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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| Scott Court Reporting, Inc.  
130 Angle Place  
Stokesdale, North Carolina 27357  
336/548-4371 |
Thereupon, the following proceeding was held:

THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning, everyone. So we can go ahead and do the roll call, Alexis.

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

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

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

(No audible response.)

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

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

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

MS. CARATELLI: I'm Joanne Caratelli. I am a teacher, but I serve here as a parent. My son is a high school junior and he has Down syndrome. He's a rock star, by the way. In my
teacher role, I've been an advisor to a huge successful unified sports program and served on our county's parent advisory committee as well.

MS. UTZ: Welcome.

MS. CARATELLI: Thank you.

MS. UTZ: All right. Diane?

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

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

(No audible response.)

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

MS. WILSON: Maegen.

MS. UTZ: Thank you.

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

MS. UTZ: Welcome. Tameeka?

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

MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.
Kristen?

(No audible response.)

MS. UTZ: All right. Jennifer Degen?

I see you there.

MS. DEGEN: Hi [inaudible].

MS. UTZ: I see you there.

MS. DEGEN: [Inaudible] now?

MS. UTZ: It was cutting in and out.

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

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


MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.

Marge?

(No audible response.)

MS. UTZ: All right. Christy?

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

MS. UTZ: All right. We'll jump to
MS. CHILDERS: Hi. I'm Abby Childers. I'm a parent.

MS. UTZ: All right. Welcome.

Aimee?

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

MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.

Jennifer Grady?

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

MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right. Matt?

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

FEMALE SPEAKER: I think you are.
MR. POTTER: Thank you. I appreciate that. So I'm here to represent the population with lived experience, but also, I turn 35 next month so I kind of -- I represent what -- hopefully, what an effective product of an inclusive educational system looks like. So that's the perspectives that I'm here to hopefully have.

MS. UTZ: Thank you. Selene?

(No audible response.)

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

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

In my professional life, I'm a banking consultant, and I also serve on the Board
of Easterseals UCP of North Carolina and Virginia.

MS. UTZ: Welcome. All right.

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

Oh. His mike doesn't work. Okay.

Well, welcome. All right. Chris?

(No audible response.)

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

(No audible response.)

MS. UTZ: Kenya?

(No audible response.)

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

MS. BIGLEY: It's okay. I'm happy to
be here. My name is Sara Bigley, and the state
education agency's foster care point of contact.

So thank you. I'm glad to be here.

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

(No audible response.)
MS. UTZ: All right. So it does look like we have our 13, so we can go ahead and do the approval of the agenda and summary of actions.

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

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

(No audible response.)

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

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any opposed?

(No audible response.)
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.
MS. UTZ: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So any opposed?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: All in favor?

(Multiple council members responded aye.)

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

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

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

I've put the link to the resource that we'll be viewing in the chat. I encourage you to click that and let it download to your
computer. It will do that automatically. And there are lots of links within this resource that will take you to various additional resources related to our State Performance Plan. So I just encourage you to download that and save it and refer back to it as -- as needed.

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

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

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

Is it okay, if I share, Alexis?

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

MS. HOLAHAN: I think that I can flip
around -- yeah, just because I already have this pulled up.

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

MS. UTZ: Yes.

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

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

So the presentation that we've used, the PowerPoint, the recording of the meeting, if you want to listen instead of reading a PowerPoint quietly, the transcripts of the meetings and the supplementary document, which is what we're going to go through today, each month, you can see it has all of those resources there. And we will
continue to use this site as we -- even after we submit the State Performance Plan on or before February 1st.

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

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

So we will be submitting the FY 2020 report in -- well, hopefully, we're going to get it done in January. We don't want to go right up to the deadline. So we're just going to work through this morning quickly [inaudible] where we've been with stakeholders, who they are, and then Kelley's going to walk us through the
baselines and targets for most of these indicators.

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

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

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

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

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

You'll see that some indicators, we want that percentage to go up like graduation for
students with disabilities, and then some indicators, we want that percentage to go down. Like with Indicator 2, dropout rate, we want to see that go down. So we'll just keep you alerted to which -- which direction is a good direction as we go.

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

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

The other thing, if you scroll down
to the bottom of the second page, there are, again, the websites linked here, and then there's a summary spreadsheet of all of the indicators and baselines. I'm not going to go to it because it will be kind of a lot of screen shifting and scrolling, and I want to save you that.

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

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

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

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

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

We know COVID has had sort of an -- we don't know what the impact COVID has been for students with disabilities, and we may not know for several years. And so that's one of the indicators we know we may want to go back and set
new targets with you-all after some of that data stabilizes.

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: So, Lauren, besides ECAC, what other opportunities are you taking to do parental outreach?
MS. HOLAHAN: Right. Yes. So these -- the stakeholder meetings, right, we -- at the beginning of the process in April and May and June, we pushed pretty hard with our local EC directors to get the word out to their parents locally. We provided all of the links and the -- you know, the meeting schedule, how to log on. So that was -- that was the main push early on, was through our local EC programs because of their connection with their own parents.

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

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

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: I do and I'll
certainly send those along to you, Lauren.

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

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

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

MS. UTZ: Yes.

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: You're saying you didn't -- if I heard correctly, I was hearing that there really wasn't any documentation yet on how the kids did as far as virtual goes. Is that correct?
MS. HOLAHAN: So in terms of like --
I think what I'm hearing your question is, how are
we calculating learning loss as a result of---

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

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

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Right.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Right.

MS. HOLAHAN: And -- but in terms
of -- you know, it's going to be -- there's going
to be some lag in our statewide data, particularly with our reading and math achievement, before we actually see the impact.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But we are going to do a very thorough and broad root cause analysis of why we have such disparity between students with disabilities and all students, between subgroups of students with disabilities for that particular
grade level in reading. But I think that's the kind of investigation we're going to have to do, and it's not -- it's not just us educating parents; it's parents educating us.

    MS. CHILDERS: Right.

    MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah.

    MS. CHILDERS: Right.

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

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

    MS. HOLAHAN: Good questions. Thanks so much.

    MS. CHILDERS: Thank you.

    MS. HOLAHAN: All right, Kelley---

    MS. BLAS: Okay.

    MS. HOLAHAN: ---turning it over.

    MS. BLAS: Thank you. So we're going to walk through the indicators, and I just want to give you an idea. So when Lauren shared with you the links on the previous page, those are going to be really important to you because what you're viewing right now, as we're walking through the indicators, is really just a snapshot of where we
are or where we've been, depending on the year of
our baseline, and then where we're going at the
end of the SPP/APR.

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

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

So that's going to take me to
Indicator 1, graduation. If you do go look at
your previous graduation rates in the SPP/APR,
it's going to be a totally different calculation
than what OSEP is requiring now. So before the graduation rate was based on a cohort and it looked at all students and students with IEPs and how they were graduating.

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

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

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

MS. BLAS: Yeah. And I will just say also that we have to report it this way to OSEP. The cohort graduation rates for both four or five years are still calculated [inaudible], so if
that's a measure that you'd like to look at and to check, that's always going to be available to you on the NCDPI website.

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

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

The first component is just looking at participation, and our stakeholders decided to keep our participation rate at greater than or equal to 95 percent through '25-26. One of the changes that OSEP made is, instead of reporting all grades three through high school, we are now
only reporting fourth grade, eighth grade, and high school. We still collect all the information, but as far as OSEP is concerned, we're only reporting that in those three areas for reading and math performance.

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

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

(No audible response.)

MS. BLAS: I think Lauren's going to take us back to the infographic.
MS. HOLAHAN: I'm working on it. Oh,
I see what it's doing. I should have never
clicked out of there.

MS. BLAS: Go to the chat and try
clicking the link from there. Will it take you?
MS. HOLAHAN: It's a download.
MS. BLAS: Oh, okay.
MS. HOLAHAN: Let's see. Here we go.

There we go. Let me move it back to -- I think we
had it at 150. Sorry for the quick scrolling.
And here we are.

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

So we're looking at proficiency rates
for students with disabilities on the alternate
academic achievement test, and again, it's whether
or not they score of 4 or 5 and the percentage of
those students who score a 4 or 5 in the alternate
academic achievement standards test. So, again --
Lauren's not going to click it, but if you want to
see what those targets are, you can click on the
link there, and it'll take you to see the targets for each of those tests and each of the three grade levels.

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

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

And that's just another way of looking at it and looking at sort of the project of special education right now. I think it's helpful to like be real about where our expectations for students with disabilities are, given this approach, in some respects higher than
for all students. We're expecting them to
improve, grow, demonstrate proficiency more
rapidly than their -- than the all student
population. And that's -- that's a big charge.

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

MS. BLAS: Thank you, Lauren. Okay.

So moving on to Indicator 4, this was -- even
though there was not a change in the measurement
table for Indicator 4, we really took a deep look
at our data for Indicator 4. This is a -- these
are targets that OSEP sets for Indicator 4B. We
were able to set our own targets in 4A. And what
this looks at is students with disabilities who
are suspended greater than ten days cumulatively
over the year.

Okay. So the first -- Indicator 4A
just looks at those as the total students with
disabilities an LEA suspended greater than ten
days. Indicator 4B breaks those out by race and
ethnicity. Okay. And we -- NCDPI chose to revise
our definition of significant discrepancy. In the past, we were only looking at students with IEPs and we were looking at a ratio -- I believe it was 3:0.

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

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

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

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

MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah, yeah. It is very concerning to us that discipline in the form of
removal from access to specially-designed
instruction is -- that we're seeing this
prevalence of removals for students with
disabilities is very---

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Absolutely. I agree.
Okay.

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

MS. HOLAHAN: No. Go ahead.

DR. HUTCHINSON: So I know we're sort
of always living one year in the past when we're
reporting our [inaudible] like we're two years in
the past. So I just -- I guess this is like
foreshadowing when we start to reveal the data
next year for this past year. I just wonder if
you've gotten any insight what reporting will look
like for this upcoming year reflecting on '20-21. And, obviously, the suspension rates are going to just miraculously go way down.

MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah.

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

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

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

DR. HUTCHINSON: I promise you I'm not, but I might be thinking along [inaudible] like, oh, they're going to start reporting that we're -- you know, done this great, done this great, done this great. It really meant that the
kids weren't in school at all [inaudible].

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

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

And so, you know, that obviously is going to contribute to those numbers going down, and it's really hard to capture those students
that were remote all year because I don't know statewide that we have reported anything to the State that indicated students that were remote all year. We marked them present or marked them absent, but that's simply that they attended Zoom classes or didn't, or whatever. You know, folks in local LEAs chose to mark students present or absent, but that really doesn't speak to the fact that they were in the building or not in the building or on buses, or whatever.

MS. HOLAHAN: Right.

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

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

MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah.

MS. CARATELLI: And it's Joanne Caratelli. And I'm sorry. I want to jump back to Indicator 1. It took me a couple of minutes to process, and then I didn't jump in at the right time, and I didn't want to interrupt you. But
when we're talking about graduation rates on students with IEPs with a regular high school diploma, I have a question for you. I don't know if you know the answer to it. You probably do. You know everything.

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

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

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

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

MS. CARATELLI: That's where, you know, I feel like there is a real conflict of interest when we talk about this. Really quick,
I'll give you some quick background. I come from out of state. I come from New York where students with disabilities frequently and quickly, as soon as they see that there's an IEP and a diagnosis, are like [inaudible] forced into BOCES, which is like a separate program on the other side of town for all the kids with disabilities.

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

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

So where is the -- where is the motivation for a principal to say, "Hey, you know what? We're going to have these kids getting regular high school diplomas in our classes with
support, taking our test. They might mess up our
test scores a little bit, but that's okay. This
is the right thing to do by our students," or I
could pay my mortgage. You know what I mean?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MS. CARATELLI: All right. Thank you.

MS. BLAS: Okay. I'm going to move on to Indicator 5, which is our least restrictive environment or placement for school-age children. And this is the percent of students with IEPs enrolled in kindergarten or age -- and age six
through 21 and served in either the regular classroom 80 percent or more of the day.

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

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

And what the increases are based on is our trend or historical data. However, we have had comments come back that we need to be more aggressive in these indicators, and that is already being forwarded up to our leadership to talk about before we submit the SPP/APR. So I just wanted to go ahead and caveat that for you.
If your -- if your initial thought is why are these so low, why are these targets not moving at a higher rate, we've had that question.

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

Any comments on Indicator 5?

(No audible response.)

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

So for 2018-19, in the regular early childhood program, 29.60 percent is our baseline, and we are looking to, by '25-26, increase that to
30 percent. Our separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility for '18-19 is 26.49 percent, and hoping to decrease that to 25.25 percent.

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

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

Any comments about early childhood placements?

(No audible response.)

MS. BLAS: Okay. So Indicator 7 is our preschool outcomes, and this is how students are doing when they exit their preschool programs, and Part A looks at the percent of preschool students with disabilities who substantially
improved their rate of growth by age six or when they exited the program. And so those are broken down into three outcomes, and we had to set targets on all three of those.

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

I will say that, you know, this is where the question comes in, well, what does the data look like? We do have a baseline for '12-13, and we always have to increase from the baseline. But we also looked at our data to see where we were since the last submission before we would set a target. [Inaudible] target that would be lower than where we were. So it'll help if you were to go back in, if you have questions, go back in and look at the data for past years to see where we are and where we want to go.
MS. HOLAHAN: And, Alexis, I'm just -- Alexis, I'm just aware of the time and wondering how do you want us to proceed.

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

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

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

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

MS. BLAS: We covered the big ones like Indicator 4 and Indicator 3 and the big changes to 1 and 2. They all kind of follow the same vein, and again, the questions that you have, as you look at your baseline target, can be answered best by going back into the data or
looking at the presentations that we did with stakeholders.

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

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

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

MS. BLAS: Okay.

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

MS. BLAS: Sure. So Indicator 8 is our parent involvement survey or parent engagement survey, and what it looks -- looks at is the percent of parents of children receiving special
education and who report that school facilitated
parent involvement as a means of improving
services for students with disabilities.

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

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

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

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

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

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

There is a very thorough analysis of the data, and we plan to share that back out with districts -- and Alexis is part of that group -- in finding ways that we can share with districts
other pieces of information in that data where -- where there may be concerns that LEAs want to know what parents are saying.

Alexis, do you have any comment on that?

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

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

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

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

MS. BLAS: So this particular survey is supposed to go to all parents of students with
disabilities on the last December Child Count.

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

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, because I think
it's important, and I don't really know --
obviously, I don't know what's on those surveys,
but I think that it would be important to kind of
find out information as far -- because my daughter
was in school a lot, she was homebound a lot, she
was in the hospital a lot. She received services
there. So I feel like my perspective would be
pretty important considering I would be able to
give information based on all of the different
three places that we -- she received services.

    MS. BLAS: Absolutely. Absolutely.

I agree.

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

    MS. BLAS: Yes.

    MS. HOLAHAN: So Charlotte---

    MS. BLAS: Would have been included.

    MS. HOLAHAN: Okay.

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

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

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

    DR. HUTCHINSON: We receive hard
copies that are already addressed to the parents,
and then there's a QR code and you can choose to
send out the QR code. And we did have a higher
percentage of people that returned the surveys
from -- we don't get to see the individual data at
the district level, but statewide, I know we had a
higher percentage of people that returned the
surveys once they allowed the option of going to
filling it out electronically.

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Thank you.

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

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

MS. BLAS: No. It's Charlotte, Wake,
Johnston, Union---

MS. CHILDERS: Guilford---

MS. BLAS: ---and Winston-Salem/Forsyth.

MS. CARATELLI: I got you.

MS. BLAS: Okay.

MS. CARATELLI: Because let me tell you, in Onslow County, it never crossed my desk either.

MS. BLAS: I don't believe that Onslow was on the list this year.

MS. CHILDERS: Guilford County isn't on that?

MS. BLAS: Yeah, Guilford should be on there.

MS. HOLAHAN: Yeah, Guilford's one of the big five.

MS. BLAS: Yes.

MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, that's what I was thinking. It should -- yeah.

DR. HUTCHINSON: And I think -- I think we get pulled once every five years if we're not on the big five---

MS. BLAS: That's right.

DR. HUTCHINSON: ---if I remember
right.

MS. CHILDERS: Oh, okay.

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

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

MS. HOLAHAN: Awesome.

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

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

And they'll say either "You know, oh, I missed the initial email that I was supposed to
send it out," or they'll try a different way such as printing it out and sticking it in a backpack [inaudible].

MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Okay. Thank you.

MS. BLAS: Uh-huh.

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

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

MS. BLAS: That is an awesome idea. Awesome. [Inaudible] anyways. I'm going to put that in -- as a note to put out in next year's memo to our districts to consider that option as a
way of distributing their surveys. I think that is a wonderful idea, and they will really appreciate that, especially if they already have a text setup.

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

MS. BLAS: Right. Right.

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

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

MS. WILLIAMS-BURCHETTE: Got you.

Thank you.

MR. BAKER: I'd like to just add -- and thank everyone for their input in this -- that we continue to use just any means of disseminating this information because I have found just in sending out information to our families through Connect Messages, that we use all the different modalities, whether it's doing it through text, email, phone, and actually, sending things out
through paper copies and mailing them because, you know, we've just found -- find out that our stakeholders respond in various ways.

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

MS. BLAS: I totally agree.

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

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

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

MS. BLAS: Uh-huh.

MS. HOLAHAN: Okay. I think that Sherry Thomas is on, and we've probably started to eat into her time. I would say -- so there are
just -- there are six more, seven more of these indicators. I think 9 and 10 are of lots of interest to a variety of people. This is our disproportionate representation data.

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

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

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

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

MS. HOLAHAN: Thank you.

MS. BLAS: So for Indicators -- Indicators 9 and 10, Indicator 9 looks at disproportionate representation, and really what it looks at is identification of students with disabilities. Indicator 9 looks at identification in all areas, and Indicator 10 breaks it out by
specific disability categories. OSEP sets the
target for Indicator 9 and 10, and it is set at
zero percent.

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

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

There's already been some discussion
with our Educational Equity and Significant
Disproportionality group, and there's been some
required trainings and processes that are
happening right now regarding those. So as we
continue on in that process, I'm sure we'll be
looping you guys in and asking you to participate in how we can really dig into identification of students with disabilities.

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

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

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

But I don't want you to think that for the last 20 years or 15 years since we've started this where we were at zero, that we -- that we haven't had any LEAs, districts, or
charter schools who were -- who were not significantly disproportionate. This is one of these indicators, to me, that is very confusing to the general public, and I include myself in that.

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

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

So if they have disproportionality one year, they are included in the numbers of 9 and 10, and those are the areas where we're going to be doing a little bit more of a deep dive when we're talking about that review of policies, practices, and procedures and really taking our time to determine whether or not these students are being placed appropriately.
And we've included an infographic there with the definitions of all of these big confusing words that we've talked about and where they fit into each one of the different indicators.

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

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

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

MS. HOLAHAN: And Indicator 12 is
those students with disabilities who are moving
out of early intervention and into school-age
programming.

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

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

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

So the first one is looking at did
these students enroll in college, are they
attending a four-year or a two-year college. Our baseline for '08-09 was 39 percent. And our target for '25-26 is see 44 percent of our students with disabilities enrolled in higher education.

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

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

MS. HOLAHAN: And that survey goes out to students with disabilities who are one year
out, is that right?

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

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

(No audible response.)

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

    And mediations similarly are the number of disputes that go through mediation that result in a mediation agreement. And that was -- baseline was 71 percent. This is the one -- these two indicators are the one place where OSEP allows us to have a range, and so we -- stakeholders did
want us to continue having this range of 75 to 85 percent of those being -- of those disputes being agreed upon either through mediation or resolution.

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

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

And for our first SiMR that we worked on, that State-identified Measurable Result, we
focused on the five-year adjusted cohort
graduation rate for students with disabilities.
We worked on that 2014 to 2021. We will be
reporting on that graduation-focused SiMR for the
last time when we submit this SPP in February.

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

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

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

And given some of the changes in our
State Board priorities and in the priorities of
our new superintendent, focusing very much on educational equity and literacy, we will be shifting to a new State-identified Measurable Result focused on eliminating opportunity gaps in fourth-grade reading.

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

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

That will open it up to any final questions or comments. I do want to say that -- and I'm going to put our contact information in the chat box as well -- if you -- if you have follow-up ideas, questions, concerns, you just
want to talk some more about this, please
[inaudible] or me to continue the conversation.
We appreciate you giving us this chance to talk
with you-all about these baselines and targets.

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

(No audible response.)

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

MS. HOLAHAN: Thank you very much.

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yes, we do.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We certainly can.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Thank you.

DR. HUTCHINSON: All right. So maybe
like five after 11:00 and flip to Sherry; is that okay, Cynthia?

THE CHAIRPERSON: That is great.

Thank you.

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

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

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

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

I don't have a lot today, which is kind of a good thing, right? I just wanted to do a quick review. We did, indeed, successfully hold our seventieth Conference on Exceptional Children
November the 16th through the 19th in Greensboro.

We had a day of MTSS work, and then we had
preconference institutes, and then a day and a
half of conference. And I believe some of you
participated in that as well.

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

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

So if you haven't -- and they may be
up already, but if you haven't seen that and have
an hour and a half to spare, it just to me is extremely fascinating to know that the legislature had the mindfulness in 1947 and '48 to pass legislation creating the Exceptional Children Division for the State of North Carolina. That is 30 years ahead of the first special ed law federally, and it was -- there was some funding that followed closely after the implementation of or creation of this Division. For about ten years, I think, Mr. Barker was the solo person in the Exceptional Children Division, which boggles my mind, but there were teachers out in the field during that time. So if you do get a chance, if you weren't -- if you didn't join in and watch the streaming and hear the information or if you haven't found it, I would encourage you to find some time to do that because it is really critical for us to be mindful that while this work feels so insensitive and so hard most days, we've got a legacy that we're following where people were navigating this in our state long before there was even federal guidance around how to do that. And that was just -- that was pretty heartfelt for me that we have a good history, and
we're going keep doing good things for kids
because that's what it should be about, not the
adults but about the kids.

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

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

People were being mindful of the
requirements and adhered to those, and I think
everybody was so glad to see people in -- in
person face-to-face, to see bodies instead of a
picture on a screen. They were like kids let
out -- let out for recess all of a sudden.

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

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

I felt really good. We don't have
the feedback from our conference surveys sorted
yet. If you haven't done that and you were there
and you feel so inclined, please go ahead and give
us your feedback on the conference. But it felt
like it was successful for a lot of reasons. And
I'll take a pause in case anyone wants to add to that.

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

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

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

And I do -- I'm like Sherry. I encourage you to watch that video, if you haven't
seen it with the history, because even being in
EC -- you know, here for 23 years, I've not -- I
did not know that information that was presented.
It was very energizing for us as well because --
parents as well.

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

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

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

Our last meeting was on November the
30th, and I believe we have now sufficiently and
completely given them all pieces of evidence to
satisfy the corrective action that we had around
the SLD piece that was all looped in with the MTSS
state complaint and all that corrective action
that we talked about before.

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

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

And that has been created in our grant system in the NC SIP system where we're putting all of our grants now, and that's being pushed out every time a grant is allotted and approved. They're getting that notification that
we've met that requirement in conjunction with our friends down in School Business.

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

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

And then we'll be meeting with OSEP after the first of the year with DHHS to go
through what we are proposing and what we have proposed as that corrective action around the PRTFs, where we are trying to determine a way we can efficiently and appropriately and legally garner information of students who have been placed in a PRTF outside of North Carolina.

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

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

(No audible response.)

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

We've had some staff hirings that I want to share. We have a new section chief over our Program Improvement and Professional Development Section. This is where the Reading
Research to Classroom Practice and Foundations of Math work lives. It's where that State Personnel Development Grant is managed, and our work around coaching and coteaching and professional -- a lot of professional development is -- Dr. Paula Crawford was there and she retired the first of August.

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

She's got some really good leadership skills, and I think she's going to bring some fresh eyes and some additional ways we can continue to connect that work to other things across not only the division but the agency. So we're very excited to have her be in that role and
providing that leadership. And I think some of you-all have met Ginger at some point in time. If you have not, we're happy to let her come before you at your next meeting and let you get to know her a little bit.

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

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

And then Lisa Blanton, who was previously the local director in Rutherford County, is covering Regions 5 and 6, which is our Piedmont Triad and our Southwest areas, so
Greensboro down through Charlotte. And both of them have, as a director, completed grants and dealt with a budget, and so they come in with that lens to support Elizabeth -- and work with Elizabeth Millen and Adam Parent, who are our other two fiscal monitors.

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

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

So those are my big staff updates for
today. Anything else for me?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any questions for Sherry?

(No audible response.)

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

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

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

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

MS. THOMAS: Sure. Absolutely.

MS. CHILDERS: I don't think that I got to do this the last meeting, and I just wanted
everyone to be able to hear this because it really meant so much.

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

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

MS. THOMAS: Because I was already muted. I'm so sorry. Thank you for that. That means more to me than you know. So many times what we hear as a Division are all the wrong things and all the negative things, and it's rare to get that positive. But it's important for us
to take care of the people that support us, and it was important for us to let you know that we were thinking about you.

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

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

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

MS. THOMAS: Thanks, everybody.

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

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

So any questions? Any thoughts? Any volunteers?
MS. DeBIASI: I do not want to volunteer to be chair; however, I don't see my name on the list. And I don't know if I was just remiss in signing up, but I was hoping to be on the Unmet Needs Committee. And this is---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, can you add that?

MS. DeBIASI: Thanks.

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

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

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

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

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

MS. DeBIASI: Oh, okay.


MS. DeBIASI: It's capital D, little
e, capital B, i-a-s-i.

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

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

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

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

MR. BAKER: No problem.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DR. HUTCHINSON: At the bottom of our
website, it kind of outlines each of those committees that are set by our bylaws, and the description of each one I found to be pretty helpful. And I think that people have struggled with the expectations in each of our committees at times.

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

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

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

MS. UTZ: Yes.

MS. CHILDER: [Inaudible] put that together. Okay.

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: There it is,
committees. Oh, it just lists them. Okay.

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

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: When was that,
Cynthia?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, my gosh. Wow.

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

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

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

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

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

MS. UTZ: Let me -- let me pull it up just to make sure because I've had to -- had to write this down so many different times because I always get confused between when the report was due, when I had to get it to Council -- or when I had to get it to the Board, you know, for all
their procedures. I want to say that it's due --
oh, it's due by September 1st to the Board.
That's what written in the bylaws.

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

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

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

MS. UTZ: Yes.

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

MS. CHILDERS: And correct me if I'm
wrong, because I know that after the last meeting
I came to, I spoke with Alexis and Christy after
about -- about the things concerning our Policies and Procedures Committee, and that was kind of why we were bringing all this up today.

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

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

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

MS. CHILDER: Yes.

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

MS. CHILDER: I think everyone -- I think people had more in-depth things that they would want to discuss, not just the policies and the procedures of our actual board, but policies and procedures of other things that come to the
board [inaudible].

MR. BAKER: Exactly.

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: So, for example, in the Unmet Needs Committee, they've always reached outside of the Council because they're talking about the unmet needs in the state of North Carolina, what is coming to them through their different constituencies as well as what is coming to us through the public comments and through the actual EC Division.
MS. CHILDERS: Right. I think that where there was some miscommunication was, is it them being given stuff or is it being -- is it stuff that maybe, for an example, Sherry brings to the Council, they just kind of review it kind of thing, or is this something where if they see something or want to be involved in something that they can and bring it back to the Council?

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

And I think that was where Anthony was even going on the last one because he said, you know, I feel like there's so many things that need help and need to be changed. And that was kind of where he wanted to get involved, not necessarily just involved in the policies and procedures that have to do with our actual Council.
THE CHAIRPERSON: So my understanding was that the Policies and Procedures Committee was expansive, meaning it did not only work on the policies and procedures of the Council, but as you see -- as you see in the little blurb, it works to publicly comment on rules and regulations proposed by the SEA.

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis, did you have anything different?

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

MS. CHILDERS: Right. I agree.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis? She's on
mute.

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.

Good thoughts. Anything else?

(No audible response.)

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

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

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

As far as the Unmet Needs Committee,
we were trying really to come back around together
with a lot of new members and really catch up at
the last meeting anyway. So I would feel we
probably need to do the same because it looks like
there's new people on my list. So, definitely, we'll just have to try to get together and figure out where we're moving forward and what we're going to work on moving forward.

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

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

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

I know one of the things was the subcommittee reporting form, and this was -- this was just something that I found that I assumed you guys were using when I started this position. I have kind of tweaked some of the -- I combined it
into one so that you could keep one whole year's
worth of information on one document to hopefully
make it easier for you -- for you, Cynthia, to
pull the information for the report.

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

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

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

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

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: I think that would be easier.

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

MR. BAKER: Sure.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yeah.

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

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

MR. BAKER: And I certainly don't
want to speak for all the other subcommittees. I know, just for us, we didn't -- we weren't going to use all the things that were there all the time because it may not fit.

MS. CHILDERS: Right.

MR. BAKER: But it may for other subcommittees.

MS. CHILDERS: Absolutely.

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

MR. BAKER: Absolutely.

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MR. BAKER: That's awesome.

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

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

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


Yes. Okay. "Reach out to Sherry for guidance and she will contact the subcommittee members."

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yeah. And it did have to do -- and it was with that Senate Bill. I do
remember that. Yes. Now it's all coming back to me. Thank God for notes. See, this is why -- this is why we definitely need to keep that note section.

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

MR. BAKER: I do.


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

So I wonder if we need to alternate and bring those two together, sometimes meet separately to have our individual things we've got to work on, but if maybe at least every other meeting, we come together and have some time
together to really see -- Policy could help drive what Unmet Needs recommendations are or vice versa.

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

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

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

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

MS. COFFEY: Abby, I don't know if that needs to be under here because, unfortunately, I will just be honest, I mean, we
probably had one letter in the last year
[inaudible] public comments, and I don't know that
we've had any -- of course, being virtual, we've
not had a lot of actual people coming in and
signing up to do the public -- I mean, honestly,
we're not getting enough to make trend data. So
we're trying to look other ways.

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

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

MS. COFFEY: And those, I look at
pretty closely, but that's -- you know, again,
I've not had a team till recently. I've got a
better team now. So I think [inaudible] we need
to go back, and I have reached out before like to
Carol Ann and others in her department just trying to get, in general, could they give us some good trends that were going on within all of it, not just the ones that end up in due process but even in the facilitated or those, but it's been hard for them to get any senses of a trend either there.

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

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

MS. CARATELLI: Diane, I have a question for you. This is Joanne Caratelli. So you talked about not having enough being brought forward -- enough needs being brought forward in unmet needs, and we also talked about how it should be coming -- it should be filtering down
from the local LEAs, you know, and getting our information.

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

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

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

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

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

MS. CHILDE R S: And, Joanne -- and Diane might understand too and know, but I actually was the advisory chair for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools EC PAC Advisory Council, and that was the very -- we actually started the council that year that I joined as chair. So -- and there -- that parent advisory council is very tied down by legal -- very, and that has been a huge issue.

And I think it's a huge issue across the state as far as the parent advisory councils
go because everyone's supposed to have one, but
the problem is, is when they are formed, what
they're able to do and what they're not able to
do. And what they need to be doing, they're not
really able to because of all of the legal stuff
that goes around it with parents being involved,
you know, all the confidentiality, all of those
things fall in place.

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

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

MS. CARATELLI: I found -- I was on
Onslow's until it just went inactive, and I found
that I was incredibly frustrated with my time
there because the meetings were structured where
every minute, it seemed like, was, hey, we're
going to shove down your throat all of these
things we're doing. Look at what we're doing with i-Ready. Look at what we're doing with this, this, this. Okay. See you next month.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yeah.

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Alexis--

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

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

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

I don't -- I don't have a -- a line of communication with those parents other than, you know, just standing outside the door and grabbing them when they walk out, which seems really aggressive.
THE CHAIRPERSON: So it might not be going to the board meeting or grabbing them, but it's gathering, capturing that information that you get from the recordings or that you get from whatever way that you're hearing what's going on at the board.

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

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

So I don't know if we need to think
about possibly one of the recommendations is that there be a mandate that there is some type of advisory council in every county. That might be a recommendation. Alexis, any thoughts?

MS. CARATELLI: That's a good one.

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

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

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

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

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

I will meet separately like as a subcommittee with the parents, but I don't know that I would go back to a separate just special needs advisory committee standalone by itself. I think a subcommittee is great, but I really like the conversations that they bring to the table in our district parent advisory committee. Having -- I really feel like it helps us create an inclusive environment for our district.
MR. BAKER: Christy, I would just add that is wonderful. It's great to hear that, that that's happening at the district level. It's certainly something we're doing at our local school level too. So even in our school improvement teams, we're making sure that those kinds of conversations and collaboration are occurring.

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

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

I think it's hard, though, when you have districts where you have an entire council -- you know, board of education council, that is -- that has no one with any experience or even a child of their own or anything to do with special education. I think that it -- you know, I think
that they hear it. It goes in one ear and out the other because they don't -- they may not even know the acronyms.

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

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

MS. COFFEY: And I think that goes beyond CMS, for sure.
MS. DeBIASI: I'm in New Hanover County, and it was just exasperating during the pandemic. It was awful. But I just wanted to let you know that in New Hanover County, we have something called Advisory Council for Exceptional Students.

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

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

And so you have so many new directors who aren't comfortable walking by a room and saying, "Are you-all talking about something where students with disabilities might be involved? Because I need to have somebody in here, if so,"

right? But I do think -- like I even talked with
other directors, who are veteran directors, who
knew nothing about this Council, and that is
alarming to me.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yeah.

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

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

MS. COFFEY: And another question
would be, is if we mandate it, they're all
different. So how we would need to maybe have
some guidance of what -- you know, like I said,
some are just literally the EC director comes and
updates what's going on and doesn't really take
feedback from the parents, to some are very much
parent-driven.

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

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

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

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

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

MS. GRANT: Right. I like that
because I think if we mandate it, we're going to
need to tie it to a policy or something like that.
I mean we would need to make some changes there.
I think the best practices is -- we've had some [inaudible] that are highly suggested before.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I think that if that's something, Alexis, that maybe we could even put on the agenda. I don't know if, Christy, I'm putting you on the spot, but if you would be willing to kind
of talk about it further with the entire board, I think that would be a great -- I think that would be a great thing.

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

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

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

I mean it truly is some rich conversations there, but we have had that help through ECAC to get to the point where we are. So -- and I know there's some other districts who are doing great things. I used to love to hear
you, Abby, talk about what all Charlotte was
doing.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Well, thank you.

Yeah, I feel like, you know, we really -- we were
starting -- we started off strong, and I feel like
it just kind of -- it really -- all of the red
tape was just so much, and -- and that might be
for the bigger counties something that is -- has
been a problem. I think CMS has a red tape issue
overall, in general.

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

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

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

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

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

MS. UTZ: Okay.

THE CHAIRPERSON: ---to revise and review.

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

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

DR. HUTCHINSON: I know this question was brought up before we kind of got down that large discussion about people that came forth with public comments prior to the pandemic and
everything going online, and Diane was making the
point that we've had very limited comments since
that so there weren't many trends.

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

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

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

MS. COFFEY: I agree totally because
even -- to be honest, I'm in my fifth year now on
the council and been in Unmet Needs the whole
time. I know of 12 even written letters that
we've had in that whole time. So nowhere -- do we get anywhere near what we need to make a trend analysis from [inaudible].

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

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

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

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

They're in courts, they're in all kinds of different departments, and they had no
idea that this Council even existed. I mean they're attorneys, you know, and they had no idea. When I talk to other parents, they have no idea that this Council even exists.

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

MR. BAKER: Agreed.

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

So when staff changes happen at all of these organizations across the state, we as the Council need to still be in there making sure that the information about this Council is available to all parents everywhere. So I don't know how we do that. We have the parent newsletter. I just
don't know what other things we can do to actually
do that kind of outreach and make sure that
everybody across the state knows about the Council.

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yes.

MS. DEGEN: [Inaudible].

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

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

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: You've gone out
again.

MS. CHILDERS: If you can talk really loud.

MS. DeBIASI: Or type it in the chat.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MS. UTZ: 12:30.

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yes. Yes.

MS. DEGEN: Okay. Leave it to my CMS-issued computer not to work. One of the things that I was going to say is yes, Abby, you
are right, is that I did come to that first meeting. And I know that since, you know, I was chosen to represent -- this my second term.

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

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

But, you know, I was happy, Abby, when I told you about this and you came to one of the meetings, you know, and then you joined the Council. So getting it out that way, but it is hard -- it is hard to be a teacher from the
confidentiality and things like that, but then it's not out there.

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

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

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

I am -- I am confident in saying that
if Jennifer and I had gone to the CMS board meeting this last month or next month, that I'd doubt that any of them would know that this board -- this Council even exists. I would be shocked if they did.

Is anyone speaking? I can't hear.

MS. UTZ: No.

THE CHAIRPERSON: No.

MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: So any more thoughts or comments?

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: So could you maybe--- Okay. Abby, I wanted to say, could you recap the things you would like added to -- possibly added to the Council agenda for next month?
MS. CHILDERS: Yeah, absolutely. So if we could add, I think, the -- what the councils -- or what the subcommittees are going to do. I think adding and talking about Unmet Needs and Policies and Procedures going together or having a meeting every other month. I think that's something else we should talk about.

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

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Yes, absolutely.

MS. DEGEN: Is there a way to -- especially the big five -- to invite some of those superintendents or assistant superintendents of the things to a meeting and say, "Hey, we want to
open this up to you-all and invite you. You're not part of the committee, but like if you could come, therefore, you could hear and see what we do and then bring in either the assistant superintendent or -- you know, just to see that that's there. And not necessarily just the big five, but you know, across the -- across the board bring in the LEAs just to sit in and observe.

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's a great idea. I think -- yeah, inviting all the EC directors or assistant directors to possibly come when they can to a meeting or even -- as we are now doing everything virtually, even when we go
back in public, we'll still have that virtual option. So having them just listen in so that they actually know what this Council is and what it does.

MR. BAKER: Absolutely.

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: So yeah.

MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

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

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

MS. CHILDERS: Sorry, guys.

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

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

THE CHAIRPERSON: Exactly.

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

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

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

MS. UTZ: Just a quick question. When are you guys going to review and revise the information sheet? Are you going to set up a time
with your committee outside of this? I thought
that's what the goal was to do today.

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

MS. UTZ: Okay. Uh-huh.

MR. BAKER: That sounds fine.

MS. CHILDERS: Okay.

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

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

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

[Signature]
Rebecca P. Scott