there's also data
14 views within each of those presentations.

15 And if the indicator was
16 recalculated, you'll see that the baseline has
17 been shifted to either '18-19 -- I don't think we
18 did any '19-20 just based on the COVID year. I
19 think that we selected a new baseline, and that's
20 going to be '18-19. And that means that something
21 changed in the measurement table.

22 So that's going to take me to
23 Indicator 1, graduation. If you do go look at
24 your previous graduation rates in the SPP/APR,
25 it's going to be a totally different calculation

1 than what OSEP is requiring now. So before the
2 graduation rate was based on a cohort and it
3 looked at all students and students with IEPs and
4 how they were graduating.

5 Now the new measurement table
6 requires us only to look at students with IEPs and
7 the percentage of students with IEPs that are
8 graduating in that particular school year. So
9 we're just -- we're just comparing students with
10 disabilities to students with disabilities
11 exiting. So we did reset our baseline for '18-19
12 and it's 69.6, and our target for '25-26 is going
13 to be 73.5.

14 I'm going to pause right there and
15 make sure that -- see if you guys have any
16 questions about that. And, Lauren, I don't know
17 if you want to add anything about Indicator 1.

18 MS. HOLAHAN: No. Only -- only that
19 this is a really good example of when OSEP changes
20 the rules and the calculation how -- how
21 significantly it impacts our data.

22 MS. BLAS: Yeah. And I will just say
23 also that we have to report it this way to OSEP.
24 The cohort graduation rates for both four or five
25 years are still calculated [inaudible], so if

1 that's a measure that you'd like to look at and to
2 check, that's always going to be available to you
3 on the NCDPI website.

4 Now we'll move down to Indicator 2,
5 which is our drop-out indicator. And, again, the
6 same exact change happened. We are now only
7 looking at students dropping out compared to
8 [inaudible] exiting in that particular school
9 year. Our new baseline is '18-19. We had 18.4
10 percent, and our '25-26 target is 17.5 percent,
11 and that is a declining target.

12 If we don't have any questions, we'll
13 move on to Indicator 3. This indicator had an
14 overhaul, revamp done to it. We've added and
15 separated -- or we didn't -- OSEP added and
16 separated some components of this indicator. We
17 always have reported our participation rates for
18 students with disabilities participating in
19 assessments, and so we are at 3A.

20 The first component is just looking
21 at participation, and our stakeholders decided to
22 keep our participation rate at greater than or
23 equal to 95 percent through '25-26. One of the
24 changes that OSEP made is, instead of reporting
25 all grades three through high school, we are now

1 only reporting fourth grade, eighth grade, and
2 high school. We still collect all the
3 information, but as far as OSEP is concerned,
4 we're only reporting that in those three areas for
5 reading and math performance.

6 And for 3B, that's going to be our
7 grade-level standards test. So just the regular
8 assessment with and without accommodations is what
9 we're reporting on in 3B. And, again,
10 stakeholders chose targets that are incremental
11 for each of those grade-level standards tests.
12 And in this infographic, if you click here, it'll
13 take you just to a snippet of what those targets
14 are through '25-26. Because there's so many
15 different [inaudible] so many different targets
16 for this and three different grade levels, we did
17 do a link to this.

18 And so just another clarification,
19 what we're reporting to OSEP is the percentage of
20 students who scored a level 4 or 5, or College and
21 Career Ready, on the grade-level achievement test.
22 Any questions on 3B?

23 **(No audible response.)**

24 MS. BLAS: I think Lauren's going to
25 take us back to the infographic.

1 MS. HOLAHAN: I'm working on it. Oh,
2 I see what it's doing. I should have never
3 clicked out of there.

4 MS. BLAS: Go to the chat and try
5 clicking the link from there. Will it take you?

6 MS. HOLAHAN: It's a download.

7 MS. BLAS: Oh, okay.

8 MS. HOLAHAN: Let's see. Here we go.
9 There we go. Let me move it back to -- I think we
10 had it at 150. Sorry for the quick scrolling.
11 And here we are.

12 MS. BLAS: Okay. And for component
13 3C, this is where -- prior to this submission, we
14 were reporting our grade-level achievement
15 standards and our alternate academic achievement
16 standards together, and OSEP has broken that out
17 now to be a separate measurement.

18 So we're looking at proficiency rates
19 for students with disabilities on the alternate
20 academic achievement test, and again, it's whether
21 or not they score of 4 or 5 and the percentage of
22 those students who score a 4 or 5 in the alternate
23 academic achievement standards test. So, again --
24 Lauren's not going to click it, but if you want to
25 see what those targets are, you can click on the

1 link there, and it'll take you to see the targets
2 for each of those tests and each of the three
3 grade levels.

4 And then, finally, for 3D, OSEP added
5 a proficiency rate gap, and that goes back to
6 looking at the grade-level achievement standards
7 test, and it's comparing -- it's really looking at
8 the gap between students with disabilities and all
9 students on the grade-level academic test. And we
10 have set to reduce that gap by at least half by
11 the '25-26 school year. So the targets that
12 were -- were intended to do that.

13 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah, and I'll just
14 add, like what that means, to meet those targets,
15 students with disabilities across the state are
16 going to have to improve faster across these three
17 grade levels in reading and math. They're going
18 to have to improve faster than all students in
19 order for that gap to be closed.

20 And that's just another way of
21 looking at it and looking at sort of the project
22 of special education right now. I think it's
23 helpful to like be real about where our
24 expectations for students with disabilities are,
25 given this approach, in some respects higher than

1 for all students. We're expecting them to
2 improve, grow, demonstrate proficiency more
3 rapidly than their -- than the all student
4 population. And that's -- that's a big charge.

5 And so I just -- I think it's helpful
6 to think about that in sort of like day-to-day
7 terms, what we're asking special education
8 teachers and directors and parents to be -- to
9 know this is the project. We are accelerating
10 learning for students with disabilities.

11 MS. BLAS: Thank you, Lauren. Okay.
12 So moving on to Indicator 4, this was -- even
13 though there was not a change in the measurement
14 table for Indicator 4, we really took a deep look
15 at our data for Indicator 4. This is a -- these
16 are targets that OSEP sets for Indicator 4B. We
17 were able to set our own targets in 4A. And what
18 this looks at is students with disabilities who
19 are suspended greater than ten days cumulatively
20 over the year.

21 Okay. So the first -- Indicator 4A
22 just looks at those as the total students with
23 disabilities an LEA suspended greater than ten
24 days. Indicator 4B breaks those out by race and
25 ethnicity. Okay. And we -- NCDPI chose to revise

1 our definition of significant discrepancy. In the
2 past, we were only looking at students with IEPs
3 and we were looking at a ratio -- I believe it was
4 3.0.

5 We've changed that to really look at
6 how students with disabilities are being
7 disciplined compared to students without
8 disabilities, and if they're being disciplined at
9 a rate greater than 2.5 times [inaudible] students
10 with disabilities, they're flagged as being
11 significantly discrepant in Indicator 4. And then
12 we are going through a process of reviewing their
13 policies, practices and procedures, and we're
14 revising the self-assessment for districts that
15 it's required under Indicator 4.

16 So lots of things happening around
17 this, a lot of training coming forth, coaching and
18 support for our districts around significant
19 discrepancies for Indicator 4. And, as you can
20 see, the baselines have been reset for Indicator 4
21 because we did change our definition of
22 significant discrepancy. Our '19-20 baseline is
23 52.2 percent, and our '25-26 target is 27.2
24 percent, and that's for Indicator 4A.

25 Again, OSEP sets the target at zero

1 percent for Indicator 4B, and for '19-20, we are
2 at 60.7 percent. And just a little caveat about
3 that, these look like huge numbers and do have a
4 ways to go to get to the zero percent. However,
5 OSEP only allows us to use, in our calculation,
6 the districts that meet our minimum cell size. So
7 if -- if a district is reporting students with
8 disabilities that have suspensions and expulsions
9 greater than ten days but they don't meet the
10 minimum cell size of black students for that
11 school year, they are -- they are not included in
12 the calculation.

13 So we had a very small number of
14 districts -- I think it was 39 -- that we were
15 able to use in the calculation. So that's why
16 those -- those percentages look so high. So,
17 really, the thing that we want you to take away
18 from this is that there is significant work going
19 on in our state around significant discrepancy as
20 well as significant disproportionality, which
21 we'll talk about in Indicator 9 and 10, and just
22 equity across students with disabilities,
23 nondisabled students, and especially by subgroup.

24 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah, yeah. It is very
25 concerning to us that discipline in the form of

1 removal from access to specially-designed
2 instruction is -- that we're seeing this
3 prevalence of removals for students with
4 disabilities is very---

5 MS. CHILDERS: I have a question. Is
6 there a way to be able to see what those districts
7 were, or is that being kept confidential?

8 MS. BLAS: They are going to be
9 notified in the next few weeks that they've been
10 identified as significantly discrepant, and then
11 that information can be shared out, but they need
12 to be notified first.

13 MS. CHILDERS: Absolutely. I agree.
14 Okay.

15 DR. HUTCHINSON: Lauren or Kelley,
16 can I ask a super quick question, or would you
17 prefer I wait to the end?

18 MS. HOLAHAN: No. Go ahead.

19 DR. HUTCHINSON: So I know we're sort
20 of always living one year in the past when we're
21 reporting our [inaudible] like we're two years in
22 the past. So I just -- I guess this is like
23 foreshadowing when we start to reveal the data
24 next year for this past year. I just wonder if
25 you've gotten any insight what reporting will look

1 like for this upcoming year reflecting on '20-21.
2 And, obviously, the suspension rates are going to
3 just miraculously go way down.

4 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah.

5 DR. HUTCHINSON: [Inaudible] lens, of
6 course, you know, over two-thirds of our school
7 districts were not in person. And then even when
8 our school districts were in person, we were doing
9 the hybrid approach, and so our individuals with
10 disabilities might have only been on campus two or
11 three days a week.

12 And it's going to appear as though
13 their suspension numbers just -- and so I just
14 don't want the gap to -- the focus to be taken off
15 the gap [inaudible] thinking that we solved this
16 problem last year with going to remote learning.
17 We haven't solved anything. We actually
18 [inaudible].

19 MS. HOLAHAN: Christy's been
20 eavesdropping on our conversations.

21 DR. HUTCHINSON: I promise you I'm
22 not, but I might be thinking along [inaudible]
23 like, oh, they're going to start reporting that
24 we're -- you know, done this great, done this
25 great, done this great. It really meant that the

1 kids weren't in school at all [inaudible].

2 MS. BLAS: Well, and I will just tell
3 you that I have already calculated the '20-21
4 data, and you're correct. It is extremely low,
5 extremely low. However, because we're only
6 allowed to use the number of districts that meet
7 the minimum cell size for reporting to OSEP, our
8 numbers are still going to be -- look kind of
9 funky. But as far as the work that we're going to
10 be doing with the districts, we -- we know that
11 it's about to pop back up, you know, based on
12 '21-22 [inaudible].

13 DR. HUTCHINSON: Well, and there's
14 factors that are involved besides students being
15 out of school and you only have, you know, 25 to
16 50 percent of your middle school and high school
17 students in person. That leaves a lot more space
18 in the hallway, a lot more personal space in the
19 classroom, a lot more individualized attention on
20 teachers. So, of course, your discipline stuff is
21 going to kind of go down anyways just by the
22 nature of spreading people out.

23 And so, you know, that obviously is
24 going to contribute to those numbers going down,
25 and it's really hard to capture those students

1 that were remote all year because I don't know
2 statewide that we have reported anything to the
3 State that indicated students that were remote all
4 year. We marked them present or marked them
5 absent, but that's simply that they attended Zoom
6 classes or didn't, or whatever. You know, folks
7 in local LEAs chose to mark students present or
8 absent, but that really doesn't speak to the fact
9 that they were in the building or not in the
10 building or on buses, or whatever.

11 MS. HOLAHAN: Right.

12 MS. BLAS: Definitely lots to think
13 about and lots to work on as far as discipline
14 goes and looking at the real picture, and you
15 know, I'm sure that we will be having more talks
16 as we go forward about that and how to -- how to
17 address that in the future. So thank you.

18 MS. CARATELLI: Kelley and Lauren, I
19 have a question.

20 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah.

21 MS. CARATELLI: And it's Joanne
22 Caratelli. And I'm sorry. I want to jump back to
23 Indicator 1. It took me a couple of minutes to
24 process, and then I didn't jump in at the right
25 time, and I didn't want to interrupt you. But

1 when we're talking about graduation rates on
2 students with IEPs with a regular high school
3 diploma, I have a question for you. I don't know
4 if you know the answer to it. You probably do.
5 You know everything.

6 But for principals, when they're
7 looking at their growth rate for their school, if
8 they've exceeded growth or met growth, are
9 students with disabilities' test scores calculated
10 in that?

11 MS. BLAS: Are you talking about in
12 the [inaudible] system or in the School Report
13 Card?

14 MS. CARATELLI: Yes. Both maybe. I
15 don't know. Whichever one a principal's salary is
16 based upon. I'm not sure if it's the -- I believe
17 it's the dashboard.

18 MS. BLAS: You know, I would -- I
19 would only be guessing if I answered that. I
20 would want to say yes, but I [inaudible] research
21 that unless someone else on the call or Lauren
22 knows the answer to that.

23 MS. CARATELLI: That's where, you
24 know, I feel like there is a real conflict of
25 interest when we talk about this. Really quick,

1 I'll give you some quick background. I come from
2 out of state. I come from New York where students
3 with disabilities frequently and quickly, as soon
4 as they see that there's an IEP and a diagnosis,
5 are like [inaudible] forced into BOCES, which is
6 like a separate program on the other side of town
7 for all the kids with disabilities.

8 And the justification for that, when
9 you look at it and you're in the system, is that
10 on that part -- in that part of the country on
11 Long Island, property taxes are the highest in the
12 country -- some of the highest in the country, and
13 so to justify the property taxes, you have to have
14 a really awesome test scores. How do we keep our
15 test scores high? Ship the kids to BOCES. That's
16 going to jack up our scores.

17 So here we don't have that situation,
18 but a principal's salary is tied to growth in the
19 school. So a principal who exceeds growth can
20 earn more than \$1000 a month more than if they
21 only meet growth.

22 So where is the -- where is the
23 motivation for a principal to say, "Hey, you know
24 what? We're going to have these kids getting
25 regular high school diplomas in our classes with

1 support, taking our test. They might mess up our
2 test scores a little bit, but that's okay. This
3 is the right thing to do by our students," or I
4 could pay my mortgage. You know what I mean?

5 Like there's a real conflict of
6 interest, in my opinion, for the principals
7 because I've seen a real hard push -- as somebody
8 who's a teacher for 20 some odd years and the
9 parent of a student with Down syndrome who's in
10 regular ed classes with support, the push is hard
11 to put them [inaudible] and the fight is
12 difficult.

13 And that push really comes from
14 administration, and with the background I have
15 from out of state, knowing that it all comes down
16 to dollars and cents, I can't help but go there
17 when the principal's salary relies on whether they
18 meet and exceed growth.

19 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah, Joanne, we'll
20 follow up, but I am -- I'm 99 percent certain that
21 students with disabilities statewide assessment
22 data is included in the school designations.

23 MS. CARATELLI: I'm a hundred percent
24 sure too [inaudible] I'm bothered by it because
25 there's no -- that's contradictory to what we're

1 trying to accomplish.

2 MS. HOLAHAN: Actually, I think it's
3 a good thing that students with disabilities are
4 included in the -- in the school grade. We want
5 those scores to be part of that school culture.
6 We don't want them removed, pulled out to -- to
7 artificially inflate what's happening at that
8 school.

9 MS. BLAS: And I can just say, based
10 on my own data mining for Indicator 3 as we went
11 through this process, everything that I look at
12 that's posted on our website, whether it's the
13 Green Book results or on the School Report Card,
14 students with disabilities' test results are
15 always there and available.

16 I would -- I would hate to think that
17 it wouldn't be there for growth, but I think it is
18 a question that we should answer.

19 MS. CARATELLI: All right. Thank
20 you.

21 MS. BLAS: Okay. I'm going to move
22 on to Indicator 5, which is our least restrictive
23 environment or placement for school-age children.
24 And this is the percent of students with IEPs
25 enrolled in kindergarten or age -- and age six

1 through 21 and served in either the regular
2 classroom 80 percent or more of the day.

3 And, again, we have a baseline change
4 because the measurement table changed, and the
5 change was to include those children who are age
6 five and in kindergarten rather than keeping them
7 in the early childhood placement. So that was the
8 change that OSEP made. We did recalculate all of
9 our numbers for five or six years. You can see
10 that on the website if you go to the month that we
11 did Indicator 5 and 6.

12 And so our baseline for '18-19 was
13 68.7 percent, and our target going forward for
14 '25-26 was 69.95 percent. I will say here that we
15 have had some questions, as we've presented this
16 infographic, about the percentage increases that
17 we're seeing for these -- for these two
18 indicators, 5 and 6, particularly.

19 And what the increases are based on
20 is our trend or historical data. However, we have
21 had comments come back that we need to be more
22 aggressive in these indicators, and that is
23 already being forwarded up to our leadership to
24 talk about before we submit the SPP/APR. So I
25 just wanted to go ahead and caveat that for you.

1 If your -- if your initial thought is why are
2 these so low, why are these targets not moving at
3 a higher rate, we've had that question.

4 And the second component of Indicator
5 5 is inside the regular classroom less than 40
6 percent of the day. This is a decreasing target.
7 Our baseline for 2018-19 was 12.24 percent, and
8 our target is 11.25 percent. And the last one is
9 in separate schools, residential facilities, or
10 homebound/hospital. You can see that our baseline
11 is 1.68 percent currently for 2018-19, and our
12 target is 1.43 percent.

13 Any comments on Indicator 5?

14 **(No audible response.)**

15 MS. BLAS: Okay. We can move on to
16 Indicator 6, which is again our LRE, and now we're
17 looking at it for early childhood or our preschool
18 three-, four-, five-year-olds. And for the
19 regular early childhood programs -- and, again,
20 recalculated because we've now removed our
21 five-year-olds in kindergarten from this indicator
22 and they're now being reported in Indicator 5.

23 So for 2018-19, in the regular early
24 childhood program, 29.60 percent is our baseline,
25 and we are looking to, by '25-26, increase that to

1 30 percent. Our separate special education class,
2 separate school, or residential facility for
3 '18-19 is 26.49 percent, and hoping to decrease
4 that to 25.25 percent.

5 And the C -- Indicator 6C is a
6 brand-new component of Indicator 6, where we are
7 now reporting separately special education and
8 related services provided in the home. OSEP has
9 marked this as a decreasing target, and there's
10 been talk around the country that, you know, it's
11 probably better for preschool students to be
12 served in the home.

13 So there's -- there's that whole
14 other alternate discussion, but for now, OSEP has
15 made this a decreasing target. Our baseline data
16 shows us at 2.42 percent, and the decreasing
17 target currently is 2.20 percent by 2025-26.

18 Any comments about early childhood
19 placements?

20 **(No audible response.)**

21 MS. BLAS: Okay. So Indicator 7 is
22 our preschool outcomes, and this is how students
23 are doing when they exit their preschool programs,
24 and Part A looks at the percent of preschool
25 students with disabilities who substantially

1 improved their rate of growth by age six or when
2 they exited the program. And so those are broken
3 down into three outcomes, and we had to set
4 targets on all three of those.

5 The last time we had a baseline
6 change for this was in the year 2012-13. So these
7 are our baselines for each of those three outcome
8 indicators, and our target for positive social-
9 emotional skills, we're trying to reach the 85.08
10 percent target. For acquisition and use of
11 knowledge and skills for preschool, we're looking
12 at 85.67 percent, and for use of appropriate
13 behaviors to meet needs, we're looking to reach
14 84.51 percent.

15 I will say that, you know, this is
16 where the question comes in, well, what does the
17 data look like? We do have a baseline for '12-13,
18 and we always have to increase from the baseline.
19 But we also looked at our data to see where we
20 were since the last submission before we would set
21 a target. [Inaudible] target that would be lower
22 than where we were. So it'll help if you were to
23 go back in, if you have questions, go back in and
24 look at the data for past years to see where we
25 are and where we want to go.

1 MS. HOLAHAN: And, Alexis, I'm
2 just -- Alexis, I'm just aware of the time and
3 wondering how do you want us to proceed.

4 MS. UTZ: Oh. You're good. Sherry
5 doesn't do -- she's not logged in yet, and she
6 doesn't do her updates until 10:45.

7 MS. BLAS: So at this point, I know
8 [inaudible] some time to talk about [inaudible].
9 Should we push through with the rest of these
10 indicators, or would you guys like to review the
11 baseline targets on your own and come back to us
12 with questions? What is the best way for us to
13 move forward on this?

14 MS. CARATELLI: If you're asking us,
15 I'd be okay to look through it on my own.

16 MS. UTZ: Kelley and Lauren, is there
17 anything that like we should note about any of
18 these, as they're looking through them, that you
19 want to point out?

20 MS. BLAS: We covered the big ones
21 like Indicator 4 and Indicator 3 and the big
22 changes to 1 and 2. They all kind of follow the
23 same vein, and again, the questions that you have,
24 as you look at your baseline target, can be
25 answered best by going back into the data or

1 looking at the presentations that we did with
2 stakeholders.

3 So that -- you know, that's where you
4 would start if you -- if you have a particular
5 indicator that you're super interested in and you
6 want to research it, all of the information is
7 available to you in the links [inaudible].

8 And then we've also included our
9 contact information on the very last page at the
10 bottom, and we are welcome -- welcome any kind of
11 questions or feedback that you have regarding the
12 baselines and targets or regarding the data that
13 we've provided.

14 MS. HOLAHAN: Kelley, let's do talk
15 about parent involvement, Indicator 8. I think
16 that's of particular interest to this group, and
17 then---

18 MS. BLAS: Okay.

19 MS. HOLAHAN: And then I think also 9
20 and 10 so that we just do a quick look at those,
21 and then we'll move on to 17?

22 MS. BLAS: Sure. So Indicator 8 is
23 our parent involvement survey or parent engagement
24 survey, and what it looks -- looks at is the
25 percent of parents of children receiving special

1 education and who report that school facilitated
2 parent involvement as a means of improving
3 services for students with disabilities.

4 And the way we do that is, we have a
5 sample of districts every year. So it is -- it is
6 not -- the percentage that you're seeing is not
7 the full state percent. We do have districts on a
8 sample schedule, and we send them out a survey for
9 both preschool and school-age.

10 And it's a 17-question survey, and if
11 they respond positively to at least nine of the
12 questions on the survey, then we consider that as
13 a positive response. And so they're included in
14 the percentage of parents who feel like their
15 schools are facilitating meaningful parent
16 involvement.

17 So that survey was revised with
18 stakeholder engagement in 2018-19. So that is
19 our -- that is where we started our baseline, and
20 we were at 49.36 percent of parents who agreed
21 that schools facilitate meaningful parent
22 involvement. One thing about the change that we
23 also did -- I think it's been about four years
24 now -- we had a contractor that was out of state
25 that was collecting this information and actually

1 making the call and speaking to the families.

2 We have moved that in-house now, and
3 so LEAs make their calls. They send out their
4 own -- they send out their own surveys, and so we
5 are getting a much better response now that
6 districts are handling it. And so our target for
7 '25-26 is that at least 54 percent of parents will
8 agree that we've had meaningful parent
9 involvement.

10 And I think I just like meshed
11 together our Indicator 14 and Indicator 8, which
12 is the one where the state -- the out of state was
13 making those [inaudible]. Any questions on parent
14 involvement?

15 And, also, we would welcome any
16 feedback on how to increase our response rate for
17 our parent survey. We really want that
18 information, and I will say even though we only
19 report the positives to OSEP and what districts --
20 the percent positive to OSEP, we are reviewing the
21 analysis of that data.

22 There is a very thorough analysis of
23 the data, and we plan to share that back out with
24 districts -- and Alexis is part of that group --
25 in finding ways that we can share with districts

1 other pieces of information in that data where --
2 where there may be concerns that LEAs want to know
3 what parents are saying.

4 Alexis, do you have any comment on
5 that?

6 MS. UTZ: No. You covered it. I
7 would love ideas of how to get this out more and
8 to have more responses.

9 MS. CHILDERS: I'm not sure--- I'm
10 sorry. I was going to ask the question. I'm not
11 sure if this is the same survey that I'm thinking
12 about, but if I am correct -- I don't know if this
13 is in all counties or -- I'm in Charlotte-
14 Mecklenburg, but I know that the survey that I
15 have received, which had to do with extensions,
16 was only -- it did not go out to everyone.

17 It was something that was some people
18 got, some -- you know, some people received, some
19 people did not, kind of thing. If you received
20 it, you were asked to do it -- return it, kind of
21 thing, but I don't know that that is the same one.

22 Can anyone tell me if that sounds
23 right, or no?

24 MS. BLAS: So this particular survey
25 is supposed to go to all parents of students with

1 disabilities on the last December Child Count.
2 So, for example, this past year, if the district
3 was in the sample, then they should send it to all
4 parents of students with disabilities on their
5 2020 Child Count.

6 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. So I don't --
7 yeah, because I don't remember receiving any of
8 that. We lost my daughter back in May so,
9 obviously, she was pretty ill back in December.
10 But I don't -- I mean I just don't remember
11 receiving anything like that.

12 MS. BLAS: Okay. So, again,
13 that's -- and I'm so sorry for your loss. But
14 that is definitely something that we would want to
15 address with districts and figure out, you know,
16 are they having difficulties getting this out to
17 parents.

18 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, because I think
19 it's important, and I don't really know --
20 obviously, I don't know what's on those surveys,
21 but I think that it would be important to kind of
22 find out information as far -- because my daughter
23 was in school a lot, she was homebound a lot, she
24 was in the hospital a lot. She received services
25 there. So I feel like my perspective would be

1 pretty important considering I would be able to
2 give information based on all of the different
3 three places that we -- she received services.

4 MS. BLAS: Absolutely. Absolutely.
5 I agree.

6 MS. HOLAHAN: And, Kelley, are the
7 larger five LEAs always included in the sample?

8 MS. BLAS: Yes.

9 MS. HOLAHAN: So Charlotte---

10 MS. BLAS: Would have been included.

11 MS. HOLAHAN: Okay.

12 MS. CHILDERS: So you're saying---

13 MS. CARATELLI: Can I ask [inaudible]
14 question? How are families receiving the survey?
15 Is it a printed paper copy? Are they getting it
16 [inaudible] how are most receiving it?

17 MS. BLAS: I believe most districts
18 send it through email. There's also a QR code,
19 and they could -- and I know that I did speak to
20 some districts who were having difficulty who
21 actually printed it out and put it in the kids'
22 backpacks. So several different ways. It is in
23 English and in Spanish.

24 DR. HUTCHINSON: We receive hard
25 copies that are already addressed to the parents,

1 and then there's a QR code and you can choose to
2 send out the QR code. And we did have a higher
3 percentage of people that returned the surveys
4 from -- we don't get to see the individual data at
5 the district level, but statewide, I know we had a
6 higher percentage of people that returned the
7 surveys once they allowed the option of going to
8 filling it out electronically.

9 But we get the preprinted envelope
10 with the child's name and the parent's name on it,
11 and those can get sent home in backpacks. And
12 then you can also send the electronic option as
13 well.

14 MS. CARATELLI: Christy, can I
15 interject quickly? First of all, I'm very sorry
16 for your loss and I love that you're still
17 involved with this. That's---

18 MS. CHILDERS: Thank you.

19 MS. CARATELLI: So thank you. I'm
20 sure it's not easy. So thank you.

21 My question was, you mentioned like
22 the biggest five counties. What are those
23 counties? Is Onslow on that list? I'm assuming
24 it is.

25 MS. BLAS: No. It's Charlotte, Wake,

1 Johnston, Union---

2 MS. CHILDERS: Guilford---

3 MS. BLAS: ---and Winston-

4 Salem/Forsyth.

5 MS. CARATELLI: I got you.

6 MS. BLAS: Okay.

7 MS. CARATELLI: Because let me tell

8 you, in Onslow County, it never crossed my desk

9 either.

10 MS. BLAS: I don't believe that

11 Onslow was on the list this year.

12 MS. CHILDERS: Guilford County isn't

13 on that?

14 MS. BLAS: Yeah, Guilford should be

15 on there.

16 MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah, Guilford's one of

17 the big five.

18 MS. BLAS: Yes.

19 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, that's what I

20 was thinking. It should -- yeah.

21 DR. HUTCHINSON: And I think -- I

22 think we get pulled once every five years if we're

23 not on the big five---

24 MS. BLAS: That's right.

25 DR. HUTCHINSON: ---if I remember

1 right.

2 MS. CHILDERS: Oh, okay.

3 MS. HOLAHAN: Kelley, I'm wondering,
4 given the interest in this, could we just share
5 with this group as a follow-up what the actual 17
6 questions are?

7 MS. BLAS: Yes, yes. I actually
8 pulled those surveys yesterday and sent them to
9 [inaudible]. So I would be happy to forward those
10 to Alexis and she can get them out.

11 MS. HOLAHAN: Awesome.

12 MS. CHILDERS: Would it be worth
13 speaking to the directors to ask them, you know,
14 have they received this to send it out to schools
15 to get to children?

16 MS. BLAS: Well, we -- we manage the
17 data coming in. So if they're on the list for
18 that year -- so, for example, this year, once the
19 data starts coming in, if I'm not seeing a
20 district that's getting responses from parents,
21 then I would reach out to them and say, "Hey, you
22 know, we don't have any responses for your
23 county."

24 And they'll say either "You know, oh,
25 I missed the initial email that I was supposed to

1 send it out," or they'll try a different way such
2 as printing it out and sticking it in a backpack
3 [inaudible].

4 MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

5 MS. BLAS: But we do track it, and
6 DPI is the one who actually gets the response and
7 sends them to be analyzed.

8 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Thank you.

9 MS. BLAS: Uh-huh.

10 MS. DeBIASI: Hey, this is Elizabeth
11 DeBiasi. I'm not in one of those counties. I'm
12 in New Hanover. This may have already been mulled
13 over, but is there any way we could send these not
14 in paper form, not in email, but maybe by text? I
15 get stuff like that.

16 Like when I got COVID, the Department
17 of Health was really good about following up via
18 text, and it was so much easier for me. I didn't
19 have to be on my laptop. I was on my phone. So I
20 was just curious if we could get the cell phone
21 numbers for text capability of parents and---

22 MS. BLAS: That is an awesome idea.
23 Awesome. [Inaudible] anyways. I'm going to put
24 that in -- as a note to put out in next year's
25 memo to our districts to consider that option as a

1 way of distributing their surveys. I think that
2 is a wonderful idea, and they will really
3 appreciate that, especially if they already have a
4 text setup.

5 MS. WILLIAMS-BURCHETTE: And, also,
6 it's easier for your end to collate it. You're
7 not taking stuff off of a paper response. I mean
8 it would automatically go into a database.

9 MS. BLAS: Right. Right.

10 MS. WILLIAMS-BURCHETTE: Kelley, were
11 those surveys also available for charter schools?

12 MS. BLAS: Yes, charters are on the
13 sample list. So, again, if they -- if they were
14 on this year, then they would come around again
15 every five years.

16 MS. WILLIAMS-BURCHETTE: Got you.
17 Thank you.

18 MR. BAKER: I'd like to just add --
19 and thank everyone for their input in this -- that
20 we continue to use just any means of disseminating
21 this information because I have found just in
22 sending out information to our families through
23 Connect Messages, that we use all the different
24 modalities, whether it's doing it through text,
25 email, phone, and actually, sending things out

1 through paper copies and mailing them because, you
2 know, we've just found -- find out that our
3 stakeholders respond in various ways.

4 And this information is so important
5 that I don't think we can just kick out any
6 particular mode of delivery. So if we can just
7 consider all of that, I think it would be
8 extremely important.

9 MS. BLAS: I totally agree.

10 MS. GRANT: This is Christy with Nash
11 County. I'm sorry. I'm a little late. And you
12 may have addressed this, but have we seen a higher
13 rate of return? Because didn't we reduce the
14 number of questions and kind of make it a lot more
15 parent friendly?

16 MS. BLAS: Yes, we are seeing an
17 increase as -- since districts are sending this
18 data out themselves -- the surveys out themselves,
19 we are seeing an increase in responses each year.

20 MS. GRANT: That's what I thought.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. BLAS: Uh-huh.

23 MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. I think that
24 Sherry Thomas is on, and we've probably started to
25 eat into her time. I would say -- so there are

1 just -- there are six more, seven more of these
2 indicators. I think 9 and 10 are of lots of
3 interest to a variety of people. This is our
4 disproportionate representation data.

5 I don't know if we have time to
6 just -- to take a look at 9 and 10, and then very
7 briefly an update on Indicator 17, Sherry, before
8 we turn it over to you; is that all right?

9 MS. UTZ: Lauren, she put in the chat
10 that she's good and she would rather you complete
11 this conversation and discussion, and she'll --
12 she'll adjust.

13 MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. Is that good
14 with the rest of the Council?

15 MS. CHILDERS: Absolutely. I feel
16 [inaudible], and I'm so happy that you guys are
17 joining us. You guys are doing a fantastic job.
18 So thank you. This is very important information.

19 MS. HOLAHAN: Thank you.

20 MS. BLAS: So for Indicators --
21 Indicators 9 and 10, Indicator 9 looks at
22 disproportionate representation, and really what
23 it looks at is identification of students with
24 disabilities. Indicator 9 looks at identification
25 in all areas, and Indicator 10 breaks it out by

1 specific disability categories. OSEP sets the
2 target for Indicator 9 and 10, and it is set at
3 zero percent.

4 Okay. And so once a district is
5 determined to have disproportionality in
6 identification, then there's also a review of
7 policies, practices, and procedures that
8 determines whether or not the disproportionality
9 is based on inappropriate identification. And
10 that's the piece that we, in our stakeholder
11 group, have decided to make a more rigorous
12 process.

13 So we're really going to be working
14 with districts and reviewing their policies,
15 practices, and procedures for Indicator 9 and 10
16 before determining that it is not as a result of
17 inappropriate identification. So districts will
18 be hearing a lot more from us regarding Indicators
19 9 and 10.

20 There's already been some discussion
21 with our Educational Equity and Significant
22 Disproportionality group, and there's been some
23 required trainings and processes that are
24 happening right now regarding those. So as we
25 continue on in that process, I'm sure we'll be

1 looping you guys in and asking you to participate
2 in how we can really dig into identification of
3 students with disabilities.

4 Lauren, I don't know if you want to
5 say anything else about that?

6 MS. HOLAHAN: This is just a little
7 bit misleading, especially in terms of the amount
8 of attention we're going to give it because
9 this -- this is not saying that we don't have
10 districts who are not significantly
11 disproportionate.

12 This indicator -- the zeros and zeros
13 are that of those who were identified as having
14 disproportionality, what percentage of them have
15 it because their policies, practices, and
16 procedures need improving. So our calculation of
17 disproportionality and significant
18 disproportionality are separate, really, from
19 Indicators 9 and 10. That happens, you know,
20 outside of our -- these targets and what these
21 actually mean.

22 But I don't want you to think that
23 for the last 20 years or 15 years since we've
24 started this where we were at zero, that we --
25 that we haven't had any LEAs, districts, or

1 charter schools who were -- who were not
2 significantly disproportionate. This is one of
3 these indicators, to me, that is very confusing to
4 the general public, and I include myself in that.

5 And it might -- if you were just
6 looking at these numbers, it might not tell the
7 whole story of where we need to focus our efforts
8 to ensure that we're not identifying particular
9 racial subgroups more often than the rest of the
10 subgroups either for special ed or for particular
11 categories of special ed.

12 MS. BLAS: Right. And so, really,
13 what Indicator 9 and 10 -- 9 and 10 look at is not
14 just whether or not they're significantly
15 disproportionate, meaning that they've been on the
16 warning list for three years or more, but also
17 whether or not they're even on the warning list.

18 So if they have disproportionality
19 one year, they are included in the numbers of 9
20 and 10, and those are the areas where we're going
21 to be doing a little bit more of a deep dive when
22 we're talking about that review of policies,
23 practices, and procedures and really taking our
24 time to determine whether or not these students
25 are being placed appropriately.

1 And we've included an infographic
2 there with the definitions of all of these big
3 confusing words that we've talked about and where
4 they fit into each one of the different
5 indicators.

6 Moving into Indicator 11, this is our
7 Child Find indicator, and that looks at the
8 percent of students who have been placed within 90
9 days of the written referral. For Indicators 11,
10 12, and 13, OSEP sets the targets for these, and
11 they have to be 100 percent. For our baseline,
12 this indicator has not changed since 2004-05, and
13 our percent in 2004-05 was 84.62 percent.

14 You can see that even that is a long
15 way from 100 percent. And we have seen, over the
16 past few years, that we are still not close to
17 that target of 100 percent, so definitely
18 something that we are working on with districts.

19 For Indicator 12, our baseline
20 percentage was 48.4 percent. We are up from that
21 for Indicator 12. You can look at our historical
22 data on that on our past SPP/APRs, but we're still
23 not at 100 percent. And that's really where we --
24 where we need to get.

25 MS. HOLAHAN: And Indicator 12 is

1 those students with disabilities who are moving
2 out of early intervention and into school-age
3 programming.

4 MS. BLAS: And they must be placed on
5 or before their third birthday.

6 And Indicator 13 is our secondary
7 transition with IEP goals, and it looks at the
8 percent of students with disabilities age 16 or
9 older whose IEPs contain all required transition
10 components. And you can see that this baseline
11 was set in 2008-09. We have not had any changes
12 to the measurement of this indicator. We were at
13 94.7 percent, and as always, the goal is 100
14 percent.

15 And for Indicator 14, this is our
16 secondary transition, and this is where I kind of
17 combined the two surveys that we were talking
18 about when we were talking about Indicator 8.
19 This looks at the percent of students with
20 disabilities who are no longer in high school and
21 that also had IEPs at the time that they exited
22 and whether or not they were enrolled in
23 postsecondary activities.

24 So the first one is looking at did
25 these students enroll in college, are they

1 attending a four-year or a two-year college. Our
2 baseline for '08-09 was 39 percent. And our
3 target for '25-26 is see 44 percent of our
4 students with disabilities enrolled in higher
5 education.

6 The second component of this is
7 either that they are enrolled in higher education
8 or that they become competitively employed. Our
9 baseline for 2008-09 was 62 percent, and our
10 target for that for '25-26 is 81 percent. And so
11 you can see that these are -- these begin to
12 combine together as they move forward.

13 And Part C under 14 is enrolled in
14 higher education or postsecondary education or
15 training or competitively employed. So all three
16 of those combined, and there's really four
17 categories. It's whether or not they're
18 competitively employed or in some other kind of
19 employment. So our baseline for '08-09 was 73
20 percent, and our target for '25-26 is to have
21 91.75 percent of our students with disabilities
22 engaged in some postsecondary activity after they
23 leave high school.

24 MS. HOLAHAN: And that survey goes
25 out to students with disabilities who are one year

1 out, is that right?

2 MS. BLAS: That's right. So if they
3 exited in '20-21, then they would be called over
4 the summer of the following year.

5 MS. HOLAHAN: And then I will--- Are
6 there any questions about any of -- Indicator 14
7 or the previous ones 11, 12, and 13 that we just
8 covered before we move on? 11, 12, and 13 are
9 examples of those compliance indicators where we
10 don't have a choice.

11 **(No audible response.)**

12 MS. HOLAHAN: 15 and 16 are really
13 about our dispute resolution continuum. 15 --
14 Indicator 15 is about the number of hearing
15 requests that go through resolution and result in
16 resolution settlement agreements. And, again, you
17 can see the baselines from back when we wrote our
18 original State Performance Plan from 2004-05. We
19 were at 86 percent.

20 And mediations similarly are the
21 number of disputes that go through mediation that
22 result in a mediation agreement. And that was --
23 baseline was 71 percent. This is the one -- these
24 two indicators are the one place where OSEP allows
25 us to have a range, and so we -- stakeholders did

1 want us to continue having this range of 75 to 85
2 percent of those being -- of those disputes being
3 agreed upon either through mediation or
4 resolution.

5 I will say that this is -- this is
6 one of these outcomes that we have very little
7 control over the processes that result in these
8 data. We certainly have control about encouraging
9 resolution and encouraging the use of mediation
10 processes, but whether families or school
11 districts choose to use those dispute resolution
12 options is largely out of our control. This is --
13 this is data that we -- that we sort of report
14 with open hands.

15 And then, finally, our State Systemic
16 Improvement Project, Indicator 17, this was a new
17 addition to the State Performance Plan. In 2013,
18 it was announced. So we wrote and submitted the
19 first part of our state's first State Systemic
20 Improvement Plan in 2014, and part of that work is
21 to have sort of this focus of improvement for
22 students with disabilities [inaudible] student
23 outcome.

24 And for our first SiMR that we worked
25 on, that State-identified Measurable Result, we

1 focused on the five-year adjusted cohort
2 graduation rate for students with disabilities.
3 We worked on that 2014 to 2021. We will be
4 reporting on that graduation-focused SiMR for the
5 last time when we submit this SPP in February.

6 We never saw any slippage in
7 graduation rate for students with disabilities.
8 It increased by almost seven points over the
9 course of those seven years. And we didn't meet
10 the '20-21 target, which was 77.9 percent. We
11 were at 74.5 percent with our '20-21 data.

12 That said, we did achieve the overall
13 goal of reducing the gap between students with
14 disabilities and all students over the course of
15 those seven years by almost three percent -- three
16 percentage points, which is to say that was one of
17 those places where we really did see, with focused
18 attention, coherent improvement strategies.

19 Students with disabilities improved
20 their five-year cohort graduation rate faster than
21 all students by three percent, which is -- this is
22 a very difficult metric to move, and so we're
23 celebrating that.

24 And given some of the changes in our
25 State Board priorities and in the priorities of

1 our new superintendent, focusing very much on
2 educational equity and literacy, we will be
3 shifting to a new State-identified Measurable
4 Result focused on eliminating opportunity gaps in
5 fourth-grade reading.

6 And this was, again, with lots and
7 lots of -- two months meeting, we spent with
8 stakeholders, in June and July, looking at
9 different options for a new SiMR, and this is --
10 and this is where we were directed. And so we are
11 continuing to do [inaudible] we need to do to set
12 targets. We won't be reporting the new focus to
13 OSEP in the 2022 submission. We will be reporting
14 that in the 2023 SPP.

15 So we'll be working with you-all very
16 closely during the calendar year 2022 as we select
17 improvement strategies for this focus as we do
18 that root cause analysis that we talked about
19 earlier. There's much more work to be done, but
20 we know this is the direction we're headed.

21 That will open it up to any final
22 questions or comments. I do want to say that --
23 and I'm going to put our contact information in
24 the chat box as well -- if you -- if you have
25 follow-up ideas, questions, concerns, you just

1 want to talk some more about this, please
2 [inaudible] or me to continue the conversation.
3 We appreciate you giving us this chance to talk
4 with you-all about these baselines and targets.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Council, any
6 other questions for Lauren or Kelley?

7 **(No audible response.)**

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: So hearing none,
9 thank you so much, Lauren and Kelley, for your
10 presentation.

11 MS. HOLAHAN: Thank you very much.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: So we're going to
13 move on.

14 DR. HUTCHINSON: Cynthia, I know we
15 need to move on. Do you feel like we need to do
16 like a five-minute bathroom break before Sherry
17 jumps on?

18 MS. CHILDERS: Yes, we do.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: We certainly can.

20 MS. THOMAS: That is totally fine
21 with me. I don't have a whole lot today, and I
22 think they probably need a break by now. That was
23 a lot of brain drain you just went through.

24 MS. CHILDERS: Thank you.

25 DR. HUTCHINSON: All right. So maybe

1 like five after 11:00 and flip to Sherry; is that
2 okay, Cynthia?

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: That is great.
4 Thank you.

5 (A brief recess was taken from 11:00
6 a.m. to 11:05 a.m.)

7 MS. UTZ: Sherry, whenever you're
8 ready, you can jump in with your updates.

9 MS. THOMAS: Good morning, everyone.
10 I think it's still morning. It feels like it's
11 probably afternoon by the time we get to 11:00,
12 we've all been so busy already. It's good to see
13 all of you here, and I am just so glad that you
14 were engaged and participated in that conversation
15 around our SPP and APR.

16 It is critical that we have all
17 stakeholders a part of that, and many of you have
18 been in some of those stakeholder meetings with
19 us. So thank you for -- for your interest, your
20 participation, and most of all your feedback.
21 That is greatly appreciated.

22 I don't have a lot today, which is
23 kind of a good thing, right? I just wanted to do
24 a quick review. We did, indeed, successfully hold
25 our seventieth Conference on Exceptional Children

1 November the 16th through the 19th in Greensboro.
2 We had a day of MTSS work, and then we had
3 preconference institutes, and then a day and a
4 half of conference. And I believe some of you
5 participated in that as well.

6 What I really want to highlight is
7 that we celebrated that it was our seventieth year
8 of having a conference or it was the seventieth
9 conference. In the last 72 years, we have had 70
10 conferences. And to celebrate that platinum
11 milestone, we did a kind of history walk of the
12 Exceptional Children division, and we are very
13 fortunate that of the seven directors of
14 Exceptional Children, six are still here with us
15 living and breathing and -- and very, very much
16 alive.

17 The very first state director Felix
18 Barker did pass away, but we had Mr. George Kahdy,
19 who is in his late nineties now talk about what it
20 was like for him to be a director, and up through
21 our most recent previous director Bill Hussey. We
22 had some of our folks with us. We had video
23 clips. Those things will be on the website.

24 So if you haven't -- and they may be
25 up already, but if you haven't seen that and have

1 an hour and a half to spare, it just to me is
2 extremely fascinating to know that the legislature
3 had the mindfulness in 1947 and '48 to pass
4 legislation creating the Exceptional Children
5 Division for the State of North Carolina.

6 That is 30 years ahead of the first
7 special ed law federally, and it was -- there was
8 some funding that followed closely after the
9 implementation of or creation of this Division.
10 For about ten years, I think, Mr. Barker was the
11 solo person in the Exceptional Children Division,
12 which boggles my mind, but there were teachers out
13 in the field during that time.

14 So if you do get a chance, if you
15 weren't -- if you didn't join in and watch the
16 streaming and hear the information or if you
17 haven't found it, I would encourage you to find
18 some time to do that because it is really critical
19 for us to be mindful that while this work feels so
20 insensitive and so hard most days, we've got a
21 legacy that we're following where people were
22 navigating this in our state long before there was
23 even federal guidance around how to do that.

24 And that was just -- that was pretty
25 heartfelt for me that we have a good history, and

1 we're going keep doing good things for kids
2 because that's what it should be about, not the
3 adults but about the kids.

4 We had about 1400 participants at our
5 preconference institutes and our conference. We
6 limited registration at a maximum 1500 -- so we
7 came pretty close to that -- because of our COVID
8 protocols we had put in place. We wanted to make
9 sure we had space between seats in the rooms. We
10 didn't overcrowd breakout session rooms. We had
11 plenty of space in the plenary so people were not
12 exposed and felt unsafe.

13 We asked for masks to be worn.
14 Registrants had to either submit a copy of their
15 vaccine card or present a COVID test within 72
16 hours of coming into the conference. And I will
17 say that, knock on wood and many thanks and many
18 blessings, we didn't have any COVID outbreaks. We
19 didn't have a cluster that appeared from that
20 conference, at least I have heard of none where --
21 where people feel like they contracted it there.
22 That hasn't been reported back to us. So I don't
23 think we had any.

24 People were being mindful of the
25 requirements and adhered to those, and I think

1 everybody was so glad to see people in -- in
2 person face-to-face, to see bodies instead of a
3 picture on a screen. They were like kids let
4 out -- let out for recess all of a sudden.

5 There was lots of conversation and
6 engagement and collaboration and gosh, I've missed
7 you, and I just think we all came away -- and some
8 of you that were there may want to add to this,
9 but I felt like people all came away -- just a
10 real boost of energy at getting to have some of
11 that personal engagement with fellow coworkers and
12 peers that are out there doing that same work.

13 Seeing teachers be excited being
14 there, and I got to talk to some student teachers
15 from one of our universities that had
16 representatives there. They were -- their eyes
17 were about this big, and they just kept saying,
18 "This is so great. We had no idea that there was
19 anything like this we could participate in."

20 I felt really good. We don't have
21 the feedback from our conference surveys sorted
22 yet. If you haven't done that and you were there
23 and you feel so inclined, please go ahead and give
24 us your feedback on the conference. But it felt
25 like it was successful for a lot of reasons. And

1 I'll take a pause in case anyone wants to add to
2 that.

3 MS. GRANT: I'll add to that. I
4 actually did take a big group from my district,
5 and I will tell you that time was a time for us to
6 all be together because even though we're in the
7 same district, we haven't had a chance really to
8 all come together like we did.

9 And they really did say that it was
10 like an SEL session for them personally, just to
11 take that break but still be energized by being
12 around other -- other districts and other teachers
13 doing the same thing they're doing and to learn
14 from them. And they made connections, and several
15 of them have already contacted some of the
16 presenters that were other teachers in other
17 districts and stuff.

18 So I think -- I've always been one
19 that I want my people to stay up and abreast on
20 what's going on across the state and stay up with
21 the law, and I really -- I really feel good about
22 what my staff left with and what I left with as
23 well.

24 And I do -- I'm like Sherry. I
25 encourage you to watch that video, if you haven't

1 seen it with the history, because even being in
2 EC -- you know, here for 23 years, I've not -- I
3 did not know that information that was presented.
4 It was very energizing for us as well because --
5 parents as well.

6 Our jobs have been very difficult for
7 a couple of years now, so it was good to get away
8 and learn and come back energized, and my staff
9 still talks about it. So I mean it was great.

10 MS. THOMAS: Thank you, Christy, for
11 sharing that. And I think Alexis has put up the
12 link to that video that was streamed. So get some
13 popcorn and enjoy.

14 The other update I wanted to give you
15 today was our continuing work with the Office of
16 Special Education Programs, or OSEP, as we are
17 still working to provide them evidences of our
18 monitoring visit that occurred in January of 2020
19 from the report that we received in May of '21.

20 Our last meeting was on November the
21 30th, and I believe we have now sufficiently and
22 completely given them all pieces of evidence to
23 satisfy the corrective action that we had around
24 the SLD piece that was all looped in with the MTSS
25 state complaint and all that corrective action

1 that we talked about before.

2 But we have shared all of those
3 documents with them, and I'm -- I'm pretty hopeful
4 that that has met the need. We have shown that we
5 have put in place the requirements that they
6 instituted with that corrective action. I believe
7 all of the school business requirements -- while
8 that really isn't our scope of work, we work very
9 closely with School Business, but one of the items
10 that had to be created was a grant notification --
11 excuse me -- grant account notification.

12 So when we get the IDEA grant, it has
13 GAN number. It has a number for us to know what
14 year and which federal grant that is. And so we
15 have a requirement now statewide -- and I think
16 nationally -- that when you do a subrecipient
17 grant -- so when our LEAs get their IDEA
18 dollars -- they also have to have that GAN number
19 with the year of -- years of availability so they
20 can track that as well.

21 And that has been created in our
22 grant system in the NC SIP system where we're
23 putting all of our grants now, and that's being
24 pushed out every time a grant is allotted and
25 approved. They're getting that notification that

1 we've met that requirement in conjunction with our
2 friends down in School Business.

3 And then they're having to also
4 provide a written procedure, which I believe
5 they've already done, around reallocation of
6 funds. So if a charter school closes and the
7 students have moved back into a regular -- a
8 traditional school district, those funds are
9 supposed to go back from that charter school that
10 were allotted to that traditional school, and it
11 does, but it wasn't written down anywhere in a
12 procedural type way that they could find and
13 follow online.

14 So that's been corrected and updated
15 by School Business. So I think we're really close
16 to tying a bow on all the School Business and the
17 finance pieces. The last piece hanging out is
18 around our private residential treatment
19 facilities. We've had some trouble scheduling
20 that call with DHHS because they've had some folks
21 out on extended sick leave, they've had some new
22 staff come on board, but we have a meeting, I
23 believe, scheduled with them before Christmas.

24 And then we'll be meeting with OSEP
25 after the first of the year with DHHS to go

1 through what we are proposing and what we have
2 proposed as that corrective action around the
3 PRTFs, where we are trying to determine a way we
4 can efficiently and appropriately and legally
5 garner information of students who have been
6 placed in a PRTF outside of North Carolina.

7 They're holding us responsible for
8 ensuring FAPE, but we don't have authority to go
9 into another state to do a monitoring to ensure
10 that they are providing FAPE. So we're trying to
11 work with DHHS to come up with a solution that
12 will meet the requirements for OSEP. So more to
13 come on that. Probably at your next meeting, we
14 should be able to update you on some final actions
15 on that.

16 And that's really all I had today
17 unless you have questions for me.

18 **(No audible response.)**

19 MS. THOMAS: I did think of one
20 thing, so I should never say that's all I have
21 because then I always think of one more thing.

22 We've had some staff hirings that I
23 want to share. We have a new section chief over
24 our Program Improvement and Professional
25 Development Section. This is where the Reading

1 Research to Classroom Practice and Foundations of
2 Math work lives. It's where that State Personnel
3 Development Grant is managed, and our work around
4 coaching and coteaching and professional -- a lot
5 of professional development is -- Dr. Paula
6 Crawford was there and she retired the first of
7 August.

8 So I'm pleased to let you know that
9 Ginger Cash, who has been in our division as a
10 consultant for charter school instructional
11 practices, is the new section chief, and she got
12 started right before conference. Ginger is a
13 trainer in both Reading Research to Classroom
14 Practices and Foundations of Math. She has
15 already been working very closely with that team
16 in her previous role in the division. Worked very
17 closely with that team on delivering professional
18 development around those two courses and work
19 around dyslexia.

20 She's got some really good leadership
21 skills, and I think she's going to bring some
22 fresh eyes and some additional ways we can
23 continue to connect that work to other things
24 across not only the division but the agency. So
25 we're very excited to have her be in that role and

1 providing that leadership. And I think some of
2 you-all have met Ginger at some point in time. If
3 you have not, we're happy to let her come before
4 you at your next meeting and let you get to know
5 her a little bit.

6 I think we'll probably be able to
7 give you some updates at that point around our new
8 [inaudible] grant, the new NC SIP project -- the
9 renewed grant NC SIP project and where that focus
10 of work is going. We're trying to focus on
11 low-performing schools and trying to address the
12 needs that aren't being met in some of our areas
13 across the state that may not have had this
14 training before.

15 And then we have two new fiscal
16 monitors that have come on board, one October the
17 1st, and that's Milinda Martina. She was
18 previously the director in Orange County and then
19 Pender County, and she's here as an IDEA fiscal
20 monitor, and she is covering the eastern part of
21 our state, Regions 1 and 2.

22 And then Lisa Blanton, who was
23 previously the local director in Rutherford
24 County, is covering Regions 5 and 6, which is our
25 Piedmont Triad and our Southwest areas, so

1 Greensboro down through Charlotte. And both of
2 them have, as a director, completed grants and
3 dealt with a budget, and so they come in with that
4 lens to support Elizabeth -- and work with
5 Elizabeth Millen and Adam Parent, who are our
6 other two fiscal monitors.

7 That section chief position for
8 Special Programs and Data is vacant. Amanda Byrd
9 left us October the 1st to take a great
10 opportunity with a national technical assistance
11 center where she's providing support to states,
12 and while it was a huge loss for us, it's a huge,
13 huge accomplishment and gain for her to be able to
14 share her expertise around fiscal monitoring and
15 connecting, especially, student performance and
16 growth back to how the money has supported that
17 across the country.

18 We've celebrated her but mourned her
19 loss for us because it was a big hit, but we
20 are -- have finished interviews and have moved
21 forward a candidate and hope to have someone in
22 place by the first of the year in that role that I
23 think is going to bring great strength and insight
24 and wisdom to the role as a very strong candidate.

25 So those are my big staff updates for

1 today. Anything else for me?

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Any questions for
3 Sherry?

4 **(No audible response.)**

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: So hearing none,
6 Sherry, I think you've done a great job of
7 updating us.

8 MS. THOMAS: Thank you. Thank you.
9 It's always a pleasure to be here. I'll try to
10 hang on for a little while, but I may be off this
11 afternoon. But thanks again for your commitment
12 to this work and this group and for all you do as
13 a Council to help support and inform us and be
14 that great stakeholder group for us. We really
15 appreciate it.

16 I hope you-all have a wonderful
17 holiday and that everybody gets some time for rest
18 because I think that's what we all need right now
19 more than anything else. Take care and enjoy your
20 break.

21 MS. CHILDERS: Hey, Cynthia. I
22 wanted to add one thing, if it's okay, for Sherry.

23 MS. THOMAS: Sure. Absolutely.

24 MS. CHILDERS: I don't think that I
25 got to do this the last meeting, and I just wanted

1 everyone to be able to hear this because it really
2 meant so much.

3 But, Sherry, I know that you are so
4 busy every single day and you have so much on your
5 plate and you do so much for our state and for our
6 children every day. And I received a card in the
7 mail from you after we lost [name redacted] in
8 May, and just to see that, our whole family was
9 just so blessed by that. I know that you're so
10 busy, and to take time out to just send that meant
11 a whole lot to our family.

12 And it just really goes to show the
13 person that you are and the character that you
14 have. And I just really appreciate that, and I
15 wanted everyone to hear how amazing you are at
16 your job and what you do and how you really
17 support all of us and care about all of us. So
18 thank you so much. I can't hear what she's
19 saying.

20 MS. THOMAS: Because I was already
21 muted. I'm so sorry. Thank you for that. That
22 means more to me than you know. So many times
23 what we hear as a Division are all the wrong
24 things and all the negative things, and it's rare
25 to get that positive. But it's important for us

1 to take care of the people that support us, and it
2 was important for us to let you know that we were
3 thinking about you.

4 MS. CHILDERS: Well, thank you so
5 much. We really appreciate it.

6 MS. THOMAS: Thank you for those kind
7 words, and I hope you're doing okay.

8 MS. CHILDERS: We're making it.
9 Thank you.

10 MS. THOMAS: Thanks, everybody.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: So our next work is
12 subcommittee discussion and goal setting work. So
13 if you could, Alexis, put up the information about
14 the subcommittees, the members of the group and
15 what they actually do.

16 So I don't know if everyone had an
17 opportunity to go into the documents and read this
18 and if you have any questions about the various
19 subcommittees. And I certainly want you to
20 understand that every member of the Council should
21 be on a subcommittee. It's sort of a requirement.
22 And we do need chairs for two -- two of the
23 subcommittees.

24 So any questions? Any thoughts? Any
25 volunteers?

1 MS. DeBIASI: I do not want to
2 volunteer to be chair; however, I don't see my
3 name on the list. And I don't know if I was just
4 remiss in signing up, but I was hoping to be on
5 the Unmet Needs Committee. And this is---

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, can you add
7 that?

8 MS. DeBIASI: Thanks.

9 DR. HUTCHINSON: Alexis, this is a
10 small thing, but is it possible to go ahead and
11 increase your font -- increase your---

12 MS. DeBIASI: Maybe I am on the list.
13 I just can't read it.

14 DR. HUTCHINSON: Oh, there you go.
15 Nice. Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

16 MS. DeBIASI: Do you need to know how
17 to spell my name?

18 MS. UTZ: Well, I'm also -- I'm
19 trying to pull up the spreadsheet that has it
20 because I might not have updated this document,
21 but it might be in the other one.

22 MS. DeBIASI: Oh, okay.

23 MS. UTZ: But go ahead. Keep
24 talking.

25 MS. DeBIASI: It's capital D, little

1 e, capital B, i-a-s-i.

2 MS. UTZ: Okay. Thank you. Yeah, I
3 see I didn't update this because Abby's not the
4 chair anymore.

5 MS. CHILDERS: Hey, Alexis. We had
6 kept me the chair because nobody would take the
7 position. So if I need to -- if I need to stay on
8 for now, I will. I would love some help, though.

9 MR. BAKER: Yes, I had agreed to help
10 you, Abby.

11 MS. CHILDERS: That's right. Anthony
12 did. I have that in my notes. I'm sorry,
13 Anthony. Yes.

14 MR. BAKER: No problem.

15 MS. CHILDERS: So if you want to just
16 put myself and Anthony by that, that would be
17 great.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: So Data and Reports
19 is another committee that we don't have a chair
20 for. And anyone on this call who's not on a
21 committee, do you have questions? Or would you
22 like to go ahead and join? So if we have no
23 volunteer for the Data and Reports Committee,
24 please think about it over this break, and if
25 you're not on a committee, think about joining and

1 certainly think about maybe chairing the Data and
2 Reports Committee.

3 MS. UTZ: I will say chairing really
4 only involves typing on the -- like the reporting
5 piece so that when Cynthia and Christy go to do
6 the annual report, they can kind of pull it up and
7 figure out what you guys were doing. It really
8 doesn't require a whole lot of extra work, just so
9 you know.

10 MS. CHILDERS: Alexis, can you scroll
11 a little bit because I can't see [inaudible] the
12 Reports and Data one. I was just trying to look
13 at it.

14 DR. HUTCHINSON: Cynthia, do you want
15 to pull up from the Council's website the -- I
16 guess you've got the expectations on the left-hand
17 side. Is that from the Council website? Maybe
18 Alexis can answer that question.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, is that
20 from the Council website or the actual bylaws?

21 MS. UTZ: That is a good question. I
22 think this actual document was started by Policies
23 and Procedures. I think they might have done it,
24 but I'll pull up the website quick and look.

25 DR. HUTCHINSON: At the bottom of our

1 website, it kind of outlines each of those
2 committees that are set by our bylaws, and the
3 description of each one I found to be pretty
4 helpful. And I think that people have struggled
5 with the expectations in each of our committees at
6 times.

7 Yeah, go all the way to the bottom.
8 I'm trying remember where it was. Yeah. Go on
9 down.

10 MS. UTZ: I wonder if it was on
11 the---

12 MS. CHILDERS: Alexis, when you
13 say the -- can you say -- did you say that the
14 Policies and Procedures group put that together?
15 That wouldn't have been ours, though; that would
16 have been someone in the past, correct?

17 MS. UTZ: Yes.

18 MS. CHILDERS: [Inaudible] put that
19 together. Okay.

20 MS. UTZ: I wonder if it was in the
21 bylaws, Christy?

22 DR. HUTCHINSON: Yeah, I think if you
23 go down. Keep going. It feel like it was at the
24 bottom of that document.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: There it is,

1 committees. Oh, it just lists them. Okay.

2 DR. HUTCHINSON: But it was a good
3 description. Hold on. Let me look. It was a
4 great description.

5 MS. UTZ: So I can tell you that the
6 information on this sheet, whoever did it, it
7 comes from the spreadsheet that lists everyone
8 from it. So that's where this information comes
9 from. I don't know where that came from, though.
10 That spreadsheet was created before -- I didn't
11 create it. It was before me.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I'm thinking
13 this might have been created by our Policies
14 Committee when -- after our first presentation by
15 John Copenhagen.

16 MS. CHILDERS: When was that,
17 Cynthia?

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, my gosh. Wow.

19 MS. UTZ: '13, '14, something like
20 that?

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

22 MS. CHILDERS: [Inaudible] maybe we
23 should go back and like start talking about -- and
24 we don't have to do it today necessarily, but is
25 this something that we should probably go back and

1 reevaluate and restructure?

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: Certainly, it's
3 something that the Policies and Procedures
4 Committee can take up and bring back suggestions
5 to the whole committee.

6 MS. CHILDERS: Anthony, what is your
7 opinion on that?

8 MR. BAKER: That's fine with me.
9 Like everybody else, I was trying to just see if I
10 could find copies of that as well. I know it
11 exists because I remember us reviewing it before,
12 and I haven't been on the committee that long --
13 the Council that long, so -- but yes, I have no
14 problem with us reviewing it and readdressing it.

15 MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So,
17 Alexis, can you give us -- what is the actual date
18 that the report to the Board is due? Like every
19 year it's due in what month?

20 MS. UTZ: Let me -- let me pull it up
21 just to make sure because I've had to -- had to
22 write this down so many different times because I
23 always get confused between when the report was
24 due, when I had to get it to Council -- or when I
25 had to get it to the Board, you know, for all

1 their procedures. I want to say that it's due --
2 oh, it's due by September 1st to the Board.
3 That's what written in the bylaws.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: So -- okay. It's
5 due to -- the Council needs to get it to you by
6 the June meeting?

7 MS. UTZ: If they have to have it by
8 September 1st, that means I have to get it to the
9 Board's administration by the middle of August.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: So the June
11 meeting's probably a good place to have a
12 deadline.

13 MS. UTZ: Yes.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: So it's important
15 for the Council to actually have some suggestions
16 and have some input into the actual board report
17 that we have to have available to Alexis by June
18 of 2022. So if we could start thinking about what
19 we're going to work on this year in each of those
20 committees and the work that we're going to do and
21 the ideas or suggestions we have for the Board,
22 that would be excellent.

23 MS. CHILDERS: And correct me if I'm
24 wrong, because I know that after the last meeting
25 I came to, I spoke with Alexis and Christy after

1 about -- about the things concerning our Policies
2 and Procedures Committee, and that was kind of why
3 we were bringing all this up today.

4 I know that in the subcommittee group
5 ourselves, Anthony, myself, and everybody else, we
6 kind of all agreed that there needed to be a bit
7 more description, I think, of defining what we are
8 going to do and who we are and what our plan --
9 our mission is for this subcommittee, you know,
10 just in general.

11 And I think that that -- when I
12 talked with everybody, it seemed like there wanted
13 to be a bit more than just what the Council -- the
14 policies and procedures for the Council was going
15 to be. Anthony, can you jump in if I'm wrong?

16 MR. BAKER: You're absolutely right.
17 That was basically the gist of our conversation---

18 MS. CHILDERS: Yes.

19 MR. BAKER: ---more detail as to the
20 responsibilities [inaudible] subcommittees.

21 MS. CHILDERS: I think everyone -- I
22 think people had more in-depth things that they
23 would want to discuss, not just the policies and
24 the procedures of our actual board, but policies
25 and procedures of other things that come to the

1 board [inaudible].

2 MR. BAKER: Exactly.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: So is that
4 something you think that each committee should
5 talk about within themselves?

6 MS. CHILDERS: I don't think that
7 that would be a bad idea. I think that it should
8 be something that maybe each committee talks
9 about. Each committee decides, you know, is
10 this -- you know, do we want to maybe, you know,
11 dip into outside of just the Council itself with,
12 you know, Reports and Data, you know, Unmet Needs,
13 all of those kind of things, because I think it
14 kind of makes everyone feel like that they're
15 getting a bit more involved and they're able to,
16 you know, help more, do more, if that makes any
17 sense.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, for example, in
19 the Unmet Needs Committee, they've always reached
20 outside of the Council because they're talking
21 about the unmet needs in the state of North
22 Carolina, what is coming to them through their
23 different constituencies as well as what is coming
24 to us through the public comments and through the
25 actual EC Division.

1 MS. CHILDERS: Right. I think that
2 where there was some miscommunication was, is it
3 them being given stuff or is it being -- is it
4 stuff that maybe, for an example, Sherry brings to
5 the Council, they just kind of review it kind of
6 thing, or is this something where if they see
7 something or want to be involved in something that
8 they can and bring it back to the Council?

9 I think that that was kind of where
10 all of the questions along for -- at least for
11 Policies and Procedures was, was are we only
12 allowed to get involved with policies and
13 procedures that have to do with the actual
14 Council, or can we actually look at other things
15 and say, hey, we want to talk about the policies
16 and procedures of A, B, and C with this
17 department.

18 And I think that was where Anthony
19 was even going on the last one because he said,
20 you know, I feel like there's so many things that
21 need help and need to be changed. And that was
22 kind of where he wanted to get involved, not
23 necessarily just involved in the policies and
24 procedures that have to do with our actual
25 Council.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: So my understanding
2 was that the Policies and Procedures Committee was
3 expansive, meaning it did not only work on the
4 policies and procedures of the Council, but as you
5 see -- as you see in the little blurb, it works to
6 publicly comment on rules and regulations proposed
7 by the SEA.

8 And, you know, so that for me always
9 was that the Policies and Procedures Committee
10 worked on all the policies, again, affecting
11 children -- students with disabilities in the
12 entire state of North Carolina.

13 So if you're getting input -- you're
14 in another group or setting and you're hearing
15 things about special ed students and you see that
16 that might be something that you want to work on
17 in the Policies and Procedures Committee,
18 absolutely. That was my understanding.

19 MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, did you
21 have anything different?

22 MR. BAKER: That -- that says it all
23 right there.

24 MS. CHILDERS: Right. I agree.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis? She's on

1 mute.

2 MS. UTZ: Yeah, sorry. The only --
3 what I have written here is what I know. I mean
4 [inaudible] what I know.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.
6 Good thoughts. Anything else?

7 **(No audible response.)**

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: So is Diane still
9 here? Does she want to talk anything about --
10 talk about the Unmet Needs Committee, anything
11 that they might be thinking of?

12 And just because Reports and Data
13 doesn't have a chair at this time, any member of
14 Reports and Data can talk about any interests or
15 any challenges or opportunities that they might
16 have or are thinking about.

17 MS. COFFEY: I am back, but I'll be
18 honest. I just got back, so I'm not real sure
19 what all has been said. So I would be hesitant to
20 jump in.

21 As far as the Unmet Needs Committee,
22 we were trying really to come back around together
23 with a lot of new members and really catch up at
24 the last meeting anyway. So I would feel we
25 probably need to do the same because it looks like

1 there's new people on my list. So, definitely,
2 we'll just have to try to get together and figure
3 out where we're moving forward and what we're
4 going to work on moving forward.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Diane, I see
6 there's a question in red in the Unmet Needs
7 Committee about should we add---

8 MS. COFFEY: I think somebody else
9 added that. That was not added by me, but I mean
10 my understanding is anything that's coming through
11 public comments, if there is actionable items in
12 that, that we would, you know, look at those and
13 decide from there. But I'm not sure who added
14 that in red, to be honest.

15 MS. UTZ: Like Anthony mentioned
16 before, this was created and taken to
17 subcommittees for them to review and update, and I
18 think that comment was added by someone that was
19 reviewing it, but I don't know who. But speaking
20 of -- I mean it kind of goes with this.

21 I know one of the things was the
22 subcommittee reporting form, and this was -- this
23 was just something that I found that I assumed you
24 guys were using when I started this position. I
25 have kind of tweaked some of the -- I combined it

1 into one so that you could keep one whole year's
2 worth of information on one document to hopefully
3 make it easier for you -- for you, Cynthia, to
4 pull the information for the report.

5 But this is not a set-in-stone thing,
6 so if it needs to be modified for your
7 subcommittee, for all committees, we can, I mean,
8 start from scratch, redo it, modify it, keep using
9 it, whatever it is. You will not hurt my feelings
10 at all because this was not done by me, and I
11 don't even know if this is useful to you guys.

12 MS. CHILDERS: I'm sorry. My memory
13 is terrible. I just cannot remember anything.
14 I'm trying to remember the conversation and
15 everything that was had a few months ago. I was
16 thinking that this really wasn't as helpful for
17 Policies and Procedures.

18 But am I wrong, Anthony? Can you
19 remember? I can't. I'm so sorry. I feel so bad.

20 MR. BAKER: I'm sitting here trying
21 to recall as well [inaudible]. I think we did
22 discuss this actual template.

23 MS. CHILDERS: I remember discussing
24 it. I don't remember the outcome of it.

25 MR. BAKER: Yeah.

1 MS. UTZ: It doesn't even have to be
2 a form as long as there's some document of what
3 you did so that you can -- like they can refer to
4 it when they do the report. I mean it could be as
5 simple as that.

6 MS. CHILDERS: I think that would be
7 easier.

8 MS. UTZ: Yeah. So maybe just keep
9 the top box here where it says the members that
10 were there so you can record the members and then
11 just---

12 MR. BAKER: Sure.

13 MS. UTZ: ---like leave it blank
14 after that?

15 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah.

16 MR. BAKER: Yeah, that information
17 certainly is essential.

18 MS. CHILDERS: I don't know that
19 there's really any -- there might not always be a
20 task. It might sometimes just be a discussion.
21 You know, it might not always have to end in a
22 task of something being done. So I don't know
23 that we definitely -- that we actually need that.
24 So I think that this is better.

25 MR. BAKER: And I certainly don't

1 want to speak for all the other subcommittees. I
2 know, just for us, we didn't -- we weren't going
3 to use all the things that were there all the time
4 because it may not fit.

5 MS. CHILDERS: Right.

6 MR. BAKER: But it may for other
7 subcommittees.

8 MS. CHILDERS: Absolutely.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Anthony and
10 Abby, would it be good to add after the notes
11 recommendations because that's, I think, where
12 Christy and I find a challenge, like reading
13 through and trying to find out if the subcommittee
14 has recommendations.

15 MR. BAKER: Absolutely.

16 MS. CHILDERS: Absolutely. Why don't
17 we do notes and recommendations.

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

19 MR. BAKER: That's awesome.

20 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah. And I've been
21 sitting here thinking more and more, Cynthia. I
22 think that this all kind of came about the last
23 meeting. There was something on the agenda, and
24 it had to do -- had to do with parents. And
25 Anthony and I kind of both, you know, there was a

1 red light that went off.

2 I just remember, I know that, and it
3 kind of was like, okay, we want to be involved in
4 that. There should be a policy and procedure with
5 that. That's kind of where we were confused, so
6 is this something where we can get involved or do
7 we have to -- is there -- are we only allowed
8 to -- basically supposed to be doing policies and
9 procedures around the board -- around the Council.

10 MS. UTZ: Did that help you, Abby? I
11 pulled up---

12 MS. CHILDERS: Yes. Oh, thank God.
13 Okay. Yes. Okay. Sorry. Okay. Can you zoom in
14 just a little bit? "[Inaudible] for an
15 understanding of how we can be most effective."
16 Yes. Okay. "Reach out to Sherry for guidance and
17 she will contact the subcommittee members."

18 Okay. Yeah. And then, actually,
19 after that, I had spoken to you and Christy
20 privately. So I didn't end up having to talk to
21 Carol Ann or Sherry.

22 MR. BAKER: That's right. I remember
23 now.

24 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah. And it did have
25 to do -- and it was with that Senate Bill. I do

1 remember that. Yes. Now it's all coming back to
2 me. Thank God for notes. See, this is why --
3 this is why we definitely need to keep that note
4 section.

5 Okay. So yes. Yeah, it had to do --
6 and there was a line in that Senate Bill, and that
7 was what got Anthony and I -- we were like, oh,
8 hold up. Wait a minute. This is -- like we want
9 to make sure that this is--- Do you remember
10 that, Anthony, now? I do.

11 MR. BAKER: I do.

12 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Good. Okay.

13 MS. COFFEY: Abby, this is Diane. I
14 am wondering with what you guys are saying here if
15 maybe -- and maybe -- Cynthia, this may be
16 something we have to decide, but if maybe like
17 every other council meeting that Policy and Unmet
18 Needs meet together because that way, it may be
19 that we can come up with better recommendations
20 bringing the two together.

21 So I wonder if we need to alternate
22 and bring those two together, sometimes meet
23 separately to have our individual things we've got
24 to work on, but if maybe at least every other
25 meeting, we come together and have some time

1 together to really see -- Policy could help drive
2 what Unmet Needs recommendations are or vice
3 versa.

4 We could work together in that
5 because I think that's been the part about Unmet
6 Needs -- is it's been -- we've not had a lot of
7 public comments or letters in or anything. So it
8 really has been hard to keep the movement of
9 making recommendations.

10 MR. BAKER: I think that's a great
11 idea.

12 MS. CHILDERS: I think that's a great
13 idea. I think that's a great idea, Diane. And
14 then to go back, Diane, honestly, because I was
15 looking a minute ago, if you go back to what
16 Alexis had up in that red where it stated under
17 Unmet Needs about -- yes -- should we address any
18 items presented in public comments or state annual
19 reports that appear to be trends within the data.

20 Do you feel like, Diane, that that
21 should really be under you, or should that not go
22 to Reports and Data?

23 MS. COFFEY: Abby, I don't know if
24 that needs to be under here because,
25 unfortunately, I will just be honest, I mean, we

1 probably had one letter in the last year
2 [inaudible] public comments, and I don't know that
3 we've had any -- of course, being virtual, we've
4 not had a lot of actual people coming in and
5 signing up to do the public -- I mean, honestly,
6 we're not getting enough to make trend data. So
7 we're trying to look other ways.

8 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. I think that's
9 a great -- I think that's very fair, then. So I
10 don't think that that needs to be added. I would
11 see -- and, Diane, I think it would be great for
12 all of us to talk about -- I don't know if
13 everybody kind of was -- anybody read over all of
14 the due process reports that Alexis sent out in
15 the past few months.

16 But there was one specifically that
17 came out -- I think it was actually the very first
18 one she sent out, if I'm not mistaken, and that
19 was one that I felt like, okay, that is -- there
20 are major unmet needs under that.

21 MS. COFFEY: And those, I look at
22 pretty closely, but that's -- you know, again,
23 I've not had a team till recently. I've got a
24 better team now. So I think [inaudible] we need
25 to go back, and I have reached out before like to

1 Carol Ann and others in her department just trying
2 to get, in general, could they give us some good
3 trends that were going on within all of it, not
4 just the ones that end up in due process but even
5 in the facilitated or those, but it's been hard
6 for them to get any senses of a trend either
7 there.

8 So -- and then like ECAC, we've
9 reached out to. So I mean there's been a lot of
10 things we've done outside the Council trying to
11 find some unmet needs. Definitely, we hear things
12 and we bring those up, like I think in March we're
13 going to try to bring up one topic that's been
14 coming up a lot lately.

15 But -- so, again, it's making those
16 recommendations, though, that's harder sometimes.
17 I think that's where Policies and Procedures may
18 be able to help -- help with the recommendation
19 side of things a little bit better.

20 MS. CARATELLI: Diane, I have a
21 question for you. This is Joanne Caratelli. So
22 you talked about not having enough being brought
23 forward -- enough needs being brought forward in
24 unmet needs, and we also talked about how it
25 should be coming -- it should be filtering down

1 from the local LEAs, you know, and getting our
2 information.

3 What recommendation does anybody have
4 for when you have an LEA that disbanded basically
5 their own parent advisory council, so the flow of
6 information is coming down? In Onslow, it went --
7 people have gone to the Board, and I contacted the
8 head of EC, and like, "Oh, yeah, we're working on
9 it." It's been a year and a half, you know, and
10 there's lots of unmet needs.

11 People have gone to the Board of Ed
12 saying, "Hey, this is what's going on with our EC
13 kids." We're losing that supply chain of
14 information. So where do you go from there when
15 the county disbands it and has no interest in
16 putting it back?

17 MS. COFFEY: I mean I think
18 unfortunately I will say, honestly, not all
19 counties have EC advisory councils to begin with.
20 So I don't know -- we would have to look into it a
21 little deeper than that, of what the requirements
22 are on that to really -- before I would speak to
23 that too heavily at this point. I just know not
24 all counties -- I mean I work professionally as a
25 parent advocate in seven counties and only one of

1 those seven has an EC advisory council.

2 MS. CARATELLI: Do the ones who don't
3 have SEPTA -- do they special ed PTA? Like is
4 there some -- you know, some way to get the
5 information other than just---

6 MS. COFFEY: No. In rural counties,
7 you don't see that that much. Some -- yes,
8 there's some out there, but there's just not as
9 many in rural counties. I know some of the bigger
10 counties have both. They have EC advisory
11 councils and SEPTA. So I know they're out there,
12 but I just don't -- I don't know if there's any
13 mandate that every county, every LEA has to have
14 one. I guess that's what I would question.

15 MS. CHILDERS: And, Joanne -- and
16 Diane might understand too and know, but I
17 actually was the advisory chair for the Charlotte-
18 Mecklenburg Schools EC PAC Advisory Council, and
19 that was the very -- we actually started the
20 council that year that I joined as chair. So --
21 and there -- that parent advisory council is very
22 tied down by legal -- very, and that has been a
23 huge issue.

24 And I think it's a huge issue across
25 the state as far as the parent advisory councils

1 go because everyone's supposed to have one, but
2 the problem is, is when they are formed, what
3 they're able to do and what they're not able to
4 do. And what they need to be doing, they're not
5 really able to because of all of the legal stuff
6 that goes around it with parents being involved,
7 you know, all the confidentiality, all of those
8 things fall in place.

9 And I feel like that that is where
10 the parent advisory council had to completely go
11 in a different direction. I'm no longer chair for
12 that anymore. My time was up. And I'm not really
13 sure where they're going with all of that now. I
14 think, especially since COVID happened, it kind of
15 shut down.

16 But -- and I don't know what the
17 future of that holds, but I do know that when I
18 was there, being able to do hardly anything was --
19 it was just very difficult to have anything.

20 MS. CARATELLI: I found -- I was on
21 Onslow's until it just went inactive, and I found
22 that I was incredibly frustrated with my time
23 there because the meetings were structured where
24 every minute, it seemed like, was, hey, we're
25 going to shove down your throat all of these

1 things we're doing. Look at what we're doing with
2 i-Ready. Look at what we're doing with this,
3 this, this. Okay. See you next month.

4 There was no way to funnel in parent
5 concern. It was just hey, this is what the
6 district is doing. We're awesome. Okay. Bye.
7 So I don't think that was effective to begin with,
8 but that was coming from the leadership of it
9 down. So I mean it's just -- it's incredibly
10 frustrating.

11 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah.

12 MS. COFFEY: I think we're going to
13 have to get more information on it, I think, to be
14 able to give a good feed to what we need to do
15 moving forward with those. And that may be a good
16 way to tie in family/parent voices is using those,
17 but we've got to figure out -- yeah, we can't only
18 select from the counties that have it.

19 We would have to figure out is it
20 going to be something that we can see from the
21 whole state if we're doing -- going down that
22 path. So I think that's definitely something we
23 need to investigate further for sure.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis---

25 MS. CARATELLI: I feel totally

1 useless when I don't have any information from
2 parents to bring to the advisory council. Like
3 what am I doing here? I only have my own personal
4 experience to speak for with a huge county full of
5 parents and children, but we just can't get their
6 information. So that's---

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Joanne, when
8 you first started your conversation, you talked
9 about the parents going to the school board and
10 putting their complaints and their concerns to the
11 school board. Is that a way for you to get access
12 to parental input and information from your
13 particular county?

14 MS. CARATELLI: Well, if I were to go
15 to those board meetings, I suppose I could grab
16 those people on the way out the door. They're an
17 hour from my house. I've watched them online, you
18 know. So these people come up, introduce
19 themselves, and then they speak. So there's no
20 way for me to connect with them.

21 I don't -- I don't have a -- a line
22 of communication with those parents other than,
23 you know, just standing outside the door and
24 grabbing them when they walk out, which seems
25 really aggressive.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: So it might not be
2 going to the board meeting or grabbing them, but
3 it's gathering, capturing that information that
4 you get from the recordings or that you get from
5 whatever way that you're hearing what's going on
6 at the board.

7 So if something's going on with
8 parents who have children with intellectual
9 disabilities, they're coming to the board, they're
10 expressing their concern, capturing that
11 information and bringing that back to the Council
12 would be effective for now as you work to see that
13 Onslow County gets back to a place where they have
14 an advisory council.

15 And, Alexis, I remember when you
16 first came on as an employee of the Department,
17 one of the things you were working on was the
18 advisory councils and all -- and all the different
19 states -- sorry -- states -- in all the different
20 counties [inaudible]. So we don't have a mandate
21 in North Carolina that you have to have an
22 advisory council at every LEA. That's my
23 understanding, but it is something that is highly
24 encouraged and suggested.

25 So I don't know if we need to think

1 about possibly one of the recommendations is that
2 there be a mandate that there is some type of
3 advisory council in every county. That might be a
4 recommendation. Alexis, any thoughts?

5 MS. CARATELLI: That's a good one.

6 MS. UTZ: You are perfectly welcome
7 to make the recommendation. Aimee and I -- Aimee
8 from ECAC -- her and I were collaborating on a
9 presentation for how to create the advisory
10 councils. ECAC helped districts in the past. I
11 know she did do that presentation at the
12 conference, but I wasn't able to attend. I was
13 doing a different session.

14 So I don't know if it -- like who
15 attended it or whatever, but as of right now,
16 these are the places that I was able to find
17 something on a website that referred to some type
18 of advisory council.

19 MS. CHILDERS: Right. I can say for
20 Charlotte-Mecklenburg, when we started, I actually
21 had reached out to Wake County's, and Wake was
22 able -- and I spoke with -- I spoke with the
23 person -- the chair -- the parent that chaired for
24 Wake, and what they were able to do was way more
25 than what CMS was giving. They weren't -- they

1 weren't budging.

2 MS. GRANT: And this is Christy with
3 Nash. We had a separate parent advisory committee
4 just for our children with disabilities, and we
5 had -- we started out with great participation,
6 and then all of a sudden, it fizzled out. We
7 restructured ours, and actually, what we did was
8 take the parents who were still active in our EC
9 PAC, and we included them in our district parent
10 advisory committee.

11 And what we have found is there are
12 so many -- the conversations are rich, and they
13 ensure that the conversations that are had
14 typically by your regular ed parents also bring
15 that lens of students with disabilities as well.
16 And so it has been very successful.

17 I will meet separately like as a
18 subcommittee with the parents, but I don't know
19 that I would go back to a separate just special
20 needs advisory committee standalone by itself. I
21 think a subcommittee is great, but I really like
22 the conversations that they bring to the table in
23 our district parent advisory committee. Having --
24 I really feel like it helps us create an inclusive
25 environment for our district.

1 MR. BAKER: Christy, I would just add
2 that is wonderful. It's great to hear that, that
3 that's happening at the district level. It's
4 certainly something we're doing at our local
5 school level too. So even in our school
6 improvement teams, we're making sure that those
7 kinds of conversations and collaboration are
8 occurring.

9 And it has been such a benefit to all
10 of our students, as we look to make sure that
11 we've got, you know, just equitable structures and
12 policies and procedures in place for [inaudible]
13 and that all our kids are being successful.

14 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, I agree. And I
15 think -- and I did want to add on one thing. I
16 can't remember if it was Cynthia or Diane that had
17 stated to Joanne about listening to what the
18 parents say at the district meetings. And I agree
19 with that, to an extent.

20 I think it's hard, though, when you
21 have districts where you have an entire council --
22 you know, board of education council, that is --
23 that has no one with any experience or even a
24 child of their own or anything to do with special
25 education. I think that it -- you know, I think

1 that they hear it. It goes in one ear and out the
2 other because they don't -- they may not even know
3 the acronyms.

4 You know, they don't -- they don't
5 understand because they don't live it every day.
6 They don't understand why that parent is standing
7 at a podium in such a -- you know, in a complete
8 emotional mess because they don't -- they don't
9 live it every day, and it is so different. But I
10 also love what Christy is saying about how when
11 she -- when they changed things up for them, that
12 was very helpful because it gave each side, you
13 know, an insight into what the other is going
14 through and what each are dealing with.

15 But I think that -- I think for CMS I
16 can say for sure the parents with children that
17 have disabilities, they're frustrated. They are
18 very frustrated because they don't have somewhere
19 where they can speak their mind, where they can
20 say this is what we really need help with, this is
21 an actual unmet need, and get the help because
22 there's no one that's capable and educated enough
23 to be able to help them with that.

24 MS. COFFEY: And I think that goes
25 beyond CMS, for sure.

1 MS. DeBIASI: I'm in New Hanover
2 County, and it was just exasperating during the
3 pandemic. It was awful. But I just wanted to let
4 you know that in New Hanover County, we have
5 something called Advisory Council for Exceptional
6 Students.

7 So I feel like if you could put that
8 on the list. I don't know. It's just one more
9 place for a parent who's Googling, if they happen
10 to come to this website here, then if you could
11 link our Advisory Council for Exceptional
12 Students, I think that would be helpful.

13 MS. GRANT: I agree, Elizabeth, and I
14 think that's one thing -- I mean I even talked
15 with other directors because there's been a lot of
16 turnover. I mean we've been fortunate enough.
17 I've been able to get to a point where I am
18 because I've been sitting in this seat for over 15
19 years.

20 And so you have so many new directors
21 who aren't comfortable walking by a room and
22 saying, "Are you-all talking about something where
23 students with disabilities might be involved?
24 Because I need to have somebody in here, if so,"
25 right? But I do think -- like I even talked with

1 other directors, who are veteran directors, who
2 knew nothing about this Council, and that is
3 alarming to me.

4 If we have -- if we have EC staff at
5 the local level that don't know about it, I don't
6 know how the word's getting out to the parents
7 that it's even there for them to go to because I'm
8 surprised we haven't had more parents turn things
9 in or address those unmet needs or come and speak
10 like, you know, we had the group -- the dyslexic
11 parents group come and talk.

12 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah.

13 MS. DeBIASI: Well, I'm just a
14 parent. So, you know, I think just because I'm an
15 involved parent, I became aware of it, but I would
16 say 99 percent of parents [sic] with special needs
17 in New Hanover County are unaware of this one. So
18 the more we can -- I would say an unmet need that
19 should be mandated for every LEA.

20 And then, secondly, we need to like
21 have a listing of each council -- each of these
22 exceptional student councils by LEA just so that
23 it's housed in one place and easy to find.

24 MS. COFFEY: And another question
25 would be, is if we mandate it, they're all

1 different. So how we would need to maybe have
2 some guidance of what -- you know, like I said,
3 some are just literally the EC director comes and
4 updates what's going on and doesn't really take
5 feedback from the parents, to some are very much
6 parent-driven.

7 So I think we would have to look at
8 recommendations to that, too, to make sure that
9 we're covering equitably across the state for---

10 MS. DeBIASI: I agree and I would
11 hesitate to mandate what it would exactly look
12 like, but I feel like---

13 MS. COFFEY: Some guidance. Some
14 [inaudible] that it's a two-way street [inaudible]
15 two-way street mentality, I guess, is what I'm
16 thinking, yeah, not that---

17 MS. DeBIASI: I mean we could put out
18 best practices as a collective.

19 MS. COFFEY: That's what I mean. Not
20 necessarily guidance, but maybe some
21 recommendations for practice, yeah.

22 MS. GRANT: Right. I like that
23 because I think if we mandate it, we're going to
24 need to tie it to a policy or something like that.
25 I mean we would need to make some changes there.

1 I think the best practices is -- we've had some
2 [inaudible] that are highly suggested before.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. So some
4 states do mandate, and Massachusetts is one state
5 that does. So I will send you, Diane, the link to
6 their -- information about their advisory councils
7 that they mandate every LEA has. And that's just
8 one example because I'm sure other states have --
9 have that type of mandate, but just to give you an
10 idea.

11 And it is a general discussions. It
12 is not -- the EC directors come and staff come and
13 just deliver to the parents, and the parents have
14 no input. It really is a general discussion so
15 that -- and it's sort of what Wake County has done
16 for many years that they've had the council. All
17 of our EC directors and department chairs do come
18 to that council meeting, but the parents -- the
19 parents have significant input during those
20 meetings.

21 I mean it's not perfect, but it is --
22 it's a good way of parents getting very involved
23 in the policies, the procedures, and the
24 transportation of students and just the minutiae
25 of what happens daily at Wake County for children

1 with disabilities.

2 MS. BURCHETTE-WILLIAMS: Cynthia,
3 this is Tameeka. Is there any way that you could
4 share that information with us? Because I would
5 be interested in seeing it as well.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah, I will send
7 it off to Alexis, and then she can put it out to
8 the whole Council.

9 MS. CHILDERS: Yes, ma'am. Thank
10 you. So I think -- at this time, I think that we
11 should add definitely for Unmet Needs and Policies
12 and Procedures to definitely come together every
13 other month. So I think we should definitely do
14 that.

15 I also think that -- I think that
16 this conversation needs to be expanded, and I
17 think it does need to be talked about a lot more.
18 I think it's very important. I loved what Christy
19 was saying that they did and how they just
20 completely reorg'd the whole entire thing and how
21 much better it seems.

22 I think that if that's something,
23 Alexis, that maybe we could even put on the
24 agenda. I don't know if, Christy, I'm putting you
25 on the spot, but if you would be willing to kind

1 of talk about it further with the entire board, I
2 think that would be a great -- I think that would
3 be a great thing.

4 And I think that that's something
5 that Sherry and Carol Ann -- I think everyone
6 needs to hear about this because I think it's a
7 very important part, and I think that it's
8 something that is a huge issue that's not being --
9 not being met.

10 MS. GRANT: I agree. We've also --
11 there's a lady from ECAC -- I can't remember her
12 name, but we've also worked a lot with ECAC with
13 our NC SIP Grant with the whole huge family
14 engagement portion.

15 And I think you're exactly right.
16 That has brought the light to us that we have to
17 stop and think that two-way input and two-way
18 communication and it's not us just speaking to the
19 parents and telling them all this information, and
20 "Okay. You-all have a good night."

21 I mean it truly is some rich
22 conversations there, but we have had that help
23 through ECAC to get to the point where we are.
24 So -- and I know there's some other districts who
25 are doing great things. I used to love to hear

1 you, Abby, talk about what all Charlotte was
2 doing.

3 So I think that's where -- I mean we
4 went to that site and looked at a lot of the stuff
5 that you had there. So---

6 MS. CHILDERS: Well, thank you.
7 Yeah, I feel like, you know, we really -- we were
8 starting -- we started off strong, and I feel like
9 it just kind of -- it really -- all of the red
10 tape was just so much, and -- and that might be
11 for the bigger counties something that is -- has
12 been a problem. I think CMS has a red tape issue
13 overall, in general.

14 But -- and I think that -- but,
15 again, that's something else that needs to be
16 dealt with, and it's not going to be dealt with if
17 everyone just constantly is submitting to their
18 red tape.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Alexis, were
20 you able to capture some of this conversation in
21 the actual---

22 MS. UTZ: I mean I went to the agenda
23 and added like some suggestions for future things
24 in that, but---

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

1 MS. UTZ: So that's one reason why I
2 brought the agenda up to make sure that we all
3 have an understanding of do we need goals for --
4 like are we doing the work session after lunch; if
5 so, what are the goals for this like -- and I
6 started at one point under Policies and Procedures
7 to put the revise and review, but then I took that
8 away because I wasn't sure if that was actually
9 going to be a goal just for Policies and
10 Procedures or for everyone. So---

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I think we kind
12 of agreed that it would be a goal for every
13 committee -- everyone---

14 MS. UTZ: Okay.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: ---to revise and
16 review.

17 MS. UTZ: All right. I'm trying to
18 think of things where we can.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

20 MS. UTZ: All right. Any other
21 specific goals to add?

22 DR. HUTCHINSON: I know this question
23 was brought up before we kind of got down that
24 large discussion about people that came forth with
25 public comments prior to the pandemic and

1 everything going online, and Diane was making the
2 point that we've had very limited comments since
3 that so there weren't many trends.

4 But one thing that I would say is,
5 the trend that I saw in the in-person comments
6 was that the folks that were from the local
7 Raleigh, Durham, Triangle, Chapel Hill area were
8 the folks that presented in-person verbal
9 comments.

10 And I think to make statewide
11 generalizations based on the representation -- we
12 have an unfair representation of individuals that
13 came and made comments because the people that
14 were local were able to be present. Written
15 comments have always been accepted, but as you've
16 seen in the pandemic, we've had extremely limited
17 written comments.

18 So I think to take a trend and make
19 it generalized for the whole state, based on the
20 presentation we've seen, is really not -- not
21 appropriate.

22 MS. COFFEY: I agree totally because
23 even -- to be honest, I'm in my fifth year now on
24 the council and been in Unmet Needs the whole
25 time. I know of 12 even written letters that

1 we've had in that whole time. So nowhere -- do we
2 get anywhere near what we need to make a trend
3 analysis from [inaudible].

4 DR. HUTCHINSON: And the people that
5 we hear from in person are Raleigh, Durham, Chapel
6 Hill, and maybe we've had a few from Greensboro,
7 but nothing outside of that. And so to make
8 generalizations based on that, we're really
9 getting unfair representation [inaudible]
10 appropriate.

11 So in the Unmet Needs, there was a
12 comment about looking at trends with comments, and
13 I just think we have to be careful about doing
14 that.

15 MR. BAKER: I would agree with
16 Christy. That's a good point.

17 MS. CHILDERS: I would agree. I will
18 also -- I think that that's a very good point, and
19 I will say that for Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the
20 Council for Children's Rights is based here, and
21 they support children here in Mecklenburg County
22 with disabilities, you know, in the school
23 setting.

24 They're in courts, they're in all
25 kinds of different departments, and they had no

1 idea that this Council even existed. I mean
2 they're attorneys, you know, and they had no idea.
3 When I talk to other parents, they have no idea
4 that this Council even exists.

5 So I think that that's -- I think
6 that that's a very true -- I think it's true. I
7 don't think a lot of people do know, and I think
8 the ones that do -- I think a lot of people don't
9 know, and I think that the ones that do are
10 probably closer to DPI where they can come in and
11 make comments.

12 MR. BAKER: Agreed.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Abby, I think,
14 unfortunately, lots of different organizations
15 like the Council for Children's Rights have staff
16 turnover because Council for Children's Rights had
17 an attorney from the Council for Children's Rights
18 on this Council, but [inaudible] you know,
19 retired.

20 So when staff changes happen at all
21 of these organizations across the state, we as the
22 Council need to still be in there making sure that
23 the information about this Council is available to
24 all parents everywhere. So I don't know how we do
25 that. We have the parent newsletter. I just

1 don't know what other things we can do to actually
2 do that kind of outreach and make sure that
3 everybody across the state knows about the
4 Council.

5 Because, unfortunately, across the
6 state, people don't even know that we have the
7 Exceptional Council -- Center for Children --
8 ECAC. They don't even know that we have that, and
9 it's like are you kidding me? You don't know our
10 state Parent Training and Information Center, but
11 it really is a problem -- it's a lack of
12 information and awareness.

13 MS. DEGEN: This is Jennifer Degen.
14 Can you-all hear me?

15 MS. CHILDERS: Yes.

16 MS. DEGEN: [Inaudible].

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Jennifer --
18 Jennifer, we can't hear you.

19 MS. DEGEN: You can't hear me? I
20 don't know why my mike---

21 MS. DeBIASI: Now we can [inaudible]
22 strong, yeah.

23 MR. POTTER: We do hear you, but it
24 sounded like you were in a tunnel.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: You've gone out

1 again.

2 MS. CHILDERS: If you can talk really
3 loud.

4 MS. DeBIASI: Or type it in the chat.

5 MR. POTTER: It kind of sounds like
6 when you start a sentence, it warps and then it
7 sounds like you run away [inaudible].

8 MS. CHILDERS: I have a feeling that
9 she's -- I think Jennifer might be bringing up
10 the -- I think she's going to bring up -- if I
11 remember correctly, of when we had the first
12 conversation. It was held over at Smith Center,
13 and Laura Hamby was involved in that conversation.

14 And we had thought that basically the
15 EC PAC was going to be going in one direction, and
16 Jennifer Degen immediately stood up, which she
17 should have being in the role that she's in, and
18 said, "Wait a minute. I cannot reach out to them
19 because I am, with red tape, tied down, and I
20 cannot due to confidentiality say anything."

21 So I think if I had -- if I had to
22 guess, that's probably what she's going to talk
23 about right now.

24 MS. UTZ: She's going to try another
25 computer and come back on and see if that helps

1 her volume.

2 MS. CHILDERS: Okay. I'm going to
3 walk away for two seconds, and I will be right
4 back.

5 MS. UTZ: She said just give her one
6 more minute.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, do we have
8 anyone signed up for public comment?

9 MS. UTZ: I just looked and I do not
10 see any noncouncil members on the call.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: And they had to be
12 signed up by---

13 MS. UTZ: 12:30.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we have a
15 few minutes. Diane, did we get any written public
16 comments?

17 MS. COFFEY: No, there is no written
18 in at this time.

19 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

20 MS. DEGEN: Can you-all hear me on
21 this computer?

22 MS. CHILDERS: Yes. Yes.

23 MS. DEGEN: Okay. Leave it to my
24 CMS-issued computer not to work. One of the
25 things that I was going to say is yes, Abby, you

1 are right, is that I did come to that first
2 meeting. And I know that since, you know, I was
3 chosen to represent -- this my second term.

4 But when our new superintendent came
5 on and our head of compliance with CMS came to my
6 office to discuss some of the issues that I was
7 having as far as -- you know, because I represent
8 a lot of -- my husband does the same job I do.
9 So, you know, I have a lot of friends in the EC
10 Department, and you know, I had a lot of concerns.

11 And so that superintendent and the
12 head of compliance came to my office, and they
13 weren't even aware that I represented on the
14 committee. They didn't -- weren't even aware of
15 the committee. So I think that that's super hard,
16 and I do, you know, listen to my parents' concerns
17 and things like that, and I do say to go to the --
18 you know, the state website and go in. Whether
19 some of them follow up with that, you know, I'm
20 not sure.

21 But, you know, I was happy, Abby,
22 when I told you about this and you came to one of
23 the meetings, you know, and then you joined the
24 Council. So getting it out that way, but it is
25 hard -- it is hard to be a teacher from the

1 confidentiality and things like that, but then
2 it's not out there.

3 I mean a district as large as I am
4 and the superintendent didn't even know that I
5 represent the Council, you know, it's difficult.
6 And, you know, this is, I think, my last year or
7 maybe one more.

8 So I think getting us out there is
9 important because we're not in the Triangle.
10 People from Charlotte might drive up and go
11 have -- you know, because there are -- you know,
12 we're a large district that has issues, and I feel
13 like we would have more if it was publicly known
14 that this is there.

15 MS. CHILDERS: Agreed. I agree. I
16 mean I -- and I'm glad that you spoke up just now
17 because I think that it's true. I think that
18 it -- I think that that is one of the biggest
19 issues. And so that's one of the reasons why when
20 Christy Hutchinson said that she didn't feel it
21 was very fair to kind of base it off of what we
22 had come in, I think that's true because I just
23 don't think that -- I just think that so many
24 parents don't have a clue.

25 I am -- I am confident in saying that

1 if Jennifer and I had gone to the CMS board
2 meeting this last month or next month, that I'd
3 doubt that any of them would know that this
4 board -- this Council even exists. I would be
5 shocked if they did.

6 Is anyone speaking? I can't hear.

7 MS. UTZ: No.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: No.

9 MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

10 MR. BAKER: You're hearing is still
11 intact.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: So any more
13 thoughts or comments?

14 MS. CHILDERS: I don't think so. I
15 just think that these are -- these are very
16 important things that we should really add to an
17 agenda, if possible, for our next big council
18 meeting. And I think that it would be very
19 important to have Sherry and Carol Ann there for
20 that to have their input.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: So could you
22 maybe--- Okay. Abby, I wanted to say, could you
23 recap the things you would like added to --
24 possibly added to the Council agenda for next
25 month?

1 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, absolutely. So
2 if we could add, I think, the -- what the
3 councils -- or what the subcommittees are going to
4 do. I think adding and talking about Unmet Needs
5 and Policies and Procedures going together or
6 having a meeting every other month. I think
7 that's something else we should talk about.

8 I think that we should talk about how
9 our Council can be more publicly known. I think
10 that that's important. I think if Christy Grant
11 doesn't mind coming and actually talking or -- you
12 know, I think we're going to be in person, you
13 said, the next time -- if she doesn't mind
14 speaking about what they're doing in their
15 district. I think that's a really very good idea.

16 So I think just those are -- I think
17 those are four real big ones that we should kind
18 of go over.

19 MS. GRANT: It might be good too to
20 have ECAC [inaudible].

21 MS. CHILDERS: Yes, absolutely.

22 MS. DEGEN: Is there a way to --
23 especially the big five -- to invite some of those
24 superintendents or assistant superintendents of
25 the things to a meeting and say, "Hey, we want to

1 open this up to you-all and invite you. You're
2 not part of the committee, but like if you could
3 come, therefore, you could hear and see what we do
4 and then bring in either the assistant
5 superintendent or -- you know, just to see that
6 that's there. And not necessarily just the big
7 five, but you know, across the -- across the board
8 bring in the LEAs just to sit in and observe.

9 I know, you know, some of the people
10 that are on the panel, I remember meeting at the
11 [inaudible], and you know, some of the people on
12 there were just parents in the galley, you know,
13 listening, and now they're on the Council. I
14 think, Cynthia, I remember when you came as a
15 parent. So, you know, I think that that's
16 important, is to bring those people in and see
17 what we do or see what we're discussing, and then
18 have them be able to contribute.

19 MS. CHILDERS: I think that's a great
20 idea.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: That's a great
22 idea. I think -- yeah, inviting all the EC
23 directors or assistant directors to possibly come
24 when they can to a meeting or even -- as we are
25 now doing everything virtually, even when we go

1 back in public, we'll still have that virtual
2 option. So having them just listen in so that
3 they actually know what this Council is and what
4 it does.

5 MR. BAKER: Absolutely.

6 MS. CHILDERS: I think that's a great
7 idea.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: So yeah.

9 MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: So I've captured
11 all of those, Alexis, for a discussion with the
12 EC -- executive committee of this Council, as we
13 develop the March agenda to put some things on
14 there.

15 So we're at 12:28. But one of the
16 other things that was on this agenda for us to
17 talk about was -- if time permits -- individual
18 committee goals for [inaudible].

19 MS. CHILDERS: Sorry, guys.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: No problem. But I
21 think since we've had the discussion about
22 reviewing and revising the actual committees, I
23 think goals might not be a question for right now.
24 Or maybe it's something we want to do after lunch,
25 if we want to come back after lunch, if we think

1 we have work to do.

2 DR. HUTCHINSON: I'm not sure if
3 coming back after lunch is necessary. If we want
4 to meet as an executive group looking at the
5 feedback from today, I don't know if the
6 subcommittees really have like valuable work to
7 do. And so looking after lunch, we just have the
8 public comments, which we don't have any at this
9 moment.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Exactly.

11 DR. HUTCHINSON: So I would make -- I
12 would make a motion that we adjourn, but I
13 certainly don't want to shut any ideas down that
14 you have.

15 MR. BAKER: I agree with you,
16 Christy. I think that makes great sense in what
17 the agenda is and what we've got or don't have
18 coming after lunch. So I would -- I would agree
19 with that, and in fact, if you wanted make that
20 motion, I would second it.

21 DR. HUTCHINSON: I'll make a motion
22 that we adjourn.

23 MS. UTZ: Just a quick question.
24 When are you guys going to review and revise the
25 information sheet? Are you going to set up a time

1 with your committee outside of this? I thought
2 that's what the goal was to do today.

3 MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, I just sent a
4 message to Anthony privately. So I'm going to try
5 to find out exactly where he is, and I think I
6 would prefer, honestly, if I could meet with him
7 and then possibly Anthony, myself, and Diane
8 possibly meet together and discuss more before we
9 go forward any further, if that's okay.

10 MS. UTZ: Okay. Uh-huh.

11 MR. BAKER: That sounds fine.

12 MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: As to the other
14 committees, do you have any suggestions for how
15 you'd like to meet to do the review and revise?
16 Or do you just want to get together with your
17 committee members and make that determination? I
18 think we all have each others' emails. Don't we
19 have that, Alexis?

20 MS. UTZ: Yeah, they are in the
21 Google folder under subcommittees.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. And so we
23 don't -- because we have no one signed up for
24 public comment, we don't have to actually be
25 around at the 1:00 time period for public comment?

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MS. UTZ: Right.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we have the motion to adjourn. We have the second. Do we have any opposed?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: All in favor?

(Multiple council members responded aye.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: The meeting is adjourned.

(At 12:31 a.m., the meeting adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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

That said proceeding was reported by me and the foregoing pages, numbered 4 through 143, are a true record of the proceeding to the best of my knowledge and belief;

That I am neither related to nor employed by any of the parties or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor interested directly or indirectly in the matter in controversy, and am not financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

Certified this 25th day of January, 2022.



Rebecca P. Scott