The quarterly meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children was held on the 16th day of March, 2016, at Haynes-Inman Educational Center, 200 Haynes Road, Jamestown, North Carolina, commencing at 9:49 a.m.
APPEARANCES

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Nicole Jimerson, Chairperson
Dale Carpenter
Deanna George
Laura Hall
Cynthia Daniels-Hall
Susan Humbert
Mary LaCorte
Ronda Layman
Lisa Phillips
Dennis Riddell
Vicki Simmons
Sherri Vernelson
Jennine Viasaty
Jason Vogler

STAFF:

Tish Bynum
Heidi Carico
Dreama McCoy
Heather Ouzts

VISITORS:

Erin Carr
Kevin Carr
Linda Creamer
Eric Hall
Sue Harvey
Jacqui Hawkins
Patricia Lentz
Ned McMillan
Joanna Rudder
Nancy Ruth
Donna Whiteman

COURT REPORTER:

Rebecca P. Scott
INDEX

PAGE NO.

Introductions...................................    5
Tour of Haynes-Inman............................   18
Call to Order...................................   20
Review of Agenda................................   20
Review of Meeting Minutes.......................   22
OSEP Notice of Proposed Rulemaking changes
   presentation by Dreama McCoy...............   26
Students with Significant Cognitive
   Disabilities presentation by Ronda Layman..   39
Agency Updates..................................   70
Lunch Recess....................................  104
Agency Updates (continuing).....................  104
Public Comments presentation by Laura Hall.....  141
Bylaws..........................................  175
Summarizing Annual Report.......................  177
Certificate of Reporter.........................  196

---

Reporters Note: Any quoted material is reproduced as
read or quoted by the speaker.

---
Thereupon, the following proceeding was held:

THE CHAIRMAN: We know that -- we are fully aware of her commitment and her dedication and how much she cares for her kids, and so I'm just so glad that we could be here today to come and see some of the things that she's been talking about over the past several years. So I'm happy about that.

I'm also happy that this is the first time that the Council has moved the meeting out away from Raleigh or -- well, I guess it's central -- still kind of central, but away from Raleigh and into other parts of North Carolina. So this is a historic meeting for us.

We're going to try to -- you guys will try to do -- each year I've asked that we try to provide access to this body to citizens across the state, to parents, caregivers, self-advocates across the state, and do that by hosting the meeting in one -- in a different region at least once a year. So congratulate -- we're here, we're doing it, we're moving in the right direction, and it's all about access.

I would like for us to begin -- because we have several new council members here
today, and so we want to just start by introducing ourselves. And then we will take the tour of the school, and we'll come back and we'll try to follow our agenda as written.

Of course, my name is Nicole Jimerson--- I probably should have said that first. Sorry. ---Nicole Jimerson. I am a parent of a 19-year-old who lives with autism -- 19. He stands six-one and a half, he's 248 pounds, and he's doing great. I couldn't be more proud of him.

But, okay, because I also have other children, I must say I also have a daughter. She's starting to get on me about that a little bit more and more. She's a 21-year-old junior at Carolina. Go Carolina. And I also have a 12-, soon to be 13-year-old sixth-grader. So I'm proud of them as well. That's on the record, right?

Which way should we go?

MS. SIMMONS: My name is Vicki Simmons. I'm an adaptive PE teacher here at Haynes-Inman Education Center. I have the best environment for teaching and learning, and I am so glad that you-all chose to come to Haynes-Inman. Our principal is Kevin Clark, and he's going to do
a tour in a few minutes. My colleague -- our school counselor is Joanna Rudder. She's the one who set up the room -- the balloons, the food, and the lunch. This deluxe baked spaghetti. It was deluxe. It was not just regular baked spaghetti. So, please, when you see her come in, please thank her for helping me set everything up.

I'm glad you-all found our -- the balloons and found our school. We couldn't be happier to host our friends in partnership towards our exceptional children.

THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

MS. VIASATY: Hi. Good morning. I'm Jennine Viasaty, a parent advocate. I have two children, a daughter Ocean, who is about to be 11 and rising into six grade, middle school. We're starting that journey. And then our youngest son Nicholas, who will be nine this month, and he's my EC kiddo. So I'm new to the Council and very excited to be here.

MS. VERNELSON: Hi. Good morning. I'm Sherri Vernelson. I'm a section chief in the Exceptional Children Division at DPI. I support the Sensory Support and Assistive Technology Section which oversees the consultants for deaf
and hard of hearing as well as vision impairment.
And I'm happy to be here for Bill and Carol Ann
today as they couldn't be here. So thank you.

MS. McCoy: Good morning, everyone.
My name is Dreama McCoy. I'm also a section chief
under Exceptional Children Division. I support
the Supporting Teaching and Related Services
Section, which is about 15 consultants, all of
related services, four autism consultants, IDEA
consultant, intellectual disability and secondary
ed consultant, LD/ADHD consultant, deaf-blind
consultant, charter school consultant for
interventions, and I think I'm probably missing
one person. So I apologize, but it is a very
large section.

And I am very happy to be here as
well, and isn't this exciting to come on-site?
I've worked closely with Vicki, and so I'm very
familiar with her and the population. And so I
appreciate being here in Bill and Carol Ann's
absence. And I can't believe he's 19 already.

THE CHAIRMAN: He's 19.

MS. Carico: I'm Heidi Carico. I'm
an autism consultant with North Carolina
Department of Public Instruction, and I cover the
northwest and western regions, and I'm also on a charter school committee for that aspect as well.

**MR. RIDDELL:** Dennis Riddell. It's my privilege to be the legislative representative on this council. My first meeting, glad to be here, good to see everybody, and looking forward to learning a lot.

**MR. VOGLER:** I'm the Assistant Director of the North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services -- one of the long names to get out -- and I actually have several different teams. I have the adult and child mental health teams, the IDD teams, traumatic brain injury, deaf services, and crisis services, so a lot going on in all of that. And I'm new on the Council and very happy to be here. It's exciting stuff.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Good to have you.

**MS. LENTZ:** Good morning. I am visiting today. I work with Lisa Phillips at North Carolina Homeless Education. I am a program specialist. And it's a pleasure to be here. I'm Patricia Lentz. I think I said that.

**MS. OUZTS:** Good morning. I'm Heather Ouzts. I am the parent liaison for the
Exceptional Children's Division statewide, and I also serve as a support to this Council. I'm happy to be here as well.

MS. SCOTT: I'm Becky Scott. I'm the court reporter taking down the record today.

MS. BYNUM: I am Tish Bynum. I am the administrative assistant for EC Director Bill Hussey, and I also serve as admin support for this Council.

MR. CARPENTER: Good morning. I'm Dale Carpenter. I'm the Dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions at Western Carolina University, and I'm also a special education professor. I'm the IHE, the Institute of Higher Ed, representative on this Council. Thank you.

MS. PHILLIPS: Good morning. I'm Lisa Phillips. I'm the State Coordinator for the North Carolina Homeless Education Program -- thank you for catching my chair -- and we are under Federal Program Monitoring and Support Division with the Department of Public Instruction.

MS. HALL: I'm Laura Hall. I'm a parent of adult children with disabilities. I'm also a new grandmother, second grandbaby, first
son, but I have an adult child and son-in-law with
disabilities who are -- who have been married five
years and have had their first child. So I just
hope that gives hope to the parents in the room.
So I'm a happy, happy person.

MS. HUMBERT: I am Susan Humbert. I
am the EC Director of a charter school in
Hillsborough, North Carolina, and I am the parent
of a 23-year-old son with autism.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: I'm Cynthia
Daniels-Hall. I'm a parent of children with
autism. I'm also an advocate across the state for
children with disabilities.

MS. GEORGE: And I'm Leanna George.
I'm finally on the Council, and I'm the parent of
two children both of whom have autism. My
daughter also has severe intellectual disability.
My son, he's easy. And I just started here, and
I've also served on several other committees and
things. So---

THE CHAIRMAN: Wonderful.

MS. SIMMONS: Eric, do you want to go
first? Eric, will you introduce yourself?

MR. HALL: Okay. I'm Eric Hall and
I'm Cynthia's Husband.
MS. SIMMONS: Nancy Ruth?

MS. RUTH: I'm Nancy Ruth on the Guilford County Board of Education, but I'm a former EC teacher and school principal for 18 years at that job, and a little bit of everything. So I call myself retired, but somehow I never get away from education.

MS. SIMMONS: How about Linda?

MS. CREAMER: I'm Linda Creamer, and I'm a grandparent of two special needs children and also a teacher for children with autism.

MS. HAWKINS: My name is Jacqui Hawkins. I'm from Guilford County. I'm the Exceptional Children Parent Liaison. I am a mom of five. Three of my children have had IEPs and received special education. And I have -- let me get this right -- five grandchildren, and one has pretty severe autism.

MS. WHITEMAN: I'm Donna Whiteman. I am actually the Parent -- Title I Parent Liaison at Oak Hill Elementary. I'm also on an EC parent committee. I am a parent of a special needs daughter who has Down syndrome, and she'll be seven on Friday. Where has the time gone?

MR. McMILLAN: I'm Ned MacMillan.
I'm a retired elementary teacher and an advocate for special needs children. I'm also an unprofessional clown. We entertain at this site here. I have an IEP. Thank you.

MS. RUDDER: I am Joanna Rudder. I am the school counselor here at Haynes-Inman, also Special Population Coordinator, and I serve on the Board of Directors at Gateway, which is a day program here in Guilford County.

MS. CARR: My name is Erin Carr. I'm a volunteer.

MR. CARR: She is and does a great job, and I'm Erin's dad. And I'm the luckiest guy in the world, right? Welcome to Haynes-Inman. We're so glad that you're here. It's a beautiful building, and when you get out there and see all the kids, we've cornered the market on cuteness. We've got some of the best kids, most supportive families, most creative teachers and staff in the world, and I'm just pleased to be able to be here and to support them on their journey.

We are so excited. This year we were one of four schools in the state to be named a State School of Character. That's a pretty cool accomplishment for exceptional children. It was
nice to be able to compete for that with all the other schools in the area, and I hope you see that we do a good job with that.

And as we opened the building and met as the staff, one of the things that we talked about was the importance of treating people with dignity and respect, and we hope that that's the way that you were welcomed today. And I hope that you like our banners in the back, when you see that, that we kind of came up with as a staff as well. So I look forward to walking around and sharing more about our school. And welcome to Haynes-Inman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I think that's a great segue, and we're almost on -- on schedule. If it's okay with you, we would love to take the tour now.

MR. CARR: Absolutely.

THE CHAIRMAN: And then we'll come back and we'll review our agenda and start our meeting.

MR. CARR: Before we go, here's a little background. When I first walked into the building the very first day, it was all empty and they were still building. I walked in this room
with Nancy and we looked around, and it was so green. And Nancy said -- what did you say when we walked in here?

MS. RUTH: I said how someone would have to mow.

MR. CARR: Actually it was really -- it was kind of a cool story, though, even with the building, and Nancy was involved with it even before I was. I came in May before it opened. But there used to be a little white house on the corner where you pulled in and there were some balloons and things up there, and that house was where Thurman Haynes lived.

And the school just happens to be named after his granddaughter Meredith Lee Haynes who was a former student with special needs. Also named after a pretty cool educator Bennie Lee Inman, who actually helped start Gateway Education Center. Originally it was the Greensboro Cerebral Palsy School and it became Gateway. So a perfect name -- a student and a former educator here.

But Thurman -- how Guilford County Schools knew to knock on his door and ask to buy the land, I'll never know, but he -- he did when he found out the type of school that it was. But
then not only did he sell the land, he pulled his
lawn chair out and he parked it right there where
they were building and watched them every day. He
got to know the builders. They gave him a hard
hat. He got the tours.

The people that built the building,
they weren't just swinging hammers. He made sure
they knew what they were building it for. The
school board made sure they went through Gateway,
another school similar to ours, and saw what they
were doing. So it was really neat. The day that
we opened, we had a number of construction workers
that had to be here, and they helped our kids get
off the bus. And it was just like oh, my gosh.
You can't buy that kind of stuff.

And then Thurman, well, he stayed
with us and he stayed for our first four years,
and every day he would be one of the first to
arrive. He would also help with bus duty, and
then he got Vicki, and he would go into the gym
and help -- help set up the gym and help our kids
with PE. Thurman -- he ended up being the
national senior volunteer of the year his last
year here. It was just amazing, and he worked up
until the day he passed away. He was 97 years
old, I mean, and he outwalked most of us on all of those days.

But, you know, to have that family just brought in from the very, very beginning, and we even for the four years also had -- Meredith's mother worked as a receptionist. So it was that constant reminder of, you know, we've got to do things right and we've got to take care of these guys there. So it was pretty cool.

Well, let's walk on out here and I'll show you how they built the school.

MS. RUTH: I want to add one thing. I have a good friend that when things happen and you think, well, you know, wasn't that interesting, her term is it was meant to be, and I think Haynes-Inman and where it's located was meant to be because we looked all over the county and considered all kinds of things, and nothing was just quite right or quite the right location. And then suddenly this -- this happens.

MR. CARR: And we found just a beautiful place.

MS. RUTH: Thank you.

MR. CARR: Yeah, really cool. Thank you for all of that. What's interesting is that
it was for access, and you'll meet one of our
students John as we walk around. He's going to
graduate this year. So six years ago, he was 16.
He had been unable to make the bus ride to Gateway
before. He had been out of school and had
received homebound instruction from the time he
was six to 16. So they have that access, and he
came -- I think he's the happiest kid in school
now. He's here all the time now.

The other interesting thing is, is
how important that community is to folks. We'll
do dinners from time to time, you know, at Chick-
fil-A or CiCi's or all that. We were at CiCi's
Pizza once, and we had the place packed, and it
was really kind of neat because you're walking in
with your child with disabilities, and everybody
says, "Hey. Come over here." Because often you
get sat next to the kitchen or someplace else or
whatever.

So it was really cool to have this
place full of family, and then I looked around and
it didn't even hit me. Most of our kids couldn't
eat there. You know, there are so many kids on
special diets or tube fed, but just that chance to
get out and see one another was really an
interesting thing. So I mean we're lucky to be here. Let's go look at the place.

(A tour of Haynes-Inman Education Center was conducted from 10:06 a.m. to 10:46 a.m.)

THE CHAIRMAN: So, again, I would really, really like to thank Mr. Carr and his staff. If you would give them a round of applause.

(Applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN: And, again, I cannot thank -- and I'm just going to say Joanna -- I can't thank you enough for pulling this together for us.

MS. RUDDER: It was my pleasure.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have to share this, and I'm going to try to say it without crying because I feel like -- my son was diagnosed when he was two and a half years old, and the first doctor or psychologist that first round of assessments that we went to, they told me that -- and at that time, he was displaying severe behaviors. He just -- he didn't understand how to interpret the world around him. He just couldn't.

So -- and, as we know, all behavior
is a form of communication, right? And so he was just reeling. And the doctors at that time told me that that was the best I was going to get -- forgive me -- and they said to me that I should just prepare to have my son rocking, screaming, and tantruming, and that would be his life.

But I kept going, I kept going, and some very, very wonderful people came into my life and came into Ari's life, and they taught me how to teach him. And as we were going through the classrooms, I could see the different instructional strategies that were given to me, and I could see and feel the enthusiasm and the commitment from the teachers. And that's what my child had, and it made all the difference in the world. It set us on a completely different path.

And, like I shared earlier, he's 19 and a half. He's learning vocational skills. He's working. And I don't mean, like, working at a sheltered workshop, and there's nothing wrong with that, but I'm saying he's working. He works at -- does training at Cafe Carolina, a restaurant. He weighs the meat portions and bags -- every time you go into a restaurant, you see portions and salad cup holders and containers.
That's what my son does. He trains at Marshall's Department Store. He sorts clothes. He puts tags on things.

And he's well on his way to having a really good life because of the types of programs much like you offer here. What you're doing for these kids will set their lives and the lives of their families on a completely different path. The hope that you're giving to these parents and their families is priceless. So on behalf of all of them, I thank you and I thank your staff and I sincerely mean that.

I'd like to call the March meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children to order. Thank you again for being here, everyone. We've done our introductions already. If you would please review the agenda, and I know we're a little behind so we're going to make some -- we'll make some adjustments as we go along. But there are couple of things that we absolutely want to hit before lunch.

And I'll just make note. You'll see twice on the agenda -- there's a section here for public comments. In our effort again to make the
Council or make this body accessible to our citizens across the state -- parents, caregivers, and self-advocates -- a public comment time will now be incorporated into the Council agenda, and a part of what we're going to do this afternoon will be to review what's being proposed as policies for how we're going to do that. So we'll talk about that a little bit later.

But also we want to -- we'll have Ms. McCoy help us with that OSEP public comment opportunity there. There's some, I guess, rule changes being proposed.

MS. McCoy: Yes. Notice of proposed changes of rules.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And so we'll do that as well, as well as hear from Ronda Layman. I haven't--- She's here? Okay. All right.

MS. OUZTS: She's here.

MS. McCoy: She's here. She's working two meetings right now.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. So she'll cover that, and we'll follow that with our agency update and then lunch. And then we'll take a look at where we are at lunchtime, and we'll adjust our afternoon accordingly.
Right now, if I could have you, please, just review the minutes that should be in your folders. They were e-mailed to you also, so you should have had an opportunity to kind of read through them already, but I will give you just a couple of minutes to review.

There are two sets of minutes here. The first is from the December meeting, and that was a full-fledged meeting of the Council in December, and the second is -- the second is the minutes from the conference call that we had in January that was necessary in order to vote on our statement to the Board on the proposed policy changes. So you have two sets of minutes.

Yes?

MS. DANIELS-HALL: Nicole, the visitors and the public people who were on the conference call are not listed.

MS. BYNUM: Say that again?

MS. DANIELS-HALL: People from the public and the visitors who were on that conference call, they're not listed. I know I was on the call, Eric was on the call, and there was someone else.

MS. OUZTS: I don't think we
called -- I don't think we asked---

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't think we took roll or incorporated that because it was a little difficult to do that. I think for the purpose of that meeting, we needed to make sure that we had a quorum, right, and wanted to account for the staff.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: Okay.

MS. PHILLIPS: Do we need to make a notation that we had people from the public participate and listen in on the call?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think that would be good.

MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. Make a notation---

MS. BYNUM: Say that again.

MS. PHILLIPS: Make a notation that there were public participants who listened in on the call.

MS. LaCORTE: Nicole?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MS. LaCORTE: I was thinking -- and it could have been this meeting or one before -- that I brought up and I think most were in agreement about having our minutes reflect the
actions taken up front and then all of the rest behind. So we could identify real quickly -- like, the summary sheet would come first that would have all the actions and the vote or anything else like that so we can just pull those out really quickly, especially if there's further work, but I don't see that in the contents.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And that was during the December meeting that we talked about having a summary of sorts at the very beginning of the minutes that would capture actions taken or votes held, very similar to an at-a-glance section for that.

Are there any other comments? Do you guys need another couple of minutes?

Okay. Regarding the December 2015 meeting minutes, is there a motion on the floor?

MS. DANIELS-HALL: I motion to accept the meeting minutes.

THE CHAIRMAN: There has been a motion that we accept the meeting minutes.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: From December 9th.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. For December 9th.

MS. PHILLIPS: I second the December
9th minutes.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. A motion has been made and has been properly seconded that we accept the December minutes. All those in favor?

(All council members responded aye.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

(No response.)

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. And it carries. Regarding the January 2016 conference call minutes, is there a motion on the floor?

MS. DANIELS-HALL: I motion that the meeting minutes from the January 13th conference call [inaudible].

THE CHAIRMAN: A motion been made that we accept the January conference call meetings -- meeting minutes. Second?

MR. CARPENTER: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved and---

MS. LaCORTE: Were you going to add that piece about other people being there?

MS. BYNUM: I have to add public participants were also included on the call.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: As amended.
THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. As amended. We have it. All right. So it has been moved and properly seconded that we accept the January minutes with the amendments. With no further discussion, all those in favor?

(All council members responded aye.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

(No response.)

THE CHAIRMAN: The ayes have it.

Thank you.

At this time, I'd like to turn it over to Dreama McCoy who will talk to us about what OSEP would like to do now.

MS. McCOY: So I'm going to reference you to -- in your packet, there is a yellow sheet that indicates the notice for proposed rulemaking changes. I want to give you just a few minutes to kind of look over that. You'll see what exactly the notice is indicating and what exactly North Carolina currently has in place, and then I'll provide some talking points or some information that Nancy has shared so that we can just kind of continue to look at that and assess and review where we are. I'm going to give you just a few minutes to kind of look over that information.
MS. LaCORTE: (Inaudible).

MS. OUZTS: It should be the yellow.

MS. McCOY: Yes, I thought it was yellow.

MS. LaCORTE: The purple should have been taken out because there was an omission in the first copy.

MS. McCOY: So some of you—all are lucky enough to have two copies, but the newest one is the yellow one, yes.

(Pause.)

MS. McCOY: I'm going to do the teacher response and say are we thumbs up or thumbs down? Do I need to proceed or are you still processing? It's a lot of information to process. Thumbs up if we're good to go ahead and start talking.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's talk through it.

MS. McCOY: Let's talk through it. It's a lot of information. It made me want to go drink a number of cups of coffee when I first looked at it. But, again, remembering with OSEP and these proposed changes, we've done some of our changing already back in 2011 when OSEP first started the requirement. And so we've made
changes in processes to already look at our
determinations for significant disproportionality.

In many ways, our processes are
reflected in the proposed changes as you're seeing
as you're doing that side-by-side crosswalk. For
example, North Carolina already includes
thresholds for reasonable progress in prior
consecutive years when making those determinations
for significant disproportionality.

So if this passes -- if the notice of
the proposed changes passes, our process for
determining significant disproportionality in
discipline will need to be revised from using our
state average with a risk ratio currently or
alternate risk ratio in previous years as a
comparison. So we are calculating looking at
those ratios for discipline and looking at similar
results to twice the state average for rate
calculation.

One of the things that Nancy has
indicated is that at some point she'd like for you
to -- if you have the time and opportunity -- to
review the comments -- there's a link at the
bottom -- so that you can provide some input at a
later time. And she's also available so that's
why her e-mail information is down there. She's available for you to e-mail her your information once you kind of review it and really take a hard look at what the changes are indicating.

Two areas of concern that will really impact North Carolina's determinations are the proposed requirements using a minimum cell size of ten. North Carolina currently uses 30. So we're really going to have to look at that, and that's going to really impact the determination as you look at small districts. The larger districts may not be such a big impact, but the smaller districts really may take a hit on that. So we need to kind of really focus on that and review that information closely.

The second big piece is looking at including three to five years. Currently North Carolina only looks at ages six to 21. So as you begin to look -- drill that down, we don't have any other comparison states or anything else to compare that to, which is really going to take a turn in how we're reviewing this information as well.

So, again, we invite you to look at the comments. This is just a side-by-side of
where it is. I love the quick snapshots because that always helps me with okay, what do I really need to focus my -- my efforts in. But all the entire information of what they're proposing is available for you to look at, and we really do -- we really will need your input at some point on how we continue to move forward, what are the best changes that the Council and North Carolina sees that's best for our children.

North Carolina is supportive of the proposal to expand the funds for CEIS to include students with disabilities from ages three -- I'm sorry -- from ages three through grade 12 so that you're looking at that pre-K all the way up through grade 12. So those comments will be due on or before May 16th. So if you have additional questions, comments that you'd really like to make sure that are included, please contact Nancy for that information.

MS. OUZTS: And, Dreama, I know she also mentioned that if you would like to make those comments directly to OSEP, to log in, and do those there so that you can have that input now as to what they actually decide to do. So that link will take you to the place to do that.
MS. McCOY: So this is again a lot of information. I did want to make sure you had the opportunity to kind of glance over it, but kind of really go back and study it. I've had to read it three or four times like, whoa, this is a lot. But it's available for you, and you know, we're here to provide additional information as needed.

THE CHAIRMAN: So, Dreama, let me ask a question. Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. CARPENTER: That's okay. Go ahead. I have a question after you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. If we're going to take this information back to our regions or back to our districts, then, who would you recommend that we start having these conversations with? Would it be--- Because I see it says the -- "to promote equity in IDEA with significant disproportionality." So is there any particular group, person?

MS. McCOY: I say the EC director and if there are parent groups that are also included because it will have an impact. The EC director always knows when they're on that warning list of hey, you need to make some changes. This is happening. That information also is -- you know,
we have that readily available for them. But I would start there. There could be some parent groups that they have already created, and so they may need to -- need to know that information as well. Good question.

MR. CARPENTER: I think you explained this. So the fourth one where it requires states to use standard minimum cell size of not more than ten and we use 30, and the note there is that North Carolina has a waiver under ESEA. So I'm interpreting that to mean that the waivers that North Carolina has will not continue. Is that what you were saying?

MS. McCOY: I believe, if it passes, that may be the possibility, but again, Nancy can answer that a little closer with that waiver. Like you stated, we've got the cell size of 30, and it's going to have to change at some point. That's why we really need the Council's input, how do we need to address this and how do we move forward.

MR. CARPENTER: And I interpreted that to mean any other waivers we might have would -- if there are changes proposed, that they would not continue either, that we would have to...
address that.

MS. McCOY: I know we are still reviewing and assessing the Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA, and so that information has not been completely decided upon. They're still reviewing a lot of that, and they are asking certain people in certain states for input. So hopefully we can have some input into what currently is -- what we currently have in place in our state. So I can't answer that completely because it's still kind of up in the air for review.

And they haven't given us specific guidance. What they'll say is, "Well, we're still reviewing the information to see how it's going to affect states."

THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? I just one more question. Regarding that same bullet about the minimum cell size, I know earlier you said it will impact the small districts. How are we determining small districts? What numbers are we looking at for that?

MS. BYNUM: It is based on that capacity, but I don't know what that breakdown is.

VISITOR: What did you say? I couldn't hear you.
MS. BUMNUM: It was based on capacity -- like, student capacity, but I don't know what that breakdown is.

MS. McCOY: Yeah, I don't know the breakdown. I apologize. But, you know, we have our small, medium, and large, and so -- and it's probably going to be your population size of the district the way they're kind of pretty much set up now. So, you know, I can't give you the specifics on that. That's a good question, though.

THE CHAIRMAN: And then maybe if that's something you guys could just follow up on, just with that particular piece, because those will be the areas that we really want to start having those discussions with. We need to make sure that this information makes it to the smaller districts, however we're defining them.

MS. McCOY: And I might can provide that information to you towards the end of the meeting. I can, you know, get on text -- thank God for technology -- and try to get you that information because I really do want you to have as much as possible and be informed moving forward.
MS. LaCORTE: I was just going to say one way which that is probably going to impact smaller districts -- it won't be just in one way -- is that when schools are spread out and the smaller the population of special education students, if the students aren't all concentrated or even if they are all concentrated, breaking that down from 30 to ten is going to make a big impact on a number of schools where the population is -- has always kind of fallen into that 30 which will no longer apply.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: Can I ask for a deeper explanation of that -- of what you're saying, Mary, just to---

MS. LaCORTE: Sure. So say, for instance, you have a high school and the high school has 30 students -- 30 or more students. When they're reporting out, the scores and all those things are not going to impact the same way because if their cell size is larger than 30 or under 30. So when the cell size is smaller, that means you're going to report more data on students ten or less in a school on a smaller cell size.

So right now, for those who have -- say they have 25 students, those report outs are
going to look a little bit different in the whole
because you have to kind of pull them out
separately instead of them just falling into the
whole. And I'm probably making that more
confusing than I meant to.

But the cell size -- it's about what
has to be reported specifically out of the group.
So when you're looking at student performance as a
whole, how they're doing on different scores, any
kind of -- there's a number of populations, not
just students with disabilities that you look at.
And so if you're reporting out those scores and
you're kind of falling in the -- you know, in the
current cell size, some of those things may just
get kind of caught up in the whole of the
reporting, and now they may come to light.

They may become, like, a specific line
item now so you'll be able to see them very
specifically, how did those -- that group of
students do in that school, and then it's kind of
put into the LEA's report and then to the State's
reports.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: And so may I ask
another question? What is -- what is the thinking
behind this proposed change? Why are they -- why
are they -- I'd like to understand what they're thinking as making this proposed rule change and why.

MS. McCOY: So I'll be very honest with you. I can't tell you the thinking behind OSEP and where they're moving with this. This is -- we're just trying to handle and address what's being given to us as a state and how we're going to move forward. So, yeah, I don't know. You know, I'm sure it has to do with the Every Student Succeeds Act and how they're moving forward, but I can't tell you specifically on that. That's a deeper question than I can answer.

THE CHAIRMAN: And perhaps that would be something that we could -- we could e-mail Nancy that. I think that's a great question as a body and then have the response come back to the group. I think that would be---

MS. McCOY: And so with that, as you're thinking about your questions and that information, if one person compiles those and sends it to her, then she can respond to all of those specifically. I haven't been a part of those meetings, and so I really can't share that with you. Sometimes we'll go off to other states
and hear what OSEP is indicating and what is the idea or the premise behind why they're making these changes, but I haven't been a part of that.

MS. LaCorte: And these are federal---

MS. McCoy: Yeah. It's not the State. It's -- this is federal. So it's larger than what we're doing. But you can also see further, if you go back to the policy changes, you can look to see. Sometimes they will add in this is the rationale behind why we're proposing this. So I really, again, invite you to review that information online.

Are we helping you catch up with some time here?

The Chairman: Thank you. All right. For the benefit of those who do have questions, that actually would fall under the Policy Committee. So, Susan, what we would like to do is, if we would forward our questions to you, if we have questions, and then maybe if you could just put that in one document and just forward that to Nancy, and then that will help us just trim the e-mail a little bit, and I'm sure Nancy would appreciate that as well.
Ronda, hi. Very nice to meet you.

Thank you for being here.

MS. LAYMAN: Oh, sure. Thank you for having me. I'm going to move over here so I don't talk to anybody's back. I'm Ronda Layman. I'm the consultant for significant cognitive, multiple disabilities, and assistive technology. And I know there have been some questions surrounding testing of this population so I kind of wanted to talk this morning about why we test, what we're doing, where we're going, and just kind of update you on those things. So if you have questions along the way, please feel free to stop me.

All right. So bless their hearts.

Federal and state -- and I have to walk when I talk, so I'll just go ahead and warn you-all.

Federal and state law does require all students to be tested on the standards on which they receive instruction. That goes for every student that is there, but we are firm believers -- and you-all know -- that every student can make success and progress through proper instruction.

And honestly in the last probably ten years, we have really looked at let's move away from sympathy and bless their hearts, we just want
them to be happy to success because the research
does show that these students can be very
successful.

So in talking to teachers -- having
conversations with teachers and parents about
this, because we do get a lot of phone calls from
parents and we do get a lot of phone calls of why
do we need to test this group of students, but
that is important to evaluate every student. We
need that knowledge. We need to understand where
they are presently and look at where we need them
to go in the future, and if we don't evaluate
that, then we're not going to be able to make good
instructional decisions.

Hopefully all teachers are doing some
progress monitoring and evaluating students along
the way and not just waiting for that last test,
but also -- and I had a good conversation with a
parent the other week, and she said, "I just don't
want my child to take this test. Where's my opt
out option?"

And I said, "North Carolina does not
have the opt out," I said, "but when you think
about this," I said, "we want all teachers to be
held accountable for providing appropriate
instruction of our students. It doesn't matter whether they're teaching our gifted students, our students that are going to become our neurosurgeons or if they are working with our exceptional children students. All of our students deserve the best instruction that they can have.

So this does help them -- help us ensure that they're being instructed on the standards as well as functional skills because we always get the question of well, what happened to the days of teaching them to tie their shoes and feed themselves and toileting skills? We haven't gotten rid of that, but we are required to give them the academics and the content knowledge as well.

And the research has shown that students across the board can make progress in reading and in math, and those are actually functional life skills. So we haven't gotten rid of the old functional curriculum, as people used to say, although it needs to be so much more than that now. So our assessment data throughout the year should be informing the instruction of our teachers, and we think that that is a critical
component to student progress.

So currently for our students on the certificate pathway or those that are instructed on the extended content standards are taking the Extend 1. And our Extended Content Standards are our alternate achievement standards that are based on the North Carolina Common Core Standards. I realize there is some change that is taking place when they're looking at our common core standards. Once any new standards or changes have been put in place, we will then look at the Extended Content Standards to see if we need to make any changes, revisions, additions so we will still be in alignment with those.

So our Extend 1, I want to talk a little bit about that, and I'm going to show you some examples of what that looks like in a few minutes, but it does satisfy our federal mandate to test all students. Now the data that we get from the Extend 1, right now we're not using for student growth or towards teacher evaluation. And currently the way our test is---

VISITOR: We are not. Okay.

MS. LAYMAN: We are not. No, we are not. And our students who are significantly
visually impaired and our blind students, right now unless they are reading Braille -- and typically this population does not get to a lot of fluent Braille reading -- do not have access to this test, and they are given a medical exception. And once you see the test, you will see that there's no way they could access it. So they are not penalized, and it does not count against the school participation rate.

But we test our students in English/language arts, we test them in math, and then just as general ed does, three, five, and ten, we have--- I think it's supposed to be eight and ten. I left that out. ---three, five, eight, and ten, we do science as well. So what I thought I would do---

VISITOR: Before you move on to that, is the only medical exception for very low vision or blind?

MS. LAYMAN: No, it is not. There are other medical exceptions, and that is submitted by the school district to a team at DPI, and there's six of us and we review them based on some medical fragility. It's not just with the Extend 1 population. It's with all -- it could be
concussions from sports, anything there, but we do
have a committee that does review those annually.

VISITOR: Okay. Thank you.

MS. LAYMAN: We have what we call
automatic -- like we know -- if a child is truly
blind, we know -- there's not going to be a lot of
discussion. They can't access the test.

So what I've got linked here is some
forms because I wanted you to see kind of what
this looks like. I know a lot of times what's not
familiar is a little scary, and realize that any
accommodation that is given to any other child in
an IEP can also be used for the Extend 1. Some
are naturally built into the Extend 1, like the
multiple sessions are naturally built in, being
able to -- with Extend 1, you can actually stop
after you've -- you may do two questions and the
child can't handle any more. You can stop,
bookmark it, take it back, and start again another
day. So there are some built-in accessibility
accommodations there.

If you'll pull up the first one.

This is just--- I got kicked off a minute ago.
You may have to go back on there.

But I'll talk to you a little bit
about this while she's getting that up. With the Extend 1 test for English/language arts, the children -- all students that take this are required to read on their own the very last selection that is provided. If the student truly cannot read, it is still presented and they are given the instructions to read that and answer those questions. The others, the format is that it is read to them, and if they make an error---

I can see it on your screen. It's on her screen. It's just not there.

But they're given picture choices, and you'll see that.

MS. McCOY: Is this what you---

MS. LAYMAN: Yeah, it's on there.

It's just not showing up on the screen.

If they do not get it right the first time, they will take that choice out and they're given choices of the remaining three cards. But we do give -- there's 15 questions each time that they are tested. And it's a really pretty plant, but they--- No.

MS. McCOY: There we go.

MS. LAYMAN: Oh, good. Okay. So right now this is the English/language arts
assessment for grade 4. So this is what students will see. So the selection here is "The Garden," and these have been released. These are online so we're not giving away any of our deep dark secrets so that you-all can't ever leave the building again because now you know what the test looks like.

I want to show you just a little bit of what the stories look like, and there is, like, one sentence per page. They have a visual to go with it. Keep going. I'm going to go quickly through the story because I don't really think you-all really want to see the story, but you do see the type of story, and it is in black and white. It is not in color. So you're actually seeing a released item here that has been used.

The teacher in the first part reads this to the students. They can request that it be reread at any time, and then you have -- teachers have manipulatives that they are -- that are provided by DPI and you have your cards, and they tell the teachers exactly what they're supposed to say just like you do on the regular -- the general ed, and then they put the cards for them to see.

Go back up just a little bit. All
right. So it will tell them what, you know, Card A is, and you can tell them that, you know, here's -- Card A says, "They plant seeds." Card B is, "They watered the seeds." You keep going, and then if they miss it, it actually tells the teachers exactly what to do next so that they know what to remove or if there's no response, and then -- you can go up -- and then they get a second trial.

You can keep scrolling.

VISITOR: So they can have one second trial---

MS. LAYMAN: They have a second trial; yes, they do get a second trial if they do not get it correct.

Okay. I think that probably is the end of that one. And then I will show you---

MS. McCoy: Sorry.


So I'll show you what math looks like so you can just -- so we can have some more technology issues. There you go. So we'll go to math, and this is middle school math, and then I'm
going to show you a biology one so you see what
high school is like as well.

But we also have -- I know that you-
all may have heard that eleventh graders take the
ACT. We also have an Extend 1 ACT for our
eleventh graders, and they are required to do that
as well. I will tell you that the students -- you
saw what the teachers have, but the students will
have four, like, index size cards with the
pictures of the answers on there. That is what
they are given. Sometimes there are words on
those cards that they would have to read.

VISITOR: I'm sorry. Has the Extend
1 ACT been available since the Extend 1 came
about?

MS. LAYMAN: It came about -- about a
couple of years ago. It hasn't been around too
long, but it's been a couple of years. Because
federal law says when we test general ed, we need
to test all students.

There's math. Okay. Yes, I'm ready.
So I'm going to go -- a quick what the math looks
like. So, again, the teacher gets the
manipulatives. It's the cards again, and the card
shows one table, four chairs. "What's the table
to chair ratio?" So this is a middle school math problem for our students, and then, again, you can read that to them. If it doesn't work, they don't get it right, then you -- they have a second trial there as well.

And then we'll just kind of briefly show them biology if it will come up.

MS. McCOY: Okay. So we're done here?

MS. LAYMAN: Yeah. I just wanted them to kind of have an idea of what those looked like.

MS. SIMMONS: Ronda, is your PowerPoint available?

MS. LAYMAN: Yes.

MS. McCOY: We can have Tish to send it out.

MS. LAYMAN: Yes. And there's more released items on the DPI Web site if you go under "Testing and Accountability" or you can just Google, "Released test items NC-Extend 1," if you want to explore those further.

MS. McCOY: I just did a copy and paste---

MS. LAYMAN: Okay.
MS. McCOY: I figured that was easier.

MS. LAYMAN: Yeah. And those will actually show them where they all are. Okay.

There's the -- that's English.

MS. McCOY: Go down?

MS. LAYMAN: Well, that's English II. That's okay. English II is fine. So you see they have a poem there that they read, so it does go along -- the Extended Content Standards are aligned to the Common Core State Standards so we also make -- they try to make sure that our testing is aligned to those requirements as well.

And then, again, "Which line of the poem describes the speaker's feelings about loving someone?" So it does go into some content areas. The same format, high school is a little harder, as you see. So I just wanted you to kind of get a feel for what those look like. Biology didn't pull up. Actually that was the link for biology, and it didn't pull up, but that's okay.

So moving -- looking at alternate assessment -- we will always be required to assess these students. What are the options that are available for alternate assessment? There's the
Dynamic Learning Maps also known as DLM. That is a computer-based program that is available. There's probably about 16 states participating in that right now, and all of the assessments are provided online on the computer.

There's also NCTSC, and I would like to tell you what that stands for, but right now, I can't. But it is a format similar to the Dynamic Learning Maps format that's also national. There's probably, I think, 11 states operational doing that right now.

I will say the one thing with NCTSC that they do different than Dynamic Learning Maps and different than what we do in North Carolina is they determine if a child is -- has the communication skills and are ready to test. That could be someone in third grade, that could be someone in twelfth grade, and if they are not at a certain point with those communication skills, then they are not participating in the assessment. So -- and then there's state-created tests, which is currently what the Extend 1 is. There are other states that do their own state-created test. There's some states that join together and partner with other states and do some
state-created tests. So that's where we currently sit under state-created.

MS. McCoy: Can I make a comment while you're there?

MS. Layman: Yes.

MS. McCoy: So with the DLM, we actually have been in the pilot -- one of the pilot states for years. It is very costly. It's 1.5 million dollars to -- I think it's 1.5 -- to be a part of it, and so we might -- we are more than likely ending up our last year as far as piloting with them, but right now, the teachers and the State still has access to review the information online, but because of the cost, we are looking at possibly doing another state-created and trying to see how we kind of continue to move forward with that, so---

MR. Carr: The nice part about that DLM, though, is how it adapts to [inaudible].

MS. McCoy: And all our standards are based -- that we currently have was -- DLM used and adopted many of North Carolina's standards, but we're still kind of, you know, continuing on in providing that information, so -- okay.

MS. Layman: So right now, we are
exploring what the options are. We're having
discussions about those options, and when we think
about ESSA, they done a little changing with their
requirement for assessments. So I want to talk a
few minutes about that.

So when you look at the academic
assessments in the new ESSA -- and, again, North
Carolina in my later slides is still in the
process of figuring out what our response and plan
for ESSA is. We're still doing the assessments in
math and reading and language arts. Still doing
the science. That's not changed. Still must have
appropriate accommodations. That has not changed.
States can chose a single summative, which is what
we currently do, or multiple statewide interim
assessments.

And I know that there's been some
talk of proof of concept with general ed, and some
of the general ed population -- I think they
piloted that already for proof of concept, which
are some of those interim assessments -- that
would result in a single summative score.

And then the assessments -- all
assessments must be developed, to the extent
practical, using the principles of Universal
Design for Learning, and if you're not familiar with Universal Design for Learning, it is multiple means of representation, multiple means of engagement, and multiple means of expression. And that's a whole other -- that's a whole other PowerPoint.

But they are -- ESSA is full of using the principles of UDL and not just a one-size-fits-all. Yes?

VISITOR: Who actually writes the test items for the Extended 1?

MS. LAYMAN: The TOPS -- we contract with Testing -- what's that stand for?

MS. McCOY: Testing and -- what does TOPS stand for?

MS. LAYMAN: TOPS, uh-huh.

MS. McCOY: Oh, I don't know, but that is who we typically use in conjunction with EC as well as Accountability.

VISITOR: At North Carolina State?

MS. LAYMAN: Yes.

MS. McCOY: Yes.

MS. LAYMAN: At one time teachers were helping to write those, but I think any new items that have been created in the last five
years have been -- have come out of TOPS completely.

   All right. Go to the next one. So when we start thinking about alternate assessments, of course, they have to be aligned with the Alternate Achievement Standards, which we already are looking at that, and then it has to be that the IEP team determines that they will participate in the alternate assessment. We already have that criteria that is out. It is online.

   We are currently in the process of reviewing that criteria and trying to make it maybe more user friendly, maybe define it a little better to make sure that we are in compliance and that it is -- we're using it for good decision-making.

   And then the one thing that they have added -- and we've always stressed this to educators, but it must -- parents have got to be clearly informed in the IEP process that participation in an alternate assessment will most likely delay or otherwise affect them from receiving a regular high school diploma. So making sure that that is there.
Of course, UDL again has to be within the alternate assessments, and then the other thing that they have put in here is that it doesn't -- students with significant cognitive disabilities are not precluded just because they take this to complete the requirements for a regular diploma, but it would greatly affect or delay their ability to be able to complete course work.

Okay. Yes, ma'am?

MS. HALL: Is it possible to do that course work within the amount of time that a student may remain in school? Is it truly possible if they can go to age 21 or through their twenty-first year?

MS. LAYMAN: If a student is truly -- has been -- truly has a cognitive disability and has been instructed on the Extended Concepts Standards all through up till high school and have not been in the general ed curriculum, the gaps probably are going to be huge that they would not be able to meet those requirements. And if they've been instructed that way up until high school, but all of a sudden actually do the course work for high school and complete it, there would
be some questions there around that.

       MS. HALL: Whether it's even possible?

       MS. LAYMAN: Right. Knowing what is required for the future [inaudible] if a student has not had that instruction all along, I would find it -- I think it would be very difficult. I won't say impossible, you never know, but I think it would be very difficult for that to actually take place.

       MS. HALL: If I might ask another question, then.

       MS. LAYMAN: Uh-huh.

       MS. HALL: If there is -- so the determination for is this made at a much earlier age, I assume?

       MS. LAYMAN: Not always, but sometimes, yes. I mean there are some students that are so physically and cognitively involved and have not been able to show progress in the general curriculum, that early on, we realize that this is the pathway that they need to take. There are some that actually have struggled and supports have been in place and been in place, and they still want to give them that change.
Some follow that direction in middle school, and then we do have some that come into that in high school, some of those that you look at that have really done well in the inclusive environment as far as socially and enjoying the participation in those classes, but just do not have the skills to get to the high school diploma track.

So when we look at what's next, we are in the process of looking at ESSA. If you ever need any good reading material, it's about 1,084 pages long. So it's -- we've been fortunate that there are people that that's their job to go through and pick out the main parts, and they're kind of filtering some of that for us, although I know that we have people in the Department that will read all of that. I would like to say I'm one of them, but I'm not going to stand up here and lie to you.

But we will have a plan, and there will be groups that meet to make sure that we implement the ESSA requirements as directed. We do meet with our Testing and Accountability staff on a regular basis, and it is nice having them in the building because at any time we run down or
they run up and we talk. Our Accountability person right now is a former -- a teacher from a public separate school. She is wonderful. She has very good knowledge of the significant cognitively-involved population. So any changes that need to be looked at to be reviewed or undated, we will do that.

So, again, our goal is to have each student learn, to have them grow. We want them to be happy, successful adults. We do not want these students, when they leave high school, just sitting at home doing nothing. We want to really push to prepare them to do all that they can do. We want them to be able to thrive in their environment.

It was really interesting. I was scrolling Facebook this morning before I got here, and somebody had posted an analogy that I thought was really -- I might use it. So any teachers that end up in my training, they'll hear this again.

But it talks about children's with disabilities -- all children with disabilities and how a lot of times we kind of peg them into this is who they are, this is their present level, and
this is who they're going to be. And so they made
the analogy to a flower seed, and so when you get
the seed, this is the current state that they're
in. This is their present level.

So you plant it and you water it and
you give it sunlight and you talk to it and you
really nurture it and you watch it grow, and that
that's what we're charged with doing with all of
our students, every single one of them. And so I
thought that actually is a perfect analogy so that
we don't get -- we don't get stuck looking at the
disability, but we always need to push to their
potential.

All right. I think that was my last
slide. Are there any questions?

MS. VIASATY: I have a question.

MS. LAYMAN: Yes.

MS. VIASATY: I don't know if it's a
proper time, but not so on the significant
disabilities but -- so the Extend 1 is for that,
but then you have the population and, LD mild or
resource setting where often EC children are --
say, if they're in a K-2 or 3-5, they can be,
like, in a second-grade age range but be
instructed at a kindergarten instruction level---
MS. LAYMAN: Right.

MS. VIASATY: ---but, yet, they're given the second-grade -- let's go with third grade because we'd be testing in third grade. So they could be, you know, age five grade, instructionally third grade, but they're still given a fifth-grade end-of-grade test when they've never been introduced or exposed to that.

So testing in that scenario just seems highly inappropriate for the child, to put material in front a student that they've never seen, never heard of, and even if you give the accommodations with multiple test sessions or extended time, that's just prolonging their agony because they still have never seen it. I mean, is anything being done for those populations?

MS. LAYMAN: I can tell you -- so when you think back when we had Extend 2 and the federal government said no more, and the federal government from our meetings -- and North Carolina participates in a consortium called ASES. It's around assessing students with special needs, and we do get to meet with the Department of Ed and OSEP. They come when we have these discussions, and we have great work around the ESSA.
The Extend 2 is not ever going to come back, and I will give you their rationale and then talk a little bit more about your questions. Extend 2 was only a different format. It was never different content. It was still grade-level content, but it was shorter passages and fewer choices.

So they felt like with accommodations that the needs of those students could be met and the Extend 2 really was irrelevant. That really upset a lot of people, and our fear at DPI was that there was going to be a mass movement into Extend 1 for students who really didn't need to be there.

So when you think about assessment -- and I know assessment is important and I firmly believe in it, but we have to look at where the child's least restrictive environment is. If it is in a general ed classroom and if they, with accommodations and some push, can reach to achieve those standards, we always want to push them up mainly because it does usually direct their pathway towards after school.

And what I have to tell teachers and principals -- and I have some principals in
here -- I have to tell them a lot of times it's not about a test they can pass; it's about making sure that we're testing the knowledge that they have received during instruction.

So not all of our general ed populations passes the test that don't have IEPs and so not all of our special ed will. We do recognize that. We know that it's a struggle. We know it's very frustrating for students. And so testing, yes, is always a big deal, but I think, for some of our students, they are more than likely going to demonstrate their knowledge -- their knowledge throughout the year with formative assessments in the classroom and through IEP goal progress. And that's kind of the direction we have to look at for those students.

So we do recognize that it's a struggle and it gets frustrating, but usually their progress again in my mind with one set of results doesn't determine any child, whether they be general ed or special ed. So---

VISITOR: I just want to piggyback on your comment or your question or -- as one of the schools that piloted DLM, the beautiful part of that was that we were able to access to student --
well, find the student's access point. And so
while they may be in fifth grade, their access
point may have been at a kindergarten level, and
we were able to successfully assess and use that
information to drive our instruction.

So I'm really -- and I just have to
say -- because you know I'm gong to speak my
mind -- I'm very disappointed that we're not going
to be able to move in the direction of the DLM
based on financial reasons because it really truly
has been a wonderful tool, and I'm disappointed
that we're not moving in that direction.

My question, though, to go with that
is, we're looking at UDL, is the portfolio going
to be a consideration as far as alternate
assessment? Would that fall under Universal
Design for Learning?

MS. LAYMAN: So it could be under
ESSA. That is one of the things that they do. We
have not had that conversation with Testing and
Accountability. I know -- you know, long ago, we
did the portfolios, for those of us that have been
around forever, and you know, it's a very -- it
could always be an option, but right now, our
discussions are not in that direction.
MS. McCOY: And the other thing, we are -- we are with Accountability a lot lately, more so than I think ever before, because we are trying to make sure that we're going through and looking at what are the best state assessments that we need to either provide, what's ESSA indicating, and we've looked at NCTSC. We've been in conversations with them about what they're providing. We've definitely been in conversation with DLM.

And so we've continued those discussions and we have not stopped, but in truthfulness, in looking at the amount that it is, we don't know yet, but more likely may not be moving that way. So that's really just being honest and putting it on the table.

We're also going to be talking with TOPS, which is Technical Outreach for Public Schools. You asked that earlier. We are going to be in conversations with Accountability on what would it look like if we created a state assessment, who needs to be involved. So nothing is off the table, but I'm just being realistic in letting you know this is where we're looking at.

And there are -- the other -- the
other big thing was, we're trying to stay away from consortiums because our state doesn't move -- we're not in that because of our legislation. So we look to see what's best for our students in this state, and that to me is the best thing that we can look at. What's going to be best and how do we continue to move forward. We do like the DLM. We've been a part of it, and it is a very sound instructionally embedded assessment. So nothing's off -- completely off the table. We're just looking at the reality of it.

MS. LAYMAN: If you find that pot of gold tomorrow. I'm going to come back to you because he had his hand up a minute ago.

VISITOR: Is the through-the-year testing a done deal? Are we going to have that---

MS. LAYMAN: That is not a done deal.

VISITOR: Okay.

MS. LAYMAN: That is not a done deal. They're still in talks about that.

VISITOR: If it is, is Extend 1 going to be a part of that?

MS. LAYMAN: If they assess all students throughout the year, we will have to look at assessing these students throughout the year as
1 well.

   VISITOR: Okay. Last question. Will
2 there be individual student information provided
3 from that?
4
5 MS. LAYMAN: There is individual
6 student information provided -- for the Extend 1
7 or for proof of concept? I am not sure how all of
8 their reporting will come out, but my
9 understanding is that it would be. It would be a
10 growth component in there for them. Yes, ma'am?
11
12 VISITOR: As a teacher that has done
13 the portfolio and Extend 1 for five years, I find
14 that the portfolio gave me more with my progress
15 monitoring, and my teacher evaluations gave me
16 more information to direct my IEP than the
17 Extend 1 ever did. I never got any type of
18 information from that Extend 1 that could help me
19 direct instruction, and that is a still a real
20 concern of mine for cognitively -- significantly
21 cognitively disabled students.
22
23 MS. LAYMAN: And I've heard that from
24 many teachers throughout the state as well. Okay.
25 Any more questions?
26
27 MS. LaCORTE: I was trying to pull it
28 up real quickly and I have discussed this with

Scott Court Reporting, Inc.
130 Angle Place
Stokesdale, North Carolina 27357
336/548-4371
Mr. Hussey -- and this would be perfect, Ronda, maybe for you to look at. On the form, the North Carolina Testing Program Summit to Assessment Options either 9 through 12 or 3 through 8, whichever, on the back side, we've had a lot of concern because there's a statement that's happening -- playing out now in a way that it wasn't intended.

And it says that Extend 1 is not appropriate at all for students who are instructed in any or all grade-level courses, and that means a student for whom they are eligible or Extend 1 is probably an appropriate assessment. But, say, they're in their school in elementary or perhaps second grade, third grade, fourth grade, and they're going to the regular art class. That's playing out now where teachers are saying they can't be on Extend 1 because they're going to an art class that's regular ed, and that's really counter to the LRE requirements of IDEA.

MS. LAYMAN: Right. And I hear that a lot, and I actually have had many discussions, actually just one last week of that very discussions, and you know, what -- first of all, special ed is not a place, so I will say that.
What that means -- what that is supposed to mean -- and, again, we are revisiting the criteria because of that and a couple of other things that are very subjective and are interpreted in different ways.

But what that was meant to say was, if I'm going to give you an alternate assessment in reading, math, science, then at some point during your day, your instruction needs to be on the Extended Content Standards. It's not to say you can't participate with general ed. It's not to say you can't receive that instruction in a general ed classroom. You do need to have a teacher that is certified to teach that.

But it has been misinterpreted many times. I've heard, "They can't even go to PE. We can't do inclusion." It is not to exclude them at all. It is just saying that if I'm in general ed -- because we have a lot of our children who do participate with general ed classrooms which is wonderful for them, so beneficial, and the research supports that.

But it wants to make sure that we didn't just do third-grade reading and we never pulled back and said, "Here's what your reading
standards say and we're instructing you on that."
So that is one of the things we are looking at as
we revisit that, so yes.

    MS. McCOY: And actually we have a
meeting scheduled, I believe, next month to
discuss some of the language with that.

    MS. LAYMAN: Anything else? My
contact information will be here. Feel free to
contact me if you have any questions. I hope
you-all have a good day. I was thinking I was
standing between you-all and lunch, but I think
Dreama and Sherri are standing between you-all and
lunch.

    THE CHAIRMAN: All right. So in
keeping with our agenda, we will---

    MS. VERNELSON: Do you want us to go
ahead?

    THE CHAIRMAN: Please go ahead with
our agency updates.

    MS. VERNELSON: Again, I'm Sherri
Vernelson. I'm one of the section chiefs in the
EC Division, and Dreama and I are here on behalf
of Bill Hussey and Carol Ann Hudgens today. They
had to be back, I think, at the office in a
meeting around our ECATS system that we're going
to talk about a little bit later that we're very excited about, but they send their greetings to you and hope to see you next time.

So I'm going to -- we're going to kind of switch back and forth between slides here as we give an update, but for those of you who are new, let me just talk about the big pictures a little bit and what we're doing in the division.

So the Results Driven Accountability system, is there anybody in here who is not familiar with what that is?

(No audible response.)

MS. VERNELSON: So it is this the accountability framework for special education out of the Office of Special Education under the Education Department at the federal level, and in the past couple of years -- well, it's always been very compliance-oriented, and in the last couple of years, they have said we want to focus more on results. What a novel idea, right? And so -- and then as a part of that RDA work, the SSIP, or State Systemic Improvement Plan, was something that -- every state had to identify an area where we wanted to improve.

And so through data analysis, North
Carolina decided that we wanted to look at improving graduation outcomes for students with disabilities, and so as a part of that work, we had to have a way, a framework to support LEAs and then be able to measure what we're doing in that work.

And so the LEA self-assessment was created to look at six core elements, and then LEAs -- also they were encouraged to develop a team through their LEA and not just an EC team. This is an LEA team because our kids are general ed students first, and so we wanted them to bring in people from the general education side as well to look at the practices that they are using in their LEA and basically rate themselves. Okay?

And later you can actually go to our EC Division Web site, and if you scroll down on that home page, there's a link to the LEA self-assessment that takes you to a wiki, and it really outlines it very nicely for you if you would like some more information on what the self-assessment itself looks like.

But the LEA and this team, they look at data and they begin to analyze it and they rate themselves on how they're doing, and you know,
we're telling them, "This is not a gotcha. We're here to support you, and so it's okay if you have zeros or ones in a particular area because that's how we're going to help you be able to improve."

MS. McCOY: Can I make a comment?

MS. VERNELSON: Yeah.

MS. McCOY: So there are three elements to that rubric. It is zero, it's not in place; one, partially in place; and two, it's in place. And so as Sherri indicated, they are assessing themselves on what pieces are in place, what's not in place because you really do have to take a hard look at your data and say, "I need to look forward in this area, and we're not doing so well in this area, and how do I begin to drive that professional development in order to ensure all students are successful but especially our kids with disabilities."

MS. VERNELSON: So just to step back one step, as we were identifying through, you know, improving graduation rates for students with disabilities, we had to identify what were sort of those root causes that were causing students maybe not the graduate at better rates.

And so through our data analysis, we
looked at or identified three core areas, so academics, behavior, and a continuum of transitions, and then kind of all-encompassing around that is engagement because if you're not engaged -- the students are engaged or we don't have parents engaged, then affects all three of those areas. So as they're rating themselves and their practices, they're looking specifically at those three areas.

MS. McCoy: With that engagement piece, you know, there are times when naturally if you have a student without a disability that parents become disengaged because "Oh, they're moving towards adulthood. We don't -- you don't need to be included."

We want to make sure that parents are engaged from the very beginning from preschool all the way up through twelfth grade or a little beyond. What are the critical components of those intermittent times that parents really have to be involved in?

I know with my child being a senior, and she was -- the guidance counselor was like, "No. You know, she's got this." No, she doesn't. She's still not a complete adult. I need to
know -- I need to be engaged in that process along the way.

So our parents of students with disabilities definitely have to be engaged. We have to stay involved in that process to ensure that our child -- the outcomes that we want to see for our child being functional, working, what are the postsecondary outcomes that we're trying to see. We have to know along the line this is my child's dream, this is their interest, now how do you help me get to that point -- that endpoint.

MS. VERNELSON: So this LEA self-assessment, we have been working in regional teams this year with all the LEAs. So, you know, through the State Board of Education, we're divided into eight regions, and every quarter, we have regional meetings with all of the EC directors throughout the state as well as the EC coordinators from charter schools, and they come together in their region. And then in our offices or our division, we've actually sort of reorganized ourselves, if you will, into regional support teams for each one of these regions.

You know, historically we've really worked in silos in the EC division. You know,
here's my little deaf and hard of hearing world or VI world or whatever. And I remember as a consultant being in a school system and passing by another DPI consultant, and I was like, "Hey. What are you doing here?" You know, we -- if we had known it, we could -- kind of were there for similar purposes, but we were so much in our silos that we didn't realize it.

And so we've organized into regional teams with consultants cross-sectionally to support, you know, the region. And so through our meeting this year with them, we've walked them through this LEA self-assessment process, and they're currently in the phase where they are building their improvement plan, and they will be submitting those plans to us by July 1st.

And then what our regional teams are going to be doing is reviewing those improvement plans and looking, you know, as a region, what are those areas that this region is saying they need support with in academics, behaviors, or transition -- continuum of transitions, and then we are going to be providing support based on those needs. So no longer will we just be, you know, going in to provide PD that has nothing to
do with what those needs are. It has to connect back to what an LEA or a region identifies as their specific needs in order to improve graduation rates for students with disabilities.

VISITOR: May I ask a quick question?

MS. VERNELSON: Uh-huh.

VISITOR: With the LEA self-assessment, is there a way to pull information if you are seeing in a certain LEA there's been concerns from several people about one issue, okay? Is there any way that you can look -- and so this would be pulling in the perspective from family members.

So I'm just wondering about, is there a way that you-all are looking at cross-referencing -- and let's just say there's a certain LEA that there's been a lot of state complaints about them not following part of IDEA. Is there a way you-all are actually looking at results based on dispute resolution-type data with how the LEA sees themselves?

MS. McCOY: So our section chief Carol Ann tries to -- for Policy Monitoring and Audit -- tries to monitor that information especially if there's a systemic complaint in a
particular area.

With the LEA self-assessment, it is really looking at that school pulling their own data and then doing their own assessment of identified areas of concerns.

VISITOR: And, hence, bingo, and that's the reason that's my question.

MS. McCOY: Right. Yeah, I see where you're going.

VISITOR: Because what I'm wondering is, I might see myself as the best looking woman since Halle Berry, but I don't think many other people, unless you love people who have a unique persona, might not agree with me. But, hence, you hit the nail on the head. That's my concern, is that how an LEA is assessing themselves might be totally different.

MS. McCOY: It's based on data. We have -- one of our consultants has created a PowerPoint for them to be able to go through CEDARS, to know where do I pull this data down, and they have to match that up. You can't just say, "This is where I am in this area," and just make a hypothesis. We've been doing that for too long. You have to use data-based decisions --
data in order to drive whatever decision you're making. So it's---

VISITOR: So here's my thing. So if we have an LEA where we have -- there are several requests for mediation, facilitated IEP meetings, state complaints, is that part of the data points that are being shared with the LEAs?

MS. OUZTS: I'm looking under the policy complaints and monitoring core element. I know that the dispute resolution consultants are on the regional teams as well, and from what I've heard Carol Ann say, they are going to continue to have targeted focus and monitoring, all these types of things. They are very aware of any---

VISITOR: Right. Okay.

MS. McCOY: And the other thing is, because they are involved in -- you know, switching up regionally has really changed the way we do business, period. And so because you have a dispute resolution consultant on -- in those regions, you kind of know -- the same with my statewide people -- you know, there's been a lot of issues over in that area, and as I'm looking at their data, I'm sure if that matches up. Again, that's us from an outside view, but you have to
really look at the data.

And so we're going to review that information. It's no longer, as a state consultant, I'll go in and say, "This is what you need." It really has to be based on those decisions and the data that they have in their area. We're able to pull down that data as well.

If we see there's an issue in IEP development and it's systemic and it continues, we may say, "in this particular area, Sherri Vernelson's LEA, you know, we think you may really -- based upon your data and what we have reviewed, you may benefit from this training."

So it's not just going to -- the districts, yes, they have their data, but we're also a part of that in trying to help them move forward with reaching the most bang for their buck.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I just want to ask, is the LEA self-assessment -- is that mandatory? Is that required of every LEA?

MS. VERNELSON: Yes, ma'am.

MS. McCoy: And charter.

MS. VERNELSON: Yes, charter schools.

THE CHAIRMAN: And charter. And
that's under your umbrella to kind of look at things and interpret what's coming out of that?

   MS. McCoy: Yes. So once the submissions go in, if we have identified -- and we've kind of done a finger on the pulse already last month of, you know, where districts or LEAs and charters are, have they begun processing and identifying their areas and really looked at that LEA self-assessment. If they have not done any submission or not been a part of it, then we're doing a phone call. Hey, where you at? Do we need to come in and help you and support you with that?

   We know charters are a little different and we're going to have to look at that a little differently, but everybody's going to be required to be a part of this process in order to move the State forward.

   The Chairman: Got you. The only other piece that I'll add to Gerri's question is, in December, this body receives a report from Dispute Resolution that surmises the state complaints that have been filed, and there's a breakdown of sorts. So we have access to that information.
Now unfortunately for us, we receive that now during that December meeting. Our December meeting is so heavy, and I think that's one of the things that we want to -- we want to talk about, you know, moving forward because not only do we get that Dispute Resolution Report, we also receive -- that's our time to review the State Performance Plan. So there's a lot going on.

But just keep in mind -- and now may be the time to have those discussions about how we as a body -- especially when we're working with the parent organizations and advocacy groups and different parents -- how we may be able to assist or to look at the data that's provided to us and align that with experiences or those anecdotal records that we're -- reports that we're coming back with, and then we might be able to contribute to the conversation as well.

VISITOR: And that's it because I know it stays so -- it's not that I lied. I just had one more thing to add to that.

THE CHAIRMAN: You're fine.

VISITOR: Because here's my concern -- because I did -- and I looked at the
report because I'm dealing with this stuff right now with families, and that's my concern, that sometimes we collect data, but -- and, like you said, hence, it's why people are moving to regionalization. You collect the data in this pocket, but we don't -- just like folks on the autism spectrum -- but we're not generalizing that across settings.

And that's why I asked the question. I just want to make sure that if we are collecting data, we are using it in a manner that makes sense because I'm running into so many folks who are just saying, "I just give up. I just give up because I'm doing this, that, and the other. We've got these things in place, but it's not working for me."

MS. McCoy: But that's the reason why we went regional because it's going to drive the PD, the professional development, for next year. And, again, I have -- the majority of the state consultants -- autism are the only areas that were broken up in regions, but we would come in and say, "You know what. We kind of did a -- sent out a survey and this is what we think you need." You know, there may still be some cases of that, but
it really is going to be based on what are the needs of that region and how do we address that. You know, there are many times I would get calls from EC directors, "Hey. Can you come out and do this training?" But what is that really based on? Are you just filling a slot? So we have to make sure that it is driving home how do we improve services, supports, and education for our students. So that's really why we're moving towards this way.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And I'll just make one last comment, Gerri. And another piece of data that we have access to -- it's on the Web site as well -- the results from the due process hearings. They are redacted. They are on -- they're online, and they're reported each year. So if you're having or you're experiencing or seeing, you know, issues that you think may be systemic, then maybe you could take a look at those and see if they've been addressed by an ALJ or whomever, and we can use that information as well, all in an effort to make good sound recommendations.

VISITOR: Very good.

MS. McCOY: I'm going to make one
more comment on that data piece, is that there
were times within the districts that EC directors
may not have had access to certain pieces of data,
and so now we're trying to make sure they know how
to go and pull down their own data. You don't
have to wait on someone else. I know -- I know
how to look at this. I can read this. Now I'm
able to really make those sound decisions as I
look at all of my students.

MS. HUMBERT: I just want to speak to
the LEA self-assessment and it being charter
school friendly because it's not. We are not
able -- and I've sat at a table with charter
school EC directors at the March Institute. But,
for example, CEDARS, the data on there, it only
goes up to '13-14. My school wasn't even in
existence at that time, and that was the same
problem that they were having. And the other
component is that not all charters go through high
school.

MS. VERNELSON: I was just going to
mention that as well. That has been -- you know,
some charters have mentioned that, and so we are
looking at what -- because the practices that you
do have for the ages that you to have do carry
over. Then when they leave you and go -- so we're helping -- trying to help charters look at that and understand those particular needs. But thank you for that feedback.

MS. HUMBERT: Because if you put a zero in that spot about the graduation, then it lowers your score.

MS. VERNELSON: Yes.

MS. McCOY: Right. In doing so, that's where we have to take into account -- we created a whole charter school team to try to make sure we help charters build that infrastructure, and so it is six consultants on that team. So we'll definitely try to work with you on supporting your needs.

Here and then here?

VISITOR: I'm going in a different direction sort of, but it's still related to what you guys are talking about. If you want to do that first.

VISITOR: Well, I -- mine was on the engagement part of it, you know, keeping families engaged. I also sit -- I'm from Wake County, so I sit on the Special Education Advisory Council for Wake County as a member agency, and kind of what
Dreama mentioned, keeping families engaged is very difficult. Being on the Council what we found, Wake County sent out a parent survey last year. Wake County has 20,000 students with disabilities. We received less than 2,000 replies back. They also hold a yearly workshop. Less than 200 families or individuals came out to that.

Through the Council meetings, we've also found that as children age, less parents attend IEPs, that they're not even physically present. They just ask for the IEPs to be sent home. So they're just relying on the schools and the IEP teams to make the decisions for their children, which as a parent with young elementary kids, it's frightening because I can't imagine not being involved in their lives. Even my gifted daughter, you know, still I feel I'm going to play a role in her future.

So, you know, as this rolls out, again, how would that be communicated? If there are any best practices or there are areas that do a really good job of keeping the parents engaged, it would be very helpful to get that message out.

MS. VERNELSON: Go ahead.

MS. McCOY: So out of that -- that's
a great comment and question -- we have on our
SSIP team, our State Systemic Improvement Plan --
we have a team that is looking at transition and
engagement, and so we're looking at that research.
There's not a whole lot out there, I'm going to
tell you right now. So, as we talk about the
continuum of transition, we are pulling what's out
there and we're also looking to see how do we help
districts have a better understanding.

And so our plan is to -- this past
March, we had the first portion of some training
around continuum of transition or we termed it
intermittent transition at the time, but it really
is a continuum. And so we have Preschool
involved. We have someone from CMI involved. I'm
involved. Beverly Colwell, who's our Intellectual
Disabilities and Secondary Ed consultant who
focuses on transition -- she's involved. Policy
Monitoring is involved.

We also have a person with Research
who's on that team as well. So we're really
trying to take a good look at that. At our March
Institute, we had districts who were doing
different things and they have right now really
good results with graduation in the way they're
looking at transition.

We had our first training with them at our March Institute, and our plan is to have them and some more identified districts who are doing well come back as a stakeholder group. Now how do we begin to train this statewide because we have to keep that engagement piece. You've got to stay there, but it's also starting at preschool, and it goes all the way up through.

So, like I said, there's very little research out there, but we're really trying to focus on that. That's a big focus and push for us. And Heather is on there too as a parent rep.

MS. LaCorte: And we're working closely with ECAC around that.

MS. McCoy: Yeah. I'm always with Mary, I think, between her and Accountability.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just a couple of points, and I really want to emphasize that the question really geared towards engagement -- that parent engagement, and that has been a huge issue and, in part, for the reason you just stated, that this should start and often -- for many of us did start, you know, at preschool and at kindergarten, and that is a long row to hoe, so they say, from
preschool up until age 21, 22.

And so I think that contributes to the fallout that you start to see at secondary ed and high school. Parents are exhausted. The red carpet is not often rolled out for parents when you're trying to secure services for your kids, and it just gets -- and I hate to say battle, but it is. It's one battle after the other trying to get the services that you're entitled to and that your child -- your child needs.

So we really want to hone in and transition -- and I understand how those two are tied together, but we really want to emphasize that the parent -- the engagement piece. A part of our State Performance Plan, one of the indicators is Indicator 8, and that's parent involvement. Historically Indicator 8 has been very difficult for us. We've been looking at that for a very long time.

So when you say 20,000 EC kids in Wake with a 2,000 survey response rate, our numbers as a state didn't look that good, and we haven't addressed Indicator 8 in a while. We went from visiting that indicator annually to now I think it's on some type of rolling system -- we
used -- as a body, we used to discuss the results
of Indicator 8, again, every December, and it kind
of -- I think it fell by the wayside, and I
thought it was because it was a cycle or so many
districts would be surveyed per year, and then
maybe every five years, there would be a new cycle
of surveys to LEAs. But my point is, just
historically, that has been an issue.

We even tried to come up with some
options or we were brainstorming ideas at one
point how could we get that parent feedback
outside of a survey, and that didn't advance very
well, you know, with this group, but it may be
something that we need to revisit. If surveys
aren't successful, then what is?

MS. McCOY: One thing about with the
engagement -- and, like I said, it originated out
of transition, but we also have that on every
slide now that all of our consultants are training
on academic behavior transition, and then on the
side, you see engagement. That serves as a visual
prompt and reminder of we've got to stay engaged.
Yes, definitely with the parents, but we also want
to keep our students engaged academically, we want
to keep them engaged behaviorally, and we also
want to make sure that engagement is they're
current with transition.

Because engagement can -- students
can start becoming disengaged, and now I've got
another issue. So we need to keep them engaged
and the parents and looking at even the
stakeholders. What does it take to help support
this community, this district, and our strategy?
So it really is on every slide that we're now
promoting with our trainings in professional
development. It may be that Sherri is training on
behavior and so that will highlight it, but you
still see those first three main slides of this is
the purpose and the reason and the rationale
behind why we're doing what we're doing. So I
want to make sure I come back to her.

VISITOR: I know you guys are talking
about graduation, but what about secondary --
postsecondary outcomes? Because when you're
talking about graduation, you're eliminating the
kids that are not receiving a diploma, correct?

MS. McCOY: No. We're looking at
postsecondary as well. Graduation was one of the
bigger things as far as a bucket of moving the
state forward, and so we looked at certain --
certain subgroups and populations of if I only
address African-Americans in resource setting, am
I really moving the entire needle? And we
weren't. So we're looking at everything across
the board, graduations included, but we're also
including postsecondary. We can never leave that
behind.

VISITOR: My point is because our
kids receive certificates. So I just want to make
sure too that we're looking at the postsecondary
outcomes for those students as well because
there's not a lot of options out there across the
state.

MS. McCOY: And that sits under my
section, and so I am aware of that. But we are --
I mean we're looking at that and trying to address
it and to assist our kids with what else is out
there, how do we -- and it's not just functional.
You heard Ronda say that. It is making sure that
they're teaching to the standards because what's
more functional than knowing how to count and
understand literacy.

You know, you went through this
facility, and you saw a lot of Karen Erickson's
work. We promote that in our training every
summer. We even moved last summer to an advance training beyond just the normal literacy. So we are really focused on that as well, and we have the same thing with math.

So I'm a huge advocate for children, and it's never far from where we are and what we are thinking about. But that's a good comment. Mary sees me all the time, like I said, in trying to see what we can do.

MS. LaCORTE: I just wanted to piggyback on a couple of things. Nicole is right in terms of the discussion around other options for doing the parent -- the Indicator 8 data, and actually I'll tell you almost every state is engaged in conversations about what to do because surveys were something every state was doing, and it's just not working in a lot of places, not just North Carolina. So ten percent is actually not the worst number I've ever heard [inaudible] surveys.

I also wanted just to briefly say, Gerri, you do look like Halle Berry.

VISITOR: Don't make me get up.

MS. McCOY: She brightened up when you said that.
VISITOR: You don't have your glasses or your contacts in.

MS. LaCORTE: Not in here, but I can tell.

I was also going to say on the SSIP team and all that work, there is a wonderful representation of families, stakeholders, charter schools, public schools, and DPI staff. So it's a real rich voice in diversity among the team really trying to move the -- move the needle and North Carolina forward.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I was trying to move us forward a little bit, but I want to make sure that we are capturing, like, the questions -- the core of the questions here because this is something that I think we need to ensure that we address, and I think what I heard her ask, how are we capturing the outcomes of students that are not necessarily receiving that four-year graduation certificate. That was the question.

VISITOR: Right. And just making sure too that we're looking at how do we -- how do we change what limited outcomes or possible outcomes there are out there, and I know it's not -- shouldn't be a DPI thing. It should be a
statewide issue that needs to be addressed.

THE CHAIRMAN: And if I'm not mistaken -- and, again, this may be -- this may be a Nancy question -- Nancy Johnson. She's, like, our guru of data.

MS. McCOY: I'm going to tell you-all that's not me.

THE CHAIRMAN: But if I'm not mistaken -- and, Mary, you may know as well -- isn't there a group out of UNC Charlotte that's looking at postsecondary outcomes for---

MS. GEORGE: In Step.

THE CHAIRMAN: What's the name of it?

MS. GEORGE: Is it In Step?

MS. LaCORTE: NTTAC. That's national.

MS. McCOY: It moved to NTTAC now.

MS. LaCORTE: We do look at that, but that's a national study.

THE CHAIRMAN: So I mean that would be one source of -- could possibly be an information source---

MS. McCOY: So what they do is -- we're trying to really look at that a little closer because what they do is they make calls to
parents of their students once they have already
exited out of school.

Well, the hit-or-miss rate around
that is very small because numbers are no longer
working. That person may have moved. It could
have been a not working number from the beginning.
And so we're looking at how do districts or can
districts begin making those calls because they
know their students, they know their community,
but all of that is preliminary.

One of the other things that we are
looking at regarding transition and beyond is, we
have -- we created a transition toolkit for the
state, but only right now those -- a point of
contact has been identified or a lead person.
Every area and LEA has been trained, and so they
have access to that toolkit of looking at this
postsecondary -- it takes you back to NTTAC, which
used be NSTTAC, which is our National Technical
Assistance Training Center. So it looks at all of
that.

It looks at the new Workforce
Innovation Opportunity Act, which is now called
WIOA. It looks at VR and how do we -- when do we
begin inviting VR into this process.
also is looking at and focusing on transition as well because that's a population that typically has not been as included with VR because VR typically -- they don't always -- they work with the kids who they know they can get the most success from many times, and so it becomes a little difficult. How do we make sure that we are including all students? How do we begin to focus on that?

So, again, we're trying to create that and look at that. That toolkit is available for right now only LEAs, and then later on, we'll take -- we'll allow that to be opened across the state. We're trying to collect our data on how they're accessing it, how many times they're accessing it, because they now -- once they get trained this summer, they have to go back and train their district on all these resources that's available. Does that answer you a little better? Does that help you out?

MR. VOGLER: So I actually wanted to sort of provide an update to folks, and I don't know if very many people know about this. I'm going to say the number so I get it right, but there was a bill passed in November of 2015. It's

What part of that called for was, it actually charged the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services to be the lead agency but partnering with DPI, Division of Voc Rehab, the University of North Carolina, the Community College System, North Carolina Postsecondary Education Alliance, and several other groups, to say the least, social services.

And what we are -- the whole charge of that group is to pull together and to look at postsecondary education and employment with the big focus being employment first, trying to get people connected. It's connected -- we have sort of an arm that's connected to the WIOA. I'm trying to stop calling it that, but connected to that as well as, you know, we're looking at some of the work that Beyond Academics in Greensboro has done.

That group is staff by Holly Riddle, who is one of my policy -- she's the IDD policy advisor, but the two cochairs are Vice Chancellor
Terry Shelton from UNCG and then Claudia Horn, who's the Senior Director for Employment Services for the state. And so the whole goal is to try to collect information, sort of see where we are as a state, and what the opportunities are, to make recommendations then that go back to the General Assembly because they were the ones who charged us with doing so.

So it is sort of this comprehensive effort. It is made up of groups -- representation of people, like, from The Arc of North Carolina, the Autism Society. I mean the list of people that are a part of this group is very broad and it really covers multiple different stakeholder groups.

MS. HALL: Is this -- and this was a question I wanted to ask both of you -- is that I don't feel like this area can be addressed without bringing in partnerships with private businesses and stuff. So is that a part of -- I mean, what is the -- you're talking about stakeholders, which is great, but if you don't bring in the private sector, it's not going -- and you don't educate the private sector. You know, what are -- is that
a piece of the puzzle?

MS. McCOY: It is a piece, and the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act also addresses that you've got to create those community partnerships in order to do -- in order to really move forward with that. So as a state, like he said, we're still trying to figure it out, but we are -- we are trying to address it and move forward with it.

There's Project Search which you didn't mention, and they're increasing across the state. I've seen really great results with them, and we're also trying to look to see how we can continue to partner with them. They are on their third year of their cycle with the North Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council.

So after that, they are charged with how do they build the capacity to continue those increasing opportunities and not to stop. I know there's been some concern with them of many times they're linked with hospitals typically because that's how they grew out of, but they are -- that's how they got started -- they are trying to grow that. And so you've got to have those community partnerships and those other
stakeholders involved.

MR. VOGLER: They're partnering with Wake County right now.

MS. McCOY: They're in, like, five or six major areas, and they are -- they've started slow, but they are increasing and they're great. I've seen those kids, and I mean what they're doing is really phenomenal.

MR. VOGLER: So your point is good, and certainly under WIOA involving the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Leadership Network -- there are a number of other groups. Of course, that -- and I know this related to a Department of Justice settlement that we're working through on the Mental Health side. It's very -- because we're trying to get people into housing and get people jobs, and we can't make people give them a place to live or a job.

And so it's all -- that's where it's all about a different form of engagement and it's about relationships, and there are some exciting other sort of really the traditional idea of community and sort of grassroots stuff that people have done to try to help build these relationships, and that's what's so key, is not
losing any voice. Just like we never want to lose parents in the process, we never want to lose the voice that people have in their communities because that makes more things happen, and I think we -- I think we take that for granted how much that makes things happen sometimes.

MS. McCOY: Yes, ma'am?

VISITOR: I know that you're looking at postsecondary and everything else. My concern is for the Extend 1 students. How are you tracking those students and what are -- you know, I know that the Department of Mental Health and all of them are looking at employment and things like that, but we have too many of the Extend 1 students that are graduating at 21 and then sitting at home all the time.

So how are you tracking those students because they don't have a diploma or they don't have OCS?

MS. McCOY: Right. And so Project Search really does address a number of those kids who are on -- who took the Extend 1. We're hoping at some point to look at doing a little more partnering once their grant is up on this third year. We have seen the work that they do and how
great it is starting -- I know in Alamance/Burlington, which is where Bill originally came from, it just kind of continued to grow. It's still a work in progress, is all I can really kind of share. I don't have anything else on that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So we are way over. We went from being almost on time to way behind. So if it's okay with everyone -- and Dreama and Sherri are fine with that -- if we can now just break for lunch, but we're going to continue the discussion through lunch. We want to let them finish their presentation. Is that okay with everyone? Is everyone okay with that?

I think this group is accustomed to kind of working through lunch because people just keep asking questions, Halle Berry.

(A lunch recess was taken from 12:39 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.)

MS. McCOY: We're going to back to engage in a conversations and continue moving forward with the presentation. So I think we've kind of closed out the first slide. Only a few more to go. Only a few more to go.

Some additional miscellaneous pieces
that we wanted to just kind of make sure you're aware of. Some of you are; some of you may not be. The SLD policy did pass February 5th, and it's not expected to be in full implementation until 2020. So we just wanted you to know that.

As DPI is currently creating SLD -- an SLD implementation guide, and so we'll have that ready soon. We've got a lot of projects that we have going on. We'll have that ready to present out and share information. Just like the white paper -- we posted that online for you to be able to access that information -- we'll also do that as well and do some training with the districts on that.

The other big piece is, professional development will be provided through the MTSS cohorts. There are three cohorts that have been set up. They've completed, I know -- or they're still working on Cohort 1, I think they've already started training with Cohort 2, and the cohort training for the third group -- the last group would be, I think, a little later on starting off with the Module 1. We're trying not to supersede that process, allowing them time to do the training, really look at effective implementation
science on ensuring that it's being built the
correct way, and they're able to install those
processes.

They're looking at -- with the
professional development, they're looking at a
number of ways of providing that. It's not only
face-to-face; it's also online. So there's
blended opportunities for districts to be able to
have that understanding and to be able to be
trained within MTSS.

The other piece is, we're -- the
third module of MTSS will be around the SLD
eligibility. I know we're currently working on
finishing up that training in conjunction with
MTSS consultants, and so we're providing some
support with that or providing a lot of support
with that. There's also going to be some
standalone professional developments that MTSS is
also including.

They've got a set training plan of
how they're going to move forward with, by 2020,
everyone being fully engaged in that MTSS process,
and MTSS being Multitiered System of Support. In
EC, we use all kind of acronyms, so I want to make
sure I indicate that. Multitiered System of
Support.

As a division, we are also looking at making sure we are increasing the knowledge with dyslexia. A lot of times, we have not really talked a lot about it, but it's there and so it's embedded in our literacy training. And so we are making sure we're intentional around using the messages of saying we -- it's not like we're going to say, "We don't do dyslexia." We do dyslexia. It's there. And so we want to make sure that the State and different groups as well as teachers and EC directors hear that. We are creating some PowerPoints and some training around that that we hope to roll out in the fall around dyslexia and what does that look like.

Again, a lot of the training components -- it's built in closely and it's already embedded in our literacy trainings that we do across the state now. We want to make sure that we're careful to say it's not like we don't do this because we do it. We do it. It's there and we want to make sure that we address it. We don't want to turn a blind eye to it.

You heard some discussion already about the Every Student Succeeds Act with IDEA
with the notice of proposed changes. Ronda mentioned some with the one percent population. The other big change that we're looking at as well is the HQ status. In the ESSA, that HQ term is going away so you won't hear that, but that does not mean that we are not still addressing it in North Carolina. You may not see that term, but teachers will still be required to go through the same assessment and licensures that they have -- they currently are going through now. And so although the term isn't there, it's still a requirement that we're making sure will be included with our tests.

Next slide. So our funding with our stakeholder group, right now, we are continuing to look at our funding formula. Bill is really trying to make sure that he increases the knowledge about it. Currently it's about -- I think back in 1993 when they first looked at the funding for Exceptional Children, it was around 1.9 percent, which equates out to $3,900 per student, but the more kids you have, the less money you get.

And so we don't feel that that is current to the national average. So he's looking
at other states to see exactly how their funding formula was created. He's also trying to talk with legislation around how do we increase those dollars. We know with charter schools we have got to do something different because the infrastructure that they have there and the amount of money that they receive really is a struggle for them in order to support students with disabilities.

So we know that has to -- we have to look at that closely, but we have to look at that in all of our LEAs and our districts in order to support our students. It takes more funding than $3,900 for our students to be supported through resources and then on up through.

We're closer right now, as far as funding, to the 2.3 percent of what many districts are spending out. So, again, he's just looking at that to make sure how do we begin to increase those numbers. This was done back in the early 90s, and so something has to change. Nothing has changed for EC in our population. So just know that he's looking very closely at that and trying to make some changes.

Next slide.
MS. VERNELSON: So mental health in the schools, this is a very robust topic right now out there, and it's getting a lot of attention and we're glad that it's getting a lot of attention. So just basically what we want to do is to propose some recommendations to the legislature around some issues in mental health and hopefully, you know, some legislation and some policies will be looked at for that.

We have developed a stakeholder group around -- with Mental Health. It is different than the Governor's group that he has. However, Bill has met with the lead person there, and we're very much aligned in the things that we're looking at, the things that we're talking about, which is very exciting that we're on the same page there, but it is a different group.

In this group, the four committees have been -- sort of subgroups of committees have been formed to look at evaluations, talk about communication, surveys, and focus groups. Recently -- this is a little bit of an old slide, but a survey was developed and was sent out a few weeks ago, and all of the -- the response was---

MS. McCOY: Far greater than what we
initially thought.

MS. VERNELSON: ---far greater than, you know, what we anticipated with over 2,500 responses. That's right, right? I got that number right? Over 2,500 responses. And so the focus of the next meeting, then, will be looking at -- analyzing what those responses are saying and then looking at the critical areas and the things that we need to talk with the legislature about in hoping to get some legislature or some policy around that. So this is -- that's already been done.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Sherri---

MS. VERNELSON: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: ---just a quick question.

MS. VERNELSON: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: I received the survey from multiple sources, from different parent -- you know, different parent groups and I think a couple of people on the Council received it from other sources as well. Not real sure that it was sent to this body, and if it was, it didn't come through. So we want to make sure, you know, that the Council is included on those -- on those
communications.

The other piece of that too is for the focus groups or the groups that are working on this, is there Council representation on those groups?

MS. OUZTS: The focus groups were done across four different locations across the state, and that was open to the public. That's not really -- they weren't stakeholder groups.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm speaking specifically of the DPI---

MS. OUZTS: It has a name. It's called School Mental Health Initiative---

THE CHAIRMAN: Oh. Excuse me.

MS. OUZTS: ---and the name -- I tell you that because that's the way you'll hear it in your communications. And it is not a DPI stakeholder group. We are -- we are very active in that group, but it's comprised of different agencies across -- from DHHS to DMA. I mean there's---

MS. McCOY: Social workers, nursing.

MS. OUZTS: We have people from all areas. We have advocacy groups. I know -- Mary, are you on it? You're not. Okay. I'd have to
look.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And that's fine, but I'm just going back - you know, Sherri explained that the Governor has a mental health initiative, and I thought it was that DPI had a mental health initiative as well, and I just wanted to see if there is, you know, Council representation on that group or if there's an opportunity for the Council to be represented on one of those groups because we have a couple of -- one of our new members is the director of NAMI. Am I saying that right?

MS. DANIELS-HALL: NAMI.

THE CHAIRMAN: NAMI. Is everyone familiar with NAMI? Not only would I like to suggest that she -- Cynthia, do you see me volunteering you? -- I would like to throw out there -- suggest that, but there may be someone else who's here who might be interested in participating as well. So we can discuss that later, but if you would just make a note.

MS. OUZTS: Yeah. It's not, like I said, DPI.

MS. VERNELSON: And that was my misunderstanding. Sorry.
MS. LaCORTE: A lot of people feel that way, so there is a lot of confusion.

MS. OUZTS: Yeah. It seems that way, I know, because, you know, Bill -- you know, Bill's passion is school mental health services, and so he's definitely very involved in spearheading that. However, I don't think there's a problem at all. You just need to contact -- just e-mail Bill with your suggestions of who would like to participate.

MS. VERNELSON: I have that written down too.

THE CHAIRMAN: You do have it written down? And I volunteered Cynthia, but if there's someone else who has that same passion and would like to serve, just let us know after the meeting and I'll forward your name as well.

MS. McCOY: So the Governor's task force that Sherri mentioned as well, Ben Matthews sits on that, and so he's under Safe and Healthy Schools under DPI. And so that is, you know, selected only by the Governor who he had -- who he created -- well, the group he created with that. So I know Ben and Bill also have been in talks around that. Ben has been to some of the meetings
as well just to make sure, again, that we're moving forward.

There has been a big cry of I want to be involved with this because this is -- it's huge, and so although they -- I think this may have been, like, one of the largest responses that we have probably received with survey results, which, you know, very -- it's a little different, but we have people still constantly contacting us saying, "Can I be a part of this group," because it has -- you know, I have a mental health history as well.

I worked in -- yeah, I know. I also say I was incarcerated. I've been to prison. I've been in mental health. I've been all over. No. I worked in the prison system for five years, and then I worked in the community mental health area program -- that's my story and I'm sticking to it -- the area program for five years before I started in the school system.

And so coming from where you just had the area program to system of care and now how that's kind of broken up a little bit, it is now -- everybody's trying to figure out how can we address the same population of students and help
move them forward. So it is a huge cry. So we'll
definitely have that noted, and we'll move
forward. I'm out of prison now, so---

MS. VERNELSON: Did you have a
question?

VISITOR: Yes. With regard to mental
health services in the school, in meetings that
I've been going to -- I'm a school social worker
here in Guilford County Schools -- the focus is
only on the student.

Is there any conversations being had
about the family support because the student is
definitely being impacted by the family and
parents?

MS. OUZTS: Absolutely. Yeah, I
would say most every focus group definitely
brought up the communication with families and how
to involve them in the process. Basically the
focus groups were to collect the data and get a
good lay of the land, what is out there. What you
have in Wilmington may look very different than
Morganton.

So we're just in the beginning stages
of collecting information, what the needs are,
what's going well, what's the barriers. So that
is what the group is looking at to help inform them in making some recommendations.

MS. LaCORTE: So are surveys still being accepted?

MS. OUZTS: The survey has closed.

There is a Spanish version that is still open because it was later getting distributed, but---

MS. LaCORTE: Until March 25th.

MS. OUZTS: Until March 25th.

THE CHAIRMAN: I mean there was a massive push to get responses in by the 7th, I think it was, I mean, because it came through -- like, I saw it, like, three or four times in one day. So I know -- 2,500 responses, I'm not surprised.

MS. McCOY: But the goal again is to make those recommendations to see what -- what changes can be made and how do we begin looking at that. There are some districts that have mental health in schools and a lot of them don't. And we're talking about a whole child and the whole community. It's not broken up. So I definitely understand the fragmentation of services that's occurring right now.

MS. VERNELSON: So in terms of
teacher recruitment, I was trying to look back through the minutes to see if Bill had updated you last time about that, but it doesn't look like it. So there's a significant shortage of special education teachers in general and not just -- I mean we always know that there's a shortage of low incidence teachers such as deaf and hard of hearing, visual impairment, deaf/blind, speech -- not necessarily low incidence but speech, OT, PT, but across the board.

And so we are really looking at this issue to sort of figure out what can we do about that, what can we do to draw people in to our universities to entice them to want to be special education teachers because it's so fun. It's really, really fun to work with these kids and just to see what they can do every single day and how they surprise you. I miss it sometimes. I got to be in schools yesterday, and it was so great seeing all the kids.

And so we just contracted with Teachers to Teachers, which is an organization, and the LEAs had access to use that to recruit teachers. But really -- as we began looking at the data and as EC directors were talking to us
about how they were using it or not using it, you know, we really began analyzing is this -- are we getting the most bang for our buck, is this the best use of our resources, or can we use it in a different way, you know, what -- we need to do something different.

And so we put together another stakeholder group. I sometimes have trouble remember all the stakeholder groups we have, but it's really great to have, you know, people involved because we did not always necessarily before. But in three groups, they're looking at research and development and the data that we need to connect; marketing, what are we doing, like I said, to get teachers or people interested in wanting to work with students with special needs; and then also IHE piece as well.

We're looking at supporting a pilot to see how we can draw people into the universities. I'm not exactly sure what that would look like at this point, but then there's also talk and consideration about regionalizing support out there. So, you know, in the far east of our state and in the far west of our state, there's just not that many, you know, teachers out
there to support and the kids. And so how can we get LEAs to work together to support one another to support their children, especially for the low-incidence populations. So, like I said, we're talking about that right now to see the feasibility of that and how that might work.

VISITOR: Are you looking at retention separately than teacher recruitment?

MS. VERNELSON: Well, I think it's kind of all encompassing.

VISITOR: I just wanted to make sure because that's a separate issue.

MS. McCOY: Right. As you look at the regionalization of possibly supporting those positions, both areas -- you've got Tennessee, you've got Virginia. You know, they're pulling a lot of our teachers because of the higher pay, and so---

VISITOR: Well, that's what I was going to tell you. Rule number one for retention, don't let them outside states come here, especially Texas.

MS. McCOY: Yeah, because they took a whole lot, yeah, so we -- and we're looking at, I mean, not just the teacher positions but also
related services. It's all impacted and it has a huge -- there's a gap there, so--- Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: Is one part of your discussion looking at building-level leadership?

Because we hear a lot from teachers who may go through and get their teaching certificates and that's what their plan is, and then they arrive in buildings and the support's really not what's needed. So I didn't know if principals were even a part of the conversation for that building-level leadership, not just LEA leadership but the building level.

MS. McCOY: We're going to write that down, and we'll try to make sure we include that in the conversation, and I didn't really think about it to that degree.

VISITOR: Especially the self-contained classroom because a lot of the principal's don't understand self-contained classrooms, and it's the first time that they've had one, and if you only have one in that school, then that teacher has no support whatsoever.

MS. McCOY: You know, sometimes it's a little difficult to get on the principal's agenda. We have tried -- Ronda has been trying
for the last two, three years to get their agenda, and it's not high on their priority, but it's not for lack of us trying to. So she now has -- we believe in small increments for change, and we're making some movement with some of the ways that she's providing PD and professional development in getting an audience in front of the administrators. So not for lack of trying.

MS. SIMMONS: First of all, Gerri's point is very valuable. Retention is extremely important and very different from recruitment. How are you going to keep the veteran EC teachers in the classrooms with the current climate they're in?

And the second thing is, some of the most valuable people that we've had at our school were once teacher assistants, but how do we train teacher assistants -- how we do the professional development to get them from being a teacher assistant with two years of college to the experience of a teacher in special ed.

MS. McCOY: You know, that's out of our hands. Part of that is in with legislation and how that's---

MS. SIMMONS: Professional
development especially for TAs.

MS. McCOY: We advocate as much as we can, so -- all right.

MS. VERNELSON: We appreciate you being here today and to be able to sit in on those meetings and to hear this information to be able to share with your colleagues the struggles that we're having. So we do appreciate you being here.

VISITOR: And I promise this is a quick follow-up. But, you know, it's just like you had said earlier, Dreama, about making sure that some professional development slides actually have this is what we're working on.

If retention is truly embedded in here, then I say that we should say "and retention," because, once again, make sure people don't miss stuff, and just by seeing it and make sure that -- you might not have Gerri/Halle in the room to say "What about retention?" How did you like that?

You know, if it is embedded, then it should be up there because that's huge, and not to just say recruitment.

MS. McCOY: Right. We'll take all the suggestions and make sure we go back when we
debrief with Bill.

All right. Assessment Suite, so as you look at this information, what we're doing -- we've received permission to work with UNCG on developing universal screening tools that will measure growth in the IEPs as well as tools for the MTSS initiative.

And so one of the things that we know is that it will take us four years to complete with the around $800,000 for the four years, but we also know of the large districts in the state is spending $800,000 a year. So we want to try to get this created and have it free for LEAs and districts to use. And so we're going to work with UNCG on the creation of this assessment and try to move forward with that within the next four years.

Private school scholarships. Two big points here that I want to make, and then I'm going to leave it at that. That's been a lot. The IEP team is required to conduct reevaluations of students who are parentally placed in private schools under IDEA. So the team has to create -- or is required to conduct those reevals for the three-year. But once that student leaves and they're no longer -- they're in that private
school and they're receiving that scholarship, the
IEP team -- if they choose to not come back to
school and stay where they are, then the IEP team
has to close that out -- that reeval, and the
parent can elect to go to a clinical psychologist
in the community in order to get that evaluation
piece to determine can they continue on in this
status of receiving services.

There's a lot around that. We're
just trying to make sure we cover that piece
that's under IDEA with legislation. So I know
Bill and Carol Ann were very active and busy with
that last year, and so we just want to make sure
districts know their obligation of what they have
to do.

MS. VIASATY: I'm sorry. Could you
repeat that?

MS. McCOY: Yes. Okay. So when a
student -- when a parent wants their child to go
to a private school, the IEP team has to
convene -- convene and determine that they're
eligible to receive those services. Once that
parent then takes that information, the IEP
document, and they go to the private school and
they're in there, when they're up their reeval,
they don't come back to the team and say, "Hey. Do this -- you know, indicate that my child is still eligible for these services." They'll go to a community licensed psychologist -- because the IEP team has not been viewing that person or assessing where they are or they may not have those existing documents.

That clinical psychologist will review the information that's coming for the private school, and they will continue on with that determination if they indicate this child needs this. So the IEP team is then -- they're removed out of that process once they go to the private school.

THE CHAIRMAN: At whose expense?

MS. McCOY: The LEA has to provide that first initial -- now I'm not sure whose expense it is once they go back to the clinical psychologist.

MS. SIMMONS: Well, that's the question.

MS. McCOY: Yeah.

MS. VIASATY: You said they're responsible for the years---

MS. McCOY: They're responsible for
closing it out after that third year because then they're no longer -- they're not a part of that process anymore. They can get it initially, but after the third year, they have to close that out from the school system.

MS. VIASATY: Okay. So, like, for example, if I decided to put my son in private school this year, when his three-year eval would come up---

MS. McCOY: The IEP team closes that.

MS. VIASATY: ---the school---

MS. McCOY: Yes. And so you'll -- the parent will go to a psychological -- not a school psych or they could be a school psych and dually licensed -- a clinical psychologist in the community, and they will determine whether that child is still considered eligible under IDEA.

MS. LaCORTE: What does that do to the LEA's obligation for Child Find?

MS. McCOY: Oh, we still have to -- we're still obligated under Child Find.

MS. LaCORTE: So you have to know these kids exist, so---

MS. McCOY: Right. Right.

MS. LaCORTE: ---the eligibility
requirement that you're talking about, though, is attached to being eligible for the scholarship?

MS. McCOY: For the scholarship only, yes. This is only when they want to -- we want this -- I forgot how much money it is that they can -- 7,000 or 6,000.

MS. LaCORTE: Because the scholarship says they have to be a student with an IEP?

MS. McCOY: With an IEP, uh-huh. Yeah, but Child Find still continues on.

MS. LaCORTE: What I'm hearing you say is if the child is transferring from public school to a private school?

MS. McCOY: To a private school, and they want to apply for an Opportunity Scholarship, I believe is what the term is, yes. And that's only in this case that the IEP team will make sure that all the documents are there, and they'll do that initial evaluation. And that parent takes that IEP, and they go to the school and say, "I'm applying for this scholarship," and so that money goes with them.

But then the IEP team, after that third year, they have to -- they close it out because they're no longer a part of it at the
local level or that district. The private school
is now the responsible agent for that as far as---

VISITOR: But it's not children
already enrolled in a private school, and we still
have to do that initial eval?

MS. McCOY: Oh, I don't know about
that. We're going to have to document that
question and get back to the Council on that.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is the question
because if my---

MS. LaCorte: I was going to say I
thought the requirement was that they had to have
had an IEP for a year.

MS. McCOY: Yeah, a year, but---

MS. LaCorte: They would have to have
been in public school at some point with an IEP
receiving services.

MS. McCOY: Yeah, I can't speak in
any more detail.

VISITOR: Yeah, you're right. That's
what it is.

MS. VIASATY: This wouldn't apply,
though, then, to parents who take the scholarship?

MS. McCOY: Right.

MS. VIASATY: So if I don't take the
scholarship, in three years, I call my local school and---

MS. McCOY: Oh, yes, all that continues on. This is only if they're applying for the scholarship and going to a private school.

MS. VIASATY: What if I go to a private school and don't take the scholarship and---

MS. McCOY: Oh, then---

MS. VIASATY: ---they wouldn't close out my---

MS. McCOY: No. But you can always come back for -- if you're coming back into -- because private schools aren't required to really follow that same process. And so if you're coming back and you're saying, "Well, you know, my child needs this service or the supports. We'd like an evaluation," then we'd start that process as well. Yeah, they operate totally different than what the public schools -- how they operate.

MS. VERNELSON: Okay. ECATS. So ECATS stands for Exceptional Children's Accountability Tracking System, and I think last time Bill -- I was looking at the notes, and he had updated you-all about this system. And there
was a question about what happens in order for it
to be mandated statewide, and so correct me if I'm
wrong, but the State Board of Education passed --
I can't remember the---

    MS. McCOY: Unified Education Reporting System.

    MS. VERNELSON: ---Unified Education Reporting System, UERS, so that will mandate one
system for the whole state, okay? So, yes, it is
going to be -- for the IEP special education
component. The ECATS system also includes an MTSS
component as well as a Medicaid component, and
those are offered at a base -- it's free at a base
rate -- not rate, but at a base level that
hopefully is going to be very enticing. It's a
pretty generous, I think, base, but if LEAs want
to continue with the current same Medicaid system
that they're currently using now and they don't
want to transition over to the new -- to the
ECATS, they can do the Medicaid system on their
own, but they have to pay for it.

    So in our system, there's a base that
will be offered, and then, again, it's pretty
generous, but if they want to add anything on to
that, then they can. They'll just pay for any
add-ons that they want. Does that make sense?

THE CHAIRMAN: And that was my question during the last meeting, you know, how do we mandate this. So this is good, but I still don't think the heart of the question -- I'm not hearing the answer to that, and let me just give you an example. Like, right now, we have CECAS. Everybody's familiar with CECAS, right?

MS. McCOY: Right.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And so CECAS is our state's system, okay? Not every district is required or mandated to use CECAS except for headcount reporting. So on December 1st and on April the 1st, every district must enter their data so that it can -- so that we can produce -- get the numbers we need and all the information we need for headcount.

Okay. So my question for the ECATS system continues to be, will that be the same scenario where -- and I know you're saying that it's passed and we have this unified system now, but will this unified system require districts to only put in -- every district must use ECATS to submit headcount information, or are we saying that all districts must enter all of that IEP --
because what we thought was so great was all of 
this information and your ability to monitor goals 
and your ability to see how kids are performing, 
and we can get better information for outcomes, 
but if districts are not required to input that 
part into the system, then we're kind of right 
back where we were. So that's my question. Does 
that makes sense?

MS. McCOY: It does.

MS. VERNELSON: So my understanding 
is, yes, that they are being required to do that 
for the special education component which includes 
the IEPs with UERS, the State Board has said we 
will have one system.

MS. McCOY: And so CECAS will be 
gone.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's fine. CECAS 
is gone. What will be required -- what will be 
input? The entire IEP or headcount information?

MS. McCOY: I believe it's the entire 
IEP.

MS. VERNELSON: The entire IEP as 
well.

MS. McCOY: Right. And so what some 
systems did was, because CECAS to them wasn't as
friendly, didn't have all the components they
needed, they went to other options like EasyIEP or
another vendor. And so we're hoping that we have
captured everything and with these presentations
that are going on today -- that's why they're not
here -- we're hoping to capture all that
information.

THE CHAIRMAN: But there's a flip
side to that, Dreama. Yeah, that's true for the
highly populated areas or for the larger counties.
But when you start thinking about the rural
counties and you start thinking about eastern --
the eastern part of the state -- that's what I'm
thinking about right now. They didn't utilize
CECAS because they didn't -- it wasn't accessible
for them. So even though districts -- they had to
go to, like, the public library just to get --
just to get the headcount information in.

So for the districts -- and I'm
thinking, again, eastern North Carolina and there
may be others -- western---

MS. McCOY: It's the extreme ends.

THE CHAIRMAN: Right. So how -- if
we couldn't require them to use CECAS for that,
then, how are we now going to require them to use
ECATS? I think it's -- I think it's a great program. I like it a lot. You know, that's just me, my own -- it doesn't mean two cents.

MS. McCOY: I understand. It's---

THE CHAIRMAN: But I'm just questioning---

MS. McCOY: It's that mandating piece -- that's where you're---

THE CHAIRMAN: We want to make sure it's accessible to everybody, right? Dale --

Dr. Carpenter? I'm sorry.

MR. CARPENTER: Dale is fine. I just want to -- since I'm the only IG person here -- hope that it's been into the plan -- when we rolled CECAS out, we had training available for preservice folks. So when they got in schools, they wouldn't have to do that all over again. We still haven't gotten over the Power School---

MS. VERNELSON: And we are trying to account for that.

MR. CARPENTER: Yeah, we'd like the help with---

MS. McCOY: I think I just got a black eye with that one.

MR. CARPENTER: ---but it's probably
better if it works before we train them on how to do it.

    MS. McCoy: Right.

    MS. VERNELSON: Yes.

    MR. CARPENTER: So when ECATS is adopted and rolled out, I hope there will be, you know, a component there for all the forty-some preservice programs in the state to be able to orient their folks on the system.

    MS. VERNELSON: I believe that we -- that there have been talks about that has been brought up.

    MR. CARPENTER: It was a great system with CECAS, and so I hope it does the same thing with ECATS.

    MS. VERNELSON: Yes. Yes. And there is a plan in place to not have the Power School thing happen. So the original---

    MS. McCoy: I struggle when I say it. I'm sorry.

    MS. VERNELSON: So as soon as -- they're looking at the vendor presentations today, and hopefully by April, we will know who that vendor's going to be, and then they're going to start---
MS. McCOY: Piloting and rolling that---

MS. VERNELSON: ---with the system.

And then in the fall, they're looking at some LEAs, maybe one or two schools, a few children in each school in each LEA who will double entry, so into the new system as well as their current system, to ensure that we can work out the bugs before we, you know, put it out there for everybody to use.

MR. CARPENTER: And the IGs would say help us help you---

MS. McCOY: Right. Right.

MR. CARPENTER: ---by preparing those people before---

MS. McCOY: Before they get in. And I think a good pilot -- and I don't know who they are because, again, that's a different committee. I think a good pilot might be one of those eastern schools who have struggled previously with CECAS, and so in identifying that, if they can work it out, then we know our larger districts can work it out. So Sherri's taking notes so we can try to look at that.

So a little over an hour later -- and
we said about 15, 20 minutes---

MS. VERNELSON: From our original

time that we came up here.

VISITOR: [Inaudible] grades and all

that stuff. Now for parents of EC children, I
know we can access a limited amount of

information, but how as a parent -- and I'm

speaking as a parent here -- be able to access the

IEP information if we wanted to without having to
go directly to the teacher or whatnot? I mean, is

there---

MS. McCOY: Is there a unique ID that

would be allowed for parents? I don't know if we

have created that, and so I have to be honest,
yeah. But it is a good question to ask. That

might be something that could indicate that hey,
you have this ability, but I don't know because

I'm not on that committee.

MS. PHILLIPS: And that turns into

another way to increase parental involvement.

MS. McCOY: It is. You guys have got

some great questions.

VISITOR: I want that, you know, and

would be able to have access to that without

having to always go to the teacher.
MS. McCOY: Well, since Power School will feed into this, there may be that option of that unique ID. I just don't know.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

MS. VERNELSON: We're at least cuter than Bill, right?

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. So we want to just give everybody -- if you need a couple of minutes to kind of take your -- remove your lunch plates and drinks and regroup.

(A brief recess was taken from 1:41 p.m. to 1:49 p.m.)

THE CHAIRMAN: We're back in session.

Okay. So we're really at a good place where we can make some adjustments for our time to be sure that we adjourn as planned. The rest of the afternoon, we want to -- we're going to combine our committee work along with the viewing of the public comments and the bylaws portion of it, and then I think we'll be in a good place.

What that means is -- Laura is distributing the public comments piece. At the beginning of the meeting, I kind of explained that we were working to give the public -- parents,
caregivers, and self-advocates or community at large -- the opportunity to share information with the Council, and one of the ways we decided we would be to incorporate a public comment period into our meetings as in most open public meetings, that opportunity will be given at the beginning of the meeting. And so before we could actually start that, we needed to establish policy or guidelines for how that would be conducted.

So what you have in front of you is what's being proposed by the Unmet Needs Committee. This is something that the Unmet Needs Committee took charge of, and they have generated a draft for what is the public comment policy period. This is a draft. It's where the thoughts are of how we want to -- how we may want to approach this, and so in Teresa's absence -- Teresa Mebane heads that committee -- I'm going to now turn it over to Laura Hall, who worked on this with that committee, and if you could just walk us through it a little bit, Laura---

MS. HALL: Sure.

THE CHAIRMAN: ---and provide us the opportunity for some discussion, and we'll go from there.
MS. HALL: Okay. What we did, especially Mary and I, was combined in researching other councils' public comment policies. It was probably close to 30 that we looked at between the two of us, and there was a gamut of very little written to some really good -- about five councils had really detailed plans. We looked at that after -- we looked at that. We sent that out. Kind of had some feedback going back and forth. We had a period of time for comment, which I just found out Mary, for some reason, did not get that e-mail so -- with this.

Anyway, it's -- it is a compilation of what seemed to be the best policies around. So this is a draft. It is completely a draft for adjustment. I just wanted you to know that it was compiled from looking at a lot of other councils' work, not just their state councils, our counterparts in other states. So I'll just run through this.

General guidelines: "Public comment may be made verbally, in person, or in written form to be read by the Chair." I will also say that there were some councils who also allowed for call-in. I left that off, but that's something
that can be discussed.

"Public comment is limited to no more than five minutes per person." That was -- five minutes was more commonly used than three, but there were some who used three.

"Written comments and written materials for verbal presentation should be sent to COSEC Secretary at, to be determined---" You know, in other words, we don't know who the person that it's going to be sent to is. Who is our secretary?

MS. BYNUM: (Indicating).

MS. HALL: That's what I thought. So I wasn't sure that that was -- you know, but that's basically -- that, in general, is what was done. ---"by 4:00 p.m., three business days prior to the regularly scheduled --" you can go on a read that.

"Comments should be focused on relevant topics.

"All public comments will be taken under advisement but will not receive verbal or written response."

They'll be summarized in the minutes of the meeting, and "The Executive Committee will
review public comments and decide on appropriate
action, if any, according to the Council's
mission.

"Making Public Comment in Person: A
sigh-in sheet will be available at the
registration table." If you look at the next
page, that is the draft of our design for that.
What's required, your name, et cetera.

"Comments should be factual,
objective.

"Maintain confidentiality and privacy
standards.

"Members of CESEC will not interrupt
the speaker during the allotted five minutes of
time."

And then this is how to submit
written public comment.

So are there any questions about --
about this or comments?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the -- and I
see now. The only question I had initially was
about the written piece of it, and I know that we
talked earlier about securing a Council e-mail
address. And so when I think about the e-mail, if
someone is going to use that as a method of
providing written communication, then we do need
to spell out, I think, how that e-mail is going to
be handled, and that was one of the -- one of the
issues that slowed down the process on actually
obtaining the e-mail because we didn't know how we
would address that. So---

MS. HALL: Right. And I knew that in
the back of my mind as I compiled the information,
but without knowing were we going to have an
e-mail address -- you know, this again is a draft.
So we will need to put it in -- we will need to
make it fit that structure if that's the structure
we want to go through.

So there is the question of what is
the e-mail address, who does it actually really go
to, how it's filtered to the Council. You know,
in most cases, the public comments are -- are --
as far as what is done with them, goes to the
Executive Committee to determine what's to go
forward, but I would think with us it would be --
you know, we have an Unmet Needs Committee. So it
would probably go first there, then back to
Executive -- and then if there's policy
recommendations, back to -- you know, to Policy or
whoever.
THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, Jason.

MR. VOGLER: I was going to say, I have a -- is there a specific legal counsel to this council?

THE CHAIRMAN: Uh-huh.

MR. VOGLER: I was just going to say because with my past experience with our division is that when we've had an e-mail and people submit in writing, it has to be in a place that they're notified that anything that they submit to a state e-mail address is discoverable and -- just so that they know that ahead of time.

THE CHAIRMAN: So how we're going to address that piece of it -- the legal piece of it is we're to come up with -- what are we proposing for this public comment period. We need to, you know, just outline it and be specific like we've done.

And then at that point, the Executive Committee will then turn it over to our State Board attorney -- and Katie Cornetto is who we've been -- is who we've been working with in past -- and then at that point, Katie would review it and say yea, nay, this works, this doesn't, and she would then communicate back to us. So we would
have that legal eye on it because we want to make
sure that all parties are covered and protected.

MS. HALL: If I could interject, I
think there's some -- there were things that I
just -- as I compiled all this information that I
received, I looked at most common. So five
minutes per person was most common, but as a
council, we can decide three minutes. This is
just basically -- this is what most of the strong
councils on public comment look like. So I guess
if that is---

THE CHAIRMAN: Personally I think
it's great. I appreciate the work that the
committee did on it, and I think it does target or
address those areas that -- areas of concern that
we raised in previous meetings. We have a format
for in-person comment. We still might need to
spell out the e-mail.

And I think Tish even -- you secured
or we talked about exactly what the e-mail --
wasn't it CESEC at---

MS. BYNUM: DPI's stance -- and I
mean I'll check further into this -- in creating
this group e-mail address, number one, there are
some licensing issues, but I can tell you that
historically in the past when we've had these
group e-mail addresses, if there has been no
activity, they want to pull them---

THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, that's
understandable.

MS. BYNUM: ---kind of thing. So
that would be my only off-the-cuff concern.

THE CHAIRMAN: The question that we
had before was whether or not it needed to be
COSEC@DPI--- Is that called like the domain name
or something? I'm not sure. ---or if we could
use just a regular, like, Gmail account. And I
think when we looked at -- I took a look at what
some other states were using, and most of the
other states were using their agency address, and
I think that's appropriate.

MS. OUZTS: Probably linked to the
issues that Jason was raising.

MS. HALL: What I did find in my
personal study -- and, Mary, you can jump in here,
but I did find in several of the ones that I
looked at that it was not just -- there was a
public comment policy that was available on the
Web site, but then it was -- it was deep -- within
the bylaws, it contained more -- even more
specifics. But I agree. If we use -- your comment is really -- and I think that's something we spoke about, was that people need to understand that it is a public record.

MR. CARPENTER: It's forever.

MS. HALL: That it is forever, yes.

MS. LaCORTE: Subject to public records [inaudible].

MR. CARPENTER: My question has to do -- you've kind of suggested a time limit -- a proposed time limit for the comments in person, but there's not one for the written, and so if folks are going to read it, you know, are there -- in any of those that you looked at, were there any limits for written comments, 1,500 words, not -- like, not 25 words and three links that lead you to a hundred-page document?

MS. LaCORTE: That's a great question. I didn't see that.

MS. HALL: I didn't either in the ones I looked at.

MS. PHILLIPS: A 120 words equal one minute.

MS. HALL: So, yeah, you could have a word limit or could you say must be able to be
MR. CARPENTER: I mean on letters to the editor -- I mean that's not the same thing, but they have limits on what they're going to do, you know what I mean, because could submit a lot of stuff, and nobody's going to read it.

MS. LaCORTE: Well, and if the promise is they're going to be read, that's -- that's the issue. I think that people can certainly submit something much longer that maybe would not get read, but they have a right to submit whatever they want to for this purpose.

MR. CARPENTER: Well, I would suggest 500 or -- 500 words -- 500 or 1,000 words, something like that.

MS. LaCORTE: Something like that.

We'll practice, Laura. We'll get together and practice and see how long it takes to speak so many words.

MS. HALL: Well, I would like to know what the Council would like---

MS. PHILLIPS: But I think it needs to be in alignment with what you're giving people to talk. If you're going to allow them five minutes, then do 120 minutes per -- I mean 120
words per minute, period.

THE CHAIRMAN: 600. That's 600 words.

MS. PHILLIPS: Because if someone's talking, they get cut off.

MS. HALL: Is that what -- what we talked about is five openings -- Nicole, what you had mentioned to the Unmet Needs Committee last time was five individuals at three minutes each. If you want to go, you know, five -- you know, again, your number of minutes determines how long your period is. So do you -- most councils had a 30-minute public comment period or they split up 15 minutes in the morning and 15 minutes in the afternoon.

MS. LaCORTE: There's a number of councils that meet for a two-day period so they have -- they have more leverage, more time to work with.

MS. HALL: Right. So the period -- depending on how -- for example, there was one council -- and I can't remember which one -- they met more frequently and they had 15 minutes for public comment, but then the ones that met over -- you know, for a longer period had 30 minutes
somewhere in that day of meetings.

MS. LaCORTE: Some used a whole hour, like a whole dinner period. They were really longer.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So the thought -- the initial thought was to have the public comment period in the morning so that the guests wouldn't necessarily have to stay for the entire meeting, and I think that's what the State Board does. I think their public comment period is like that, so we were just trying to align ourselves with what the Board does. I think that's what---

MS. HALL: What is their public comment period? Is it 15 minutes, 30 minutes in the amount of time? Do we know?

THE CHAIRMAN: No, I don't know that.

MS. HALL: There was one council that basically just said their policy was in line with the State Board of Education so it was, like, exactly like that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So that could be something we could check or that could be something that Katie would probably just know, like, right off the top of her head, and she could
share that with us. Once we submit, you know, our
draft to her, she should be able to answer that
question or give us suggestions or ideas. Mary?

    MS. LaCORTE: I think it may be
important too to distinguish the difference
between public comment policy and when we have
open -- we have guests here all the time who
participate freely and openly in the discussion.
I think it's important to distinguish.

    THE CHAIRMAN: And we talked about
that as well. That once we implement the public
comment period, then our meetings would have to be
adjusted so that we would not have that frequent
flow or frequent exchange because, you know---

    MS. LaCORTE: That's right.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: We would just have
to move to a more formal format for our meetings
once we implement this public comment period. So
we talked about that.

    MS. LaCORTE: Since we still have
guests, I thought it was important to say that.

    THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. We're going to
have -- we're going to have to make that
adjustment. Is that---

    MS. DANIELS-HALL: That was my
question.

THE CHAIRMAN: That was your question. Okay. So can I recap a little bit where we are, and I know you guys will correct me if I'm wrong.

MS. LaCORTE: Nicole, she had something.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes?

VISITOR: Then, I would rather not have the public comment because then -- during the time when you guys are having your discussion is a time when I think of things, and I wouldn't know it until the next three months to be able to say it. That doesn't mean I'm going to be here every time. I'm just -- I just think that this -- having the parents being able to say -- what you're discussion is part -- we feel like we're part of the group now, and then we would feel unwelcome if we weren't allowed to say anything at all during the meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN: You would not feel unwelcome.

VISITOR: And then my other comment was that you're going to have to figure out how many written questions you would do and how many
people you would have because if you go ahead and let five people speak, then you won't ever get to the written comments.

MS. HALL: They were -- basically the policy was that it was as they were submitted. So it was -- but you could determine that. That could be added into the policy. I think one of the challenges of making this transition is that we are moving to something more like Robert's Rules of Order, which is -- which is really required in a lot of ways. Certainly legislature has to use that. So -- committees have to use that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And we are to operate under the open public meeting law. So to a great extent, we really should be and do follow Robert's Rules. So, yes, when we make this transition, this meeting will become a lot more formalized. I don't know another way to say it. And we have to -- and we're going to have guests that -- and we want you to continue to come to the meetings, but again, the purpose of having the public comment was to provide access and a voice to people across the state.

Everyone needs to have the ability to
contribute or to communicate with this body, and so if that is the overarching goal, then we need to figure out, you know, how to get this done. And we've been talking about it for a while.

MS. HALL: If I might say too, this is just the tip. The Unmet Needs Committee needs to have a strategic plan going forward of how North Carolina residents as a whole, but particularly the stakeholders for our group, are able to make comment and participate. So some are able to participate by coming and listening, but most of the state is not able to do that.

So this goes beyond -- this is just the tip of getting policy in place so that then we can go to our parent councils, we can go to our EC directors, we can go to the public of North Carolina and solicit more voices, more input.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Right. And that goes back -- that's our number-one function that's listed not only in the bylaws but under IDEA, is that this body will advise the SEA of unmet needs. And so when first started having these conversations, you know, it was about how do we allow people in the western part of the state to communicate needs that are not being met or
matters that maybe should be addressed, how do
dthey communicate that information to this body,
and so we wanted to do that by having a public
comment period that consisted of in person, if
ythey could show up like our guests do, or via
e-mail or if they wanted to write.

And that's where -- that's where we
are. This isn't something -- and I know you guys
know it, but I'll just say it anyway. We're not
doing it just to be doing it; we're doing it to
carry out the functions that we are required to
do.

So those are three methods -- I think
those are the three methods. We have to decide --
let's look at them in that manner. Let's look at
in person, what are the outstanding questions that
need to be addressed; via e-mail, what needs to be
addressed; and via written response, what needs to
be addressed.

So in person, we set -- the question
is, do we just want to have it at the beginning of
the meeting, and do we want to put a word count --
I think Lisa said 120 words is one minute. So if
you're getting five minutes, that would be 60 --
600 words, if we want to put that at the
beginning. Any other outstanding for in-person public comment?

MS. SIMMONS: If it was me, I would want to know that you-all received my e-mail, that I am coming. Because if I'm coming, I have to plan ahead of time to leave school, take a day and go -- not now, but take a day and go to the meeting. And then I would hope it would be at the very beginning because the parking deck is very expensive. It was, like, $16 the last time I left for being there for a day meeting. So, you know, have it first thing so they can just pay the very beginning part of the parking.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now for me, that's two separate issues.

MS. SIMMONS: Okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: If you're going to come in person, then you're going to come in person, then you're going to come in person, and our policy is you're going to sign up on a sheet. So if you---

MS. SIMMONS: Okay. What if I'm number six, though, or number seven? Then, I have to turn around and go home.

MS. LaCORTE: We did talk about that,
Vicki. We were concerned about that we had our December meeting, and we haven't really played that all the way out in terms of -- because we wouldn't want someone to drive from Watauga or Buncombe County and get here and go, "I can't do this because too many have signed up." And that was a concern of ours that we had that we needed to come up with something to help to address the issue that you're bringing up.

MS. GEORGE: Well, maybe what we can do is [inaudible] e-mail and put you on a list, and we'll say you're this number on this list. Now if somebody does show -- you physically sign in like we do as council members. And like, okay, well, the first three people who are on the list didn't show up, because you'll have that happen too, but you're here so that moves you up to number -- you know, to higher up on the list, so you'd have a chance to speak.

MR. VOGLER: What if you broke it up into 15 minutes at the beginning and 15 minutes at the end? The end time is reserved for people who show up in person. The beginning time is when written comments are read if they've been received, and if there haven't been any received,
you would take the first few written -- first few
people who are in attendance physically. That
way, the same amount of time is available, but you
are still -- you are sort of overcoming that what
if people show up.

Because more than likely if you -- if
I was showing up somewhere and wanted to make
public comment, I would rather listen to
everything that was said and make public comment
at the end because sometimes what I'm going to
comment on may change during the course of the
meeting.

MS. McCOY: If I can make a comment?
THE CHAIRMAN: Uh-huh.

MS. McCOY: I think that's a good
idea, but one of the things that I know from
driving across this large state is, if you're
coming from one of the outer areas, it's a long
drive for 15 minutes at 4 o'clock or five minutes
at 4 o'clock and then I have a four-hour drive
back home.

So just kind of think about that
because you can be in one area of the state -- and
I've driven trying to do a professional
development and it took me six hours, and I'm
cramped up in the car because I was leaving for
the western part and going to the eastern part.
So just kind of also keep in mind the length of
time that your person is traveling.

MS. HALL: Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: I was just going to
say, Laura, maybe it's good we get all the
feedback and then take it back and then bring back
to the next meeting.

MS. HALL: Okay. I was going to ask
a question of the Council if I could as far as how
do you view the e-mail — what does that look
like---

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Are we ready to
move to e-mail now? Because we were doing in
person. Now let's get e-mail.

MS. HALL: Well, some of these
questions may be addressed if the e-mail can
address multiple needs, like a written comment
just — you know, not to be read at the meeting
but somebody who just wants to make a comment.

THE CHAIRMAN: And that was — and
that was the thought as well, that the e-mail
would be for someone who just wanted to say okay,
here's an unmet need, here's my experience, here's
a concern, or whatever, I'm sending it to the Council.

Now we're not -- and one of the recommendations or suggestions that I had was an auto response be sent back because we're not going to speak specifically to that person's issue. What we're going to say is, "Thank you. Your e-mail has been received. It will be -- it will be forwarded to the [whatever]. Have a great day."

We just need to have some type of response just so the person knows oh, yeah, okay, at least they got it, but we're not going to get into that back-and-forth or we don't want anyone to feel like we're providing them with any type of advice or -- you know, we're not doing all of that. It's just supposed to be a means for them to communicate with us.

Now the second part of that was that the Unmet Needs Committee would review the e-mails and kind of categorize them: We had six -- we had six e-mails from the western part of the state and they were talking about this or, you know, we received a lot of e-mails about seclusion and restraint or something like that, you know,
whatever it may be.

And then at that point, the Unmet Needs Committee could report that to the body for us to take into consideration, but that's as far as the e-mail was going to go. That was my understanding of how the e-mail would go.

MS. HALL: And I remember you saying that to us as a committee. So, again, do we want to tease this out a little bit as far as for public comment you have -- you have this -- you have these two areas. It's in person or written public comment that is submitted to something different other than the e-mail or the e-mail is used if that's what we want to do.

But there is also -- the e-mail is actually -- the e-mail is actually not a part of public comment policy for meetings is what I'm trying to say, is that---

MS. VIASATY: I think it is because I'm not going to handwrite or type up a letter if I'm a parent with a public concern. I'm going to go to the e-mail address and e-mail my written concern in. You know, I wouldn't, you know, put it in a letter form, put it in an envelope, and mail it. That's kind of a little antiquated,
so---

MS. HALL: So how do we instruct the public on how to use e-mail?

THE CHAIRPERSON: But wait. And I don't mean to cut you off, but while this is on my mind, we have to give the opportunity for people to write because not everybody has---

MS. VIASATY: Yeah. But it could be either/or, right?

THE CHAIRMAN: Right.

MS. VIASATY: That's what I'm saying. It could be both.

THE CHAIRMAN: It's either in person, e-mail it, or yeah, sit down and write a letter.

MS. VIASATY: Yeah, absolutely.

THE CHAIRMAN: And the letter -- we need to have an address. Maybe the address would be to the EC Division, and Tish could just kind of put them all in a pile or -- you know, and we'll go through them -- you know, the Executive Committee, when we talk or whatever, we could kind of go through them at that point. But I think a written letter in an envelope needs to be an option.

MS. VIASATY: Yeah, and I do too.
THE CHAIRMAN: And we could put a page limit on that as well. Do you want to say 600 words or two pages?

MS. PHILLIPS: It has to be whatever the time limit you're giving people to be consistent.

MS. HALL: Yeah, I think it's 600 words to be the same for e-mail and written. So it sounds like our committee needs to add a section on e-mail public comment, and I will tell you -- Mary, did you see any that actually had---

MS. LaCORTE: I think there were some.

MS. HALL: I think there was maybe one or two. So we'll have to go back and look at that, but that's---

THE CHAIRMAN: Try Maryland, I think.

MS. HALL: I didn't find Maryland's, but Mary, you did.

MR. CARPENTER: And we may be talking about something we don't have to worry about. There may be no comments. But you've -- you know, I'm not sure that it needs to be consistent, but just to -- if you've got a limit on the oral ones in place and you've got a word count on the ones
that you can do, how many -- how many are you
going to read? If you get 100 500- or 600-word
ones, would you read all 100 of them and would you
spend all your meeting talking about those?

It's probably not an issue that we'll
ever have because there may never be any comments,
but---

MS. LaCORTE: I think one part of
that question, we can ask the attorney as well to
find out if there's any restrictions for limiting
public comment and the difference between limiting
public comment to that 600 words to be read
because of the amount of time or if you -- if we
actually legally can require someone to limit just
their thoughts -- we may not have that much---

MR. CARPENTER: Because if I can't
get it in 600 words, I'll just send you another
one with 600 words.

MS. LaCORTE: Exactly. So, you know,
what could be read, we can, I think, clearly
establish that based on our time frames, but Katie
will probably be able to help us---

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MS. LaCORTE: ---if we can put a
governor on how long just a general -- someone's
general thoughts are.

MS. VIASATY: And you know what I want to add too is, I don't think we really need to, like, overanalyze this. There's so many -- you know, I mean I've spoken in front of the Wake County School Board as public comment, you know, and it would be really great if we ever ran into the problem that so many showed up that we didn't have time for them, but that might be a little, you know, overaggressive.

So we need to start somewhere, and I'm kind of concerned with okay, let's wait another 90 days to come back and talk about it at the next meeting. I think this is a really good outline right now, and I'm concerned kind of about the word count too. I'm a really fast talker, you know, so I might be able to get in a lot more words than someone, but then you're going to -- you know what I mean?

I think we're getting too nitty-gritty with word count, and then some of this too, written comment whether it's via postal or via e-mail, is the intent that the Council's going to discuss all these, or is it just for us to be aware of them, which is the other difference.
So people could come and talk and then we could have all these, but as a council body, are we going to talk about every single one that comes in?

MS. HALL: So our role would be to analyze trends so that the trends would come before the Council. So the Unmet Needs Committee would do that. The one thing I would say from some of my experience on councils, that we tried to implement a public policy. We had a particular issue. We ended up with 50 people there, and the foundational public comment policy was not strong enough to withstand that, and it caused -- it caused a lot of problems.

So while it seems that we're being nitpicky here, that's what were trying to avoid because the last thing you would want to cause is a lot of -- in such a passionate topic -- a lot of division amongst your council or other stakeholders.

MS. LaCORTE: We don't want to be unclear about our policy because we failed to address something. Not everything's going to be---

MS. GEORGE: I almost wonder maybe,
okay, in-person comment definitely has priority. We may or may not read written public comment or verbally at a meeting. However, the written public comment would be given to our council members and may be published somewhere for anyone in the public who wants to see. I don't know if that would be something we need to do or not to that extreme. But---

THE CHAIRMAN: For our purposes, again, let's just go back to what we're called to do. All right. Let's go back to our functions. We need to be able to advise the Board on unmet needs, and so this is a method of providing that advice. So what we want to do is what Laura said. We want to analyze what we have for trends. We're looking -- is there a particular issue going on in one part of the state, how can we support this particular LEA, is there an outcry about something from -- you know, that's what we're looking at. We're looking at the big picture.

So I don't think we would really want to get into, you know, publishing -- now, of course, all of this information is going to be maintained by the Division, so I think we'll always have access to it, but whether or not -- I
don't think it's something that we're going to publish.

MS. GEORGE: Even if it doesn't go as far as publishing it publicly, but a way to ensure that council members are aware of what comment was made or written.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The entire -- okay. So you've got to join a committee. So you might want to join the Unmet Needs Committee.

MS. HALL: If I could say something about that, this is really broad, and I don't know that we have anybody on the committee yet who knows how to capture data and put it in a program. That is -- I mean something is going to have to be inputted, you know, so I don't know where that's -- what program that's going to be, but we need -- we're going to need more people on the Unmet Needs Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we agree. We agree, and that's why the Unmet Needs Committee is the largest committee. Like, there was quite a few members on that for that reason, because we felt like they would need a lot of support. All of the new members need -- they have not signed up. So you'll need to sign up for one, and it
might need to be the Unmet Needs. I'm just saying.

MS. PHILLIPS: And we could use someone else, right, Dr. Carpenter?

THE CHAIRMAN: So in sum where we are right now -- but I do agree with you, Jennine, I don't think this needs to drag out, and the -- and the committee -- at that last meeting, they thought it would take, like, three months to get it done, and you guys really jumped in and got it done.

So what I'm hoping now and what we wanted to do today was give everybody the opportunity to kind of at least see what was being proposed and, you know, have that discussion. So if you could kind go back now and incorporate just a couple of those pieces that we've discussed, make sure that you guys are okay with it, and send it to the Executive Committee, and we'll take a look at it.

And what we may -- what we might can do is probably -- I don't know if we want to do another conference call or we might can arrange something. I don't think we need to wait until June to decide. We can send it out to the body,
if necessary, and vote on it that way.

After it comes to the Executive Committee, we're going to have to then turn it over to Katie and then Katie needs to sign off on it, and then if it's okay, we'll send it out to everybody and maybe vote on it at that time and so that we'll be ready when June comes. Does that sound like a good plan, Tish?

MS. BNUM: I just have a comment. As far as by 4:00 p.m., three business days prior, I think that looks good on paper. In reality, for people receiving them, reviewing them -- the Unmet Needs Committee receiving them, reviewing them, and able to report out to the Council, three days from then, I think that's a little too short.

MS. GEORGE: Especially for a volunteer council.

MS. HALL: A week, seven days?

MS. GEORGE: I'd say two weeks. For written comment, two weeks.

MS. PHILLIPS: Within 30 days -- business days, that allows for summer breaks and the time that Council's not meeting and things like that.

MS. HALL: So ten business days?
MS. PHILLIPS: 30.

MS. HALL: 30 business days. Okay.

MS. PHILLIPS: You also need to write "draft" on your papers, and then anything else that you submit, if you'll stamp -- write "draft" on it.

MS. LaCORTE: I also think that in keeping with the heart of our mission, [inaudible] about this is changing that first sentence -- we're not going to wordsmith now, but where it says "Public comments are a welcome and necessary part," I know I read that in somebody else's, but I would like us to change that to "essential part" because it's an essential part of the function. I think that speaks to not something we just have to do, but something we really embrace.


MS. BYNUM: I have one---

THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm sorry, Tish.

MS. BYNUM: And this is just a logistical piece to consider. For in-person public comment for the people walking in, let's say they want to hang out. The logistics for the food could -- it could---

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I don't think
we're necessarily required to feed them.

MS. BYNUM: Then, are you going to
tell them to leave?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, when the
Board -- when the Board breaks---

MS. BYNUM: Okay. Well, see, we're
not at that same location now. That's not how
it's going to roll out now.

THE CHAIRMAN: When the Board breaks
for lunch, they all go to the back. They all have
lunch. All of the guests, they go and have lunch
on their own, and then we reconvene at, you know,
whatever time they designate. So I'm thinking,
when it's time for lunch -- and especially since
we're now going to be in the boardroom. Do you
guys know that?

All right. We are done with Yonkers
Road.

MS. GEORGE: No more test kitchen.

THE CHAIRMAN: No more test---

MS. GEORGE: I love their deserts.

THE CHAIRMAN: I've said that to some
other people, and that's the first response that
I've gotten every single time. What about the
kitchen? What about the lunch?
So we're done with -- we're done with Yonkers Road. So in -- this is a huge effort being made by the Board to support the Council. They are pulling us into the fold, so to speak. So all future meetings will be held in the State Board of Ed conference room. We're going to be in the actual conference room with the galley for visitors to come. And we will have full access to agency staff. They're going to come -- they're going to try to attend some of our meetings.

We'll just be there in the midst of everything. We'll have access to the necessary, you know, technology. I think that was -- you know---

MS. LaCORTE: Where is that building?

THE CHAIRMAN: DPI.

MS. LaCORTE: The parking is so much easier.

MS. PHILLIPS: And cheaper.

THE CHAIRMAN: I know. I know. So starting in June, our meetings will be held at DPI in the State Boardroom. So when it's time for lunch -- so let's just say that the gallery is overflowing with visitors or guests, right? So when it's time for lunch, I assume we'll do as the
Board does, and we'll break and we'll go back -- there's a huge conference room. They all go back and have box lunches or whatever they do, and then they reconvene, you know. So visitors will have lunch on their own.

Now that's what I'm thinking. I don't think that we're obligated to feed the guests. I think that's been a courtesy, and that's another -- when we formalize this meeting, sorry, dudes.

MS. PHILLIPS: Well, there's always the legislative building.

VISITOR: And you-all have been very generous because I do go to a lot of these meetings, and---

(Interruption.)

VISITOR: So that's it in general. Just by making it more -- more structured, that will automatically take care of expectations for lunch and all of that other stuff.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. All right. A slight adjustment because we are going to get out of here on time, and it is 2:35. We'll continue to work with -- I have the Bylaws Committee. There was a draft of what's being proposed as far
as edits for the bylaws -- for the Council bylaws.

Is it okay if we give you the draft and then you
take the draft with you and review it and then
e-mail me any questions or comments or edits that
you would like to make? Would that work? Okay.

And---

MR. CARPENTER: If you could send it
electronically, it would be easy to do it.

THE CHAIRMAN: What's in the packet,
they are the actual bylaws. What Lisa's handing
out will be the draft -- what's being proposed.

And I think what we wanted to -- please write
"draft" on it, and I think what we wanted to do --
one of the things we wanted to do was to make sure
that we incorporate our committees in our bylaws.

What's happened in the past is that
we've put a lot of time and energy into forming
working committees or standing committee, and it
would fall by the wayside, and maybe like two or
three years later, we'd go right back to the
entire process of getting the committees in. That
was just one example.

The Policies and Procedures Committee
which Susan chairs, they worked on this, so I
think it was Katie Holler and Greg Singleton --
they were instrumental in pulling this together for us. So if you would just review those and then send me your comments or recommendations or suggestions, and we'll take that into consideration.

And, again, this document -- any changes to the bylaws, you know, it definitely has to go through Katie and it has to be approved by the Board. So we'll follow that same process. We'll make sure that she has an eye on it and she tells us what she thinks. We'll do that as well.

Okay. All right. And with that being done, we would like to finish our day by starting to frame our annual report, and it's very simple, and I'll have to communicate with the rest of the Council via e-mail as well because we're going to need information from them. The annual report should let the Board know all the work that we have done over the course of the year. All right. That's what it should be, and our reports in the past haven't necessarily been that. So this is going to be a little different for us.

So one of the things that I know I want to incorporate is, we need to let -- we need to let the Board know, you know, what is it
because -- especially those of us who have Board appointments and you may talk with your Board rep at some -- you know, at some point.

I try to let Kevin know, you know, when I can, but we need to let them know -- or I need to let Kevin know, "Hey, this is what I've done in the north central region --" or it used to be Region 3 -- "I have -- you know, I talked to my EC director. I attended our local parent support organization." So we need to know from you what, if anything, that you've done in your area to promote the work of the Council or to support parents and students in your area. That's the first thing.

The next thing we need to do is, we need to know if you represent -- if you currently or have represented the Council on any other committee. So if you are the Council rep on the School Mental Health Initiative -- if you're the Council rep, then let us know that and give us a blurb on what's been going on in that -- with that initiative, you know, what's been the hot topic -- you know, what's been the topic of discussion, and what are you taking away from that.

Another thing that this annual report
is going to do -- and you might see this a little bit -- it's time for this body to start being held accountable for the work that needs to be done in the areas, and I know we all get together and we do -- we do a lot. We haven't done a very good job of capturing what it is that we do, but now we definitely need to start doing that, and especially since the next step is to present the annual report to the Board. That's the next step.

The other councils are doing this already. Like, I've seen -- in the past year, I think I've seen the Advisory Council on Alien Affairs Report, like, twice. Yeah, they're on it, and so we need to be too. We need to be too.

Is there anything else that needs to be -- but we will definitely include the work that we've done around the whole policy thing. We want to let them know we've had call meetings. You know, we'll capture that, but any other information that you think probably should be incorporated, write that up, and send it to me in an e-mail as well.

And what we're going to do is, we're going to pull a draft together. The Executive Committee said we were going to work with Heather,
and Tish is going to pull a draft to frame it up, and then we'll send it out for your feedback, and we'll go from -- we'll go from there. Does that sound like a plan?

Can anybody think of anything else that needs to be incorporated? I've looked at some of the annual reports for the other states, and they seem to follow along those lines, but this is the time for you to rise and shine people. What have you done? Please don't record that.

MS. PHILLIPS: She said it's too late. I do think that's where the subcommittee report comes in, which leads us into the next section. So if you've been meeting, like the Unmet Needs Committee has been working on different documents, you need to be preparing this and providing it to us -- the Chair's handle it. And unfortunately I'm the only chair here.

So, anyway, those of you who are new, we have a subcommittee reporting form that needs to be completed each time you meet in your small group. Those, I guess -- would you like those sent directly to you and then included in the annual report?

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. Let me
check the list.

MS. PHILLIPS: Or would you like for me to take them?

THE CHAIRMAN: Reports and Data.

MS. PHILLIPS: You've got it. So just submit them to me, and I'll send out an e-mail to folks, and I'll condense them into the annual report since I'm also on the Executive Committee.

MS. HALL: Has that been sent electronically?

MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, it has. We can resend it. Tish, can you please send this form.

MS. BYNUM: No problem.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Okay. That's all we have for our subcommittee, and if you need a hard copy, I've got some with me today.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions, comments, or concerns? Tish? I'm sorry.

MS. BYNUM: I just need a question/clarification under the bylaws "E, Procedures, Number 3," what---

THE CHAIRMAN: The actual bylaws or the draft?
MS. BLYNUM: The draft. So you're wanting meeting minutes and -- in addition -- "In addition to minutes, all meetings of the Council will be recorded by electronic audio and a transcription copy of the minutes will be presented to each council member." So you're looking for meeting minutes and -- and a transcription. Can you distinguish the two for me?

THE CHAIRMAN: What section is that, Tish? I'm sorry.

MS. BLYNUM: E3.

MR. CARPENTER: I think you want the minutes, but the transcription is to -- if there are any clarifications, issues, concerns, that's the -- that's the backup for that. Personally I don't think we really want to get into providing the transcription to everybody.

MS. PHILLIPS: And I thought the purpose was for the EC Division to actually maintain---

MS. LaCORTE: I'm sorry? For the EC Division to?

MS. PHILLIPS: Maintain the recordings. In case there was a question that we
had about a year ago, that we could back and review.

THE CHAIRMAN: I honestly don't know. I didn't work on this, but I can ask for clarification. I think we just -- I think the intent was just to ensure that the---

MS. LaCORTE: Was this Katie's suggestion maybe?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, Susan and Katie and Greg.

MS. VIASATY: And I think it's just the verbiage. I think it should be a transcribed copy of the meeting because what you're doing is transcribing all of the comments during the meeting will be represented and prior to the vote on the minutes which are an abbreviated format.

I think that's what we talked about last -- last meeting was because there was some information that was left out of the minutes, and really official minutes aren't always a transcription of your meeting. It just captures your highlights. So they are actually two separate -- I don't think they should both be called minutes.

MS. LaCORTE: And I think that was
Katie Cornetto's suggestion to basically tape them.

MS. VIASATY: Yeah, a transcription of the meeting itself.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, and I think too -- I think that this draft was written prior to the decision maybe to relocate the meeting because I think that's the benefit of now being in the boardroom is that it's automatically -- will have the ability -- it will be digitally recorded, I think, is my understanding. So that might address some of this, but what you can do is just---

MS. BYNUM: It's on audio cassette tapes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just send me a -- I'll ask for clarification. How about that?

MS. OUZTS: Something to think about related to that too, Nicole, is if you want it broadcast or not because that will be a question from our IT, is do you want it broadcast live during the meeting or not. That's something that you guys need to decide.

MR. CARPENTER: Jennine's question -- I mean, Jennine, do you really want a written
transcription of an audio recording before you're going to approve the minutes?

    MS. VIASATY: No. I think it's just going to be saved and available and something that we can go back to.

    MR. CARPENTER: Okay. Okay.

    MS. VIASATY: Yeah, I'm not going to compare it.

    MR. CARPENTER: Yeah. Okay. And Tish is going to -- who's going to transcribe all that stuff? I mean there are programs to do that, but they're pretty expensive.

    THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know how the minutes were captured from that conference call, but I thought it was great.

    MS. BYNUM: Audio cassette.

    THE CHAIRMAN: And then you transcribed it?

    MS. BYNUM: Yes. And then I get to sit---

    THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, Tish.

    MR. VOGLER: How many hours was that?

    MS. BYNUM: Well, it took -- for the couple of hour meeting, it took about six hours because you have to stop, go back, stop, go back,
stop, go back, stop, go back. Then when you get
three or four people talking at the same time,
it's very difficult.

MR. CARPENTER: That never happens.

MS. BYNUM: Which is why I'm really
kind of honing in on this because of the logistics
of it.

MR. CARPENTER: I agree.

MR. VOGLER: According to the bylaws,
if we get to the point where we really have an
interpreter on-site doing sign language, you can't
have people talking at the same time. It has to
be---

MS. BYNUM: And we have had council
members that did require---

MR. VOGLER: It's hard for the people
doing sign to convey the---

MS. PHILLIPS: I was just thinking
too, you know, the attendance of membership has
not been as high as it's supposed to be. There
have been times we've been very concerned if we
had enough people for voting purposes. Would we
now be able to have a call-in feature for our
meetings?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should. I
think that's something that should be available.

MS. PHILLIPS: You can mute everyone.

No, I'm just kidding.

MS. OUZTS: The problem is with the platform that we use, it is problematic often.

MS. PHILLIPS: You're talking about the one that DPI uses?

MS. OUZTS: Uh-huh. I mean it's -- I think it's related to the Internet service and things within the building.

MR. VOGLER: It's state. Right across the street, ours is the same.

MS. OUZTS: You-all have the same problem? Oh, okay. That makes me feel better. But, like, everything was tested and then it just -- whatever happens throws things off, and it's really hard to save that meeting. And then if you have public people who were given that number, that's problematic because now if you change over to conference call or another -- how do you communicate it once it's already--- There's just a lot of issues. I'm not saying it can't be done, but it has problems with it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll ask, I mean, because there have been board meetings where board
members have participated by conference call, and
since we're in the room now, that may be an
option. We can ask.

MS. PHILLIPS: But I think it is
something for us to consider. I mean times are
changing. Technology's changing. And we need to
have that as an option for our board members
because if you think about who is supposed to be
here -- those that are supposed to be here and the
ones that are not are the ones who are typically
not able to make it.

MS. OUZTS: I think some of the
things to ask---

MS. PHILLIPS: Then you have people
driving eight hours to get to a meeting.

MS. OUZTS: And some of the things
with that that we need to ask is, like, on a
conference call in the room, how many -- what's
the capacity of doing that because I know that's
why we ended up going to Go To Meeting or Go To
Webinar. So that's something we can check on.

MS. PHILLIPS: Right. And it may be
that we just say that the Board itself -- those
appointed to the Board call in, and anybody else
who happens to participate, that being the general
public, then they can attend the meetings, but
that could affect---

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm glad you said that
because I was supposed to announce and I didn't.
I completely forgot. Dr. Pharr -- Martin Pharr on
the Council -- he missed the January meeting and
he's not here today. He has been, like, really,
really sick. He had some type of severe
respiratory infection that caused other problems.
And so he's back at work.

I just spoke with him, and he's back
at work, but I didn't even want to be on the phone
with him very long because you can hear -- so he
wanted us to know he has not abandoned the Council
or his responsibilities. He just has been really
sick. Any other?

MS. HALL: I just had a question
regarding the conference call. Do we have any
information on the other councils and whether
they -- like councils and whether they do this and
how they do this?

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know. I don't
have any of that information.

MS. PHILLIPS: Are you talking about
specifically EC councils for other states?
MS. HALL: Yes. I mean our counterparts in other states.

MS. OUZTS: We could check as to how they do it with the other advisory councils within the agency.

THE CHAIRMAN: If they allow conference calls or call-in participation. Now I will tell you this. I spoke to Katie before about members in attendance, and she was very clear that the expectation is that members will show up. We only meet four times a year, and so -- and that's when she encouraged us to really follow our attendance policies.

But I do understand sometimes things -- things happen and you do at least like to have the option. And we are, you know, at that point where technology is available and is utilized in other areas, and we're always talking about 21st century this, 21st century that. So---

MS. HALL: I was going to ask, can we -- could that be put in our bylaws like each member is allowed one call-in per year as a part of -- so that it's written into the bylaws so there's an encouragement still for you to be present, but there's an allowance for life.
THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So I'll make a note of that, but will you also e-mail me that as one of your suggestions for the bylaws -- review of the bylaws.

MR. CARPENTER: You mean if you call in twice, you're going to be -- you're going to get eliminated? I mean, what does that mean? If you didn't show up twice, I mean---

MS. HALL: I guess what I'm -- we currently have a bylaw that if you don't attend a certain number of meetings a year, then you're removed.

MR. CARPENTER: Have you ever done that?

MS. HALL: Well, that's a good question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, we have. We just did it.

MS. HALL: So it would be like -- it would be policies such as that.

MS. McCOY: And that's kind of consistent with some of the other councils and committees that I am on. You have a 75 percent rate that you have to be there, and you're allowed to miss one. But in that call-in, you also kind
of want to make sure that you have clear is this enough to meet the quorum, do you have to have an in-person quorum, or can that quorum also include a phone call, especially as you're looking at that making decisions. I'm sorry to add to it, but I'm just kind of thinking through that.

MS. LaCORTE: We're right in the middle of redoing our bylaws [inaudible] this discussions, and we really went a long way to describe what presence means -- to define what presence is and by what means you can be present.

MS. OUZTS: It does need to be clarified, though, so that as we're taking attendance, we know when, like, Nicole and I need to send out the attendance letters. I mean we need to be clear as to what counts.

MS. PHILLIPS: And that includes if someone covers for you because this is my program specialist. If I can't attend something, it's her responsibility to cover on my behalf. So even that is something to consider.

THE CHAIRMAN: Because she cannot vote.

MS. PHILLIPS: She cannot vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: Right. Katie was real
clear about that.

    MS. GEORGE: I don't have a coverage person that I can send in my stead either, you know, and if it's during the summer, I've got my kids so---

    MR. VOGLER: But that is a question. So for those of us that are ex officio, I looked and it wasn't spelled out. Typically if you're ex officio, you don't vote---

    THE CHAIRMAN: Right. And so---

    MS. VOGLER: ---but it just wasn't spelled out clearly. I wanted to make sure. I did raise my hand earlier. Whoops.

    THE CHAIRMAN: That's one of the questions or that's one of the discussions that we want to hold about the ex officio members having voting rights.

    MR. VOGLER: Typically we would not.

    THE CHAIRMAN: Right.

    MS. OUZTS: I think that would be something that Katie would know better.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. We're going to talk to her about that. This just keeps getting longer.

    MS. LaCORTE: So what is the
definition of quorum.

THE CHAIRMAN: Definition of quorum.

MS. LaCORTE: What is the definition of quorum. Does the definition include a representative of member.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anything---

MS. PHILLIPS: Well, and I think that also the difference may be because we are [inaudible] State Coordinator's Office -- she's State Coordinator's Office, so she may technically be allowed to vote on my behalf. I know. I'm just throwing it out there. I'd rather know than be uncertain. So it would be nice for Katie to clarify that because I'm appointed to be here. I don't get a choice. I can't miss ten meetings and get kicked off.

MS. McCOY: Just send your alternate that has voting privileges.

MS. PHILLIPS: Yes. Because I would prefer that she does because I do share with her the information. We are one.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. This is -- I know we're being silly now, but this is really good work and these are questions that we need to have answered and especially right now because we
are really at a turning point in this body. I think we're headed in a really, really good direction, and so we want to make sure, as Laura said earlier, that the foundation is in place for us to do the work. So I appreciate you. Thank you for staying and thank you for the discussion.

Is there anything else that we need to address?

MS. SIMMONS: I move that we adjourn.

THE CHAIRPERSON: If there are no more questions or concerns, is there a motion on the floor?

MS. PHILLIPS: I just want to point out that I think this is the first time in about two years, we've actually ended early. It's 3 o'clock.

THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, really. Oh, excellent.

MS. SIMMONS: I made a motion we adjourn. Nobody seconded.

MS. PHILLIPS: I'll second it.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We are adjourned.

(At 3:01 p.m., the quarterly meeting was adjourned.)
CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, REBECCA P. SCOTT, State-Certified Verbatim Reporter and Notary Public, duly appointed and qualified in and for the State of North Carolina at large, do hereby certify:

That said proceeding was reported by me and the foregoing pages, numbered 4 through 195, are a true record of the proceeding to the best of my knowledge and belief;

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

Certified this 17th day of April, 2016.

Rebecca P. Scott

Notary Number: 19940530133