The quarterly meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children was held on the 8th day of June, 2016, in the State Board of Education Board Room, Education Building, 301 North Wilmington Street, Raleigh, North Carolina, commencing at 9:41 a.m.
APPEARANCES

COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Nicole Jimerson, Chairperson
Dale Carpenter
Cynthia Daniels-Hall
Leanna George
Jennifer Grady
Laura Hall
Mary LaCorte
Teresa Mebane
Lisa Phillips
Elena Roberts
Vicki Simmons
Greg Singleton
Gina Smith
Rick Smith
Jennine Vlasaty
Jason Vogler

STAFF:

Tish Bynum
Carol Ann Hudgens
William Hussey
Heather Ouzts
Heather Reynolds

VISITORS:

Eric Hall
Adam Johnson

COURT REPORTER:

Rebecca P. Scott

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INDEX

Page No.

1. Call to Order................................... 6
2. Introductions................................... 6
3. Review of Agenda.............................. 8
4. Review of Meeting Minutes....................... 10
5. Specific Learning Disabilities -- Response to Council's Questions by Bill Hussey............. 14
6. SSIP -- Next Phase presentation by Heather Reynolds........................................... 59
7. Parent Handbook Update presentation by Heather Ouzts...................................... 92
8. Agency Updates.................................. 100
9. Lunch Recess.................................... 116
10. Agency Updates (continuing)..................... 116
11. Review of Meeting Minutes....................... 158
12. Nominate/Vote for Council Chairperson........... 173
13. Recognition of Chairperson Nicole Jimerson...... 180
14. Public Comment update by Laura Hall............. 182
15. Council Bylaws update........................... 230
16. Summarizing Annual Report....................... 255
17. Meeting Adjournment............................. 267
18. Certificate of Reporter......................... 268

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Thereupon, the following proceeding was held:

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you this morning -- this is Wednesday, June the 8th -- to our quarterly meeting, the meeting of the Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children. This is our final meeting for this academic year, as many of us are wrapping up in our schools and preparing -- well, some of us will get to have a summer vacation and some of us will be back at it in a few days. But welcome. Thank you so much for being here this morning.

    We just have a couple of items that we want to -- a couple of reminders for everyone because this is new for us. We're here in the State Board of Ed meeting room, and so there are just a couple of housekeeping items, again, because this is so very new and so very different.

    Number one is, we want to remind everyone to please, when you speak, to speak directly into the microphone, and that's because these meetings are audio-streamed. I'm not sure if that information went out with your agenda and your other documents, but all meetings held here now will be audio-streamed, which means people can
go online and listen to -- listen in to our meetings. So that, then, I also remind you that the mikes are hot, so we want to be mindful of our conversations. Everything is being heard.

Secondly, once you fill out -- we still need for you to fill out your transportation reimbursement forms. Tish has those. The thing that's different about this, this time is now, when you're leaving, you're paying for parking as you exit. So if you would mail in the actual ticket, the receipt. They need the original hard copy. So if you'll forward that to the Division, and then you will also be reimbursed for that.

Another change for us or a point that's new for us is, Council Members will absolutely have the ability to call in to participate now for discussion, to vote, to listen to the meetings. So that is an option that you will have, and going forward, they will -- your leadership will work with the Division in order to make sure that you have that information ahead of time.

Now I do want to remind everyone that the expectation is you physically attend these meetings. We met quarterly. There are four
meetings a year, and there are -- we will still follow our attendance guidelines as outlined in our bylaws. So the expectation is that you be here, but life happens, all right, and so at least now you have a method -- an alternative method to participate. And I think that's all I have as far as housekeeping is concerned.

Again, welcome and thank you so much for being here. I would like to call to order our quarterly meeting, and if we could begin with introductions. We're right on time. It's 9:45. If we could begin with introductions. I'll start, and if you would just give us your name and the area that you represent.

So my name is--- Did I really look on the paper to see what my name was? Really? Did I really look down for that? My name is Nicole Jimerson. I am a parent representative, and I represent the North Central Region, what used to be Region 3.

MS. SIMMONS: Hi. My name is Vicki Simmons. I'm an adapted PE teacher in Guilford County Schools. I represent the Piedmont Triad, Region 5.

DR. CARPENTER: I'm Dale Carpenter.
I'm the IHE representative. I represent Region 8.

MR. SINGLETON: I'm Greg Singleton.

I represent the Northeast Region, Region 1.

MR. SMITH: Yes. I'm Rick Smith and

I represent the North Carolina Department of
Public Safety. And today with me, I brought a
visitor Mr. Adam Johnson. He is our new Director
of Exceptional Children's Program for the
Department of Public Safety.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Welcome.

MS. HALL: I'm Laura Hall. I
represent Region 6 and live in Mooresville, North
Carolina, and I'm a parent representative.

MS. GEORGE: I'm Leanna George. I'm
from Johnston County, North Carolina, Region 3,
and I'm a parent.

MR. HUSSEY: Bill Hussey, EC Division
Director.

MS. OUZTS: Heather Oufts. I'm
Parent Liaison for the EC Division.

MS. HUDGENS: Carol Ann Hudgens,
Section Chief for Policy, Monitoring, and Audit.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: Cynthia Daniels-
Hall, a parent representative for Region 3, the
North Central Region.
MS. SMITH: I'm Gina Smith, and I represent Region 6, the Southwest Region.

MS. ROBERTS: I'm Elena Roberts. I represent Region 4, the Sandhills.

MR. VOGLER: Jason Vogler. I'm the Assistant Director of the North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services.

MS. MEBANE: I'm Teresa Mebane, and I am from the Southeast Region, Region 2, and I'm also a parent.

MS. PHILLIPS: And I am Lisa Phillips. I'm the State Coordinator for the North Carolina Homeless Education Program, which is part of the Department of Public Instruction's Federal Program Monitoring and Support Division.

MS. GRADY: I am Jennifer Grady. I am a trade rep and I work for Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, and I am also a parent.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent. Thank you again.

All right. If we could just take a look at our agenda that we have for today, and for our visitors and just for reference, our meetings are generally formatted to presentations in the
morning -- in the mornings, whether it's a presentation regarding a topic maybe from the indicators of -- a review of one of indicators from the State Performance Plan or if there has been a request to cover a specific topic such as testing of kids with significant cognitive disabilities or what have you.

We generally have presentations of some sort in the morning with lunch, and following launch in the afternoon, those are our work sessions where we break out into committees and we do committee work. And then we reconvene to adjourn.

Today what we will do -- it's still very similar; however, it's what we'd describe as an extended agency report of sorts, whereas Bill and his team will provide us with -- because there's a lot going on and they're going to provide us with quite a few updates, and we'll talk about the next phase of the SSIP as well as updates regarding what's happening with the Parent Handbook. Again, we'll have lunch, and following lunch, you guys will nominate and vote for a new Council chairperson, and we will review our public comment and bylaws.
What I would like to ask of the group is, the agenda -- and we didn't catch that until this morning -- it reads that the meeting was going to be from 9:30 until 4 o'clock. Our meetings usually run from 9:30 until 3:30, and I've already been approached since I arrived about the possibility of us adjourning at 9:30 [sic] primarily because there's some other things happening over in the area.

So some of the members would like to attend some the other activities here and the fact that this will be the first time for several of us who drove in to actually have to drive out, and so we'd like to get a head start. Vicki wants to get a head start on her half-hour walk back to her car. So we will look to make some adjustments to our afternoon session. So after lunch we'll touch base again to see how the time needs to be adjusted if that is -- if that's okay with everyone here. So I think there needs to be a motion.

MS. ROBERTS: I would make a motion to adjourn early in the afternoon.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Excellent.

Finally I would draw your attention to the minutes
from the last meeting. All right. So what was
e-mailed to everyone was an actual -- was the
transcript. Did you guys -- did you get this?

(Multiple affirmative responses.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So

there's going to have to be some discussion about
this. You, along with your new leadership team,
will have to decide what happens with this

transcript. It turned out to be 196. So there.

So that is not included in your

packet today that you have. What you have today

is a Summary of Actions, and this is on the --

what color is this?

MS. BYNUM: Buff.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Buff. Thank you.

It's on the buff colored paper here. So if
everyone could just, I guess, take a minute. Now
this is a little -- this is going to be different

as well because we need to review and vote on the

minutes from the meeting, and is this what we're
going to use?

MR. HUSSEY: I think that's going to

be a decision you-all need to make. I mean I

think we moved to the transcript piece so now we

have---
THE CHAIRPERSON: A summary?

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. I mean that's what this really is. What you've got is every other word that ever got spoken in that transcript. So I mean I think we just -- I think you-all need to -- that was -- that's what -- at least that's where I thought we were going, but that's going to be you-all's decision about how you want that done.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. All right. So for today, that will be what we'll -- that's how we'll move forward. If everyone now could just review the summary.

(Council Members reviewed Summary of Actions.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: I'll open up the floor for discussion on the summary. Being none, is there a motion?

MS. HALL: I motion to approve the Summary of Actions as the minutes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: A motion has been made by Laura Hall to accept the Summary of Actions for the minutes.

MS. MEBANE: I second.

THE CHAIRPERSON: It has been
seconded by Teresa Mebane.

MR. SINGLETON: Madam Chair, I was absent on March 18th, so I request to be excused from the vote and excused from -- I was not here.

MS. ROBERTS: Likewise, I was not here.

MS. SMITH: And neither was I.

MR. SMITH: Neither was I.

THE COURT REPORTER: You-all need to make sure I can tell who is saying what. I can't see that far to see your names.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we have Greg Singleton, Rickey Smith, Elena Roberts, and Gina Smith.

MS. GRADY: I wasn't there either.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And Jennifer Grady. They all -- they were not in attendance and have asked to abstain from the vote, which destroys our quorum. Congratulations. No, I'm just teasing. All right. So, then, what we will need to do, then, at this time, since we do not have a quorum to vote and approve the minutes, we will revisit that this afternoon in the afternoon session. So hopefully additional members will come in and we'll be able to get that taken care of.
Right now, you'll see on your agenda that it calls for public comments, and this public comments section or time period is a time period that we have designated to receive public comments from the public. We have been working for some time now to develop those -- the guidelines and to have them incorporated into the bylaws.

We are still tweaking, we're still working, but I'm pretty sure that we'll be able to get that done relatively -- relatively soon. So it remains on the agenda as a placeholder and a gentle reminder for us that going forth, we will have a public comment designated time.

And so actually we have now -- we're ahead of the game a little bit. Bill, are you ready to do this piece or do you want us to---

MR. HUSSEY: I am ready to answer questions. I mean my understanding was that we're going to -- based on the data -- I feel like I'm back at the board meeting. I do this all the time. I know this is new for you-all, but---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Second nature?

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. Yeah. So I'm ready to move forward with answering any questions people have regarding the SLD policy.
THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we didn't -- well, it's not in the packet, but it was e-mailed---

MR. HUSSEY: Right.

THE CHAIRPERSON: ---I think -- last June, I think it was, when we started those discussions about the SLD policy. The Council presented the Division with a list of questions. Do you at least remember receiving them in the e-mail last week?

(Multiple affirmative responses.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: So there was a list of about 30 -- 30 questions that we presented to the Division regarding some specifics, and we did finally receive the response back from the Division, but included in that response was a massive document.

MR. HUSSEY: We gave you pretty much all the data you could ever want to see.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Right. All the data. Right. And so I think today we really only wanted to go back and -- we just wanted to review the questions specific to the data, and again, it could just be asked and answered---

Okay. So a couple of the questions
did say, "Refer to -- refer to Attachment A," and
Attachment A was that massive document.

MR. HUSSEY: Right.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And so I guess the
hope was that you would be able to provide just a
summary, and I think that's what I shared with you
during our last conversation. Just a summary.
The question actually was where the highest
concentrations of LD kids are in North Carolina,
and it does just say, "See Attachment A," but is
that information that you have?

MR. HUSSEY: Yes. I mean I think the
highest concentrations are going to be in the
largest districts. And so as you move -- but
let's go back and start and say that it is the
largest population of children within the
Exceptional Children's group, so the 14 different
categories, and -- but as we get into
concentrations, you're going to find them in Wake
County and Charlotte-Meck and Winston-Salem and
Greensboro, so the largest numbers of children
there.

And we average -- just so you have a
sense. Wake County has basically 20,000 EC kids,
so when we think about -- and you guys are about
16 or 17,000---

   MS. SMITH: 14.

   MR. HUSSEY: 14. 14,000. So when you're looking at those numbers, LD represents somewhere between, in the population, anywhere from about 25 percent to about 40 percent of the population depending on where you are and what we're looking at. So it's -- so that's kind of where we are with that. I mean it is the predominant identification throughout the state.

   THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. And so the same for the next question -- and you did provide some information in the charts, but the next question was regarding the students identified at the secondary level, and that data is not available, but in the future going forward, you said that it will be -- will be switching to a different system.

   MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. Right now through CECAS, we can't pull the information on that as cleanly as we'd like, but as we move into the ECATS piece, which is part of my update as we move forward, we will be able to pull that information. The other piece of information just for your knowledge is, right now, if you ask a question

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about OCS, I have to go to every single LEA in the
state to draw that information. That information
will be in the new system. So there just --
historically we've not had that data available in
a way that we would like.

But, again, when you think about
secondary, very seldom do we get -- children are
identified primarily by the third, fourth grade,
and the LD population, based on the old way, it
was really -- we never really identified them much
until the third grade because what you had there
was a discrepancy -- it was developmentally an
issue that we had to wait until the children's
achievement dropped 15 points below their IQ
score.

And so that was one of the issues
that we talked about in the process of changing
the definition, was that a lot of times, we were
having to wait for children to fail before we
could actually identify them, and one of the
reasons why we wanted to move to the other system
was to be able to have, you know, more
intervention earlier.

So, again, third grade -- from there
forward is where we identified, but once you get
to high school and really into middle school, it precipitously drops, the number of children identified. So we're identifying most of the kids pretty much as they come over pre-K into kindergarten, the ones that we already know that are designated as developmentally delayed, and then the other part of the population -- the LD part of the population picks up at about third grade and really pretty much third grade to middle school, and then the kids drop pretty significantly after that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So, then, that did address the OCS question, and that was, I think, a explanation or a great explanation for question number 6 regarding the graduation -- graduation rates for kids with -- kids with LD. Was that something that -- I can't remember. So if somebody could help refresh my memory. Was that something that we reviewed during the last review of the State Performance Plan? Did we have -- did we set that target?

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah, the SPPAPR, and that's also our SIMR. So for our State Systemic Improvement Plan, our measure -- the measure we're using to actually look at for progress is in our
graduation rate, and basically at this point in time, I think this year is 69. We were at 67 last year when we started in our graduation rate, and we're trying -- our SIMR we're moving to in the five-year period to 78 percent. So we're trying to approximate the 80 percent, which is what is considered to be the goal, and in five years, we should be close to that 78 percent.

So, again, we'll talk a little bit about that in the upcoming presentation, but that is kind of where we're moving. We had good progress over the last two years, and we've been making progress. But what we wanted to do in the original part was to close the gap because as we're making progress, so is everyone else, and so we're not catching them this way.

But the feds wouldn't allow us to -- we just had to set a goal and go for it. We couldn't set a goal of closing the gap; we had to actually set a percentage. So that's what we ended up doing, was setting one, and we can, at any point in time, come back and show you that chart because we have that chart of our progressive steps forward over the next five years.
THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Are there any other questions?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.

MR. HUSSEY: Well, let me just give you a little beyond that. So we are moving forward obviously as the definition was passed and the change in policy was made. We will, this coming year, be working with school districts across the state trying to help them understand what needs to happen in the context of that change in policy, what it means. We're in the throws of MTSS, and that's part of my update which I'll talk to you a little more about, but in the third part -- the third module of that training in MTSS is where we get to the definition piece.

So we are doing -- there will be multiple sets of training around the SLD both through the MTSS process and then what Lynn and other folks will be doing across the state with EC directors and with folks within districts trying to focus on what's happening with just the process because this is a big change from everybody, going from a well-understood traditional process to one that's different.
And so we'll be working -- we want to work with directors, and then we want to work inside of the director network with that group of people who are going to be focused on Specific Learning Disabilities and working with them to understand the process so that they're helping teachers and helping school officials work through that process.

So I didn't know whether that was -- I just wanted to make sure you-all knew where -- we had continued steps moving forward, that it wasn't we passed the policy and now we're moving on, but we've got to -- obviously got to do training this year to make sure we're out in front of that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And so, then, regarding the training with the other people, so working with the EC directors and that group. Again, could you speak to members -- members of the general ed population? Will these teams have -- who forms these teams within the district? Because that was always the -- was the concern, was that most of the work is going to have to be done by gen ed. We would really need for them to step up to the plate and to make sure that these
interventions are being implemented and that the documentation is being maintained.

But we have -- we as special educators have the expertise, I guess, so to say -- so to speak. So just any information about how are you working with these teams, who makes up the teams, you know, that you'll be training?

MR. HUSSEY: The MTSS teams are the regular ed side of that process, and so what's happening right now, the first two cohorts were rolled out this year. So Cohort 1 started in August. Cohort 2 started in January. Cohorts 3 and 4 have been identified and information has been sent, so Cohort 3 will start in August and Cohort 4 in January.

At that point, we're 97 percent through the regular, so there's obviously going to be a Cohort 5 because we didn't get all 100 percent and they all have to participate, but we do have 97 percent of the regular LEAs and a large number of the charters. So Cohort 5 is going to be made up of the rest of the charters and the remaining three percent of the LEAs.

What happens is, we've got regional people. Initially, the MTSS team was the director
and four individuals. We moved four people out of
the special ed group into the MTSS team to give
them aid and to also make sure that we were
covering not only the academics but the behavioral
component through PBIS. So we gave them that
support network.

Those eight people by region are
developing regional teams, and the regional
teams -- inside of those regional teams are
representatives of every LEA district team, and
then the district team help support school-based
teams as it goes down. So there's an
infrastructure there. We are using implementation
science in the context of how we are rolling
things out.

So we've got a very well-defined
plan, and that process is underway. Like I said,
it starts at the district, goes from the district
to the LEA, from the LEA to schools, and goes --
so it goes that way. So those teams are being
developed, they're being looked at, they're being
reviewed. There's ongoing training face-to-face
as well as online training in trying to make sure
that there's always access. The online training
is facilitated. So it's not something you can
just go out and do, but it's facilitated by the team. So there's a way of accountability and feedback in that part to make sure that people are going through it and getting the information.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Greg?

MR. SINGLETON: Bill, I have a question---

MR. HUSSEY: Sure.

MR. SINGLETON: ---about the information you provided. My question is, can you show us what the driving force is behind the increase in graduation rates for exceptional children?

MR. HUSSEY: Well, I think -- that's a good question, and I wish I had the -- I'd like to have that nugget in my hand that we could say it was because of this, but really, I think it's the overall processes that are in place moving forward. I think it does show collaboration between special ed and regular ed. It does -- we are nowhere near where we want to be, but that is moving forward and that communication is going back and forth.

I think what we've done through our SSIP, State Systemic Improvement Project, which is
to increase both Reading and Math Foundations to
teach teachers what the conceptual framework is
around learning reading and learning math, has
been significant, and we are moving teachers
through that in significant ways. This year, in
particular, we're going back and redoing both of
those and certifying all of our trainers, having
them go back through to become trainers again but
with the updated information.

We're also then going to take that
out and build coaching collaboratives through
demonstration sites and start to work with more
and more -- my challenge to them was how do we do
what the federal government is asking us to do but
also get down on the ground and get infrastructure
out in the LEAs to support that, and they done a
nice job of turning that around.

I think what we've done to help
support regular ed teachers through that
process -- because we teach about as many regular
ed teachers as we do special ed teachers in both
the Math and the Reading Foundations, and I truly
believe that as they begin to understand what we
do in specially designed instruction and what
happens in the way of intervention and they begin
to translate that back to content, we're making --
we're making progress.

   But, like I said, you know, if you
look at our proficiency rates, they still stink,
and you know, we still have to work on that and
try to do something with that to make it better.
But obviously we were growing these kids from a
skill perspective, and that's showing up in the
graduation rate.

   MS. SMITH: Is it appropriate for me
to add something to that, Bill? Is it appropriate
for me to add something to that?

   MR. HUSSEY: It's more than
appropriate if you'd like to speak, yes.

   MS. SMITH: Because in Charlotte, our
graduation rates made a jump that our new
accountability officer said, "Okay. So what's the
story here? You know, how did this happen?" And
it really was a cross-functional effort deeper
than even what Bill shared between EC teachers at
the high school, counselors at the high school, an
administrator from each of the high schools and
even our Partners in English Language Learning.

   So they -- this summer, they'll go
through all of our high school -- all of our EC
high school students' transcripts, IEPs, and
schedules, and they'll make sure that the kids
have the classes that they need and that they get
scheduled first and that there is somebody who's
responsible for just making sure that all of that
tracks.

And then we'll go back -- whatever we
find that needs to be changed, that's all
recorded, given to the principal and counselor at
that school. We go back about the middle of
September and check to be sure that that happened,
and if it didn't happen, then we go back to the
principal and say, "We've got to get these
schedules right."

So I think when we expected something
different in terms of how our students got classes
and were able to move through that, we got a
really nice result from that, and it also built
relationships with counselors that we hadn't
necessarily had in that way before. So I think
for us it was that -- being really intentional
about what it takes for a student with a
disability to graduate and making sure they get
that.

MR. HUSSEY: I'm going to jump from
there.

MS. SMITH: Sure. Absolutely.

MR. HUSSEY: Because I didn't how much detail you want. Our SIMR where we're going with that, we're looking at three buckets to improve graduation rates, and the three buckets have to do with academics, which is kind of what I was talking about more than anything else, and the behavior component, but then engagement and transition.

And engagement and transition is that. And, you know, in my own district, before I became a director here, we had something we called a five-year plan, and we started in middle school mapping out the entire schedule of every EC student all the way through high school. Two things happened there -- and I think we're pushing from our end on that piece now -- is trying to help parents buy in to what needs to happen for their child so that when their child who wants to be just like everybody else in high school says, "I don't want to take that course. I don't want to do that intervention to help do that," but then to also make sure that we've got that child in as many intervention opportunities as possible for
Algebra I or Math I now -- and I'll speak to why we don't want to call it Algebra I ever again based on a law over there right now -- but Math I and English I because you want to make sure -- you want to look at every one of those records.

You want to make sure that you understand that kid's four years behind in math, and if you try -- if you stick him in Math I and he fails two times, three times, you're pretty much done with that kid and that kid is done with you whether -- that's not what anybody wants, but that's the reality of what happens.

And so we've got to make sure that we structure intervention for those children in a way that supports step-by-step progression, and a lot of times not having kids get into Math I until the second semester of their sophomore year, meaning they had multiple sets of intervention prior to that point, that piece is going to make the difference. We can focus on the academics and we can focus on the behavior, and those things are going to be significant, but it is that engagement both with parents and the child and having them understand.

And we're pushing -- intervention has
always been -- or transition has always been
postsecondary from the special ed world. That's
always been what we've talked about. We're
talking now from preschool to kindergarten, third
grade, fifth grade, eighth grade. We've got to
have structured intervention around what
transition looks like and how we do it and what
makes sense.

I mean, if you think about it, it's
got to be that far back so that we work with
what's happening with those kids so that it makes
sense at each of those development levels, as we
make those changes, why we do what we do. Right
now, we just do something. I mean write it in the
IEP, and we do it because we've done it that way
for years. We've really got to look at it. Her
word is perfect. It's intentional. It has to be
intentional and it has to move forward.

So we think we're going to jump right
by our 78 percent. I think our graduation rate
will improve more than what we put it down as, but
it really is that work and then, you know, that
whole communication with regular ed. So I'm glad
she spoke -- allowed me to give you more detail.
I didn't know how much you wanted, but what Gina
said is absolutely correct. And the schools are really -- I mean people are paying attention now, and it's really making a difference.

So we did a Cohort 1. It's nice to be fed information. We did a Cohort 1. In our first year of the SSIP project, we actually went out and, with a rubric, we picked school districts that we really saw were successful in one of those three buckets I mentioned: behavior, academics, this transition component, and what Heather just said, the other things that were going on there that she's talking about now -- that Gina's talking about now are decision-based decision-making -- database decision-making, I mean, use of teams. We were already using teams, that communication and collaboration and coaching in some way, shape, or form.

So what we found in that Cohort 1 group that's continued to be successful -- so we brought them out to take a look at them, and they continue -- their graduation rates are going up and they're going up faster than the state rates are. And, again, these are the four things that they're doing. We had focused -- we had two -- three in transition or three in academics?
MS. HUDGENS: Three in academics, three in transition, and two in behavior.

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. So out of our eight, we had three and three and two -- academics and behavior and then transition -- two in transition or three -- two in behavior. So -- but these are the common factors that they're all -- that every one of them has. So that's probably more than you wanted to know. Yeah?

MS. HALL: Can I ask a question? I missed something. You talked about focusing on database decisions, teams, something, and then coaching. What was that?

MR. HUSSEY: Communication and collaboration so that the whole thing is working with the regular ed programs, going in -- one of the things she said is having -- at the high school -- and, Nicole, you know this because you work in high schools -- if you don't -- if you don't plan and schedule for your EC populations first, then it doesn't work, and you've got to go into that building and schedule those kids in first, get them into their classes, and that way, you've got -- you've got an opportunity to actually have inclusion.
You have an opportunity to make sure that your pullouts are there so that whatever intervention pieces can be concurrent with what their academic needs are so that if they're in Math I, they've got a Math I intervention going at the same time to support them with a way to do that. But you've got to do that first, and it seems like such a simple thing, but it really is hard.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But it really is not, is it?

MR. HUSSEY: No. And it's hard to get principals to understand why, but it makes it so much easier if you do. Again, just being an administrator, we ended -- we tried to get them to do it. They didn't. So a person from my team and myself went to every high school in my county -- and, of course, I didn't -- couldn't come close to what they have, but you know, we went in every one of them, sat down, and basically scheduled their high school EC schedules for them because that's what we needed to do because they weren't doing it right. And once we got somebody trained in the building and they'd go on and do it, it was amazing how quickly it went and how successful
those kids were.

MS. HALL: So is that one specific step now being taken throughout the four cohorts that are in?

MR. HUSSEY: Well, most of these guys are doing some of that. One of these is Wake County, so I can't speak for that across all the schools. But I mean, again, where we're seeing work happening, a good number of those schools are doing that. Yeah?

MS. ROBERTS: You talked about in high school that they're scheduling the EC kids. What about middle school; is that a similar model? Is that being encouraged as well?

MR. HUSSEY: Well, the transition has to occur there. The way those things are scheduled are different because you don't have your independent courses. You've got -- you know, you've got periods and you've got math and English and social studies and science and things going on.

What really happens in middle school more times than not is that a child who's in a pull-out situation is actually having to be removed from some time frame -- because of the
schedule not being as flexible as high school
is, you actually have them pulled out of some part
of their academic day to get that resource
support.

MS. ROBERTS: What we're typically
seeing -- what we're typically seeing is that
they're pulling them from the electives and
related arts, gym, PE, you know. So a lot of
these EC kids aren't participating the same as
their nondisabled peers. So that's why I was
curious.

MR. HUSSEY: And that shouldn't --
so, again, that's one of those things that
district by district people will have to deal with
that. I mean they make some changes inside
building level with the administrators, but again,
EC directors have different levels of
communication and ability to go into a building.

We talked often to them about, you
know, parity there. I mean that's -- you've got
to do something different than that. You can't
exclude those kids from all of those elective
courses which they would a lot of times find
successful, and it's one of those few places that
they may be successful. And so if you just don't
allow them to participate in that, then it doesn't work.

But that's a building-level decision, and so the EC directors are having to push in and talk to them about that as they move forward, and again, that's an issue.

MS. ROBERTS: It's not exactly a related question, but so one of the things you talked about was engagement from the parent and the child. I know what everybody else's experience is, but as a part and as somebody who helps parents with the school districts and getting services for their children, what I see is there's a breakdown in trust particularly by the time you get to middle and high school. By that point, the parents don't trust the administrators or the school staff.

And so how do you overcome that? Because you've had years of being told that they can't do this or they can't do that or the school -- our policy says we can't do that or either there's no policy, I mean, and that's pretty widespread. I've seen that not only in North Carolina, I've seen it in Virginia, DC, and Nevada.
So this is a pretty common thing, and what we often also see is the blaming of the child where it's -- you know, as opposed to looking at the techniques for instruction or methodology, it's the child's fault somehow, some way.

So in terms of that engagement, do you have plans to sort of address those recurring issues?

MR. HUSSEY: That's kind of the reason we hired this lady right here. I mean seriously we want -- we want more special education PTAs. We want more parent advisory groups. We need to have a parent voice in every district that basically says what you're saying, and what does that in the context of how we make change. So it's got to be a voice that can be heard, help move things forward, but at the same time, working with the system.

I'll give my own example again. When I first moved into Alamance, one of the things I did was changed the autism classroom structure which went over like a lead balloon. You know, people didn't like what I did. Basically what I did was I regionalized it. We had two different kinds of settings set across the district, and
kids were traveling all over everywhere. So we
created a different system that ended up being
liked, but it wasn't liked by the initial group.
So the initial group, one of them ran for the
school board and basically had me fired.

So one of the things we did was to
work through our family group to include these
guys and bring them in, and he actually -- I just
read my little book yesterday. By some chance, I
picked it up. They gave me a book when I left,
and basically this guy became a very real partner
of mine in how we did what we needed to do to move
things forward. You know, it was never personal
on my part, but it appeared to be, and once we
were able to kind of work through that and work
around that element of trust, we were able to make
a difference.

And so I truly think the more we can
get parent groups working within districts to be
working with the system -- you know, Heather was
also -- you know, I stole her and brought her up,
and she worked with me down there. She can
attest -- I mean we didn't always see eye to eye,
but we had to work through stuff, and you know, we
had an open group where people could pretty much
argue what they needed to say and do. I think in
the end -- you know, again, I think that built the
trust, and I think that's the important part.

So I do think those things can
happen, and I do think it's possible and that is
why we hired Heather to start working on trying to
develop more of those relationships and more of
those organizational structures in the districts
to do just that because I agree with you. Lots of
you-all don't know, but I'm one -- I was chair of
Families Can. My daughter was traumatized in the
ninth grade in a very significant assault, and I'm
a parent of a child with severe emotional
disabilities, and I started a family group there
and was part of the beginning of Families United
that's there now.

So I have a real belief in parent
voice and think it has to be there and understood,
and I've sat on the other side of the table even
as a special educator where people were
challenging me around my own child. So I've done
all this at some point, and it's real important
that, you know, we have that voice and we have
that understanding and we know what's going on.
So it's a key part of what we're trying to do.
THE CHAIRPERSON: I just want to add too -- and it goes right along with what you're saying -- that all of these solution seem simple. Why can't EC kids be scheduled first in high school? I mean it's almost like a no-brainer. You know, these are kids that -- they have required courses that they need to take, they have needs that we're trying to address. What on earth is the problem? Why can't we get them scheduled as they should in the beginning?

It's almost a no-brainer that we need to have relationships -- you know, good relationships with the people that are working with our children, but what seems -- what should be a no-brainer isn't. And it is -- it's mind-boggling. I do sit on both sides of the table and I have for over 15 years now. But to fully -- fully engage with IEP teams, with school teams, with parents, with administrators, it can be quite -- it can be quite a challenge.

So, you know, Heather, hopefully one of the things that will come out or come from this group is that the relationship that this Council can have with you. We're fortunate enough to have the ECAC here at the table to start talking about
some of the strategies and some of the interventions that have been successful for families going into this. It is a very intimidating atmosphere, process when you walk into the room as a parent and there are ten other people there ready to tell you everything that your child cannot do.

MS. ROBERTS: And it's your fault.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And it's -- well, even if it's not your -- even if it's not your fault, more often I hear that it's the kid's fault.

MS. ROBERTS: That too.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You know, it's the child's fault that things aren't falling in line. So it's a relationship. But as far as the Division is concerned -- and the questions started about a question -- Greg had a question about the graduation rates. One of the points that I would like to make is that we look a little bit behind graduation rates and let's start putting some emphasis on outcomes. What are these kids doing when they graduate? That, for me, is the heart of everything.

I've worked in -- I've worked in a
couple of districts. I've worked in public. I've worked in charter. I've seen a team make it happen when a kid needs to graduate. When the order comes down, "This child needs to graduate this year. Let's make it happen," then it happens. By hook or by crook, it happens.

And so as we are -- you know, as we are looking at increasing the rate of graduation and everybody is moving forward, I know that tends to be a conversation that we usually have in December with Nancy when we're reviewing some things, but outcomes are really important, be it, are the kids employed, are they participating in postsecondary ed programs, are they receiving additional vocational training? Those are the type of things that I don't think we need to forget because that's what this, I think, is all about.

MS. ROBERT: Do we track that information now? Do we know?

MR. HUSSEY: We have surveys, and we don't get very good results from the surveys. We actually have two of our larger districts who are basically deciding to go on their own and that I think we're going to eventually have pretty much
everyone go on their own. Other states are doing that now. We're getting much better information. School systems are where these people are, and they're not getting a call from New York from somebody and they don't know who it is, you know, asking them to do a survey, which is what we've got right now.

So, yeah, we are tracking, and we're asked to track whether they're in school or employed. There are several things in that transition piece that we look at. You know, we don't have bad results on what we get. We just don't get enough to give you really valid information.

MS. SMITH: We do have the National Transition Center at UNCC now, and so we -- the surrounding counties to UNCC as well as CMS are really working a plan for how we do that, and one of the things that's come out of that is that -- it's called Circles, but it's where the voc rehab person comes if the student has a case manager from any other agency, the folks who might have postsecondary options for students, they have a meeting. The student prepares a little presentation of what they think they'd like to do,
and then this team of people commits what they'll
do to support.

So I think -- that's a really small
scale, but those are the kinds of things that the
Transition Center at UNCC wants to -- and
nationally wants to help schools be able to
accomplish.

MR. HUSSEY: And I think a
self-advocacy individual helping kids figure out
how to voice their own future the way they want to
go and getting people to help them do that is
huge, and I think -- that seems like, again, one
of those logical things that would be very easy.
High school kids should be able to run their IEP
meetings. I mean they've been in a thousand of
them, but it's hard to get people to let go.

And I just want to go back to that.
It is so logical that all these things should
happen, but if there's a fear behind what happens
in special ed because you can get sued -- and we
never talk about that out loud, but that's a
significant reason why when you get into a school
situation, administrators are -- I mean they're
backing up because they don't want to get engaged
in that or they want to put an end to that piece.
And I think, you know, again, the more -- the more we can educate parents around what it is that needs to happen, the fewer real due process hearings we will have, the less that will happen. So I think it's significant that we work towards parent education, but also, we've got to work with building-level principals to rid them of this fear. You know, all you have to do is go to LRP or any of the legal conferences, and they'll scare you to death. I mean they scare you to death.

And so it's really trying to figure out how we do something -- I feel like I'm doing the State of the Union up here. I mean, but it really is -- it's about how we begin to break those -- those are huge barriers, but they're real and those school folks, they're scared. Nobody else can come after them the way that people in special ed can, and so---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, it depends because, again, what's -- the unspoken part of that would be it depends on the school and it depends on the district where -- what type of fear we're talking about.

MS. ROBERTS: And there's a lot less
worry about being sued if you're actually participating and doing what you're supposed to be doing.

MR. HUSSEY: Absolutely.

MS. ROBERTS: Because as a special ed attorney as well as a special ed parent, I can tell you that where I run into those problems is (a) the school is not doing what they're supposed to do and (b) it becomes a very -- it becomes offensive on the part of the teachers and administrators understandably. I understand a lot of these folks take it personally, but you know, a simple "I'm sorry" or "Let's try something different" or a lack of "Well, we can't do that because we've never done that" would be a huge difference.

MR. HUSSEY: Absolutely.

MS. ROBERTS: Because most parents just -- they're not out to get the school. They're trying to get some assistance, but what we see is we can't do that or -- well, for military kids, this comes up a lot. You know, what we see is, "Well, we don't know what that other district did so we're going to start from ground zero, and even though we have a parent here and records to
show us that it wasn't effective or the child
didn't make progress" or "We're not going to trust
you on that. We have to start from the
beginning."

And you see it even in the transition
within a district, elementary to middle school and
middle school to high school. And so even though
a methodology has not been shown to be effective
for a child, we're starting all the way back at
ground zero, you know, and there is a -- there is
a large attitude from a lot of administrators --
and not all -- I mean there are some that are very
engaged, but there is a large consistency of
dismissal of the parent and the parent's expertise
about their child and their experience with their
child.

And that's the thing that I think is
really hard because I think what I see is, I think
teachers feel like when a parent says, "This isn't
working," they're saying, "You're a bad teacher,"
and instead of saying -- instead of recognizing
that there's not that personal component to it,
and I think that's where we see a lot of
difficulty between parents and teachers and
administrators, is the parents are saying, "This
isn't working for my kid," and what is being heard
is, "You're bad at your job," instead of "Oh, this
isn't working for this kid. Let's look at other
things. Let's be creative. Let's see what else
we can do."

THE CHAIRPERSON: I love that, and I
know we have to move on, but actually we're right
on time, but -- and my final point to that would
be, I completely agree. But if we get back to
what I guess would be the unspoken piece of this
again, there has to be -- we have to address the
culpable piece of this, and it's not only about
working with families to empower and to educate --
educate families, it is recognizing and it is
acknowledging that the African-American parents
approach the IEP team -- what they face is very
real and very different from what many Caucasian
families or parents face.

When white families go to IEP
meetings, it has been my experience and what I'm
seeing is that the school -- they often do -- they
tend to feel attacked. The teachers feel
attacked, and I think that's when you start seeing
walls go up and barriers being put in place
because we are now defending ourselves because
this mom -- you know, I do think they
acknowledge -- you know, they may actually know
what's happening and what's best for the kids, but
that is not the experience of an African-American
family when you go into these meetings. The
tables turn a little bit, and the conversation or
the feeling that you're left with is that, you
know, I know nothing about my kid and now not only
am I fighting, you know, to be heard, it becomes
more and more difficult to get appropriate
services.

So there's a cultural piece in this
thing that we have to acknowledge. It needs to be
addressed if we're going to see the graduation
rates increase for EC kids across the board, and
I'm not so sure we've done a very good job -- a
very good job of that.

MS. SMITH: I do have to just say
that's not just a special education problem,
though---

MR. HUSSEY: Right.

MS. SMITH: ---Nicole. That's a --
from my perspective, gen ed parents do the same
thing, and as a district, that's an issue that as
a district our superintendent has said we're
taking that on because we don't have the cultural
proficiency that we need to be able to address the
needs of the family. Not that we, along with
Heather, can't make great strides and be leaders,
because I think that we can, but I don't -- I
don't want to let that moment pass. It's not just
us.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, within this
context -- and we are here for EC kids---

MS. SMITH: Yes. Absolutely.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So what I'm saying
is, while we're talking about family engagement
that we need to make sure that we put that
cultural piece on the table and address it
appropriately.

MR. HUSSEY: We can take advantage of
some of the situations. We're held to
disproportionality, and so you've got a real
number out there. But if you take that number and
you walk outside of our world and into the regular
ed world, that number is tenfold, and we really
only get to measure it inside our house because
it's the only place anyone asks the question. So
I think that is a place where we can leverage and
make moves on that.
With discipline, we get caught in the EC world, and we need to -- I mean we need to do something, but when you go into -- when you go and look at the rest of the population, the disproportionality relative to suspensions beyond the world of special ed is huge. So it's a great -- I mean I do think we have leverage points that we can move with, but it is so much bigger, and that's why it's so hard for us to turn it around in EC because we're only dealing with that little piece of that. And it's really the bigger issue that's out there, which is very cultural, that we haven't been able to make any inroads in.

MS. LaCORTE: Can I just say something? I apologize for being late. I know I missed a good part of this conversation.

MR. HUSSEY: It's gone from here to there, so---

THE CHAIRPERSON: It sure has.

MS. LaCORTE: One of the things I think is important, too, just a tiny bit of history going back to when the first structured law 94-142 happened and the parents had a little information and the educators had a little information, I think they tried harder to do some
things, and it wasn't quite so hard for families
to get services they thought were important or
they thought were beneficial because everybody was
new to it.

And the further it went through the
years with different reauthorizations and things
being identified as needing to be fixed, rules put
around things, boxes put around things, we've
evolved into a system -- LRP is a perfect example.
Those conferences are often -- if you look around,
you realize it's lots of ways for lawyers to tell
you how not to get in trouble, but I'm sure how
the lawyers trying to tell you to really enhance
the education of the children to work better
together.

One of the things that we've seen is
that we're talking about people and humans and
emotions, and everyone in an IEP meeting is coming
to that table with a different set of experiences,
whether cultural, educational -- in any way,
everyone's coming with a different set, and we
don't have a lot of rules and boxes that help us,
which I'm not sure that rules and boxes would do
it -- to help people get to visions and values,
and it's with those visions and values that
there's often a conflict.

And so people are coming to these team meetings, and the team dynamics are ruled by lots of misinformation about (a) what the rules really are, what we can and cannot do, what we should do, but also how to get to the heart of what Congress intended, that people would come into a room, really talk about the needs, and figure it out to create an individualized plan.

And there's such -- you can think, too, if you go back to early intervention, preschool and kindergarten and on through, if the expectations and the values were set then for whether it's student participation in the IEP, whether it uses self-advocation, self-determination, really involving everyone that should be involved and moving forward, then you would get to these transition ages with a different set of experiences, expectations, and the mind-set of we can do this together rather than whoa, we can't promise too much or a family having a different expectation, or a family with a different cultural experience in a room with someone who has no capacity or has not yet had access to something that would give them the
skills and tools they need to make sure that things happened.

So we've got a system that's got rules. We've got rights. LEAs have rights, teachers have rights, parents have rights. We've got a way to solve those problems, but the big factor is the values and the humanness on this and the expectations, and everybody's coming with different sets of expectations. It's like the telephone game. You can -- Nancy Johnson used to do some of the best IEP training there was on the planet, and I can tell you now she did this outstanding training and that training was to a group of people who would go back to their schools and districts to train.

By the time the classroom teacher hears it all, there's a different message or just at least a different understanding, and so sometimes people are coming to the table with expectations that, in their mind, are as absolutely as well-intended as the parents' are, but it's a disconnect. So we have to figure out how to fix some of those disconnects, and we know the heart's there to do it, so---

MR. HUSSEY: I think -- and I'm going
to sit down, but I think it starts with that
movement from -- into preschool where the
cconversations -- that's where the conversations
have to start with parents and the honesty about
what's going on and what's going to be expected.

   I mean I would go in and sit in
meetings, and people tried so hard to protect me.
I mean people wouldn't say things that they needed
to say at that moment that would have made a
difference and it would have made a difference all
the way through had the honesty been there, and it
was well-intended because it was like -- you know,
but we've got to get honest. We've got to have
open voices, and it's got to start there. That's
the whole piece on the transition component of
what we're trying to do. It's got to start with
that first transition.

   MS. ROBERTS: There's a significant
military population in this state and a
significant number of military kids that are here,
and when you're talking about transition, are not
those typical transition points? You have
transition throughout. You have transition, you
know, in every single grade at every single time.

   And one of the things that I was
seeing a pattern of that I hope that it's something that you-all can think about in your larger plan is that the delay of getting services, the delay in getting a new IEP in place because they come from out of state, it's significant. It is three, four, five, six months, and it needs to not be that long. So---

MS. LaCORTE: Those military families' children in high school are not in DoDDS schools.

MS. ROBERTS: No.

MS. LaCORTE: They're in---

MR. HUSSEY: No. They're in high schools.

MS. ROBERTS: Right. And I say that just as a military parent of an EC kid, as somebody that deals with a lot of military families, it's a significant issue, and if it's not something that you guys have thought of -- I'm sure you have, but I think that in terms of your core pieces, it's something that needs to be factored in.

MR. HUSSEY: Okay. And I agree with you. Again, that's one of those laws that changed. You know, we went from basically being
able to do reevaluations when kids came in and
moved to having to start initial evaluations, and
whatever happens in that context does seem to
complicate it and move the process through.

So it's -- and these are things that
have come up in this conversation today that I
hope you guys as a group can also take advantage
of because these are things that we will need help
in supporting and trying to make change, and it
could be some of these agenda items that you-all
chose as priorities to move forward because I mean
we've hit some pretty big buckets here today for
this conversation, and that is -- those are the
needs -- unmet needs that we're talking about that
you can look at relative to some of those
priorities. So I'm really going to escape from
here now.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I've got to cut us
off now because we were doing so well, and we're
just a little bit behind. I just want to provide
a gentle reminder if we could help our reporter.
If you could just -- before you -- make sure you
speak into the mike -- and I think everybody's
doing well with that -- but for -- especially the
people on this side of the room, if you could just
say your name before you speak and that will be a
great help to her. Thumbs up? Thank you.

Okay. So, Heather Reynolds, are you
ready to walk us through the next phase?

MS. REYNOLDS: Sure. Let me adjust
that because I'm so infinitely shorter than Bill.

Good morning.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning.

MS. REYNOLDS: It's great to see
everybody, some familiar faces and some new ones.
So my job today is kind of to give you guys an
update about the State Systemic Improvement Plan
which, as you remember, is the new Indicator 17
that's part of the State Performance Plan Annual
Performance Report when OSEP made kind of the last
set of revisions. To that process, that added the
State Systemic Improvement Plan.

So the slides that I'll be using this
morning, along with the full and complete Phase 1
and Phase 2 reports, should you have any interest
in reading those 60 or 70 pages, along with a
slightly different style of summary are all at
this link that's on this first slide. So I'll
give you a second in case, you know, you want to
take that down or if anybody wants to jump there
now.

We are currently in Phase 3, having begun that with the submission of the Phase 2 report on April 1st. So I'm watching. Are you guys ready to move on?

(Multiple affirmative responses.)

MS. REYNOLDS: Okay. So I thought I would start with just a quick review of what the three phases look like. Phase 1 was really about analysis and problem-solving for us, so taking a look at the data that we had, really reviewing how our current infrastructure was working for us, and then identifying a focus for improvement or that State-Identified Measurable Result -- that's what that SIMR thing stands for -- and then coming up with a theory of action or what we could do to improve in that area.

Last year, we spent a lot of time thinking about how to make our infrastructure work better for us and how we were going to begin to build LEA capacity to implement evidence-based practices and really start to do some improvement around that area that we selected, which was the five-year cohort graduation rate.

I think one of the things I really
appreciate about this process and, in particular, that Phase 1 time that we had to explore together is that it allowed us some time to really get a lot of stakeholder feedback and actually shaped our SIMR.

We were looking at a four-year graduation rate because that's what Indicator 1 is, and we had to pick something that was related to one of the indicators. That was one of the requirements for us, but our stakeholders really kind of drove us in that direction of looking instead at the five-year cohort graduate rate, and OSEP gave us permission to do that, so that's how we decided to move forward.

In Phase 2, this past plan -- most recent plan that we submitted, we also had to detail our evaluation plan. So how are we going to know that the work that we're doing is making a difference so that we know if we need to change it, right, because we're not going to keep doing things that we know and have enough evidence to show us are not working. And the next year, we'll really begin to put that evaluation plan in place. So looking at past data as a baseline, continuing to collect additional data from LEAs, and using
that to help us figure out are we making a
difference with the support we're providing to
LEAs.

At that point, we recognize that we
may need to make some revision to our process,
right? You guys have been part of problem-solving
and improvement efforts before. That's just part
of the deal, right? You have to look and see is
this working; if it's not giving us the outcomes
we want, how do we need to make changes.

So, again, just a little bit of
review. Phase 1 conclusions, here's what we
figured out. First of all, we're taking an
approach that the State Systemic Improvement Plan
is just one part of the larger results-driven
accountability work that we're already focused on.
I would say probably not every other state is
taking that point of view, but we felt like this
needs to be one part of the larger puzzle that
we're working on.

As we do that, we also recognized
that, as Bill mentioned before, the graduation
rate for students with disabilities in this state
has been on an upward trend. Okay. That's been
true for several years. The problem is, there's a
fairly persistent, about 11-percentage-point gap between the graduation rate for students with disabilities and the overall graduation rate in our state. Again, that's been persistent over five, six, longer years, and that's not okay with us. We feel like we need to not just improve the graduation rate, but we need to improve it more quickly so we can start to close that gap.

One of the things we had to do was take a look at root cause. Why is it that we feel like the graduation rate is not where we want it to be, and we did do some of that at the state level. That's where we came up with those three buckets of academics, behavior, and transition, but we left those fairly broad at the state level, that was very intentional because we do recognize that LEAs are going to need to determine their own root causes.

That's been a big part of what folks are doing in the LEA self-assessment work that they've been engaged in this year. That really gives them a chance to do some of that same kind of data and infrastructure analysis that we did do in Phase 1 of this project.

We also know that we can't do this
work alone. Any improvement efforts that we make have got to be more strongly tied, linked, and aligned with other agencywide work, and we're going to need better partnerships from outside of the EC Division to really make sustainable change. So that's part of why our State Systemic Improvement Plan project includes a link to MTSS, right, because we know that that is one of the major agency initiatives and something that needs to be connected to this work.

Finally, we determined that we're going to have to look very broadly at graduation rates for students with disabilities because as tempting as it is to select a particular subgroup on which to focus, that is not going to give us the kind of change that we want statewide. When we really -- we drove deep into the data analysis. Some of those of you who were a part of that process can attest to that. We looked all the way down to African-American students who were SED and resource and separate settings so just to -- I mean that's just one example, right, but that's how deeply we went into the data.

But what we figured out is, a population like that, as much as we want to make
changes in the graduate rate for that population, is so small, what about all those other kids, right? So we determined we're going to have to really focus on graduation as a whole. Now particular LEAs may find that they have gaps, that it does makes sense to focus on a subgroup. That's why that LEA determination of root cause and data analysis becomes so critical because it may look very different in any one spot in our state.

Okay. So based on those conclusions, we moved forward into Phase 2 and established a goal of increasing the five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities and, as I said before, reviewing that really as part of this whole measurement of results-driven accountability. And we know that to create change, we're going to have to provide different kinds of supports to LEAs than maybe we have done historically.

So some of the particular outcomes that we're looking for here. One, we want to improve LEA capacity for systemic improvement and make sure that that's a line to MTSS implementation. So this is really about
increasing problem-solving and implementation
capacity in the LEAs. So how do we do that?

Well, that's really where the LEA self-assessment had come into the process this year because we've spent this whole year -- as I'm sure you guys have heard and some of you have participated in -- really walking through a structured problem-solving process, asking LEAs to do data and infrastructure analysis, think about where they need to improve, where they need to focus their efforts, and then come up with a multi-year plan to do that.

Because we've stretched it across the entire year, it's given us an opportunity to really sit with LEAs at regional meetings in smaller groups, working together with other LEAs of like sizes or alike in other ways along with our staff. So we really could have some deep conversations about the work that's happening now and where they need to go next.

So the other outcomes are more specifically related to those three buckets, right? So the first one is about academic performance. We know that we need to increase student academic performance particularly in
reading and math so that kids can earn the credits they need to graduate, right? For this area, we're primarily going to be focused on continuing, building, strengthening Reading and Math Foundations.

We do -- have seen some success with those things across the state, but the saturation level is not necessarily there. Everybody is not participating in this or maybe they're just getting started, they need a little bit more time to get up to fidelity and really see changes in outcomes. That's where our primary focus is going to be around reading and math is with Reading and Math Foundations.

The second area is student behavior. Again, we're going to try and build on existing programs that have shown success. So positive behavior intervention and support and CSEFEL. That's the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning process which I always think of as kind of PBIS for the younger kids, right, so pre-K and that area. But, again, these are things that have shown success for implementers that are doing this at high fidelity. We just need to build on that. We need to bring it more widely across the
state and then support implementation at high fidelity because that's really what makes the difference in changing outcomes.

Finally, as we've talked about before, engagement and a true continuum of transitions supports is kind of our final big area of outcome for the SSIP. And this is really about how do we do all of -- how do we address all of those issues that you guys have just been talking about, how do we make sure that we're not losing kids and families at any step along the process.

So while historically when we've used the term transition, we've been thinking more about that postsecondary transition. The reason that we're calling it a continuum of transition and focusing on engagement is because we really do want to look very broadly. So starting all the way at that first transition from Part C to Part B for the kids for whom that applies and then that transition into kindergarten, those transitions between elementary and middle, middle and high school. That's where we are starting.

I do hope that once we kind of get some firmer ideas around that, and we've got a group that's working on that right now and on the
16th. We'll be able to dig into some of those other kinds of transitions, things like military families, but also just kids who move a lot or are maybe experiencing a transition back from, you know, a group home, foster placement, PRTF, whatever, right?

So we do want to really think broadly about how we keep kids and families engaged throughout all of those kinds of transitions that may be happening for them, and keeping them engaged in a way that there's good communication back and forth between the school and the family so that everybody can work together because we know that's what it takes for kids to really be successful, right? Everybody's got to be in this together.

So we're working on tools, checklists, resources, kind of a toolkit, if you will, that we can share with LEAs. As part of that process, we've also been doing work with ECAC to pilot some focus group process with a few LEAs, and basically the outcome of that project will be that we'll be developing resources together that can be shared with LEAs so they can do their own focus groups.
So once you've done all that data analysis at the LEA level and you've identified some areas where you want to work, then how do you bring folks in from the community -- parents, families, community partners -- in to sit with you to tell you, "Hey. This is what we -- this is what we know about the issue you're working on. This is information you need to be able to fix this," okay?

So we would be able to provide, again, tools and resources to help LEAs structure those processes so they'll be successful, and that's work, as I said, that we're doing with ECAC to be able to really kind of reach beyond some of those education only settings, right? ECAC has some connections to community and family groups that, you know, don't always exist previous to, you know, these efforts to work together. So that lays out the outcomes from Phase 2.

The other thing we had to report on in Phase 2 was how we're doing with infrastructure. So I will tell you a big part of that has been changes in how we as a EC Division staff are supporting LEAs. The biggest and most obvious change there has been kind of realignment
into this regional structure. Now we've had regional consultants in particular areas for a number of years.

The thing that's a little bit different about this is that everybody on staff, even those folks who are statewide consultants, have been assigned to one of these regional teams. We did that for a lot of reasons. One of the biggest was we knew we had a heavy lift this year with the LEA self-assessment rolling out, and we knew we were going to need all hands on deck to provide support around this new process, right, that we were asking folks to do.

Well, I say new. For some folks, it felt pretty familiar, right? For others, it just seemed like, "We've got to do what," right? What we've heard from LEAs, though -- I got an e-mail this morning from a director who had submitted her LEA self-assessment and said, "Hey, you know, listen. Thanks for the support that you guys provided. It made a huge difference being able to have those conversations and regional meetings. It really was helpful."

So we feel like the shifts that we've made in infrastructure have contributed to folks
being able to successfully complete this and have
the support they needed to feel confident in doing
it. As we move toward Phase 3, as we kind of get
g geared up for that, those infrastructures -- those
regional structures will be really important
because what we want to do with the results of
those LEA self-assessments is actually create a
tiered model of LEA support.

So based on what LEAs are telling us
they're going to be working on next and what they
need to be able to do that, that will drive how we
support them. So, you know, if you guys are
familiar -- you know, folks in the past requested
training. "Hey, we need work on this. When are
you doing this training? We're going to come and
be part of it."

The shift here is that now we're
going to look at their LEA self-assessment, at
what's documented there, and use that information
to build regional and statewide training and
professional development and technical assistance
support plans so that everything's going to flow
out that LEA self-assessment which is based on the
data analysis that the LEA did. Make sense so
far?
MR. HUSSEY: I will tell you that's been more difficult inside our own house than it has been outside.

MS. REYNOLDS: Yes. It has been a shift for everybody involved, and sometimes that's a little uncomfortable for folks.

As part of that process our staff did say to us, "Hey, listen. This sounds like we're going to be doing a whole lot of coaching for these LEAs. Can we get a little bit more on that? Can we get some PD on that?" So we responded to that during our kind of regional planning meeting time. We did go through some activities to strengthen coaching skills and really think about okay, how do we ask questions, how do we prompt LEAs to get them thinking more deeply about some of these areas.

So the final piece of the Phase 2 report included the evaluation plan. So how are we going to know what we've done is helpful and if it's working, and our evaluation plan is really built around these five questions. So, one, have measures of family engagement improved? That's how we're going to take a look at those transition pieces and engagement pieces. To do that right
now, we're primarily going to be using transition
indicators. Overtime, as we're able to develop
more sophisticated measures, we may add other
things as well.

This is also true for the second
question you see here, have measures of transition
improved? So are we seeing change based on the
work and support that we're providing for LEAs.
Third question, is the incidence of student office
referrals and suspensions decreased and attendance
increased? That's going to be our primary
evaluation question to get at changes in behavior,
right?

Down on that second row, do students
exhibit an increase in academic achievement as a
result of the shorter-term outcomes? Things like
better teacher content knowledge based on Reading
and Math Foundations. So that helps us measure
that academic bucket. And then, finally, are LEAs
better able to use data to engage in systematic
problem-solving? We're going to use data from the
LEA self-assessments to measure that in a couple
of different ways. There's a practice profile or
a rating that LEAs do as part of that LEA self-
assessment, so we'll be using that data. We also
have developed a staff review tool, and part of that review tool is about collecting the information about the supports LEAs will need.

There's also kind of a checklist part of it, like, particularly because this is the first year we've done this, you know, did they fill in all the blanks, right; did they identify strengths; did they identify needs; did they document the analysis that they did; you know, do they have a complete improvement plan; does it include, you know, these types of items, things like specific goals, strategies, timelines, roles that are responsible for these things?

So we'll be using some data from that as well just to measure over time change, right? Are we seeing improvements, right? Are the plans getting stronger and what does that tell us about the support that we need to provide next? You know, are we doing a good enough job supporting LEAs in being able to accomplish these tasks?

And we also had to report progress on our SIMR target. So you'll notice that we started at 67.82 percent of students with disabilities graduating within five years, and our target, we actually surpassed just a smidgen. That's a
highly technical data term there -- smidgen. And if you'll notice, the way we set these targets, the change -- the amount of change between each year is smaller over here on the left side because we knew we were going to need some time to put some strategies in place, right?

This first year we knew we were going to be spending mainly on LEAs doing the assessment, right, LEAs doing analysis, identifying priorities, planning for improvement, but we won't actually begin to see the outcomes of that, you know, for a couple of years, right? So we did make the change -- the amount of change a little bit smaller up front and then looking for larger changes down the road.

So based on the evaluation results when we put that plan in place, we'll use that to kind of refine and improve our support plans for LEAs. We'll also be looking, of course -- as they update those LEA self-assessment improvement plans each year, right, we ask them to write plans for two to three years, knowing that at the end of next year, we'll need them to submit an update. Hey, what you did this first year? How did it go? Does that change anything that you need to do next
year? We know you were planning to do this in Year 2, but based on what actually happened in Year 1, do you need to make any changes?

As we move into Phase 3, there are several things happening right now. So the first is around the LEA self-assessment. Those are coming in, quite literally, as we speak, and they will be reviewed by our staff between now and about August 15th, give or take a couple of days. We are pulling data off of those as they're coming in.

As I said, we've developed a review tool for our staff to use. We'll be compiling all of that, and then our EC Division staff will be spending a couple of days together in August really sifting through all of that information and beginning to develop those regional and state support plans for the next year. So a good time to be had by all then, no doubt.

As we do that, we also, as I mentioned earlier, want to really build a continuum of support for LEAs. So how are we thinking we're going to do that? Well, we know that there are going to be some things that everybody needs. The top of those lists, ECATS,
right? If you've got a new system, we know we're going to have to train everybody on that.

Specially Designed Instruction, some of that training has already started. It has been a big hit. There have been a lot of requests for it. We anticipate needing to do a whole lot more. We also know that we have some folks that may want some additional training on problem-solving and good implementation practice just based on conversations that we've had at regional meetings this year and what we're starting to see come in on those LEA self-assessment improvement plans.

And we also want to make sure that we're matching the correct expertise from the regional team to the specific LEA needs that they've identified. So a couple of examples here. We have -- some LEAs have said, "You know what? We have a certain way that we do things for EC, but it's probably not written down anywhere, and if I didn't come into work tomorrow, I'm not sure if anybody else would know how to do that stuff."

So part of what they've included in their LEA self-assessment improvement plans is, "Hey, we probably need to write those policies and procedures that we typically use down," right, and
then make sure everybody knows what they are, you
know, what the procedure should look like, things
like that, and then also sometimes in a specific
capacity.

So we know that if we have folks that
are requesting PBIS training or Math Foundations
or, you know, one of those very specific topic
areas, that we'll need to match expertise from our
division with that LEA to support them in that.
And then we also know that we want to ensure
capacity for specific populations. So making sure
that students with visual impairments can take
full advantage of math initiatives, right? It's
work that we've long done and, of course, must
continue and want to continue to do.

But that gives you sort of a
beginning idea of how we're planning to move
forward. So there will be some things that we'll
provide for every LEA, and then based on needs
they identify, we may group some LEAs to provide
specific information to that group of LEAs or
maybe develop some communities of practice around
a particular topic or topics.

And then we know we have a few LEAs
that are going to need more intensive support for
one reason or another. You know, sometimes that's as simple as there's been a recent change in leadership, and we have a new leader that just needs some additional support, right? The idea is we're really trying to put that strategic vision in place. The whole notion of customized support for LEAs, this is where we start to really bring that to life.

The other thing that's really happening in Phase 3 and getting kicked off in a serious way is the evaluation. Now what you see in the background here is the evaluation logic model. You can see a version that's large enough you can read either in the Phase 2 report or in the graphic display that is on that Wikispaces page that I gave the link to at the beginning of the presentation.

Things I want you to know about it. We're really trying to make sure that we're keeping track not just of that five-year cohort graduation rate but, as I mentioned earlier, student behavior, transition and family engagement, PBIS, NCSIP for Reading and Math Foundations, that LEA self-assessment data, student reading and math performance.
So we want to look not just at outcomes but also at fidelity measures along the way. How are we doing what we're doing? Are things being implemented to a level at which we should be able to expect changes in outcomes because we know we've got to look at both of those pieces, right? Any questions for me?

THE CHAIRPERSON: I just have one, and it's funny because as I was writing my question down, you mentioned it, and that's regarding the ECATS training, new the system. Everybody is going to require some training on it.

MS. REYNOLDS: Sure.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But one of the things -- you know, as I started out as an EC teacher, one of the things that blew my mind as I was finishing up my program was -- you know, I went through my entire teacher prep program, and not once had I, you know, heard of, talked about, seen anything related to CECAS. And I finished, I graduated, and I went to work, and I was ready to write my IEP goals and I knew how to assess my kids, and I get this stack of files, and they're saying, "Okay. This is your caseload. IEPs are due, and you've got to get them in CECAS by a
certain date." And I was floored.

So I guess my question was, is it possible or has there been any discussion -- I guess, first of all, is it even possible to incorporate some type of ECATS orientation, training, seminar, workshop into the teacher prep programs. And I know we're struggling right now with, you know, recruiting EC teachers and EC teachers aren't staying here in North Carolina, and things of that nature, but has there been any discussion about doing that type of work with the teachers?

MS. REYNOLDS: I'm going to turn this over to Carol Ann since she's really more in charge of kind of planning how that training rollout is going to look.

MS. HUDGENS: So a comment to start with is that previously and currently in this state, the LEAs have the choice of what type of software that they want to use to manage IEP programs. So that has been a barrier historically toward a concerted effort on navigating through the system, and the State's perspective has been focused on the programming and the meat involved in the IEP, not so much the data entry.
Of course, that is important for what we pull out of it, but our focus has been mostly on writing well thought out present levels of performance, appropriate goals and objectives that are measurable, and services that are appropriately addressing those unique needs. And so moving forward, since we have the Uniform Education Reporting requirement now in place, that assists us as a state to be using one database for the development, the tracking, and the data collection for our IEP process.

So I think that your comment is well timed in the planning that we're approaching going forward about how we're going to roll out the entity that's selected to manage this for us in terms of electronic records and looking at IEP process as a whole because the training is really two-faceted. It's not only understanding how to interact with the ECATS system, but it's going back to that core training of appropriate IEP development that's based on data.

And so it's really another good opportunity for the State to refocus and have that really good comprehensive content-based training about IEP development. It's been a number of
years since that has been rolled out collectively as a state. Mary, you rolled out some training that Nancy Johnson did, and we do that on an as-needed basis.

Certainly as a result of monitoring, there might be specific components of those IEPs that need to be trained, but this will be a collective rollout for the state and really trying to recalibrate and realign to what the requirements are, but in addition to that, the outcome's focus of writing really good programs for students with disabilities that is highly specific to their unique needs and that the specially designed instruction that is provided is really focused again on how that student -- that disability impacts their involvement in the general curriculum.

DR. CARPENTER: I can't speak obviously for all the preservice programs, but when we used CECAS, the State worked very well with our university and I think with others in providing access to the program as well as assistance with us developing training, and so we did -- we've been doing that for all of our preservice folks at my university.
And when we talked about ECATS, I think, in Jamestown at the last meeting, where you talked about that some, I did ask about that, what were the plans for the IHEs and the preservice institutions, and you know, so we got that there. So I think it's a good point, but I feel like the State's done well with that, at least with our institution in the past, and I'm hoping that we'll have the same thing as we go forward.

MS. HUDGENS: I anticipate those opportunities as well, and one of the nice features now about being in a uniform reporting system is that we can establish a whole other realm of resources available because one of the big things that we're worried about as a state is capacity building with turnovers with teachers in the field and then the training time that LEAs have to engage in to help reinforce the skills of the new teachers coming in.

And so now that we have the opportunity to get things more uniform, that gives us the opportunity to make available some real specific training modules virtually that preservice teachers can engage in or teachers, who might perhaps need a refresher on a particular
area based on a particular specialty or unique need, can plug into, too, to be able to have that consistent message again in training.

And to what Mary spoke about a little bit earlier, sometimes the Train-the-Trainer model can have a little different perspective once it gets down to the teacher level. So, again, in our planning going forward, we're looking at mechanisms that can get consistent training down to the teacher level that can be interacted with in a variety of formats and upon demand or need.

MS. SIMMONS: Hi, this is Vicki. This is a really good summary of what you've been teaching us for the last few months. I was looking for information on students with significant cognitive disabilities in the summary, and I know you had to select some slides, but can you catch us up on significant cognitive disabilities? They're not on the graph because those are graduates.

MS. REYNOLDS: So I think---

MS. OUZTS: Do you want to go back?

MS. REYNOLDS: Yeah, if you'll go back one more. So in the same way that we look at -- the example here is about making sure that
students with VI can access, but I think that also
applies to any, you know, more specific population
or group of students that -- you know, we want to
make sure that everybody is successful, and
because we'll be tracking some of those transition
indicators as part of this process, I think that
gives us a way to account for students that may
not appear in the numerator as graduates, right,
for the cohort rate.

Because I don't know how familiar you
guys are with how that thing is calculated, but
you know, everybody that starts in a particular
year, every student gets counted in the
denominator of that equation, but of course, if a
student is not eligible to receive a diploma,
right, then they won't be counted in the numerator
of that, and I think that's what Vicki is alluding
to. I think, because we're going to be tracking
those transition indicators as part of the overall
evaluation, that gives us an opportunity to take a
look at that group of students as well.

MR. HUSSEY: There's also some other
things going on right now with the extended
content standards where we're going back and
making reviews on how that's going to be looked at
and what's going to be taught.

   So there are other things -- DLM --
we're trying to figure out -- we want to do it.
We've just got to figure out how to afford it.
It's over a million dollars a year just as an
assessment tool. So there are lots of things out
there that we are doing that won't necessarily
show up in our summary of this, but will be things
that we're moving forward on.

   So the fact that you don't see him
doesn't mean that things are being done. It's
just not in the -- not in the big structured
pieces that you're seeing here.

   MS. REYNOLDS: So things like
universal screening and progress monitoring tools
that are being developed. Ronda Layman came and
asked me kind of a question about that, right?
"Our kids with significant cognitive
disabilities -- will folks be able to use those
tools for that population?"

   And I said, "Well, I would think so,
but here's who I want you to talk to that's on the
team that's developing that assessment suite,
right, so that we make sure that that actually
happens. My assumption is yes. Go double-check
with this person."

So we do want to make sure that anything we're developing encompasses, you know, the full range of students with disabilities.

MS. SIMMONS: I had another question.

MS. REYNOLDS: Uh-huh.

MS. SIMMONS: Is ECATS going to be required for every LEA and every charter school or will there be choices?

MS. REYNOLDS: That's what that uniform system---

MR. HUSSEY: UERS, Uniform Education Reporting System, basically has made ECATS the only system available for charter schools or for regular schools for the special ed component only. There's three parts to it, but because we can't require the other people to participate in the other two parts, they can have choices. They have to pay for the other pieces where they can get this for free, but---

MS. REYNOLDS: And the other two parts are?

MR. HUSSEY: The other two parts are the MTSS component and Medicaid billing, and I'm going to give you a little bit of an update when I
get back up.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary again. I'm pretty sure I've got this right. So the -- working at that broad stroke is where we're going, and I remember Nancy describing this very well in terms of moving any one of those subgroups was not going to move the needle very far. So we're looking at moving all of them, but the data systems will still really provide an excellent way for LEAs to look at the subgroups and create targeted strategies to use and targeted methods to use to move those subgroups along as well to really -- and that might actually -- you may be able to see then almost a little bit of an accelerated achievement, which is, I know, hoped for.

MS. REYNOLDS: Absolutely. So one of those requirements of the system is that we need it to be able to disaggregate that data and hopefully to do it in a way that's much easier for LEAs to use than maybe some of the previous methods of getting to that information.

MS. LaCORTE: I'm looking forward to that also, including being able to really look at
what the data shows about outcomes for students on the occupational course of study, which I know you haven't been able to do quite so easily yet.

MR. HUSSEY: That will -- it's just going to pop up there, which will be nice.

MS. REYNOLDS: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. So we're scheduled to have lunch at 12:00 and it's 11:37. Is it okay if we just make an adjustment here, Heather, have you review the handbook update after lunch so that we can at least get started with the full agency update, or would you like to -- I don't want us run out of -- run out of time. We have probably about 20-some minutes to -- and, Bill, you actually have---

MR. HUSSEY: We've talked about a whole lot of this, so---

MS. OUZTS: Mine's pretty short also.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So you feel like you'll be okay?

MS. OUZTS: Mine's pretty short also, so I think---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MS. OUZTS: You're probably apt to get more questions than I am, but it's -- whatever
your preference is.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll follow your lead. I mean whatever you think. I just want to make sure you have sufficient time for your presentation.

MS. OUZTS: Good morning. Mine is very much just an update. As you know, the Division has been engaged -- I've only been here a few months, and this is one of my activities. So one of those projects has been looking at the Handbook on Parents Rights. We are in the final stages of revision. It's a work in progress. We are very close to having a final draft, definitely down to nitpicking the revisions at this point.

But this was done with input from a stakeholder group that included parents, advocacy groups, LEAs, school attorneys, parent advocate attorneys, all of those people, ECAC. We had -- one of the Council Members was very active in this group. It is scheduled to be ready July 1st. So you should be seeing it coming your way shortly.

Just to give you a good idea, it looks different. There's a title change. This was from the group's input. They really wanted parents to understand that this is about their
rights and responsibilities. As you notice, my
first slide, I should have pointed out, said,
"Notice of Procedural Safeguards," because that is
the real purpose of this document.

And so lots of members thought it was
important that the title reflect that this is
about parents' rights and responsibilities. It is
the Notice of Procedural Safeguards which means
that the content is pretty much set. There's a,
you know, standard, which I'm going to talk about
in a minute, content that needs to be included.

Now some of the things that have
changed are the format. Visually it looks
different. The sequence of the procedural
safeguards, the group decided as a whole what
order they should be presented in the book. One
of the requests was an expanded table of contents.
I know as a parent liaison I don't know if I'd
ever -- advocacy groups had this -- a lot of
people had a hard time finding certain topics in
the handbook. It's a small book, but it's a lot
of information.

More simple, visually easy to
understand, an acronyms page -- these are some
that things that were added in this edition.
Content, as I said, has not changed. What we decided to do is to rely very heavily on OSEP's model forms for procedural safeguards. That is for the section that is strictly the notice of procedural safeguards.

Something that we know as a group, after the first meeting, parent friendly is not as easy as it sounds when you're talking about this content. Everyone had the best of intentions. We were like yes, we're going to make this parent friendly, and then you start wordsmithing and you realize there's only so much you can change in that statement without changing the legal ramifications of what you're saying.

So parent friendly language is a challenge in this document. We did, I think, do our best to make it so. We did run it through to make sure of the reading level, and it came between, like, 8.5 and 9.7 on the scale, and I think that's probably due to some -- some sections are easier to understand and some are more difficult. We tried to be mindful of that, but it is difficult content to change.

There's a new section that is taking the place of the "In other words" of the current
handbook. We had stakeholder group members provide recommendations for each of the sections that coincide with the procedural safeguards section. There are cross-referenced page numbers in those places so that they can go back and check it either -- in either section. That section is grouped by prior written notice, discipline.

So the intent -- I think the quote I remember from our last meeting from one of the legal advocacy groups was, "I really think we could sit down and go through these five pages with a parent and they could get what they needed from these -- from this section in a general sense." So that is the hope. That is the intent. It is a little bit longer than the current one, but not egregiously so.

But one of the main things I think to share with you guys, as we move forward -- some of you may be interested in participating in this work -- was that the group really decided okay, we're going to keep this to the procedural safeguards, but there's other things we need to provide for parents, right, which I'm in total agreement with. So there will probably be different avenues supporting that. One of the
things is a supplemental parent guide where you can really get away from just the procedural safeguards and go more into helping parents through the process in general, possibly videos, all kinds of other ways to get the information and make it more parent friendly.

So in the transition -- this is my last slide -- the only thing you need to know probably is that we have a message to LEAs that they can use up their current quantities of the current handbook. This will be made available starting July 1st. We hope that by the end of the year, all of them will have transitioned to using the new version, but there will not be a compliance issue.

And we will message this on our -- I mean on our website, and we'll appreciate any help that you guys may have in messaging. The content has not changed. The procedural safeguards have not changed. So if an LEA gives someone the current handbook and they go online and see ours looks different, the information is the same. It just is in a visually different format.

So does anyone have any questions?

(No audible response.)
MS. OUZTS: Okay. I will gladly forward it to the Council when it's ready to be released so that you can have a better look.

Anything else? I know Mary's in the group that provided some input. So do you have anything?

MS. LaCORTE: I was just going to say it was a very diverse group of ideas, opinions, capacities, and perspectives, so I think that was a really -- it was not only a good thing, but I think it was a very wise thing to use stakeholders in that way, and I was just kind of wondering. You said it's kind of down to the nitpicky kind of really looking at little typos, spaces, periods, and things like that at that point.

MS. OUZTS: Yeah, that's what it is now.

MS. HUDGENS: I just wanted to elaborate on the compliance piece after we thank Heather for her tremendous work on this work and this activity. We thank her for pulling together the stakeholder group that met to do this and thank you for your participation on that as well.

I do want to reemphasize the compliance piece. The part that is not different
are the parent rights. Of course, the reauthorization has not occurred so the parent rights remain intact. So the parent handbook is really two parts, the notice of procedural safeguards, which are the parents' rights that have not changed, and then the parent friendly language, which has changed to be more parent friendly. And so it's changed, but it's not.

So I just want to make sure that that's really crystal clear. The rights are the same. The way that they have been recorded in the handbook is according to OSEP's suggested way to do that. We wanted to get right back to what the federal government expects and how they have chosen to use that language. And then the parent friendly language is, of course, all of the information used from the stakeholder group to explain those rights.

And from a compliance point of view, one of things you can really help us with is that visually it is going to look a little differently to parents. And while LEAs are sunsetting their copies that they have already been purchased through printing, it may cause some other parents to be alarmed about "Has something changed? I
don't necessarily understand what is going on. It looks different. Why am I not getting the new copy?" And if you could just reassure them that, again, their rights remain intact from all the other meetings that they have participated in. This is just an effort to make sure that we are messaging well how parents can actively engage in their child's program.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Vicki?

MS. SIMMONS: Heather, you said this would be available online on or after July 1st?

MS. OUZTS: Yes.

MS. SIMMONS: Okay. So we can share it with parents on or after July 1st and they would have a copy electronically if not in hand, is that correct?

MS. OUZTS: Yes, it will be available on the website, and we are going to try to make attempts -- because, as you know in the current -- we will probably, like, a more large print electronic version available as well because -- because of this amount of content, it's hard to get it in a nice pretty font that's accessible. So---

MS. DANIELS-HALL: And will it be
translated in Spanish? Will it be translated in Spanish?

MS. OUZTS: Yes, it will be.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That was my question.

MS. HUDGENS: That will be a little lag.

MS. OUZTS: That may not happen on July 1st. We will do our best to get it done as quickly as possible.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any other questions?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you, Heather, and we do appreciate your work on this. Thank you.

MR. HUSSEY: Okay. I'll try not to stand in front of your lunch. I am very pleased with where we are with the School Mental Health Initiative. Right now, as of the 15th, we have -- the final recommendations are being -- will be done on the 15th. So we've got -- if you remember, we did the survey and got it out. We had over 2,600 responses. We've aggregated that data, and in the process, we basically broke it
down into six different working groups, and I should have written those down, but basically we're looking at personnel, we're looking at program, we're looking at communication and collaboration, we're looking at blended funding, we're looking at assessment, and there's another one.

But we've got six workgroups that have been working. The purposes of the workgroups are to come up with recommendations both for policy and then for potential legislation in a long session. So on the 20th of this month, we will meet, take all the recommendations, bring them together, and basically go through, take out the duplications, help within the subgroups to prioritize, sequence those in a way that we'll be able to kind of begin to draw down legislative and policy changes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Bill, it just occurred to me -- I'm sorry -- we have some new attendees, first-time attendees, and I'm not sure that it's been expressed -- clearly expressed what the purpose of the School Mental Health Initiative is. So if you could just say, you know, what it is. And I apologize, but as I looked around the
room, there's a lot---

MR. HUSSEY: I'm sorry. The School Mental Health Initiative is a coalition of school folks, everybody under DMH -- not DMH but -- not just DMH, Division of Mental Health, but everybody under DHHS, private providers, MCOs, parents, attorneys, advocacy groups, just -- it's a huge group of folks, and we're adding all the time because we see this as a long-term initiative.

We don't see it as just a one-time shot to get something across the legislative bow and through policy change but an ongoing group. Because what we've got in these recommendations -- it's really based on how to provide access to children earlier within the school environment so that we can ensure that we don't lose children through the cracks because they didn't get connected to the one right, now, portal of entry which is through the MCO. So we're really trying to make sure that we do what we can do there to begin to facilitate that transition and support.

We're not -- this group's not trying to become another system to serve children in the sense that we're competitive or trying to compete. It's just trying to figure out ways in which we
can assess case management support. The school part is primarily going to be prevention and primarily intervention and then trying to help facilitate connections to the broader MCO system to get children who are in more dire need into system supports that will help them.

So the idea has been -- and we've been meeting for about a year now -- to basically get ourselves to the point where we are -- we will create a paper that will look a lot like the Government's Task Force recommendations. That is a bigger broader piece. Also, we will create specific policy statements for change inside the school systems, and we will look for broader, more general legislative changes about systems for the long session that's next January and February.

We will have the recommendations done on the 15th. The 20th, we'll meet. As I said earlier, we'll look at duplication, we'll look at what we need to do to make changes to kind of put things into sequence and priority within each of the six areas. We will then turn that over to a group of folks that we have, and again, this is all voluntary. No one -- everyone is doing this just because they want to, which is tremendous.
Basically, we'll write that paper and we'll get the recommendations in play.

We will present to the State Board of Education in August. Because we are implying that there will be change within the school system, we want them to hear and see what we're talking about. The State Board -- based on the Leandro case, we've had to start talking about what we do from a collaborative point of view.

And so I was actually in Savannah at an OSEP meeting on the 1st when they did it, but Tom -- not Tom -- Matt Hopkins and Lauren Holahan basically presented about a ten-minute presentation to the State Board on the 1st just about doing more about collaboration and what we're doing as an agency to collaborate with other agencies, but it was on this topic. And based on their response, I think they're going to be very receptive in August, and they're very interested in looking at what it is we can do to make changes. So we're very excited about that.

We'll have everything done by August. We will be ready to start. I was to meet with Senator Barringer yesterday, and she had -- they've got a lot of stuff going on over there, so
I didn't get to meet with her. But we've met with numbers of senators and representatives in support of going forward with this, and we've got a lot direct support there. So we're very excited about what we may be able to do regarding that.

Medicaid funding in public schools---

THE CHAIRPERSON: I think you have a question.

MR. HUSSEY: I'm sorry.

MS. SIMMONS: The Mental Health Initiative, is it under EC or is it located in the---

MR. HUSSEY: No, huh-uh. It's not located anywhere. It's a coalition of people who've come together. One of the things -- in the recommendations that went forward in the Governor's Task Force on Mental Health, there is an attempt to create what's called the Children's Cabinet, and actually I would love for this to sit within that context.

The Children's Cabinet is not cabinet-level people, but people at really my level, at the division level that can actually do -- you know, we're the worker bee people. We actually have other people who are truly the
worker bee people, but we push them to work. So I mean it's -- so hopefully that comes to fruition. We've been talking -- when we meet with legislators, we're saying -- and the reason -- the purpose for that is to make sure that we've got a place where we're all doing the same thing and talking about the same thing and looking at policy implications as we adjust ourselves by department.

And this came out of the Juvenile Justice side that Billy Lassiter -- he was in charge of the Governor's Task Force for the Mental Health side, and he is -- he put that out there, but we've joined hands with him. We think it's a very important piece to have a multiagency group overseeing the development of all these things moving forward, and it's been something we've needed for a long, long time. And, you know, hopefully the Governor will see this and the legislature as well and try to put something forward.

So that's -- so right now, it doesn't sit anywhere. It's a coalition. We meet here because we have space, and so it's looked like it's a special education thing, and we were the ones who got it going, but we didn't try to get it
going as an educational piece. We got it going
trying to bring this coalition together because we
knew it wasn't something we could do from our end.
It has to be across all the agencies and it has to be -- we have to have that groundswell and
something to push it forward.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Just regarding the
schools, since that's what we do, could you give
us an example of maybe what the hope will be---

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. Okay.

THE CHAIRPERSON: ---of the impact
that we could see in the schools?

MR. HUSSEY: Well, I'm meeting this
summer with folks who are school counselors -- the
school counselor organization, the school social
worker organization, and the school psychology
organization to talk about what it is that we
already do for kids that are in need of mental
health services, and we do it -- we do a lot of
things already.

And basically an example would
be -- back to pre-K so our first transition. So
we've got kids coming out of zero to three who
have mental health issues, and they're moving into
the schools. If we're able to get school social
workers to be able to be billed for the case management support of that, then when those kids come into the schools, we're able to do assessments, we're able to do case management coordination to actually help connect those kids to service delivery options inside the county, inside an LEA, and help support the development of programming and, therefore, also be there as part of the school environment and helping to assist moving those cases forward as they go. So that as we develop child and family teams, we've got someone from the school that are there to do that. So that's an example of something that would happen within the schools. We would also work through PBIS and other structures to do more in the way of awareness around mental health issues, do what we can do for primary prevention at that point, and then -- I'm going to use that term again -- primary intervention, that first level of intervention to start working with kids that we know already have problems, that have issues. And we're doing that now, but to be able to kind of come back and -- it runs right into the Medicaid in the schools piece.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.
MR. HUSSEY: So I mean we're looking
to see what we can do with that. So that's an
example of what could happen and what it could
look like. There are some things like -- school
psychologists could actually -- if they do direct
service now -- I mean there are things that could
happen differently, but there are some things that
are already going on. The school social workers
and school counselors are already doing it in the
schools.

So the Medicaid piece. I think I
told you-all that they forgot about us. When they
did the big Medicaid reform, they forgot about
schools, and pretty much, you know, we just kind
of got -- we're only at $54 million, so that's --
I mean that's not even a drop in that bucket.
It's part of a drop in the bucket when you look at
the total money.

So the very positive piece of this is
that the plan that went to CMS, which is the
federal Medicaid group, last week had us in the
plan. So we got ourselves back in the plan and we
got in the plan fee-for-service which means that
we're not under the capitated managed care
component of the broader plan, which would have
been very difficult to do within an IEP structure, and right now, the only billing structures out there are for special education.

While we were talking to them about being forgotten, we gave them an opportunity to talk to us about expanding services. So we made it into the House bill -- House budget bill, not only did we get in there -- well, we got into the Medicare transformation bill too as law, but we're in there not as a -- not as a capitated plan but as fee-for-service, but we had, inside the budget plan, two options for studies, one, to look at expansion and, two, to look at the actual rate structure because there's a difference there within the rate structure that we've got to deal with.

And that came across to the Senate. Now the Senate has not put us in their budget bill, and I'm not sure we're going to get in their budget bill. But in the process of doing this, I have been meeting with the Division of Medical Assistance, which is the Medicaid state agency here in North Carolina, and I met with them last Friday. And so whether we get in the budget bill or not, we have a promise from them -- and there
were way too many witnesses in there for them to
back away -- a promise from them to sit down to do
those -- to figure out how to do those studies.

So we are going to move forward to
look at expanding services both in the area of
special education but then more broadly for those
things I was just talking about where if we were
in any other agency other than the schools, we
could bill for that case management and that
support of that service for the pre-K. We could
bill for what the psychologists and social workers
and counselors are doing in that primary
prevention piece, and there is some that we could
do even -- I mean in the primary intervention
piece, and there's some we could even do in the
intervention piece.

So we're looking at potentially
another $50 million that would be available to
public schools, and again, we're still right at
100 million, which may now equal a drop in the
bucket for Medicaid, but that is a significant
amount of dollars for schools. And, again, the
nice thing about it is we were able to sell it
because there's no increase in state dollars.

So when we talk about doing this, the
state dollars that are already present both through special education that are allocated to the systems are a match, where in the private providers, there actually has to be a real match on the other side of that -- well, it's really about a third, I guess, because you get two-thirds of that -- so about a third of from the State that's a direct match.

And so we were able to sell the legislature that you can give us new federal money without putting any state money up, and a nice buzz line when you're in there talking to them. So it actually worked for them to understand. So these two things are wrapped up together, the Mental Health Initiative and this Medicaid piece. They're both there in support of one another, though they are two different things entirely at some level.

THE CHAIRPERSON: May I ask a question?

MR. HUSSEY: Sure.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So we're talking about students who already -- who would already be eligible for Medicaid?

MR. HUSSEY: Medicaid, yes.
THE CHAIRPERSON: So these are kids who have Medicaid.

MR. HUSSEY: And not only just eligible, but at that particular point in time, are able to be billed for. The place where it's going to change and be different where we're really going to have to take a look at it is with the regular ed kids that we're talking about -- not the special ed kids but regular kids---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Right.

MR. HUSSEY: ---and what we do in the way of looking at medical necessity. Now they're eligible for the services if they were in another situation. So there's going to be some adjustment. We're going to have to work through this, and there are going to probably be some things we would want that we won't be able to get. But I think once we opened the door -- we've been trying to do since about 1993. So we've finally got the door open and they're willing to listen to us, and so I think we've got a real good chance to move it forward.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And be cognizant of the situation that we discussed -- I think it may have -- it may have been Laura who came to the
Council meeting, was it last year---

MR. HUSSEY: Uh-huh. Yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: ---and was explaining the conflict between -- I don't know if it was a conflict -- but the issue between schools billing for speech therapy and then---

MR. HUSSEY: And private providers.

THE CHAIRPERSON: ---and private providers billing for speech because that's what I was thinking. If the kid has Medicaid already and the school is billing for, you know, services, then, you know, is that -- or have you gotten that far?

MR. HUSSEY: They would still be eligible because these are different service definitions so they can actually bill for different things. And let me just give you an update on that. If you remember, we were in a -- we are in a battle with DMA over that particular piece, and right now, we have gone to CMS, and CMS has notified DMA that they're looking into this. And so were waiting for a ruling from CMS on whether or not what they're doing is appropriate under the policies.

So we don't know yet what they're
going to say. They were concerned. They've heard our side. They've heard their side. Now they're -- and they move about as quickly as our government body does. So it could be awhile before we hear, but they are doing an interpretation of that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we're right at 12:10, and you still have a couple of the pieces left. So I'll leave it to you guys to decide how you want to -- now, you know, at the other location, we would have, you know, a working lunch. This is new for us, so this is one of the things that we'll have to decide. I think maybe lunch was going to be in the back room.

So how do you want to handle it? Do you want to take time and have lunch and come back? Do you want to work through lunch?

MR. HUSSEY: I'll be glad to talk to you while you're eating, if it's not going to cause indigestion.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Is that okay with everybody?

(Multiple affirmative responses.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So if you will just give us a couple of minutes and let us
get lunch, and then we'll be back.

(A lunch recess was taken from 12:09 p.m. to 12:32 p.m.)

MR. HUSSEY: MTSS, I think we talked about that. I'll just review it real quickly. We're now in the second year of implementation of rollout, and as I said to you earlier, Cohorts 3 and 4 will start this year. Cohorts 1 and 2 -- 1 will finish by the beginning of January, 2 will finish by the end of the year, and the other two are starting up -- Cohort 3 in August and Cohort 4 in January.

I did want to say just one more thing about the LEA self-assessment. She went through that. I really -- the big thing is that everyone looks to the State for data, but the State has no data. What we have is local data, and we pull it up and report it. So the LEA self-assessment was really about our -- is our attempt to help LEAs take a look at their priority issues, their strengths and their weaknesses so that our outcomes begin to change.

We can't -- we realize that -- and it's pretty much driving our SSIP -- that we can't impact by coming up with some strategy from here.
about how we're going to make change in the LEAs. We can't force that to happen. It's got to happen at the LEA level around those pieces. So that is what we're trying to do. And, like I said, it's been very difficult for our guys up here who have been sectionally-driven. That's section.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MR. HUSSEY: I wanted to clear that up because I realized what I said. But as a section, they always operated independent of one another doing what they did by section, and what we've now said is you've got to do this by region based on the data we get from the LEAs on what their needs are. We will customize our support and what we do in the context of that information.

Obviously, there's been some -- and I said it on the webinar yesterday -- I don't know if you were listening, but I just flat out forgot about the two weeks in the first of August before school started. I mean we were basically saying, "We're not going to train, we're not going to train, we're not going to train. We're going to wait till we do this." But we forgot about that time which is so important for schools to get certain pieces of information.
So we're adjusting that, but instead of going through consultants, it's going through our -- so individual consultants like -- we talked about Lauren. So instead of OT things going through Lauren's only, it has to go through the regional consultant to say we need -- we need OT help so that we can begin to take a look at what's happening and begin to organize that and the case management.

All those plans are due on June 30th or July 1, and we all, including myself, have 11 of those that we will read. So we've got a hundred people in our division. Every one of us, including myself and Sherri, will have 11 plans to read to be able to give feedback on when we start in August to look at the plan. So this is a concerted effort on our part.

I want to jump to House Bill 657. They actually were -- I almost gave you-all an opportunity to get up and leave to go over there, if you wanted to, to the legislative office building, and stand just so that they would see that people are interested.

MS. LaCORTE: Did they have---

MR. HUSSEY: So at 11:00 -- it was at
11:00. We were right in the middle of everything.

MS. LaCORTE: Okay. Did they have a vote or just a discussion?

MR. HUSSEY: No. It's just in the committee right now. It hasn't come out yet for a vote. But basically what House Bill 657 is doing is going back to Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and Trig, and the implications are immediate for special ed. Virtual Public School, which basically oversees the majority of our OCS programming for children, will have no math whatsoever because they have no way to get that content up and ready by the start of school. So all of our OCS kids would be without math.

It would dramatically impact any child who has -- any child who has difficulties with math in that we've got lots of kids who are SLD in math who are exempt from Algebra I. Now I want to make sure you-all hear this because being exempted from Algebra I doesn't mean they don't take the course. It just means that they're not going -- not be able to not graduate if they don't pass the course.

But what happens with most of those kids is that we end up coming up with other maths
for them to take. Well, this bill also removes CTE maths, which are the majority of the maths that we end up participating in completely out of the structure. So they're no longer going to be allowed to be used as math substitutes. So that not only impacts those exempted from -- because of the SLD piece -- from Algebra I, but those other kids who look at the waiver.

There's a waiver out there. A lot of kids can get through Math I and Math II, but really are not able to get through Math III, and Math IV, and by taking the CTE courses away, you've taken away the courses that they could go back and do as substitutes. Now they could also do Foundations and Introduction to Math -- if they've taken those courses along the way, they can come back and pick those up. So there is a way for them, but it takes away a good part of the possibility.

There's no real reason why this got done other than they wanted to. So please -- we sent something out yesterday through CASE. We've contacted Disability Rights. We've contacted ECAC. We contacted Duke Law. We contacted pretty much anybody we could find out there who would see
this as an issue to speak, and obviously what it also does, beyond that, is goes back and -- I think certainly people have had issues with math standards, but we just changed those standards -- the State Board just passed new standards in June -- June 1. So it would go back and run in conflict with that. They want to start it immediately. You know, they want to go back to it immediately.

So, anyway, please talk to your representatives and to your senators and let them know. We can send something -- we've got information we've sent out. We will be glad to send it out to each one of you-all. There's a paragraph or so with specific implications and issues with special ed, and then just last night, DPI put something together that's broader for all of -- all the children so you can see the impact and influence of that. It's significant and substantive and something that we need to work with.

ESSA. I haven't gotten into calling it "ESSA" yet or anything else. To me, it's still "E-S-S-A." We just finished last Friday our first round of public comment. The first round of
public comment was really intended to bring in feedback. So we've gotten lots and lots of feedback from people around the state around their concerns and issues, priorities, things that they want to see.

From now until the fall, we will be working to basically take that information and put it into a plan. So we'll have another round of public comment in the fall that will basically give you more of an idea of where we are as a state around the various issues. I did sit on that internal departmental committee and am a part of the group that's going to be looking at what we do for children with other learning needs or alternative learning needs. So that's ELL, our special ed kids, and our other kids with learning difficulties.

So in the fall, we will basically start that series again. Probably in December, I will bring you what will be the draft of that initial plan for you-all to take a look at and to give comment to.

ECATS, we've been talking about it all day. We are actually in the last round of negotiations or last rounds of negotiations with
vendors. We've gone through the process of review. It's called BAFO, best and final offer, another acronym, and so we're in the process of working with the vendors now to try to work out specifics as to reporting processes and what's happening. We hope to be done in the next month completely with an identified provider.

I've teased with you guys before about this whole concept of pregnant amnesia, you know, when you forget about what it took to get that baby out. I forgot the politics behind this thing. This has just been a nightmare to get it through, but we're now there. Two and a half years later, we're almost done.

We will have it ready to roll, I think -- not I think -- we will have it ready to roll in the start of '17-18 stateside. We hope to be ready to go in January of this coming year in '17 to work out the kinks and get it into systems, and as I said to you-all before, we will not go to specific pilot sites to do it. What we will do is spread out across the state both in charter schools and regular schools and have them do smaller bites so that we're not impacting anyone's system too much and work our way through it that
way, but we're excited about that piece.

Teacher recruitment. We've all alluded to it here today. This is the first time in North Carolina history that anybody that I know of can remember that we couldn't even find elementary school teachers, so not just special ed teachers but elementary teachers. It's bad.

We've got politics happening this year. There's a big vote in November, so people are talking about raises and other things. I'm hoping some of that will help.

But, you know, we're at a 30 percent decrease in the number of people engaging in our colleges of education inside the state system. So we're down -- the number of teachers available are down, and that's going to be over the next several years. So it's not going to get a whole lot better quickly. I sit on a committee here, and we're looking specifically at EC certification and also reciprocity, which we are going to have to engage in.

I don't have real answers for you on either one of those pieces right now, but one of the things we have suggested -- and we did get at least some positive pieces here -- if you
remember, teachers coming into the state and
teachers who are -- for special ed and the general
K-12 classification for special ed have to take
both the reading and math test. We're having a
tremendous number of teachers not passing the math
test. So one of the things we're looking at is
utilizing Reading and Math Foundations that we've
talked as a way -- as an alternative potentially.
This is not a go yet, but we got some positive
feedback from that group, and there would have to be a board policy change.

But it's very interesting because I was here the year before I came into the
director's position as a representative of CASE, which is the state organization of state
directors -- I mean of local directors, and trying to get that done instead of the tests. Said let us put teachers to work doing the work and having experiential opportunities to do this so they can understand what it is versus having them to take a test. Smart kids can pass a test. They may not know anything about reading and math, but they can pass a test. And we put that out there.

This would not take the place of the test, but it may be an alternative piece on kids
going through our -- and you can speak to this from the Western Carolina perspective, but folks have ramped up their support of those tests and what needs to happen, and colleges are working there. We would probably use this for teachers coming in and lateral entry teachers as a way of trying to support other things. We're not trying to interfere with what the universities are doing, but just looking at it as an alternative.

Another thing that we're looking at, over the last couple of years, we've had -- actually for about ten years, we've had a group called Teacher to Teachers and pushed people towards North Carolina if they were interested in teaching in North Carolina, but they never really followed through beyond that. Once they got to our system, there was no real interface with them, and we weren't really sure how many people we ever got out of that. So we've changed the contract with them and reduced it quite significantly because we were spending lots of money and we were not getting outcomes.

What we're trying to do now -- what's interesting that we've been talking to the students, in the last couple weeks, with the
universities -- various universities and
[inaudible] that people are interested in doing
that come to us which I think is very significant
and very positive.

But in talking about that, we started
talking about teacher match and how do we begin to
profile teachers to understand better who they are
as a person and as a teacher and thinking about
looking for -- looking for volunteers at the
university level to do this with student teaching
to start with, to go and get profiles of teachers,
and it's like Match.com for lack of a better
analogy, but really looking at who they are
profile-wise and then profiling the schools that
we're putting them in as student teachers to try
to see if there's a way in which we can look at
match and see what the impact is in making that
connection and match, not only for that first
year, but how long do we keep teachers in schools
if we get a decent match.

Now we know the one variable is the
principal, and if the principal goes, we've got
problems. But we're just trying to figure out --
we've got to figure out something. What we're
doing right now, we're not getting enough and
we're not keeping teachers in schools. So what can we do? So we are looking with this group to do some pilot sites around the state, working with the universities and systems to see if they would be willing to do this as another means of looking at how we retain teachers.

So we'll let you know, as that one moves forward, how it's going to work and who really our volunteers are and what we're doing, but we've got to -- you know, we just have to step outside of the box and do something different.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I have a question.

MR. HUSSEY: Sure.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm wondering -- I don't know if we talked about this at the last meeting or not, but has there been any consideration given to some type of assistance, be it -- I hate to say scholarship, but scholarships or support or working with districts to help the teacher assistants who want to become teachers but who are facing barriers. What I've been noticing in a couple of districts is that the TAs seem to really outlast many of the teachers. Like, the teachers is just a -- it's been a revolving door, but the TAs have been constant.
And I've spoken with several -- I talk to TAs all the time who really are interested in teaching, but for whatever reason, be it financial reasons or family obligations or whatever, they can't go back to school to get what they need in order to teach. So -- but that seems to be a really -- it seems like it would be a really good source, a place to look to start developing some of the assistants into--- Did we talk about this at the last meeting?

MS. SIMMONS: Yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We did?

MS. SIMMONS: Yes.

MR. HUSSEY: There are opportunities for TAs to move forward. I don't -- do you do anything at Western? There are various universities across the state who are doing that -- trying to do that now, and there is support for them if they're interested in doing that. There's some different things with tuition costs. And so it is a good idea.

THE CHAIRPERSON: This is really like -- it's happening now. Do we know what universities or we can we identify which schools or---
MR. HUSSEY: I can get that list for you. I don't know them all off the top of my head, but there are multiple ones doing it, yeah.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. That would be good information to have.

DR. CARPENTER: And one of the things that the State has had in place for several years is those folks who are teacher assistants, one of the barriers has been the student teaching semester. If the system is willing to let them switch places with their teacher and be the person, you know, who is -- you know, full-time charges the kids or work somewhere else, you know, during that time. That's been encouraged by the State for years and years, but it's up to the system to allow that to happen.

And so there are several folks that if people want to, they will, and then there are some that -- some systems that, for whatever reason, they don't. But that's -- that alone has been a major barrier, and the scholarship loan that the state agency has provided has never been used -- all of it for the -- and that may be that folks don't know about it, they don't know how to take advantage of it, or whatever -- and whatever
is there. So there are incentives and supports.

MR. HUSSEY: We offer money through

the Division for teachers, yeah.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I didn't know. So

I mean---

DR. CARPENTER: They don't always

know that, but it's a real good source, although

there are fewer of them than there were before.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Right.

DR. CARPENTER: It's a real good

source. And one of the things, you know, that

really helps -- the diversity of teachers is, you

know, 80 percent female and 80 percent white, but

the teacher assistant core is more diverse, and

that's a place to really make a difference.

THE CHAIRPERSON: It sure is. I

think the window of opportunity may really be open

now to start really. So maybe districts that

wouldn't consider it before may really be more

inclined to consider some of these options.

MR. HUSSEY: The vacancies are

tremendous. Did you end up -- how many at the end

of the year?

MS. SMITH: Oh, we probably had -- we

probably had at least 30, if not more.
THE CHAIRPERSON: To take advantage
of some of these---

MS. SMITH: 30 vacancies.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh. Okay.

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. I mean it's---

MS. SMITH: This is Gina. So we really are working with our TA groups and supporting them to use the scholarship money as well as principals are identifying their TAs that they feel like really just need that extra support. So we're willing -- principals are more than willing to work with them to help them get their student teaching or whatever it is they need to do. So we're tapping into that, and I have more -- the other thing that happened this year that isn't ideal -- but it happened -- is we had teacher assistants who were in schools that had vacancies who were very -- who were very ready and willing to work with other people on their teams. So they ended up being long-term subs because they could do that. We replaced the -- you know, we finagled it so we had enough people, but you have to be willing to think outside of the box a little bit.

DR. CARPENTER: And, Gina, one other
factor that's kind of -- it's become more of a
barrier at least in some of the rural areas -- is
we have so many assistants that are driving buses
because they can't get anybody else to drive a bus
in the system, and that makes it harder to go to
school. I see people shaking their heads, so---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Laura and then

Elena.

MS. HALL: This is Laura Hall. As a
personal view into things as this ties to EC
children in the typical classroom in an inclusive
setting, my daughter is a second-year teacher and
had a large number of EC students within her
classroom this year, as did her teaching --
teaching -- you know.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

MS. HALL: Okay. And they're both
about to quit. I mean they -- they're not going
to, but -- or one of them may. My daughter is
not. She's going back. But as it pertains to
melding regular ed with EC ed and support of
teachers and teacher retention, there's a big
problem there, and she's an exceptional teacher --
both of them are -- but ill-equipped to having the
supports.
And she has a sibling -- my daughter -- other daughter, her sister, is a young adult with disabilities now. So it's not that she is ignorant of the needs in that, but I think something has to be looked at not just with, you know, getting new teachers, but with the young bright teachers you have that at two years are ready to say, "This is -- this is not worth it even though I passionately they love this job. I can't---"

MR. HUSSEY: How old are her kids?

MS. HALL: Second grade. And I worked within a different school district as -- under at-risk category with second- and third-graders as a tutor for several years, and I had never seen a class -- it was---

MR. HUSSEY: Her classroom?

MS. HALL: Her classroom in that setting. But the thing was, was that she wasn't the only one experiencing it. It was multiple classrooms. I think the thing I wanted to tie it back to is what you talked about this transition piece, and it beginning early and being intentional. I think administrators really need to be intentional in their placement of students
at that level and not overloading your young
teachers with -- you know, just because of
experience, they still need more time to not have
to try to manage that level.

MR. HUSSEY: If you're talking about
inclusion, I mean most of the time you're probably
looking at a third or less of that class being
special ed. You want it no more than that. And
so any time you see classrooms that are above that
threshold, then what you know is that someone
wasn't thinking, wasn't being intentional about
what they do.

And I will tell you that obviously
it's more difficult for a second-year teacher, but
it's difficult for any teacher when the majority
of their children are at risk and the level of
differentiation that you have to do within the
class to do what you need to do.

MS. HALL: That was her experience.
I think one problem in second grade too is, some
things are not yet identified, and so you have
emerging problems in second grade that are just
beginning to be identified. So your number that
you start with on paper is lower than it actually
is, but I'm just saying, from a standpoint of this
issue, I think the State's going to have a much larger problem if this young teacher group is not -- that you do have right now is not supported and helped and a lot of intentional focus put on their classrooms and what they look like.

DR. CARPENTER: A promising thing that folks might not be aware of, UNC Charlotte, UNC Greensboro, and us and some of the privates also is the dual licensure programs. And so at my institution, you can't -- as an undergraduate, you can't major in special education by itself. It's called inclusive education, and everyone does all the things that the elementary ed students do as well as all the things in special ed, EC general curriculum K-6. We had to make room in four years to do it, but we're not the only ones that are doing that. I think that's helpful at the preservice-level.

Once they get there, you're talking about the supports too, and there are -- in the UNC System around the state, we're doing more to support beginning teachers. It's not everywhere, but it's making a difference in the retention of those folks and having coaches that know more about those classrooms and can do that.
Charlotte has a good program where they do that, and it's making a difference.

MR. HUSSEY: I think her name is Dr. Chapman, who is the person---

DR. CARPENTER: Yes, Dr. Chapman.

MR. HUSSEY: She was at a meeting we had not long ago, and it's interesting because we got lots of pressure from HR people at the local level to go back to the old HOUSSE, which means that we certify people somehow in some other category, and what we said to them -- what I said that day was, you know, "We don't want any part of the HOUSSE anymore. We will leave that alone. What we really need to do is look at the university system accepting this dual certification or dual licensure process as a way to go."

And, of course, the first response from the HR people was, "You're just going to lose them all to regular ed because they're going to leave."

And I said, "Well, that's -- we lose them anyway. So what we really do need to do is increase the N. If we increase the N, yes, we lose them, but we've got more of them." And they
understand -- I think the big issue that we have in special ed -- and I mentioned it earlier -- is getting what we do in intervention back in the content in regular ed. When you have people who understand content and who understand intervention, then the translation and the generalization of those skills are available at a way in which we're not doing it right now.

So, to me, that's the way to go, and what we said to them was, you know, "That's what need. We don't need to go to HOUSSE. We don't need to set up some arbitrary system out there that we can't have any control over accountability just to find teachers."

You know, I hope they hear more and more of that from many different sources because, to us, that's the only way we're going to step out of this mess.

DR. CARPENTER: And the other thing that you mentioned earlier is about the matching of what makes successful teachers and different kinds of things. And so we don't have all the answers yet, but the research in North Carolina is going on to do that. So those things that we call noncognitive, like personality things, you know,
we're engaged in a lot of research there, pretty big numbers of folks, and we know a little bit so far.

You know, it's not a surprise to you that conscientiousness makes a difference, but you really didn't know that before. You just expected that that was true, but you didn't have the data to do that. So we are finding some other kinds of things. So that's -- it's not overnight work, but it's going on, just to let folks know.

MS. ROBERTS: This is Elena Roberts. You mentioned briefly -- like, you touched on reciprocity, and I was just wondering. I know that there are a number persons -- again, you know, there's this huge military presence here and a huge military spouse presence here.

MR. HUSSEY: Right.

MS. ROBERTS: And I know, for example, there is an organization that has been working across the states to get basically provisional licenses for military spouse attorneys so that I don't have to go through the same bar admission process every state I move to. And I didn't know if that was something that was being looked at for teachers, you know, to open that
population.

MR. HUSSEY: Yes, it is. They are looking, and actually there are processes by which that could -- they get -- they can actually move in quicker than others based on what's happening right now, and I didn't want to go into a lot of detail on reciprocity because I really want to get into this first set of meetings with these guys.

For lots of folks who have been around a long time like myself, reciprocity was a much simpler deal many years ago, and we had agreements with states and that was pretty much was it. You came in from that state, and you were certified. Life went on. You came in, started work, and your license followed shortly thereafter, and you were good.

That's not the way it works now, and so we've really got to get back into it and see what's happening. But it's a huge thing. We just lost a VI teacher to another state because we couldn't get her through the reciprocity piece in a small county where finding that person again is going to be next to impossible. So I mean we've got -- we've got lots of issues, but I just kind of wanted to give you-all an update on that.
I know I'm into your electing a new person now, so -- but this is a big issue, and I just wanted to make sure you-all knew that we were moving forward with it. We're looking at it. We're trying to make some decisions. We're reallocating our dollars and just pushing people here to try to find other things that we can do to actually hold onto them once we do that.

And that's kind of it as far as my updates.

MS. SIMMONS: I saw that emergency permits were going to be allowed. Would that affect special education?

MR. HUSSEY: Yes. Special ed is in there. We're looking to make comment on that. Obviously there are concerns about emergency placements, but as I said to Carol Ann yesterday, it's what we'll have to do right now. We have to be able to talk about it, and we have to come back and make our points. You know, obviously, from our point of view, if you're not a special ed teacher and you're delivering special ed, there's a problem for the system.

So, you know, we're dealing with that and we have to deal with that, but at the same
time, we don't have bodies. And so we've got to have some bodies. And the one thing you need to know about that emergency is that's one time and one time only, and if you're not engaged in some process at the end of that point in time to get your license -- so if you're not already in lateral entry or if you're not already in some other process, you're gone.

And so it is a one-time thing, but it -- you know, it just gives you some sense of the straits we're in, and you know, that's one of those things that we're dealing with. You know, what we're really worried about are charter schools where we don't have enough teachers to go around for the previous system, and now we're, you know, over 160 of those. You know, if you've got people moving in and out of those, that's a problem.

This emergency thing -- I mean one of the things that could be problematic is that we wouldn't have the same person repeating, but we could have an emergency-placed teacher in that school three years in a row, I mean, and that's street legal, you know, according to the policy. So I mean we've got to look at what it means for
the implications on our side in developing
programming. So, again, it's is a huge issue.

MS. SIMMONS: You mentioned
strategies for recruitment. How about retention
of EC teachers?

MR. HUSSEY: Well, again, I think
we've -- we're looking at this match piece
because, to me, that's about retention. The more
we figure out about who someone is and what those
skills are and matching them to schools where that
match works, then we've got recruitment
opportunities -- I mean retention opportunities.
And that's -- we see the need to do that, and like
I said, we're working with this one group to start
to look at some things.

Obviously, the colleges of education
are looking at that as well. We're realizing that
we've got to look at these attributes, we've got
to understand them, and we've got to understand
the integration of those attributes into the
school systems and what the impact of that is.
But, you know, that's pretty much what we're doing
right.

MS. SIMMONS: I heard in Laura's
voice her great concern for her daughter's class.
Is there any advice we could give her before school starts next year to make her third year better?

MR. HUSSEY: Without knowing the circumstances, no. I mean I -- you know, I would certainly -- if I was -- if I was the special ed director in that county, the thing that I would be doing would be talking to the principals about numbers in classes. I mean that -- again, you know, Charlotte is too big for Gina to get down in the schools.

I had a perfect world in Alamance. I was big enough to have some money to do something and small enough that I knew every single principal. So if that was happening in my schools, we would go in and say, "Hey, you know, that's crazy. You can't do that," and that's why -- again, why we went in, in the high schools, and in the first couple years, we did all the planning so they could understand what it looked like and why it would work that way if they did it.

So I think if I was -- it would be that special ed director's responsibility to go talk to that building-level person because
that's -- like I said, it doesn't matter whether
you're a second-year teacher or there ten years,
if you get nothing but children who are at risk
that you're going to have to differentiate every
bit of the instruction that you provide, you know,
the possibility of losing that teacher is just
about as good for the ten-year, after a couple
years of that same experience, as a two-year.

MS. HALL: This is a question
regarding my role in Regions 6 as far as
connecting to those EC directors and those
principals. I've been focusing on connecting to
parents and teachers, but it seems that especially
in assessing unmet needs that I've got to get the
EC director and the building -- get the building
level connected.

MR. HUSSEY: We've had more open
dialogue today than I think we've had in the two
years that I've been here, and I will tell you the
buckets that we are uncovering relative to unmet
needs and things that you-all could advocate for
from this group have -- we're almost to the second
hand here today on a number of things to really
take on, I mean, because this is huge, and it's
about retention of teachers. I mean what do you
do to keep these.

And the concern about the whole teacher recruitment/retention issue is a huge thing that we could talk about from this group and look at what you could do to organize by district, start talking to folks, have you-all participate in our regional meetings coming in to talk to directors as reflection from the Council.

I mean there are lots of things that are coming up here today that are just giving me ideas off the top of my head of things that you-all could do to move forward.

MS. HALL: And I did make an initiative on meeting with the -- at the Region 6 EC directors meetings, but I was told to contact somebody else, somebody who's like over that group as opposed to -- just so I could be -- that my name could be known, but that's not the same. I don't want just my name to be known to them.

MR. HUSSEY: Reggie? Was the name Reggie?

MS. HALL: I don't -- I've got the e-mail. I can look.

MR. HUSSEY: So you're in 6. Oh.

MS. HALL: I'm in 6.
MR. HUSSEY: Okay. So that would be Nance.

MS. HALL: Yes. Yes. And I have no problem with connecting to her and making myself known. I just -- I think it needs to come from you that there should be a degree of openness to us -- you know, not being at the whole meeting, but being able to have some interaction.

MR. HUSSEY: I will talk to them and make sure that if they hear from you guys that they're okay with that because I'm basically telling you to go there.

MS. HALL: Right. Exactly.

MR. HUSSEY: I think that's what I just said. We'll make sure they hear that.

MS. HALL: Okay. Thank you.

MS. SMITH: And if you'll let me know when you're going, I'll go too.

MS. MEBANE: This is Teresa. The problem that I'm running into when I talk to EC directors is the difficulty in effectively communicating and engaging building administrators. It's -- I mean EC directors have no real power over building administrators.

MR. HUSSEY: And you don't. I
remember I had this mother who kept trying to get
me to fire a principal, and I kept saying, "I
can't do that. I don't have any control over
that." But---

MS. MEBANE: Are there any ideas of
how to reach these folks and make them understand
the importance?

MR. HUSSEY: We are going to host a
general ed piece in the fall so that we can start
talking to administrators about these things. We
talk about relationships. You know, I don't know
what else to tell you other than I mean I don't
think I had any kind of magical piece there, but
you had to go meet these people and sit and talk
with them. You had to hang with them through --
you had to help them problem-solve through other
stuff to where they'd learn to trust you.

Bottom line, they're in control of
their building. You know, they have to understand
that you're going to support them, but at the same
time, you've got to be supporting your program in
the context of that building. And so it's really
a matter of conversation more than anything else.

MS. SMITH: I also think it's -- my
struggle -- this is Gina. Part of my struggle is
generational because I have 168 principals, half of whom only know and understand special education from the experience that they had as a teacher. So it's different from those of us who have been in it longer and experienced it in a different way.

And so we're really just sort of backing up and regrouping in terms of how we are providing professional development to our principals, and a much more customized, like, one-on-one approach with them because they -- what was done to them is what they're doing, is kind of what I see, and so just working through that generational piece is something my team and I are just coming to grips with here in the last little bit.

And I think when it really hit me was when Carol Ann -- when I saw Carol Ann's video, the 40 years of IDEA, and I started to think about how -- like, what I knew about it when I started, and then I looked around me at the principals that I'm working with now, and they were students in classrooms. It's just -- it's just different. And from what they came through, a lot of our students were still in self-contained classes.
So they don't really -- it's just a -- like, we're trying to really look at it -- and I have a daughter who's a high school science teacher, and you better believe she keeps me straight. She had a VI kid this year that we just about had to take off the gloves.

But it's important we don't -- I think one of things with her that I've realized is we don't spend enough time with general education teachers talking about IEPs and their -- their part of the ownership of IEPs. And so that's the other thing, is we're developing our revised IEP training. Gen ed teachers, if we expect them to be with our students the majority of the time, then we need to have -- their voice needs to be one of the loudest voices at the table.

So it's things like that that I think we're just sort of transitioning into a new -- into a new era and a different -- and kind of a different -- I don't know. Do you get that, Mary, that feel?

MS. LaCORTE: I do. This is Mary. I was going to say earlier that it was very encouraging that probably four years ago, something like that, we were invited to co-train
with a [inaudible] staff member, who's no longer there anymore. I can't remember his name right now. He was a dynamite guy.

There was a group of principals up in the Wilkesboro area or a coalition. They belonged to the same group, and they decided in their own -- they had identified their need to know more about special education so they could be more supportive, and we thought that was outstanding. And they really -- some of them came because the group had come -- had come together and decided this, and a few there were really thinking they wouldn't learn anything.

But the co-training was great, and we identified a number of resources -- and I'll be glad to send them out to the whole Council -- on helping school building principals and others, and a lot of it was CEC things and some other things about really supporting them in their growth around understanding special ed better, but also understanding what they could do in their buildings to make things better, and I'd be glad to share that.

It's not rocket science, but they've got -- I think, Gina, you're a hundred percent on
target, is that special ed's important, but it's not -- it's not a priority in terms of -- it is a priority, but it's not the only priority. There's conflicting priorities or competing priorities.

I was going to ask you, on the issues of teachers, certainly North Carolina -- or I'm guessing North Carolina is not unique in this issue with losing teachers. Maybe through NASDSE, the national special education association -- maybe someone's got some other ideas in maybe how to do -- I'm sure it's a -- I'm sure it's a topic.

MR. HUSSEY: Well, there's -- actually on the 23rd of this month, there's a meeting inside one of the subcommittees up there. I actually may be the one from NASDSE to go and be a part of that panel, but it's a huge national issue.

MS. LaCORTE: Yeah, I would think it would be.

MR. HUSSEY: And so it's going to be interesting to see what happens.

DR. CARPENTER: This is Dale. I'm going to use up my quota for the whole year this afternoon. But folks may not realize this, but when you talk about teacher shortage and talk
about dealing with the principals. There's a big principal shortage in this state. Lots of systems are having a hard time finding principals, and I know there are schools that had vacant assistant principal jobs almost all year long. I don't know how it is in the areas where other people are, but that's -- so it's not just teachers; it's the principals.

MR. HUSSEY: We are the lowest paying state in the union relative to principal salaries. I don't know. I've used the word "union" a couple of times. In the United States.

MS. HALL: How are you going to ask for some information--- This is Laura Hall. Throughout this process of your report today, there have been several events that have been mentioned of things happening. I wonder if there might be some way for that to be captured for us so that we have an awareness of what's going on in the state, not that we could be at everything.

I mean some of the individuals around this table probably already have a broad idea, but as a parent advocate who does not work professionally also in this area, it would be helpful for me to know because there may be some
things that I would like to go to or at least
follow up on.

MR. HUSSEY: Well, the next big thing
is, the summer institute is in Greensboro, but I
think they're primarily full at this point.

MS. HUDGENS: There are some openings
for various things.

MR. HUSSEY: There may be a few
openings. Vicki and I were talking earlier.
There is a contact person Deanna Snead. She's on
the website. You can call and check to see what's
there. During the fall conference where we have
parent strands, but also a broad 3,000 plus people
every year who are there, and there are lots of
things of interest depending on where you are in
the way of behavior, academics, engagement of
parents. You name it and I mean it's pretty much
there.

MS. HALL: So that information can be
found on our website as far as---

MR. HUSSEY: It's on our website
under the fall conference and summer institutes.

MS. HALL: Okay.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any other
questions?
MS. GEORGE: I actually have one little question that kind of touches on some of what has been discussed today. I was wondering if in the LEA assessment -- self-assessment, is there anywhere where we have any documentation about the -- anything being done for Disability Awareness Month which was mandated several years ago in October, that the school districts would do something?

So I'm wondering if that's really being done in the classrooms across the state. I'm thinking that might help bring awareness for principals who may not be as aware of the unique needs of our children.

MR. HUSSEY: It's not in the self-assessment. It is -- different districts do different things and different schools do different things within the districts. We do informational kinds of things coming out, but we don't -- we don't do anything big for the---

MS. GEORGE: I just wondered if there was any kind of data collection. When I walk into my son's school in February, I see Black History month all over the place. I walk in, in October, I see crickets, you know.
MR. HUSSEY: Yeah.

MS. GEORGE: So I'm just wondering, is the disparity there -- because that might be a way of preventing [inaudible] and issues.

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. It's an idea to talk about.

MS. ROBERTS: And when you do see it, it's often restricted to disabilities that can be seen---

MS. GEORGE: Not necessarily mental illness or---

MS. ROBERTS: ---which, you know, not that that's not important, but it's harder for kids to grasp.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Any other questions?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Bill.

MR. HUSSEY: You're very welcome.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You've certainly given us quite a bit to think about. Okay, guys.

MS. OUZTS: Nicole?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MS. OUZTS: Just as a reminder that we need to review the minutes and vote because---
THE CHAIRPERSON: Do we have a quorum?

MS. OUZTS: I'm not saying you have to do it now. I'm just--- I think so.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. We actually have 14 for the quorum. So---

MS. OUZTS: How many are abstaining still?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh. 14 minus four -- 14 minus five.

MS. GRADY: Do we have to abstain just because we weren't there?

MS. HUDGENS: No, you do not.

MR. HUSSEY: No, you don't.

MS. HUDGENS: You do not.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You do not. Are you okay with that? That still won't give us our quorum, though, will it, because we need 13 for the quorum.

DR. CARPENTER: Don't abstentions count in the total votes?

MS. ROBERTS: Yeah, they do. Your abstentions---

DR. CARPENTER: Yes, no, abstentions.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.
MS. ROBERTS: Yeah. Your abstentions still qualify -- I mean you still have a quorum. The abstentions just don't vote as I recall from Roberts Rules of Order.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Then let's review. We can go ahead and do that now since we did say we would come back to that after lunch.

Thank you, Heather.

So, again, I'll just draw your attention -- for those who arrived a little late, here's the hard copy of the transcribed meeting, but the summary is buff. That's in the packet, and if you just want to take a couple of minutes just to review the summary, and then we will vote on whether or not we'll receive these as the minutes for the meeting in March. Was it March? Yes, in March. So just take a couple minutes to review that.

(Council Members reviewed of the Summary of Actions.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Yes, Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. Nicole, I just want to make sure I'm understanding. We're going to vote on the summary?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So my
understanding is that now that meetings are transcribed, we have a verbatim account of what happened during the meeting. So that, yes, a summary has been provided, and we are voting on the summary of the meeting. That is my understanding. Does anyone understand anything any differently?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MR. HUSSEY: But I think it's going to, then, be you-all's decision as to how you want to move forward with whatever document you want to derive from this.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We did make that announcement at the beginning of the meeting -- no, I didn't mean it that way -- that there probably should be another discussion as to whether or not this is something that you want to continue or how it will be used, but you can have that conversation later.

MS. LaCORTE: Just a follow-up question. I don't know if we have [inaudible] we may have to ask Katie Cornetto about whether that's adequate. That's all. I know that we had talked about having a summary just so it was easy
to skip to what our action steps were, and then
what will be posted on the website is -- I'm not
sure -- minutes or a summary?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Those are questions
for -- those are questions for Katie. I started
communicating with her yesterday on some questions
that came up, and I sent a response back this
morning letting her know that I would follow up
with her after we met today. So more information
will be coming out, and for those of you who don't
know, Katie Cornetto is the State Board attorney
who kind of guides us through our procedures and
especially as we're making several transitions
right now.

MS. HUDGENS: You might consider
discussing what your preference might be in case
there is an option so then that way, we wouldn't
have to wait another meeting. If you knew your
parameters and what the Council's preference was,
then we can go ahead and post accordingly.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely, then,
we can open up the floor just for, I guess, a
brief discussion on our thoughts about the
transcript. I don't know how many people read it.
I read through it. I was looking for certain
things. I don't know if anyone read the entire transcript or not. Tish said she read the whole thing. I did hear a comment that it was thorough and that, you know, it was very well-documented, very well-recorded. So does anyone else have any comments they'd like to make about---

MS. MEBANE: This is Teresa. I read through most of it, and because I wasn't there, it really made me feel like I knew what was going on in the meeting.

MS. ROBERTS: And I think as far as it being something that's accessible to the public, I would -- I think the summary is a nice recap, but I think as far as what's posted on the website is that the transcript should be available as an option.

MS. HALL: That was my thought, is that if you have the transcription available to the public, then a summary of actions should be sufficient as minutes, and then we're not bogged down in, you know, did this word get said right and communicated correctly. We have a word-for-word transcript that's available to the public. I found it helpful. I didn't read all the way through the entire thing, but I found it
helpful in refreshing, you know, my memory of what occurred, and I think it's a good option.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You think it's a good option. Okay. So a couple of points for us to consider. One, now that we are actually here in this facility, the meeting is being audio-streamed; and, two, I received a note -- and I'm not sure if it was from Tish or from Katie -- that the requirement is that the audio version be maintained for ten years. Now I do have to get clarification on where it's housed or how it's -- you know, how it's to be maintained. That's a Katie question. But just so you know, that it is -- it will be available.

So now does that change your opinions as to whether or not you want to -- you would like to keep the transcribed meeting minutes?

MS. ROBERTS: This is Elena, and it's probably the lawyer in me talking so discount that if you want, but from a research perspective or for somebody who's trying to get something, listening to six, seven, eight, nine, ten hours of audio is a much more difficult proposition than having a document that you can search through or that you can make searchable with your OCR.
software and that kind of thing. It is also -- I think it actually takes a lot less space as far as being accessible to the public. A PDF of that size is a significantly less amount of bandwidth and space than an audio recording.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Tish?

MS. BNUM: The ten-year record retention is actually IT -- DPI's IT policy. So when you have the public anything, that is their schedule for retaining audio-streaming. So it doesn't matter whether it's the Council, whether it's the State Board, whether it's who is who in the zoo; you know, that's their record retention for audio-streaming.

MS. ROBERTS: So they're going to retain that regardless?

MS. BNUM: Right.

MS. ROBERTS: I think that -- I would think just also in terms of accessibility since, you know, we are concerned about the EC population and accessibility [inaudible].

THE CHAIRPERSON: So am I hearing--- Do we take an official vote?

MS. HUDGENS: I think where I'm interested is what you want posted on the website.
Do you want the transcription or do you want the summary of actions or both?

MS. ROBERTS: I would put both in.

MS. GEORGE: I vote both.

MS. SIMMONS: Does anybody miss the minutes -- the little four to six page minutes that summarize---

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's a valid question.

MS. LaCORTE: I see your point, Vicki.

FEMALE SPEAKER: I kind of do. I kind of do. I feel like -- you know, honestly, the transcript is quite a bit to digest, and this is not that much detail. So something in between is nice.

MS. HUDGENS: So what I would offer you for reflection is that we had three or four meeting minutes that never were approved because a consensus couldn't be reached by the Council. So just consider that when you're weighing your options of whether to go back or to continue.

MS. ROBERTS: I mean if it's a transcript, you have a lot less concern about whether or not what was said or how it was said or
what was meant. So if there is any dispute over
the summary or whatnot, you can easily go back,
and again, if it's printed, it's a lot faster
process than---

THE CHAIRPERSON: So I'll offer this
as well, that up until the last year or so, we
never had any issues whatsoever with the minutes
as they were summarized. You know, that was
really only an issue for, like, the past year, and
I think what made it such a significant issue was
all that was happening during the course of that
year.

So for the new members, first
attendees, that's how we got to the transcribed
copies of the minutes. So I'm just offering that
to say that it is -- you know, if you decide to
get back to the -- if you miss the five or six
pages, I think it's likely that we may not have
the situations that we just experienced over the
year. Does that make sense?

I mean I can't guarantee that, but
I'm pretty comfortable in saying, you know, we
never had the types of problems that we had over
the past year, and I've been with this group now
for -- this is year eight for me. I've never --
I've never experienced that before.

MS. HALL: I'm just concerned that there are a lot of new transitions happening. You're going to MTSS, you've got the State Improvement Plan, and you've got a lot of things going on and there's a lot being communicated to us. If you lose the transcript, you lose a lot of the ability to really go back and look. So that's -- that's my only -- that's my only thought on that.

MS. ROBERTS: If I can piggyback on -- this is Elena. If I can piggyback on Laura for just a second. The other thing is, thinking about it from [inaudible]. You know, when we give our input to these folks and other folks, when they're looking for the support, we say this is the viewpoint or the cross-section part of what we as the Council function to do, being able to go back and look at exactly what our words were and how we expressed it orally, you know, being able to go back into the verbatim is going to be a lot more helpful for them in their advocacy as well.

So, you know, if they're reporting to a legislative committee, they can say, "This is what we got from the Council. This is the
response." You know, that gives them evidence to support those assertions.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Rick?

MR. SMITH: This is Rick, and I guess my question is, if we don't have the transcript, will we still have the oral recording of what was said during our meeting?

THE CHAIRPERSON: As long as---

MR. SMITH: So we will still have that, so we do have something that captures the comments that were made during the meeting.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Right. It would just be a matter of---

MS. ROBERTS: It has to do with -- I think it's accessibility, then, because if you're talking about eight hours of streamed audio versus I can search a 200-page document and I can do a control F on my computer and find keywords. You know what I mean? It's significant -- as someone who reads legislative histories and committee documents on a fairly regular basis, I would so much rather have that than an audio recording.

I'll just be honest.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So it sounds like what I'm hearing is that at least for now, we
would like to keep the transcript and the summary
and have them both posted online---

(Multiple affirmative responses.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: ---and have them
both posted online at least for now. Now you can
revisit this at any point, you know, if you feel,
you know, maybe at some point, you know, next year
or the year after, whenever you want to, you can
revisit this whole thing and decide to do
something else, but for now, is that the consensus
of the group?

DR. CARPENTER: Could I make a
suggestion? Because I'm not going to read the
transcript, but -- I mean you-all might read it,
but I'm not going to read it. So we're going to
probably say you agree with the one-pager, or
whatever it is there, and if we allow folks at
that time when you're approving the last meeting,
to say there was nothing said about this major
outcome and suggest wording for that, that they
could bring that and so amend that -- that
one-pager.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, absolutely.

DR. CARPENTER: That's okay?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely. We can
do that. That's the hope that when they send out the agenda and documents in preparation for the meeting, that you will review the summary, if you find it necessary, to go back and review the transcript, and then when you come to a meeting, be prepared to say, you know, "I would like to add" or "We omitted. Can we please," and then do it that way.

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. I just had one comment. I think I might have been the one that brought up the summary, but that had -- a couple of times ago -- that had absolutely nothing to do with [inaudible] or the transcript at all. It was just my experience on several boards I've sat on, is when you have a lot going on, it is so great to look at your action steps.

It was attached to the minutes, but it was just kind of that piece. And so I just wanted to make sure nobody thought that the summary had anything to do with the timing of doing it by transcript or any other way, and it was always attached. So---

DR. CARPENTER: And some people just use the agenda and just put that the action or the major outcomes right there, and that's---
THE CHAIRPERSON: And that's sufficient.

DR. CARPENTER: ---and that's what they approve.

MS. LaCORTE: Anything was sufficient. It was just to be able to go quickly to, you know, what steps or what actions were taken.

MS. OUZTS: Could I offer -- to piggyback on Dr. Carpenter's comment, you don't have to call it summary of actions. I mean I think more is -- if this format is sufficient, this can be your minutes. You can amend it just as you would, but it's much more straightforward than what's done in the past.

MS. LaCORTE: Heather -- this is Mary -- I think I might only disagree with that in terms of calling it the minutes because this doesn't really capture all the conversations. It just captures all of the actions taken. That would be the only difference.

MS. OUZTS: And I think there's different approaches to what constitutes minutes. Some are very brief, much more brief than this.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And that's -- and
that's what we experienced before. The minutes aren't necessarily a verbatim account of all that happened at the meeting.

MS. HALL: As a part of our meetings, can we have a final page that has action plan -- summary of action plans determined from the meeting, and then -- and then a more typical minutes, though not as long. I think that that's what I'm hearing from Mary is---

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's what this is. We just need to---

MS. LaCORTE: No. I wasn't suggesting something else. I was suggesting -- when I brought that up, it was just months and months and months ago. Just that having the actions separate is just something I appreciated in some of the councils I sit on, which is useful -- helpful and useful, but that was long before there was any concerns.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. All right. So, again, what I'm hearing is that for now we would like to keep the transcription -- the transcribed meeting and the summary and have them both posted online at least for now? Is that the consensus of this group?
MS. SIMMONS: If you're asking for preferences, I've got a preference. If it was my preference, I would prefer minutes about four to six pages with more information on it, and then there be an attached sheet that says, "Bill will," "Mary will send," whatever, and so that everybody knows what everybody is going to do. This is like minutes with a skeleton instead of meat, and that's -- you know, that's the whole body.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But these aren't -- these aren't minutes.

MS. SIMMONS: But I like minutes. She asked for preferences.

MS. HALL: Might I make a motion that we accept for today the summary of actions as our minutes from the March meeting.

THE CHAIRPERSON: There is a motion on the floor.

DR. CARPENTER: Second.

FEMALE SPEAKER: I second.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The motion has been made and properly seconded. All of those in favor of accepting the action -- summary of action for the minutes for March meeting -- all in favor say aye.
(Multiple members responded aye.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: All opposed?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: And the ayes have it. So thank you for that.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Any abstentions?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, any abstentions?

(Multiple members abstained.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: I'm sorry. I am so sorry. All right. So we have four who have abstained -- Greg, Rick, Jennifer, and Gina who have abstained. I'm sorry. I always just kind of look for somebody to do [inaudible] move forward. All right. So thank you for that.

We have transitioned into the afternoon work session very well, and so the next thing that we need to do is to nominate and vote on your new chairperson. It's time for new leadership. So, you know, as I said before, this is -- this is year eight for me. So I am done. I've served two terms as a member, and I have been appointed chair twice during two different periods. And so as of June the 30th, my term officially ends. Today is my last official
meeting. It's been great, guys. No, honestly, it really has been.

And so I guess right now if we would give some -- if you would give some consideration to who you would like to nominate to be considered for Chair. If we could just take a few minutes to do that. Do we need me maybe, like, five minutes or so? Do you want to discuss among yourselves? I'm looking for--

MS. SIMMONS: I nominate Leanna George for Chair.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, you want to go ahead and make the nomination. Okay. All right. Leanna George has been nominated for chair. Are there others? Oh, I'm sorry. Leanna George was nominated by Vicki Simmons for Chair. Are there any other nominations?

(No audible response.)

MS. SIMMONS: Do I get to say anything?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Would you like to say something? You may, absolutely.

MS. SIMMONS: I've gotten to know Leanna a little bit in our associations with the Council. She's a parent of a child with a
disability. She's been to numerous, numerous meetings in the last three or four years. I met her through Partners in Policymaking as well, so she's had that kind of training. I think she would be an excellent Chair for our Council. She's been through legal processes with her child, so she knows the ropes of that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And I'll just add -- and I'm smiling because -- I'll just add to that -- because I think I just talked it over with -- not too long ago -- talked it over with members. I remember when you submitted your resume and your letter of interest to join the Council, and I felt then at that time that you were a really, really strong parent advocate, and that -- I've got to say Leanna has had better attendance at our meeting than some of our sitting members. So she's been working with the group for a very long time, so I'm---

MS. ROBERTS: Do we need to second the nomination?

MS. MEBANE: I'll second.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So the motion has been made and seconded by---

MS. ROBERTS: Teresa did it. I just
asked if we needed to.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. ---by

Teresa. Any additional discussion?

MS. LaCORTE: I was reading something else. Leanna, will you accept that nomination, or did we ask you?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, she doesn't get to say no. Leanna?

MS. GEORGE: I accept the nomination.

THE CHAIRPERSON: She will accept the nomination. All right. So all those in favor of Leanna serving as the next Chair to the Council, please say aye.

(Multiple members responded aye.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: All those opposed?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any abstentions?

MS. GEORGE: I abstain.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent. Thank you. Okay. In addition, there's one other little -- a couple of appointments. Well, I guess--- I'll tell you what. If it's okay -- because I would like to -- she's going to chair this Council.

There are -- I was prepared -- I was
prepared to make appointments because Teresa is
going to -- expressed that she needs to surrender
her committee due to her family obligations and
some things that she's going through. So I was
prepared to actually appoint someone else to chair
her committee as well as Lisa. Lisa and I just
chitchatted a little bit about her surrendering
her chair of her committee due to some obligations
and things of that nature.

However, I will respect the
incoming Chair by saying if we could just take
a five-minute -- if it's okay to take a
five-minute break, I would like to consult with
her to see if she's okay with making the
appointments now or if you want to wait until
September. So can we just take a break, just
everybody give us a couple of minutes.

(A brief recess was taken from 1:52
p.m. to 2:00 p.m.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you for
giving me just a minute just to consult with
Leanna, and she's agreed that we can move forward
with the appointments, and I will help Leanna and
her team transition. I'll transition everything
with her so that they'll be ready to -- they'll be
up and running by June 30th and be able to carry on with the duties and responsibilities of the Council.

So the appointment for the Unmet Needs Committee, which was Teresa Mebane, will now be Laura Hall, and I did talk to Laura about that and she has agreed to accept that -- accept that appointment. Thank you. Laura has already done -- you'll hear from her in a few minutes because she's done a lot of work with Mary on the public comment draft, and so we appreciate that and thank you.

MS. HALL: Thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely. For the Reports and Data Committee that was being chaired by Lisa Phillips, it will now be chaired by Cynthia Daniels-Hall. I spoke with Cynthia about that, and she has agreed to accept that appointment. So welcome again. Thank you, Cynthia.

The Policies and Procedures Committee will remain the same. Susan Humbert still chairs that committee, but I have to say, have to say, have to say that--- That's right. I'm looking at you, Greg. ---that Greg---
(Interruption.)

MR. SINGLETON: Divine intervention.

THE CHAIRPERSON: ---that really Greg and Katie Holler have both done a tremendous job. They did a lot of work with the drafting of the -- with the bylaws, the amendments to the bylaws. I mean they -- they worked on it. They met, and they included the other members of the committee, but that was spearheaded by Greg. And so I want to thank him for the work that he's put into it, and he knows that I was looking at him. But we'll go [inaudible].

And, again, just to thank -- your vice chair will remain Vicki Simmons. I cannot thank Vicki enough for our support since I've been the Chair and just as a member. I have learned so much from Vicki. It's just been amazing, and there are a lot of days that I just don't feel like I would have made it without Vicki and others of you who are here, and I appreciate that so, so very much.

I think I might have been sharing with Lisa that one of the ways that serving on this Council that has really impacted me has been now when I look at leaders or when I see different
chairs or leaders of agencies or whatever capacity they're serving in, now I rarely look at the person in the front and I'm always paying very close attention to the people who are beside them because although that person is standing there, you can't get anything done if you don't have the support beside you in order to move everything forward and get the work done.

I find myself doing that all the time now. Wherever I go, I'm always not looking at the person who is giving the talk or making the presentation, but I'm looking to see, okay, who is beside them because I know that's where their strength is. So thank you and the two of you as well. It's been a great ride, but this bus is pulling out. Please strike that from the record.

MR. HUSSEY: And I'm going to take this opportunity to thank you.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You have got to be kidding me.

MR. HUSSEY: I could be, but I'm not. We took, I guess, the liberty from the Council to go ahead and get something for you, a plaque. Basically it says presented to Nicole Jimerson for dedicated service to the Council on Educational
Services for Exceptional Children, year 2016. So we want you to have that.

And I'm just going to say a few words if I could because I really do think we're moving in a different direction, and I think you have pushed this Council that way, and I think we're on the road, and I think it's time for us -- so now you have big shoes to fill.

MS. GEORGE: I've always had big shoes to fill.

MR. HUSSEY: But I mean I really do think -- and I want to thank you for creating what I believe now is a much bigger voice from this Council, a much clearer initiative about where we're going in actionable steps. We've sat in this Council for a long time and you-all listened to us. We're now getting feedback.

Like I said today, this was one of the best conversations I've had in the three years, just talking about things and doing things and you-all's honesty and willingness to talk about things, and I think a lot of that is due to your leadership and the way you pushed what we needed to do, and I just wanted to say that out loud in front of everybody. And so thank you very
THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, Bill.

Thank you.

Okay. So it's now 2:10, and we want to continue. I think we discussed earlier that our goal for today is 3:30 and not 4 o'clock.

Let's see. The public comment draft. Hopefully today we can put this to rest, okay?

We've been working on this for a couple of meetings now, which is good because we started -- this was, you know, an idea that we had. We wanted to be able to provide the public access to this body, and that's who we represent. So we wanted to increase the access, and we felt like one of the ways to do that would be through having or offering a public comment period.

So we had to move from that and to draft -- to draft that policy, what would that look like. So this is the second or third time, I think, it may have -- it's come back to this Council, and I think we're in really, really good shape. So what I'd like to do is to ask Laura and Mary if you would just review -- because I know you tweaked it a little bit and you made a couple of changes -- just hit the highlights for us on
that, and I think we'll be prepared this time to
really, really, like, really send it for legal
review.

    I shared at the beginning of the
meeting, I think, that I had been in communication
just in the past day or so, like, with Katie, and
Bill and Carol Ann may have been in that e-mail as
well. My last note to her this morning was that I
would submit these documents to her following our
meeting today. So if we can go ahead take the
final review, that would be great.

    MS. HALL: This is Laura. Mary and I
met together after our last meeting to take the
comments that were made at the last meeting
regarding public comment and tried to integrate
them into this document. The largest area of need
was a statement of how we would take e-mail
comments and what that would look like. Mary's
background and understanding is really very
helpful for that, and that's the biggest area,
would you say, that we made the adjustment or we
actually added to that -- what we had.

    Basically, the document speaks for
itself. We took what you said -- the one thing we
did not change, because we felt like it was very
important to make this user-friendly to our population, was it had been requested that there be a 30-day period -- 30 business days to submit, and we just felt like that was really not user-friendly for our population. So we originally had it at five days. We did extend it to ten business days.

But I would suggest that everybody take a moment to look over it. The one need that we have is an e-mail address for -- for where comments will be sent to. In other documents for other states, it's the secretary. Tish functions as our administrative assistant. So I don't know if that's where we want them sent to or if we're going to have our own e-mail address.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Previously we discussed having our own e-mail address and that the, I think, which would be you, of the Unmet Needs Committee -- the Unmet Needs Committee would be responsible for reading and summarizing the e-mails that would come in, and that's why we---

MS. HALL: I think actually it's the Executive Committee under -- under this, which is what we wrote, "The Executive Committee will review public comments and decide on appropriate
action, if any, according to the Council's mission." Our committee -- as chair, I would lead -- and that's typical actually of other states.


MS. HALL: But as chair, I would lead our group in the implementation of those actions, but the Executive Committee decides the course of action. So as far as it being printed -- them being printed out for the written submissions or written by letter or written by e-mail, those would go to Tish, I would assume, and then would also be forwarded to the Executive Committee then.

Why doesn't everybody take a minute and read through this, and that should be pretty self-explanatory.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

(Council Members reviewed draft Public Comment Policy.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Are we ready or do you need a couple of minutes?

(No audible response.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: First of all, I have to say this is -- this is thorough. This is good. I think this is a really good draft policy.
But I am going to ask, for my benefit, if you would differentiate your instruction, please. I've read it, but now will you walk -- will you walk me through what will happen if someone from my county e-mails the Council -- and we know we have to get an e-mail address. So they e-mail it. It's goes to the e-mail, and what happens? Because that's where I'm unclear.

MS. HALL: Okay. Two things happen.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MS. HALL: One is those are sent to the Executive Committee in the order received. Second is Tish would record them in the order received. They were limited to 600 words in their public comment. The order in which comments will be received by the Council at our next meeting is in person comments first according to sign-in sheet and then written comments in order that received up to six comments.

Right now on our schedule, we have 15 minutes for public comment. What we are proposing is 30 minutes for public comment. If there aren't that many public comments, then they would not -- you know, that time would be taken. What is sent to the Executive Committee -- the written comments
sent to the Executive Committee are taken in by
the Executive Committee, and as it says here, they
review them and decide on appropriate action so
according to our mission.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So the
Executive Committee will be responsible for
checking the e-mail?

MS. HALL: Tish should send written
comments, I would suggest, at a designated time
once they've been received, which is ten days
prior to the meeting. They are sent to the
Executive Committee -- the written ones because
those are the only ones that will be stated at
that particular meeting, and as with those
comments and any that are given in person, the
Executive Committee decides what action needs to
be taken. There may be no action taken, maybe one
thing you decide. It may be sent back to the
Unmet Needs Committee. It could be sent to one of
the other committees because it has to do with
their scope of work. So that's that process.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So then the only
question I would have, then, if you go back to
when we were making plans for this originally, the
Unmet Needs Committee is the largest committee and
that was purposefully done because we really
wanted to be more active in identifying the unmet
needs across the state, and we were thinking -- we
anticipated that once word gets out about, you
know, there's this Council and you can e-mail or
write, we really would think it would be like the
floodgates would open.

So my only concern is that I don't
know if we want to put that responsibility on Tish
because she is one who helps us or if we would
like to actually find a way somehow for that
committee -- because that committee has ten or 12
people on it.

MS. HALL: In name.

THE CHAIRPERSON: In name. I
understand that. So but -- I mean but, you know,
as the chair for that committee, you could kind of
delegate that and figure out who's going to be
willing. I just don't know if we want to put that
type of -- I'm confident, you know, that once---

MS. HALL: What I would suggest for
Tish is that she take the written comments, holds
them in an e-folder, you know, electronically. I
don't know that she needs to do anything with them
other than being sure that they're -- the first
five are copied because no more -- first six -- no more than six are going to be -- to be read at the most.

THE CHAIRPERSON: To be addressed.

Carol Ann?

MS. HUDGENS: I just wanted to offer that if we're able to establish the DPI e-mail address, then we can also establish the recipients of that e-mail so that there are not multiple steps there because if it does take off, as you mentioned, that could be a quite labor-intensive task.

I know you're not necessarily going to act but maybe on the first five, but I would venture to say that there would be other folks here that would be interested in what comments were offered just as a matter of the business of this Council, and so if you have established who could be the recipient of that same mailbox, then you kind of eliminate the need to establish more procedure about getting it back and forth, and then the appropriate persons can have and act in real-time based on the information coming in.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. I was
just going to add one more thing too. It's not on this piece of paper, but the Unmet Needs Committee will take on -- take on the responsibility of assembling all that in a way that's easily reported to the Board in terms of the categories and looking at the primary issues and seeing if we can't use, you know, grids and rubrics to kind of capture that. So we've received so many comments on this topic and so many comments on this topic.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MS. LaCORTE: That's not here.

MS. HALL: And that's not addressed in this -- in this form.

THE CHAIRPERSON: But you're right. That was the initial thought behind that.

MS. HALL: So what I hear you saying is that you would -- you would want the Unmet Needs Committee to review the public comments, and it's not really our role to decide on appropriate action.

MS. ROBERTS: Are you just looking to screen, though? Is that what you're looking for?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Probably screen. If you wanted to forward the five---

MS. HALL: Uh-huh, to the -- or six.
THE CHAIRPERSON: ---or six or, like Carol Ann said, just give the Executive Committee access and we could do it that way, but the screening process would ultimately be the responsibility of the unmet needs committee. Does that make sense?

MS. ROBERTS: I think you guys are talking about two different things. You're thinking that -- and correct me if I'm wrong, Laura. This is Elena. It sounds to me like what she's saying is that the Executive Committee is only ever going to see the first six for each meeting. As far as all the rest of the e-mails go, the Unmet Needs Committee will be looking through all the rest of those and categorizing and chopping that data down in a way to present to everybody else in a way that's easily consumable, is that right?

MS. HALL: That is correct, but the one concern that I have is -- I mean, as a step, it could come to the public -- I mean to the Unmet Needs Committee first, but the Executive Committee, as they receive data from us, has got to decide on the appropriate action of the Council.

MS. HALL: Okay. So am I capturing that well?

MS. LaCORTE: Uh-huh, I think so.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So it would really ultimately be -- it would be between the -- I'm trying save Tish -- it would be between---

MR. HUSSEY: I'm going to make a comment about that at some point.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MS. HALL: That's fine. Just the secretary in other -- is who -- so I'm just going with our current setup, and this is fine. So I just want to be sure our wording is right. The Unmet Needs Committee will screen public comments?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Uh-huh.

MS. LaCORTE: Review.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Review.

MS. HALL: Okay. The Unmet Needs Committee will review public comments and---

THE CHAIRPERSON: The Executive Committee will determine what actions, if any, need to be taken on the five that are going to be presented at the meeting.

MS. HALL: How can we simplify that?
Just like the Unmet Needs Committee will review public comments, forward actionable comments to the Executive---

    MS. LaCorte: Two steps.

    MS. George: What type of actions are we proposing that the Executive Committee makes on just these written public comments? Because I'm reading in here that there's no response to an in-person comment. So why are we doing any response above and beyond documenting the concerns and possibly reporting back any actions? So I say we -- you know, I don't want to do actions on all of them if we need to do actions because that's what we need to do, right?

    MS. LaCorte: I don't think the Executive Committee is going to any take actions on the five or six. Those are just the five or six that come in, in that order---

    MS. Hall: So you know what's coming in at the meeting. It's for your knowledge as the Executive Committee.

    The Chairperson: Okay.

    MS. LaCorte: I think after the Unmet Needs Committee reports to the Council on what the issues were and if there are any unique or
particularly concerning trends, then the Council
can get that information and determine if the
Council makes any action on that.

MS. HALL: So for the sake of this
document, do we just need that sentence to say,
"The Unmet Needs Committee will review public
comments and decide on appropriate action,"
appropriate actions being whether it's forwarded
to the Executive Committee, put into a format of
trends. So we don't define appropriate action in
detail.

MS. GEORGE: When you say "action,"
people think you're going to act on it. That
might be---

MS. HALL: Appropriate action, if
any.

MS. GEORGE: Yeah.

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary again. I
think we may simplify -- in the bullet above
"Making Public Comment in Person," I think we
might simplify this just by saying, "The Council
will review public comments and decide on any
appropriate action -- on appropriate action, if
any, according to the Council's mission."

MS. ROBERTS: Yeah. I'm not sure you
need a duplicative---

MS. LaCORTE: No, I don't think we do. So I think if we just take that bullet and where it says, "The Executive Committee --"
because this is for the public. This is the external document rather than the internal
document. If we take that, then this is --
everything through here is about what the Council will do, so I think that instead of the Executive Committee, it'll be, "The Council will review public comments and decide on any appropriate action."

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's great.

MS. LaCORTE: That would be either in the form of the first six or the report from the Unmet Needs Committee to the Council, and that just---

MS. ROBERTS: I don't even think you need to do review. I think you just have to put consider. "The Council will consider the public comment---"

MS. LaCORTE: That's fine.

MS. ROBERTS: It doesn't say you're going to do anything, just that you're going to consider it, and then, you know, if there's any
additional action to be taken, the Council can do
that. I don't know that it needs to be set forth.

    MS. LaCORTE: That's correct.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Jennifer?

    MS. GRADY: Do we have a mission statement?

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

    MS. GRADY: Okay. We have the vision---

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Oops. We have a
vision statement.

    MS. HALL: But in this document, what
we suggested was put in this fourth bulleted point
where the mission of CESEC -- is that the mission
statement be stated there. So if you are in
"General guidelines for public input," the fourth
bullet point down, "Comments should be focused on
relevant topics to the mission of CESEC. (State
mission statement here or somewhere in the
document."

    THE CHAIRPERSON: I think her point
is we have vision -- we created a vision
statement. We didn't create a mission.

    MS. ROBERTS: But isn't that defined
by what the Council in fact is, though? Isn't it
already---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Our duties and responsibilities.

MS. ROBERTS: It was created -- it was created by legislation, so the purpose or the mission of the committee is stated in the legislation.

THE CHAIRPERSON: In IDEA.

MS. ROBERTS: IDEA.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So pull it from IDEA.

MS. ROBERTS: Yeah. Well, pull it from North Carolina statutes.

MS. HALL: And you could also put the vision statement underneath the -- where it says, "The Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children," you could put the vision statement under there, and both Mary and I felt like the -- that the -- I know our -- that we have the headers be bold rather than -- because they kind of are missed in this document.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That was in my -- my forwarding it to Tish. I just copied and pasted that, but yeah.

MS. HALL: So those things would be
highlighted. Then the vision statement could be
added at the top. All right. So what I -- to
clarify, "The Council will consider public
comments and decide on appropriate action, if any,
according to the Council's mission."

Are there any other questions or
concerns?

MS. GRADY: This is Jennifer. Would
this be placed on the website, or how would be
communicating?

THE CHAIRPERSON: This will be -- I
think it should be put on the website, and once we
have the final document and everything has been
approved, I'm sure it will be a PDF, and everybody
on the Council can receive one and it can go out
that way as well.

MS. HALL: It also could be something
that could go out within our districts and the
parent thing with that so that they are made
aware.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. And that's
why I wanted to make sure that we were clear that
it just wouldn't be Tish's responsibility to check
the e-mail because I think once word gets out --
you know. Any other questions or comments?
MS. GEORGE: I just want to -- are we sure we want to go with five minutes? Most public comment periods are only three minutes in length. Five minutes can be a very long time, having presented testimony -- giving live testimony, five minutes is a long time, so---

MS. HALL: In looking at other states, it was about half and half. So -- so three minutes would not be -- what do you think, Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: Well, we did discuss this as a group at some point, and part of it was because of the distance people may come to a state meeting and then the complexity of sometimes the issues, that five wasn't really too much, that three might be too little.

MS. GEORGE: At three, we could also follow up on as well, and three would allow more people to be able to present versus just six. If we're allotting 30 minutes to it, that allows ten people to present versus five.

MS. ROBERTS: Are you trying to limit the number of public -- like, I mean, are you trying to have -- like, is the goal to have at least 30 minutes set aside for public comment and
hear from as many as possible in that time, or is
the goal to be able to hear from at least six
people per meeting? You know, like, what's your
gear point here because that affects it.

MS. GEORGE: Well, the more we hear
from people, the more, I think, we're fulfilling
our mission to finding unmet needs of the
community. However -- like, you know, and we can
get -- you know, we can do more by listening to
more people versus limiting it to just five. So
we could always follow up and if we wanted to
extend and ask more questions about a certain
issue or concern, we can do that, but you know---

MS. HALL: One thing that this
document does allow for is for the Chair to give
additional time. So, say, you have five people
who speak for three minutes each. They don't use
their time. You have 15 minutes. You can allow
for more comments to be -- to be presented. So
you might get more, but I think -- I know when
Mary and I did meet, we did discuss that and we --
especially for in-person comments, it's a long way
to travel for a lot of people for three -- for
three minutes. 600 words is -- also meets the
five minutes.
MS. LaCORTE: I think that was --
somebody had done that math.

THE CHAIRPERSON: We did that at the
last meeting.

MS. LaCORTE: Yeah. One of the other
thinkings was to -- was that this was moving --
prior to this, in all the years where we had
people sitting around the room, they could
participate and do lots of things, and so this was
stepping away from that.

And so I think we don't -- we don't
know until we do -- you know, it's one of those
things we don't -- we can predict, but we don't
exactly know how it might play out. And that's
kind of -- I think that's why we discussed that
time, I think, either in the committee or as a
group in a small way at one time.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And keep in mind,
you can revisit this. Once we implement it, you
can -- yeah, if it works too well.

MS. GEORGE: I know, like, the
commission I serve on in DC, we have actually have
two public comment sessions per meeting.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That was my
question. Were we saying 30 minutes at the
beginning, or were we saying 15 at the beginning
and 15 at the end?

**MS. HALL:** We did discuss that. Our
general thought from the group was that they
didn't want to have 15 minutes at the end, but
that is -- that is a -- I mean there's a different
group of -- I mean there's people here that
weren't there for that. So that is -- one state
that we looked at does do 15 minutes at the first
half and then 15 minutes in the second half.

**MS. ROBERTS:** Is it under your
discretion? I mean, do you have to set -- I mean,
you know, if the Chairperson looks at the agenda,
and says, "We're heavy here. We're late here,"
you know, they can move it around.

**MS. GEORGE:** Adjust it. If you've
got [inaudible] want to say something, then I
could open it up to public comment at the end as
well.

**MS. ROBERTS:** But, you know, I think
the thing is, when you set a time period, it means
that no matter what, you have to have that time
set aside.

**MS. GEORGE:** Uh-huh, for public
comment.
MS. ROBERTS: So, you know, that's the thing as far as it goes. I mean, if people are going to come in person, you know, you may want to decide whether or not -- you know, I mean it's a first come/first serve basis. If you put it all together at one time period, at least people know when to be here. Now whether you want to do that first thing in the morning or you want to do it in the afternoon, that's a different story. You might do it just before lunch.

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. One other way of doing that is for it to be up to 30 minutes for so many people. So you can use some language that doesn't restrict you from -- you would have guidance then about arrive -- when you arrive. You know that you arrive, you know, at the beginning of the period to be able to speak. So people aren't thinking they can walk in at, like, you know, five minutes left in the period that we're going to -- that we'll do that. So that additional guidance could be there if the Council would like that.

MS. ROBERTS: I mean it seems to me that you want to have people to know exactly when they're -- when they're going to come in order to
be heard, and -- while I know that a great number
of people are incredibly dedicated when they come
for these things, you know, there's a prospect of,
like, if you're going to come -- if you're coming
from across the state to Raleigh. It's different
if it's moves around the state. You know what I
mean?

But, like, if you're going to have --
if you're coming from the western part of the
state and you're traveling, you know, four hours
or more to Raleigh, you know, to make a 9:30 a.m.
public comment period, you know, I mean you don't
want to -- I think the value of putting it
together is that you have consistency of knowing
when that period is, when you have to get there,
you know, so -- you know.

MS. HUDGENS: And may I offer
something as well? With your sign-in sheet, if
you're worried about someone coming in, in the
last five minutes of the comment period and maybe
business has moved on because they weren't --
weren't there, if you have a time set that they
have to be signed in, then they can arrive at the
appropriate time. They know that they've gotten
in, and then you have grounds to be able to
redirect a person's interest to make comments if they didn't -- if they didn't sign in by the time allowed for without it feeling to the person that it was a subjective decision. If you have a process there, you can, a little bit more gently, say, "I'm sorry. Unfortunately, you did not sign in by the 10 o'clock time. We're not able to accommodate your request to comment."

MS. LaCORTE: I said that a minute ago, but not nearly as -- I said we could have a set time of arriving, so---

MS. ROBERTS: And I mean, like, I think if you're going to do it, we're going to have -- obviously [inaudible] today's meeting and the committees, you know, often things take longer or go less time, you know, so you want to, I think, allow for flexibility. So setting a time like, you know, after lunch or setting a time for like 1 o'clock, having to be signed in, you know, by 12:30.

MS. GEORGE: The public comments set at 1 o'clock just before we start our work sessions, that way, anyone who's running late getting here because they're coming from Manteo or Murphy---
MS. ROBERTS: And my thought too is that that's the committee usually breaks for lunch, and people coming in and out won't be [inaudible] focus or distracting too. So that's something else to think about.

MS. GEORGE: That's an idea.

MS. HALL: So what I'm hearing is the public comment period will be---

MS. GEORGE: From 1:00 to 1:30.

MS. HALL: ---from 1:00 to 1:30.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And you have to be signed in by---

MS. GEORGE: 12:30.


MS. ROBERTS: And then we're going to need some kind of disclaimer language like be prepared that, you know, things may not run on time since [inaudible]. You know, like, anytime to you deal with government bodies, it's like, yes, there's a set time you have to be there, and there's a time that it's set for, but that doesn't just always work out that way. So you need to give yourself a little bit of leeway to say, you know---

MS. GRADY: [Inaudible] involved
here.

MS. ROBERTS: Yeah, I mean -- yeah, maybe I'm over thinking this, so if I am, feel free to just be like, "That's nice," pat me on the head, and go on.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I think that's actually really fair.

MS. HALL: So if I put under "General guidelines for public input," the first bubble or second maybe because it's short, but "Public comment is limited to no more than five minutes per person with a maximum of six public comments per meeting." Do we want to strike the maximum of six public comments?

MS. ROBERTS: I think what you want to do is set a time limit.

MS. HALL: Five minutes.

MS. ROBERTS: Well, I mean, if it's five minutes per person, then 30 minutes will be allowed for public comment.

MS. GEORGE: 30 minutes.

MR. SINGLETON: The period of time.

MS. ROBERTS: That's much more [inaudible]. Thank you.

MS. HALL: All right. So "Public
comment is limited to no more than five minutes per person--"

MR. HUSSEY: And will run from 1:00 to 1:30. You don't even have to say anything else.

MS. HALL: ---"five minutes per person beginning at---"

MS. ROBERTS: The first 30 minutes of the afternoon work session is probably how I would do it because then you're not -- and then, like, if you start -- you know, if you run over in the morning session and you start at 1:15, you're not---

MS. HALL: All right. Let's try this. "Public comment is limited to no more than five minutes per person in the first 30 minutes of the afternoon session. Sign-in must occur by 12:30 p.m."


MS. LaCORTE: I do think there's something to be said, though, for making it clear enough that people can expect what that time frame is. So people signing in by 12:30 don't necessarily know that that starts at 1:00 and ends
at 1:30. I don't want to get so caught up in it, but at the same time, what we talked about in the last several meetings is making sure it was clear enough that we didn't have to keep -- you know, we didn't have to keep revisiting it too often except if we found something really that wasn't working.

MS. HALL: What about this: "In the first 30 minutes of the afternoon session, generally 1:00 to 1:30."

MS. ROBERTS: There you go.

MS. GEORGE: That works.

MS. LaCORTE: How early -- excuse me. This is Mary. How early are the -- can agendas for the session be posted online? Because you could also have a comment in there generally or whatever, "See agenda for that meeting."

MS. HALL: What do we want? Generally 1:00 to 1:30?

MS. LaCORTE: I'm just basically asking---

MS. ROBERTS: Honestly, knowing people and how you want to do it, I think I would go with what Laura is saying and just put it in there that it's generally 1:00 to 1:30 because that's typically what it is. I don't think it's
necessarily helpful to refer them over to yet
another place to go, and again, like, the agenda
for today, you know, we had things at assigned
certain times, and we busted those pretty well.

   So, you know, I don't want people to
have the -- you know, I want them to have a
general expectation. Like you said, you want them
to know I'm probably going to talk around 1:00 --
between 1:00 and 2 o'clock. Hopefully we're not
so far off course, but you know, I can plan to
speak between 1:00 and 2:00, and then I'll be free
to leave or then I'll be able to go home or what
have you.

   But you don't want to tie it down so
much because -- the only reason I bring it up --
and this may be protecting again, like, you know,
the crazy strange element that you might run into
with people because some people get -- that you
run into where people actually look for reasons to
sue North Carolina government under whatever act
which requires -- you know, I'm just trying to
avoid that.

   And if you build in a little -- what
we learn is called hedging -- a little hedge
language into some of your policy, that just gives
you a little bit of cushioning but yet provide a
clear expectation.

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. I
totally honor that. I just also want this
document to drive our behavior as well so that
we're aware that the agenda -- that we're really
also responsive to the public and to kind of try
to maintain -- no matter what we need to do to
make that time period the time period. We can
always, as we do any other time, hold our comments
[inaudible] a little before or a little after, but
I think if we -- if we're committed to doing this,
then I feel like maybe we can at least try by
committing to saying this is going to be our time
period.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MS. LaCORTE: And then that will help
steer our behavior.

MS. HALL: So are we striking the
word "generally" or are we keeping it?

MS. LaCORTE: Generally is still
okay.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Generally is okay.

MS. ROBERTS: Generally is still
okay.
MS. HALL: All right. If I can summarize the changes that I have thus far to this document.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MS. HALL: The first is that at the top of the page under "The Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children," the vision statement would be listed. The headers of "Public Comment Policy, General Guidelines for Public Input, Making Public Comment in Person, and Submitting Written Public Comment," would be in boldface.

The second bullet point under "General Guidelines for Public Input," would be "Public comment is limited to no more than five minutes per person in the first 30 minutes of the afternoon session, generally 1:00 to 1:30 p.m. Sign-in must occur by 12:30 p.m."

In the fifth bullet down, "Public comments will be --" I'm sorry -- the final bullet point under "General Guidelines for Public Input" will be "The Council will consider public comments and decide on appropriate action, if any, according to the Council's mission."

That is what I have for changes thus
far. Anything else?

MS. ROBERTS: The only other thing I noticed was that under the written public comment, you have that "Any individual may submit a written comment via written letter or e-mail," and I'm just not clear on if we're getting written comment via e-mail and we're getting written comment via letter, although I suspect those will probably be much fewer and far between than e-mail, and you're limiting the comments that will be done to the first, you know, six comments.

Like, how are you going to log that if you have competing systems?

MS. HALL: The reason that we did this was for the sake of accessibility, is that not everyone will have access to e-mail. I guess the date it's received -- the letter is -- written letter is received is the date that it's marked has having come in, in the order that it's put in.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Uh-huh. And the written correspondence would absolutely need to come to the Division. So we would use the Division mailing address, and then whoever is responsible for the mail would log, stamp that in -- stamp that in, and then it could be
incorporated.

MS. HALL: Then it could be scanned and sent to the e-mail address for monitoring.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

MS. ROBERTS: Okay. So if somebody writes in, when it comes in the mail, whatever kind of mail it comes in, somebody is going to date stamp -- time stamp it both with date and with time, and then we're going to -- and then forward it on. That means, though, as the people reviewing the e-mails in terms of looking for this public comment, that you're going to have to look at headers of e-mails and where that falls in your written correspondence to see if it falls within your number of comments that you're going to read into the record.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah, that's right.

MS. HALL: I don't think it will be as large of a---

MS. ROBERTS: I don't think it will be. I just want to make---

MS. HALL: ---of a problem, but---

MS. ROBERTS: Because we've specified that that first X number, then we're actually going to have to make sure that it falls within
that first X number, and I'm just making sure that
that was what was intended.

    MS. HALL: Yes.

    MS. ROBERTS: All right. Thanks.

    MS. GEORGE: I have one more
question. Where it says, "Any written materials
for verbal presentation should be sent in early,"
apparently it sounds like for us to print out and
distribute. Is that the idea?

    MS. HALL: I think that that is where
we would have to send to Tish to have -- because
Tish is who does our printing, is that correct?

This is Laura.

    MS. HUDGENS: That is true, but what
I would offer is that you guys need to prioritize
and then send us what you want duplicated, and we
will just duplicate for the meeting purposes.

    MS. HALL: So do we send to you or to
Tish?

    MS. HUDGENS: Tish will be the
contact person, but all of the decisions around
the priority, the time-stamping and all of that,
we would like -- it would be helpful for you guys
to do that. Then we'll just print whatever it is
you ask us to print, and typically that comes from
to chair in preparation for the meeting.

MS. GEORGE: I was just saying that it sounds like it's for someone who's planning to present in-person public comment that had a handout that they want to distribute. My concern is, do you want to limit how many handouts, how many pages? Because that can get -- for a 24-person body---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, we wouldn't do that.

MS. GEORGE: A ten-page white paper, that's 240-page, you know, printing cost.

THE CHAIRPERSON: No, we wouldn't do that. They would bring -- if they wanted to bring something.

MS. HALL: This is what was typical in the other state documents is that if they submitted handout material, then if they did so within a time frame, it would be provided -- printed out and provided for by the Council.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, well, here it is. "The presenter will be -- the presenter will be responsible for copies for distribution---"

MS. GEORGE: "If this timeline is not observed."
THE CHAIRPERSON: ---"if this timeline is not observed."

MS. HALL: Which is ten business days prior.

MS. HUDGENS: And also on the back, it says that your written comment is 600 words, which is great for the written comment, but back to Leanna's point, it doesn't speak to the handouts. So I guess that could be a decision-making piece here. Do you want handouts e-mailed to you? I mean handouts can be fine, but if you put it solely into the participant bringing it with them and structure it a little bit differently, then you don't have to worry about the duplication part.

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. We might want to strike "and any written materials" and just leave it as their written comments.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I think so.

MS. MEBANE: Yeah, and if they do choose to bring something, that doesn't mean we reject it---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Can't receive it, yeah.

MS. MEBANE: ---but I don't think we
should offer to print---

   MS. GEORGE: Spending money to print.
   MS. MEBANE: ---yeah, print handouts.
   THE CHAIRPERSON: Strike that.
   MS. GEORGE: 200-page transcripts.
   MS. ROBERTS: Well, the other options
is if they want to submit any kind of handout, I
mean if you want to strike a balance, you can
always say that, you know, if there's any
materials that they want to provide attached, you
know, to their e-mail that's fine, but -- you
know, and it will get forwarded if it's part of
the public comment. But I don't know that you
would want to go there. I think you're better off
with---

   THE CHAIRPERSON: I think we should
just -- just strike it.
   MS. HALL: Strike it?
   THE CHAIRPERSON: Just strike it.
And if someone shows up with something and they
want you to have it, you can receive it. You can
accept it. Just say thank you.

   MS. ROBERTS: I think as the Unmet
Needs is going through it, you know, and it's not
when it actually gets to the meeting, but if
there's something you see that we want to know more about or to see if they have any supporting anything, we can always reach out and ask for that.

MS. GEORGE: If they want to send an attachment, that's fine, but don't expect us to print it out and distribute it at a meeting. If they're bringing in verbal, in-person comment, they can bring whatever documents they want to bring to support it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we want to just strike that language.

MS. HALL: That is under "General Guidelines for Public Input," bullet point three will be struck.

MS. LaCORTE: No. Just the---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Just the one about---

MS. LaCORTE: Any written materials.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any written materials.

MS. GEORGE: For verbal presentations.

MS. LaCORTE: It's here. Written comments---
MS. HUDGENS: So I have a question.

MS. LaCORTE: We're going to strike "and any written materials."

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Carol Ann.

MS. HUDGENS: Would you guys like to consider some language around the fact that this is to express unmet needs and not an opportunity for pitching sales or something like that because who knows. Someone may see this as a venue to sell insurance or -- you know. I don't know. In our world, those kinds of things are possible. So a statement -- there is a lot of legal terms and options around. No solicitation. I mean this is not an opportunity to---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, yeah. To put on the document?

MS. HUDGENS: Yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, sure.

MS. HUDGENS: That it's not a time to offer goods and services.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Like autism insurance or something like that.

MS. LaCORTE: That's a good point, Carol Ann, and I think, though -- I don't know that we have to keep it to the unmet needs because
we don't know until somebody's talked, but that's a good point.

MS. HUDGENS: Sure.

MS. HALL: What if in the -- down below where it says "If special assistance is needed to participate," there be an additional line of "No---"

MS. HUDGENS: Yeah, just at the bottom.

MS. HALL: ---"No public comments regarding solicitation." How would you word that? How would word that bullet?

MS. HUDGENS: I don't know. You guys have legal people on your team.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. Let Katie---

MS. ROBERTS: I would say ask Katie.

MS. HUDGENS: I was waiting for them to---

THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll let Katie just give us a sentence, a line to put in there, and then we'll be done.

MS. ROBERTS: She'll know what to say because, more or less, all doing is -- I mean we haven't had the -- we don't have the wherewithal or the authority to engage in anything like that
anyway. So, like, it had to be -- public comment
is really, really specific.

MS. LaCORTE: Right. And the fourth
bullet in the first section pertains to that.
"Comments should be focused on relevant topics to
the mission and see the mission statement --"
however that happens, what it says, and then at
that point, if Katie helps us with a sentence,
that would be the perfect spot for that sentence.

MS. ROBERTS: Yeah.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MR. HUSSEY: I think you also need to
be careful that you don't -- it's about an issue
or a concern. It's not about a person.

MS. LaCORTE: It's in here, but if it
wasn't obvious, we'll make sure it's obvious.

MR. HUSSEY: Because I still think
that -- to me, that's the one place that I'm
afraid they're going to get---

MS. GEORGE: Start naming names or
something.

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah, and I---

THE CHAIRPERSON: And then I think it
would be the responsibility of the Chair to just
kind of say, you know, "Excuse me, sir/ma'am."
MR. HUSSEY: But there do need to be
a set of expectations that are said right before
the comments start---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MR. HUSSEY: ---to make sure that
people are clear again what---

MS. GEORGE: What the ground rules
are.

MS. ROBERTS: That this is not a --
that this is a forum for you to bring forward
concerns you have about meeting the needs of
children with -- of exceptional children and
educational. You know, you want it so there won't
be some sort of pitter-patter that's just like a
this is what this is for, this is not a place to,
you know, blame. We don't have any power to --
like, the Council is not -- can't exercise any
authority over the Department of Education.

MR. HUSSEY: I mean I just get to
that lady who wanted me to fire the principal. It
wasn't about what was going on anymore. It got
personal, and that was what she wanted to have
happen, and it didn't really matter what the
causal effects---

MS. HALL: If I can note, in the
document under "Making Public Comment in Person,"
on the back page it says, the top bullet,"Maintain confidentiality and privacy standards. Do not mention the personal names of students or school staff."

MR. HUSSEY: I hadn't turned it over to see that part, but I just want to make sure that -- as I sit and listen.

MS. ROBERTS: I'm not sure you can do that, to be honest with you. I don't think you can limit it that far in any -- obviously people have to be careful about who they name, but whether or not -- when you're talking about -- if this akin to going -- like, if you went before any legislative committee or any other public body that is a state government, you know, institution or branch thereof, the public free speech says that they can name names. It may not be helpful. We may not enjoy it, but they can name names.

MS. MEBANE: Yeah. I was getting ready to say we can't stop them. You know, I think that can be a guideline. I think we can put it as a guideline.

MS. ROBERTS: We can tell them, you know, "Please --" you know, "Please respect," or
you know, that kind of thing, but we can't mandate
that they don't name names.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I think we -- I
think we have what we need in order to send it for
the legal review. Let her take a good look at it
and let us know if any additional changes need to
be made, but I think pretty much it's a really
good policy.

MS. ROBERTS: You guys did a really
good job with it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah, I think so.

MS. MEBANE: You guys did great.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you again for
that. Yes.

MS. HUDGENS: So for housekeeping,
this sounds like an action step, that based on the
feedback today, then, is this a correct assumption
that that document will come to us at your request
to have Ms. Cornetto review it; and if so, is
there a timeline associated with that that you
would like for us to adhere to?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So---

MS. ROBERTS: Can we get it reviewed
so we can -- because if we can get it reviewed, it
would be nice if at the next quarterly meeting, we
can adopt the policy.

    MS. GEORGE: Might be able to

implement it the next meeting.

    MS. ROBERTS: Yeah, that's what I
mean. Can we -- you know.

    MS. HALL: If we vote on this as
acceptable per Katie -- Katie's---

    MS. ROBERTS: Subject to Katie's
review.

    MS. HALL: ---subject to Katie's
review so that it can be in place for the next
meeting? Can we do that?

    MS. ROBERTS: Make a motion.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: I would think so,
yeah.

    MS. HALL: I'd make a motion---

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Do we have
enough -- do we still -- do we have enough people?

    MS. GEORGE: We still have 13.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Do we still have
13?

    MS. HUDGENS: Is there anyone that
wants to see that clean, approved copy before they
adopt it? That's the only question I have here.

I mean I was just thinking in terms of process,
based on the edits that the Council has determined as appropriate today, those edits will be put in the hard copy. Then the hard copy will come to DPI with the request for a legal review. We initiate the legal review. Any comments from Katie will be directed back to the committee, and then the committee is going to determine if there are issues that have to be amended before it's adopted.

MS. HALL: Can we do a -- can we---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah, you put a couple of extra steps in there.

MS. HALL: ---can we do a conference call in August?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Sorry. We forgot.

MS. HALL: I'm Laura.

THE COURT REPORTER: I know who you are. Just, one at a time. I know who you are now.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Here's my recommendation -- all right -- and I'll just take a little bit from Carol Ann and a little bit from Laura. Okay. So, Laura, if you would clean it up and get us a copy ready, I think the Executive Committee can then forward it to Katie, and then
Katie will just let us know, you know, what she thinks. She's reviewed it and here's -- this is where we are.

All right. Once everything is okay, then we simply need to do -- we can do a conference call -- I think we may have talked about this before -- just do a conference call -- send it out to everybody, do a conference call, do a vote, and it's done because if we wait until September, that's a couple of months away. I think that this is something that could be done in the next, like, week or so.

MS. SIMMONS: A couple of things. In the Guilford County Schools for our school board meeting, we have a little timekeeper so they know when their three minutes is up.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. We'll have to have that.

MS. SIMMONS: We have a security guard in there, plainclothes, because you just never know, and---

MR. HUSSEY: I'm too old.

MS. SIMMONS: ---there's also a person that if somebody starts to get personal, they say, "Would you please step outside the room
and address your comments to whoever," and that way they don't have to go into the whole personal story of whatever.

THE CHAIRPERSON: And, again, I just think we just need to get it going. Let's start down that road and then see if any changes need to be made, if those types of things need to be given consideration. But for now, just to get going, just to get it started, I think we have what we need.

MS. HALL: It sounds like it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So the next thing -- so, again, what will happen is, you guys are going to clean it up, you'll send it to the Executive Committee, or if you send it to me, I'll make sure I include -- I keep doing like this -- I'll put it back in the Executive Committee. I'll connect with the Executive Committee and Katie. Katie will take a look at it. Once Katie says everything is fine, we'll reach back out to the full Council. We'll schedule a conference call. It should take no more than ten minutes maybe just to get everybody on the line, vote, and it's done.

MS. HUDGENS: Thank you. Because it sounds like we'll wait until further notice --
from DPI's perspective, we'll wait until we hear further directions from you or the Executive Committee on the topic.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. And I will make sure that you guys are copied on the e-mail as well. Is that okay?

    (Multiple affirmative responses.)

    THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. We're moving right along. Okay. So the Council bylaws, and that is goldenrod, not to be mistaken with buff.

    MR. SINGLETON: I should have paid attention to that Crayola crayon box when I was a little boy with 64 colors. I never learned all of them.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: So the first thing that we can start with on the bylaws and then -- Greg, I didn't talk to you about this, but do you want to just kind of touch on some of the major points?

    MR. SINGLETON: Sure.

    THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Take a look at it, and let me just start with -- let me start by saying this. In preparation for the meeting today, there was an attempt made for members to
call in, and we were kind of going back and forth trying to figure out if that was possible, how we were going to make it happen. It wasn't in the bylaws.

So we reached out -- we reached out to Katie who replied that because this is an open public meeting, members are allowed to call in and participate -- listen in, discuss, and vote. That's all allowable whether it's explicitly stated in the bylaws or not.

Last call for sandwiches and cookies.

If anybody wants to slip out and get something, that's fine, but we're going to continue.

So whether it's explicitly stated in the bylaws or not, it is permissible. So at this point -- you know, from this point forward, when the -- I'm thinking that when the agenda comes out and all the supporting documents, you should receive one -- we're going to ask -- and that's something we'll have to work with the Division on. We'll ask that the call-in information also be provided, and that should be relatively simple because it's something that's done already. So it should be just a matter of getting the number.

MR. HUSSEY: It's just -- that
contraption right in front of you is it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That?

MR. HUSSEY: That's it. That's the call-in. So we basically would be able to do that without any difficulty.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. And, again, I want to reiterate the Council only meets four times a year. This is a quarterly meeting. The expectation is that you do everything that you can possibly do to attend, to be physically present, but in those instances where you just can't, you now have an option. If you have to leave early, you can still call in and listen to the meeting as you're going on.

So having said that, I'm not sure if we need to write that -- we'll let that be her call, something we'll talk to her about, if there will be a line that says that or not. We can strike that from the list. That was one of the questions that we had. Okay?

Next I will give it to Greg and just let him hit the highlights.

MR. SINGLETON: Just a few things. This actually grew out of the meeting that we had in December. I was unable to be here for the --
was unable to be at Vicki's school for the March meeting, but at the December meeting, there had been some questions that had come up as far as going back to previous concerns about the minutes and audio recordings and so forth. And so Nicole has spoken with our committee -- the Policies and Procedures Committee, and we were charged with going back and trying to add some language to the bylaws that would hopefully take care of that.

There are only four of us on that committee. Katie Holler, who was unable to be with us today, resides in Pitt County and I'm in Beaufort County. So we're next door to each other. Martin Pharr and Susan Humbert are unable to join us today. They don't live in close proximity to us. So it became apparent it would be easier for Katie and I to work together. We were eventually able to connect a couple of times.

Katie Holler really deserves the credit for this. She looked at what other states were doing and the bylaws of similar advocacy bodies in other states, and she basically brought the information. I really just supplied my typing ability which, as you can tell, is not that great. What I tried to do was to strike through things...
that we wanted to take out and to underline things
that we wanted to add just like the legislature
does when they're revising a bill.

    So it was not a whole lot, but you
can -- and I'm not going to go through each one,
but you-all can read it. The biggest thing was to
clarify the number of folks on the committee and
who they were. It was 24 members and that the
Council Members -- there's 20 members who are
appointed by various entities in the state whether
it's the Legislative Branch, the Executive Branch,
or the State Board of Education. And then there's
four state agency representatives, and they
are actual standing -- we believe they're actual
standing members of the committee just like anyone
else, and that's the way it's listed here.

    We've clarified that a majority is 13
when you're talking about 24 people. We clarified
that a vote must be taken about the minutes and
that it's recorded by an electronic audio device.
That's been solved by meeting here in the State
Boardroom. We clarified that we would add that
only those Council Members in attendance of a
meeting should vote on the minutes of that
meeting. That was something that we added and
that she had seen in other states.

And then we just kind cleaned up committee and task force. So it wasn't really a whole lot to it, but we worked on it for several hours one day. And we sent it to Nicole, I believe, maybe in February, but there wasn't enough time for this committee to vote on it because there's a time frame if you're going to do that. I was unable to be at the March meeting, so I think that she sent it to everyone to look at. So that's pretty much it.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any questions or comments, Carol Ann?

MS. HUDGENS: So in looking at the procedures E3 and having the minutes posted on the web page within one week of approval, just as a matter of note for you-all, there is a five-business-day processing request with the webmaster to post things on the Internet. So that runs really tight there in a week with two of them not being business days. So I don't know if you guys want to consider that.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Ten days?

MS. ROBERTS: Ten business days.

MS. HUDGENS: I guess I'm just asking
for a little more wiggle room so that we don't violate the bylaws. Five business days is the worse-case scenario, and a lot of times, we can do better than that. But just---

THE CHAIRPERSON: What do you think is reasonable? Is ten days reasonable?

MS. HUDGENS: Ten business days is very reasonable.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MS. LaCORTE: Just for clarification, to not only generate them but also post them?

MS. HUDGENS: I didn't see the generate and post. What I'm seeing is "All approved minutes will be posted to the Council's web page within one week." That's the part that I -- I'm taking the assumption everything's done at that point, we've all agreed, and then if we could have ten business days to post it, I think that's very reasonable.

MS. BYNUM: Web Publishing has prerequisite requirements.

MR. HUSSEY: I guess I have two comments. One, on the first page under "Council Members," one of the things we did to get more parents on the group, because we didn't have
vacancies, was to use the minimum of 24, meaning that this was the group of people that had to be there, 24, and because it was minimum, we could bring extra people on, which is what we did the last time.

So I'm fine with whatever you-all decide, but I just want you to know that that has been a benefit to you in the past, and you may not want to limit yourself in that way. So just -- just as a reminder.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MR. SINGLETON: And I'm fine with that either way.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So we want to---

MR. SINGLETON: We want to take that back out?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Take that out. So it will read, "The Council shall consist of a minimum of 24 members as follows."

MR. HUSSEY: And the only other thing I was going to comment on was under -- page 2 under E, what we just did is not what this says. So I just -- just comments.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Say that again.
MR. HUSSEY: What we just decided we would do is not what this says.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MR. HUSSEY: So just to make sure that -- and I don't care how you reconcile it. I'm just pointing out.

THE CHAIRPERSON: E3?

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah, 3E or E3, whatever, yeah.

MS. HALL: In regards to having a summary of actions and the transcribed---

MR. HUSSEY: Right. This is minutes, and again, it's -- it may just be wording and semantics that you want to correct, but it's -- what we decided just a moment ago is not what that says. That's all I want you to be---

MS. SINGLETON: What would be some suggested wording to change that?

MS. ROBERTS: You have to decide what's going to be the minutes is the thing. Is it going to be the full transcription or are we going to have it be the summary or some other permutation. I think that's what you're going to have to -- if you're going to define it that way. I mean what you could say is, you know, "Official
minutes must be kept on all Council meetings and must be made available to the public on request. At each meeting, the Council must vote on the approval of minutes taken during the previous meeting. In addition to minutes, all meetings of the Council will be recorded and a transcribed copy of the meeting will be -- you know, will be posted to the Council's web page along with the minutes," and that would give you a bit more flexibility. You don't want to call that big---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Transcript.

MS. ROBERTS: ---transcript---

MR. SINGLETON: The transcribed copy of the minutes, right.

MS. ROBERTS: You don't want to make the transcript the minutes. So I think what---

MR. SINGLETON: A transcribed copy of the meeting?

MS. ROBERTS: Yeah.

MR. SINGLETON: Okay.

MS. ROBERTS: I think that's -- as long as you demarcate that, then that still gives some discretion to the committee to determine what will be the minutes, but we probably next meeting will need to decide on what that standard form is
going to be as far as, you know, is it going to be the summary of action, is it going to be four to six page minutes with the summary of action page included, is it going to be, you know, hieroglyphics drawn by someone. You know, at some point, we have to---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Based on what -- I think Katie came to the -- not the March -- what was the previous meeting -- the December -- December meeting when we were talking about this whole thing with the minutes. And so we learned a couple of things -- well, I learned a couple of things there.

First of all, you know, namely that the minutes are not a verbatim translation of everything that happened. At that time, we were even considering doing a posting on the website of what had been offered as -- you know, as minutes. It was a summary. I also learned that a statement could be put on the website and the public, if they really wanted to see or view the minutes or the documents from that meeting, could simply request to come and view them.

So I think what I'm saying is, we can just check with her -- let her know what we
decided today that for now we would like to use
the summary of action and the transcription, and
then see what her advice will be for wording in
the bylaws. And I say that because, again, you
guys may revisit this, like, a year from now and
say, "You know what? We really don't need that
transcription," and then you would change -- alter
the bylaws to accommodate a temporary resolution,
and then you would have to go back through this
process again.

So let's make a note of that, and
then that will be something that I will ask, you
know, of her. "Here's what we decided to use
today. This is what we want to do. Now how
should that be reflected in the bylaws," and then
I'll push out -- I'll let everybody know what she
says about that. How does that sound? Because
the question -- it sounds like the question is,
you know, what are going to be the minutes, and so
just let her tell us, you know, "This is what we
want to do, and now how should that be effected?"
Is that okay?

MS. ROBERTS: Sounds good.

MS. BYNUM: Also, one other thing,
depending on the location, the recording by

Scott Court Reporting, Inc.
130 Angle Place
Stokesdale, North Carolina 27357
336/548-4371
electronic audio device may or may not be able to occur.

MR. SINGLETON: Like if we go visit another town like---

MS. BYNUM: You're right.

MS. ROBERTS: Then you just have to put in the language "if available."

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Well, make a note of that too, and I'll put all of this in the e-mail to her. The initial e-mail will go from the Executive Committee and copy DPI, copy the staff, and to Katie, so that when she replies, everybody will see her response. And then we'll inform the entire Council where we are. Does that sound okay?

(Multiple affirmative responses.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Any other comments?

MR. SMITH: Yes. This is Greg Smith, and just for accuracy purposes, on page 2, 5(c), that should say "from the State Department of Public Safety," not "Correction."

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Thank you.

MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. On page 2 as well under -- I guess it's 4(k),
"Representative from the State's Parent Training,
its should say "and Information Center," and
that's Parent Training and the word Information is
capitalized as that's from OSEP, Parent Training
and Information Center.

MR. SINGLETON: Is Parent Training
and Information all capitalized?

MS. LaCORTE: Uh-huh. Well, the word
"and" is not.

MR. SINGLETON: Right. So P, T, I.

MS. LaCORTE: Yes, P, T, I.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I had -- I did --
when I read that, I had a question about that
because I was thinking about when we write -- when
you write IEPs, you're not allowed to name a
particular program or, you know---

MS. MEBANE: That's true.

THE CHAIRPERSON: You're not allowed
to say that the Wilson Reading Program will be
used or you're not allowed to say the specific
type of, you know, technology will be used. So I
was wondering if we should just leave it at a
representative from the State's Parent Training
and Information Center, and kind of not indicate
ECAC. Now I don't know, but that's what my
thought was.

MS. MEBANE: Yeah. I think that's fine because we only have one.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Anything else?

MS. SIMMONS: Page 3, number 7, "The Council shall meet in offices provided by the State Department of Public Instruction on a date to be agreed upon." Does that leave us wiggle room to meet in another school or another place somewhere else?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

MS. ROBERTS: We maybe need to say, like, premises as opposed to offices.

MS. SIMMONS: Well, just that we met in a school in March, so---

MS. ROBERTS: Right.

MS. HUDGENS: Or in a location.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Location.

MS. ROBERTS: Location [inaudible].

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right.

MS. LaCORTE: And this might have come up -- this is Mary -- might have come up already on the bottom of 3, F6 is making sure that someone -- that attendance can be reflected as on
the phone or in person.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes.

MS. HUDGENS: And on that same item, is there -- and I don't know how I want to phrase this because it might be a Katie question, but if you can't vote on it because you weren't in attendance and you don't have a quorum to offset those that can't vote, is that phrased in such a way that there would be potentially occasions in which your minutes would never be able to be approved?

THE CHAIRPERSON: That is a Katie question.

MS. LaCORTE: I wondered that as well, Carol Ann, and I wondered if maybe members not in attendance must abstain from the vote or something that -- like happened today. People abstained and be -- were counted, but it wasn't a yes or a no.

MR. SINGLETON: There's three votes. It's yes to approve, no to approve, and I abstain.

MS. LaCORTE: Exactly.

MS. ROBERTS: Right. So what -- I guess the thing is, is instead of, you know, "Only those Council Members in attendance may vote on
the approval," you know, what you would probably
need to say is -- phrase it in the negative.
"Council Members who did attend a meeting must
abstain," because either that or you have to allow
an exception for people who weren't there to count
towards your quorum. You know what I mean? So
you have to have---

THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll ask.

MS. ROBERTS: Because typically from
parliamentary stuff -- my memory on the
parliamentary stuff is fuzzy because I think I
discovered a couple of years ago that nobody
actually reads Roberts Rules of Order.

MS. HUDGENS: We're looking at them
right now.

MS. ROBERTS: Have you read all of
it, though? Yeah, it's painful.

MS. HUDGENS: I guess my bigger
question is, even if you are abstaining, do you
count in the quorum?

MS. ROBERTS: That's what I'm saying.

Typically, like, from -- from what I recall from
the Roberts Rules of Order -- my mind's really
fuzzy and Katie will have to give you the for sure
answer. Typically anybody in attendance counts
towards the quorum. Now whether or not they can
vote on a particular matter may be something --
whether or not they can vote yea or nay or have to
abstain is something else entirely.

And I think what it looks like on
this that you want is to require those that were
not in attendance to abstain from voting, but the
quorum can still exist. So those of us that
weren't at March's meeting would still count
toward your quorum. We just can't vote to
approve. So now the only type of situation you
can run into is if the quorum is 13 and seven of
them weren't at the last meeting---

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's not going to
happen.

MS. ROBERTS: Of course not. That
would never happen. But you know---

THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll ask.

MS. ROBERTS: You know, but so the
options is then to carry over to the following
meeting to approve the minutes if you can't
approve the minutes here. So---

MS. HUDGENS: All right. But it
seems like that would be the same situation
perpetuating itself because the same number of
people were not present at the meeting for which the minutes are trying to be approved, even though you -- it just keeps getting pushed along potentially.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So we've captured that, and I have that. We'll ask and then we'll get a response back, and I'll let everybody know.

MS. HALL: And going forward, attendance will be counted as those who are here in body and physically here---

THE CHAIRPERSON: And call in. You can physically attend or call-ins count for your -- for your attendance.

MS. ROBERTS: In another ten years, we'll be able to do that thing where everybody is talking on the screen.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. All right. So I promised -- I promised 3:30. We're going to make it.

MR. HUSSEY: I don't want to throw the anchor in the dirt here---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Uh-oh.

MR. HUSSEY: ---but I'm just trying to make sure on the quorum, when I look at it,
that definitive number is 13, meaning what?

MS. ROBERTS: You have to have---

MR. HUSSEY: So is that the -- I mean, is the quorum going -- regardless of whether our numbers go up or down, is 13 what we've established and will be there, or do we need to -- do we need to put it in such a way that---

MS. ROBERTS: Do you need to write that a quorum will be---

MR. HUSSEY: A quorum is a certain part of the group because---

MS. HUDGENS: Because at some point, it could be the minority.

MR. HUSSEY: It could be the -- and I tried to look it up to see if they gave us a number, and they don't. They just -- they say it's a definitive number, but I'm---

MS. ROBERTS: But it's something that can be a calculation---

MR. HUSSEY: Right, of a set number. That would -- it would give you more freedom to get -- if you said two-thirds of your group is a quorum or whatever number you want to assign versus saying a discrete number.

THE CHAIRPERSON: The bylaws may be
amended by a two-third vote of those present at a
Council meeting. So is that the same---

MR. HUSSEY: But two-thirds is 16.

MS. ROBERTS: I believe the
requirement is that if only five people show up---

MR. HUSSEY: Well, no. I'm talking
about two-thirds of your -- two-thirds of you in
number. I looked at two-thirds of---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Two-thirds of the
24.

MS. ROBERTS: Two-thirds is kind of
high for what you're wanting to do. What you want
to look at is -- this is my suggestion, I should
say, but two-thirds is something you want to do
when you want to make things that are difficult --
you want to make things difficult. Changing your
bylaws is something you want to be difficult. You
don't want to be able -- for people to do it
willy-nilly. So we're requiring two-thirds of the
membership to be present in order to effectuate a
change in your bylaws makes sense.

If you want to able to make simple
actions, what you want to do is, you want to
specify -- when they're talking about a quorum,
you need to have a minimum number of people
present to take any action at all, and then
typically, in order for an action to proceed, you
need a simple majority of that quorum. So if
you've got ten people present, you need six people
to go yes.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So, then, the
question is, do we want the minimum number to be
13?

MR. HUSSEY: That's the question I'm
asking because---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. Let's ask.

MR. HUSSEY: ---if the number -- if
the number is being reflected up -- I'm just
asking because I don't want us to get stuck
somewhere that we've got a defined number and
that's not there. And I may be over thinking it,
but I just wanted to clear it up.

MR. SINGLETON: Let me make one
point. The reason we had it at 13 was because on
the previous page, we had taken out "of a minimum
of 24." So since we have placed back in "a
minimum of 24," we can simply take out "13 or
more" and it's just a majority of however many
folks are on the Council at a time, whether it's
24 or more.
MS. ROBERTS: I'm not sure that for actions items, though, because of the way the Council can sort of grow and contract, I still think what you want to do is you want to look at your base -- your minimum number of people on the Council, you know, and then base your quorum off of that. I don't know. We'd have to check Roberts Rules of Order.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So the minimum -- we've said the minimum would be 24.

MS. ROBERTS: So a quorum -- a quorum can be larger, but you know, basically a quorum, you know---

THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll ask.

MS. MEBANE: Everything -- every committee that I've ever served on, a quorum was one person over half.

MS. OUZTS: I was just going to just say Roberts Rules says your bylaws should specify the quorum. If they don't, Roberts Rules of Order states that a quorum is a majority, more than half, of all the members -- of all the members, is what it says.

MR. SINGLETON: So why don't we just strike the "13 or more."
THE CHAIRPERSON: We'll strike the "13 or more" and put 50 percent plus one.

MS. HALL: Is that just simple majority?

MS. ROBERTS: Simple majority.

MR. SINGLETON: Or a majority -- or you could say "a simple majority of the members of the Council."

THE CHAIRPERSON: "A simple majority of the members of the Council."

MS. LaCORTE: And do we need to specify voting members?

MS. ROBERTS: We have nonvoting members?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So it is 3:31. I'm just teasing.

MR. HUSSEY: You have ex officio members, but we're voting members.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's the questions, and that question has come up, like, three times today as far as ex officio members because I think there are other people here who have served on Councils -- who serve on Councils, and the ex officio members do not vote. So the question was -- I mean we know that it's in the
byplaws, but does anybody know, like, the rationale behind that or why that is?

MS. OUZTS: No, but I -- I mean I don't know the background of why that was said, but Roberts Rules says, a most frequency asked question, "Can ex officio members vote?"

It says, "If an ex officio board member is a regular member of the organization, there is no distinction between the ex officio member and the other board members. The ex officio board member is counted in the quorum and has the right to make motions, debate motions, and vote on all questions. If an ex officio member is not a member of the society, he or she is not counted in the quorum. However, the ex officio member still has the right to make motions, debate motions, and vote on all questions."

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. All right. So we'll just let it stand. Last call, questions or comments?

MS. HALL: I have one question, and that is, when can we expect an e-mail address?

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's a good question.

MS. BRYNUM: I sent that request to
IT, and I've not responded back because -- I've not received a response back, and I sent a follow-up e-mail today and then that person has an automatic reply that they're out till Thursday.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So we're going to -- we're moving right along. So summarizing the annual report. How about this? We can do this electronically. We'll just send an e-mail out, and pretty much we're just asking for any information that you can provide as to your participation on any committee, task force, advisory group in which you are a representative of this body.

We need to know, you know, the name of that entity and just a little blurb about the activities that have taken place. This will be for the annual report--- I moved on. I'm sorry I didn't say that. ---but for the annual report. So what we're trying to do is we're trying to collect the information to compile for the annual report, and that annual report should be an accounting of what we have done -- what we have done as a body. I lost my train of thought. You guys know what I'm talking about.

MS. ROBERTS: The annual report is a
reflection of what we have done as a body over the
year; is that what---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. Thank you.

Thank you. So, for example, when -- Vicki and I
attended all three days of the Leandro hearings,
and so we could include that in our annual report
because we wanted to see, you know, the tie-ins
and we were hoping to hear something about
[inaudible]. But at any rate, that's an example.

Or if Teresa made an announcement at
one of her local parent organizations sharing
information about the Council, then she would
simply submit, you know, "In, you know, April
of -- or August of 2015, I shared with my local
body information about the Council, our purpose,"
and you know, things of that nature.

So anything that you have done that
will show how you have -- you know, what you've
done, how you've participated or acted on behalf
of this group, we need to know about it so that it
can start being put together in the form of that
report that is due September the 1st. And that
seems to be far away, but it's not, especially
when you're working with 24, 25 people. Yes,
ma'am?
MS. LaCORTE: This is Mary. A quick question. The period of time -- I know when it has to be submitted, but the period of time it captures -- the report?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So the report in September 2016 would be for the previous year.

MS. OUZTS: I think it's July 1 through---

THE CHAIRPERSON: July to July.

MS. HUDGENS: July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016. And the September 1 date, we have to have it in advance to get it routed with the Executive Committee pieces and paraphernalia so it can be presented to the State Board. So is September 1 taking in consideration that time line?

MS. BYNUM: No. Any item to the State Board of Education is generally due 30 days prior to the board meeting, at least 30 days prior. So I would actually need it by the first part of August.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, I think the report itself can be submitted by September the 1st, but one of goals for the Council was to do a
presentation of the report to the Board, and I think that -- the actual presentation could -- could happen after that date. I think -- and I'm just trying to give you a little bit more time. But I'm thinking as long as the report is done and submitted by September the 1st, you could ask to present it at any time. They don't require us to present by a certain date, right?

MR. HUSSEY: Is this actually required to be submitted to the Board?

THE CHAIRPERSON: The annual report?

As far as I know, it always has been.

MS. HUDGENS: There wasn't one last year.

MR. HUSSEY: Right. And my point is, is it required or is it recommended?

MS. OUZTS: Well, the question being---

MR. HUSSEY: The reason I'm asking is that what Tish has said is correct. We would need it August 1st if we were going to -- if we were going to do it. But if it's not required, then we can do it in September, and I think that's the piece that I've got to figure out, is whether or not -- if it's on the list of things that we have
to turn in. Do you know if it's on that list?

MS. BYNUM: Oh, it's not on the chronological schedule.

MS. HUDGENS: It's not required, but it has been the practice of this Council that it has been the desire that it is presented to the State Board. So, then, again, back to Bill's point and your question, when you determine that you want to present that information is up to the Council. I was just asking if you wanted the release date and the presentation date to be the same in September, as a matter of your practice, then it will have to back up some so we can make that happen for you.

MR. HUSSEY: Yeah. I'd keep it at September 1 that you get it done. We can get you into the Board when we need to.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Right.

MR. HUSSEY: I think---

THE CHAIRPERSON: That was going to be my recommendation.

MR. HUSSEY: ---based on what we've got to do, that makes the most sense. If it's not required September 1, then we figure out a way after September 1---
THE CHAIRPERSON: So let's stick with the bylaws and that the report should be done, completed by September the 1st, but you can schedule and work with the Division to schedule a time to present it any time after that, and then that gives you some more time to work with and time to -- time to prepare.

Would it be too much of a bother if we said from July -- July 1 to June 30th -- could we back it up because we did not have that report -- that last report -- could we do January? So anything from January 1, 2015---

MS. HUDGENS: Sure. It's your decision.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Because there may have been some meetings and stuff ahead of that. So the time frame that we're looking at for activities would be January the 1st of 2015 to June the 30th of 2016. That's your time frame, okay?

MS. GRADY: Did you say when you need us to get that to -- to someone?

THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. I was just going to -- I was just going to send out an e-mail saying -- so you start thinking about it and
composing it and getting your stuff together, and
then when we send out the e-mail, it will have a
due date on it.

MS. HUDGENS: Well, I think she made
it clear too that she was done June 30th.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's what I said.

MS. HUDGENS: So it might be soon.

THE CHAIRPERSON: So look for this to

come---

MS. OUZTS: Right. And if the
Executive Committee has to compile this, I would
suggest June 30th at least because it's going to
take some time for them to come up with it and go
through their process.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So look
at everybody packing up. Okay. So I need the
record to show that I was ready ten minutes ago,
but you guys kept asking -- you guys kept asking
questions.

Okay. So my last comment and my last
official request of this body, because I was
thinking about that and I was thinking about the
recommendation from Mary about having the summary
of action and how we could capture the actions
that we've taken during the course of these
meetings.

When we attended the Leandro hearings, Dr. Bill Harrison gave testimony, and during his testimony, he was explaining that when he served here on the State Board, he ended his meetings by asking a question, what have we done for kids today, and the response that he wanted and received from the Board was all of the actions, the actions that had been taken during the course of that meeting.

So you guys can say no, but I would like it very, very much if at the end of your meetings, where it says that you will adjourn, when you get ready to adjourn, if you would, just ask, "What have we done for kids today? What have we done for North Carolina's EC students today," and use that as the question to answer, what actions have been taken, what decisions have been made.

Everybody takes notes, and you may not capture everything, and you really don't have to because you got this transcript that you're going to get, but at least that will be a nice way to surmise what has happened, the important -- or the highlights from the course of the meeting. Is
that something that sounds doable? Yes? Maybe?

(Multiple inaudible responses.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. So if I ask now, what have we done for kids today, do you have any -- what actions have we taken on behalf of our students?

MS. GEORGE: We have discussed strategies about teacher recruitment and retainment.

THE CHAIRPERSON: I love it. Excellent. Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: We've moved one step closer to having a way for the public to make comment to meet the needs of the students.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Any other actions taken today?

MS. SMITH: We added an unmet need in terms of military families and what we need to be doing.

THE CHAIRPERSON: That's a good one. That's an excellent one. Any others?

MS. GRADY: Talked about items we may want to discuss further in future meetings like the October Disability Awareness Month and several other topics that we might want to delve into more
deeply going forward.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent.

MS. ROBERTS: I think we also identified some of our key concerns to DPI as they're [inaudible] these trainings and working with the LEAs and whatnot that they can -- that they know the parents and a lot of the folks -- EC folks and our experiences so they can actually use that to tailor those strategies when talking to and getting buy-in from the building administrators and stuff like that, so---

THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent.

MS. HALL: We established new leadership for going forward.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Excellent. That's a good one. Thank you. Mary?

MS. LaCORTE: I was just going to say we also spoke about the needs of students around the issues being voiced by our legislature in math and the importance of paying close attention to that.

MS. GEORGE: In fact, we need to make a letter of comment on that as a group, as a body. I didn't mean to add something else to the agenda today, but---
MS. ROBERTS: I was going to ask, is there any way, like, for us to -- you had talked about capturing events and whatnot. What I was curious about is, you know, legislative action items, to be able to help distribute that information to our regions and to our schools and our parents so that they can -- because I don't how many parents know about, you know, HB-62 over there. You know, I'll be honest I didn't until I got the e-mail that Laura sent. So those legislative -- those hot legislative action items might be something we want to visit next time.

THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

MS. ROBERTS: About a way to be able to get that disseminated.

MR. HUSSEY: I mean I think we didn't think about you-all as an entity to do that. I mean we called -- we called Disability Rights, we called ECAC. So I think, you know, what we do is we just put you guys on the list.

MS. ROBERTS: That would be great.

MR. HUSSEY: So I mean I think that's a simple thing. It's just that we really hadn't thought about you-all with that in mind.

MS. ROBERTS: Because I'd like to be
able to get it out to my folks in my region.

MS. LaCORTE: And we were able to
send it to folks on our electronic mailing list
which is about 7,000, and then it came back
several ways. And then I think Facebook -- a lot
of families connect with Facebook, and Facebook
was 1,200 or so in a number of hours.

MS. SIMMONS: And I sent five e-mails
to senators about the bill based on what I got
from Mary the other day including Phil Berger.

MS. HUDGENS: But to Leanna's point,
yes, certainly the Council can collectively send a
letter of concern, response, or whatever, but
individually you can as well, and I think we
established earlier in the meeting that we would
be sending out the stuff that we talked about
today after this meeting so that you can have that
contact information.

MR. HUSSEY: We will -- I mean we'll
just put you on a list of people that we -- as the
Council as a whole. We do that frequently. If
something comes up, you know, we call -- we call
ECAC, we call Disability Rights. They're our
first two groups to go to because they've got a
widespread distribution, but we'll just look at
you guys as another group.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Okay.

If there are no other concerns or questions or offerings, is there a motion?

MS. LaCORTE: I make a motion.

MS. DANIELS-HALL: I second.

THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. We're adjourned.

(The quarterly meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.)
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 267, are a true record of the proceeding to the best of my knowledge and belief;

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

Certified this 20th day of July, 2016.

[Signature]

Rebecca P. Scott

Notary Number: 19940530133