

EXHIBIT PP

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In The Matter Of:

Nevada State Public Charter School Authority Meeting

May 20, 2016



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- May 20, 2016
Nevada State Public Charter School Authority Meeting

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1 NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY
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11 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF REGULAR MEETING
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15
16 Taken at Grant Sawyer Building
17 555 East Washington
18 Room 4412
19 Las Vegas, Nevada
20 On Friday, May 20, 2016
21 At 9:00 a.m.
22
23
24 Reported by: Jane V. Efaw, CCR #601, RPR
25

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1 Friday, May 20, 2016; Las Vegas, Nevada
2 PROCEEDINGS
3 *****
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** It's 9:02. I'm going to
5 go ahead and call our meeting to order. We'll go
6 ahead and do roll call first.
7 **MEMBER MACKEDON.** Can you go ahead and stand
8 up for the pledge of allegiance?
9 (Pledge of Allegiance)
10 **MR. WHITNEY:** Mr. Chairman, I move to allow
11 you to move forward with the agenda.
12 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** All in favor for
13 accepting the agenda?
14 **ALL:** Aye.
15 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Motion passes. We will
16 work with a flexible agenda.
17 The first item on the agenda today is public
18 comment. We have three people who would like to
19 speak. So I will call up three at a time. First up,
20 William Whitesell? I'm not sure I'm saying your last
21 name properly. (Inaudible) (inaudible), Shane
22 Shanson, Swanson?
23 **MR. GAVIN:** Mr. Chairman, would you note for
24 the record that we have a three-minute time limit?
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yes. Next, Joe Nestor?

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1 Board Members Present:
2 MARC ABELMAN, Member
3 ADAM JOHNSON, Chairman
4 ELISSA WAHL, Member
5 KATHLEEN CONABOY, Member
6 ROBERT McCORD, Member
7 MELISSA MACKEDON, Member (Carson City)
8
9 Others Present:
10 ROBERT WHITNEY, Deputy Attorney General (For Board)
11 GREGG OTT, Deputy Attorney General (For Staff)
12 PATRICK GAVIN, Director
13 BRIAN SCROGGINS, Deputy Director
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1 Joe Nestor is in the crowd? Thank you, Joe. We have
2 a three minute time limit.
3 **WILLOUGHBY WHITESELL:** Hi, guys. So I'm
4 Willoughby Whitesell. That's my name. And I go to
5 Connections Academy. I love doing home schooling
6 because I'm an actor and singer. So it goes well
7 because I go to LA almost every week. So I use home
8 schooling to like take my laptop, and I can do
9 whatever state I want. I just love it. I think it's
10 so much easier than doing regular school because when
11 you go to regular school, you have to take sick days
12 and you have to take absent days, and you have all
13 these absent days. While with home schooling, you
14 can just take your computer with you and do it there.
15 So I think that's easier.
16 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, Willow.
17 **WILLOUGHBY WHITESELL:** Thank you.
18 **JENNIFER BISTLINE:** Hi, my name is Jennifer
19 Bistline. I'm representing the special needs
20 children. (Inaudible)our committee. I don't just
21 sit here, I'm engaged. I am a big advocate of all
22 the different (inaudible). However, if you make sure
23 those kids that are sitting underneath the table in
24 third grade, not talking, (inaudible). (Inaudible)
25 and that's always (inaudible). My son has

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1 Asperger's. He's also very high on medical needs.
2 (Inaudible). I did a lot of research on the
3 different curriculum out there. Being a highly
4 qualified Masters teacher in the district,
5 (inaudible). It's not what I wanted. I wanted him
6 to be accountable to somebody. I love the home
7 school environment. (Inaudible) touched me. I
8 researched and researched, and (inaudible) curriculum
9 blew anything I could find out of the water.
10 (Inaudible). We started it in Arizona with him, and
11 we moved to Nevada. (Inaudible) but my son still
12 would not speak through a computer. But he listened.
13 He paid attention. He did his work. He got straight
14 A's. This year my son has voluntarily decided to run
15 for national honors society.
16 He is willing to get up in front of a group
17 and speak. That is because we were allowed to have
18 the tools that the NVA offered us. (Inaudible).
19 They've given him occupational therapy. They've
20 given him speech therapy. They've given him the
21 leeway to be absent and in the hospital for two weeks
22 at a time and still get his schoolwork done. NVA
23 (inaudible). They struggled there for a while
24 because they take on a bunch of kids that dropped out
25 of high school. (Inaudible) (inaudible) they

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1 continuously every year listen to the parents and try
2 to improve intervention (inaudible). And if you take
3 that away from these kids, not only do you take that
4 away from kids that don't want an education, but
5 you're taking away from (inaudible) that advantage of
6 my child as well. Thank you.
7 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you.
8 **JILL NESTOR:** Good morning, members of the
9 board. Any name is Jill Nestor. I'm one of the
10 school social workers at Beacon Academy. Beacon
11 Academy excels in not only caring about the students'
12 academic needs, but also their social and emotional
13 needs. Hence the extensive wraparound services that
14 we provide for our students.
15 It is our belief that lack of attendance and
16 school engagement is simply a symptom of a much
17 bigger problem with the students, which is usually
18 the biggest non-academic issue. These struggles are
19 often related to a lack of basic needs being met,
20 homeless parents, lack of a support system and
21 alcohol and substance abuse addiction, teen
22 pregnancy, being adjudicated and many other risk
23 factors.
24 It's no secret that if any students are
25 dealing with these issues, they are less likely to

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1 graduate from high school. Beacon Academy does not
2 ignore these issues. And in fact, we encourage a
3 discussion of these areas (inaudible).
4 It's our belief that if we help them
5 overcome these obstacles, that they will be
6 successful in our school. More likely than not, the
7 students who walk through our doors, have issues with
8 truancy and lack of school engagement. And we see it
9 as our mission to re-engage them and give them a
10 positive school experience.
11 We do not push students at risk out our
12 doors. We welcome them and provide them with the
13 services that they need. Some of the services that
14 we help provide to our students include; parenting
15 and pregnancy. We have an attractive option for
16 students who are parenting and pregnant because of
17 the flexibility of an online school. For pregnancy
18 and parenting, we often need referrals to community
19 agencies and maternity plans. The community agencies
20 that we partner with to help with them are Beacon
21 Academy, Headstart, Southern Nevada Health District,
22 the Nurse-Family Partnership, and Healthy Start
23 Program, and Nevada Children's First.
24 Many of these kids are in need of free
25 childcare while they're working their classes, and we

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1 are currently in the process of being approved to
2 operate a drop-in daycare so that students can bring
3 their school -- bring their children into the school
4 while they're being tutored. Beacon Academy also
5 collaborates with Nevada's Partnership for Homeless
6 Youth to ensure that the students' academics are not
7 disrupted because of homelessness or a chaotic home
8 life.
9 The homeless students that attend Beacon
10 need information on affordable housing, homelessness
11 resources and any other teenager resources available.
12 Many need counseling to identify how their current
13 housing situation impacts their ability to be
14 successful academically.
15 We also provide students who are identified
16 with FRL with many services throughout the school
17 year. All of our students get information linking
18 them to community resources that can assist
19 financially with their basic needs. We partner with
20 Project 150 to provide nonperishable food items,
21 toiletries and clothing to the students. The student
22 has access to these items through the Beacon closet
23 which is located in our office.
24 Through Project 150, we're able to help
25 provide holiday meals to students in the school that

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1 the school social workers identify as a need. These
2 meals are delivered to the students' home. We also
3 provide free 24-hour bus passes and a free laptop to
4 any student who qualifies.
5 So the school social workers conduct home
6 visits for students who are pregnant, sick or unable
7 to come into our office. We assess their needs and
8 make referrals to appropriate government agencies.
9 We collaborate with mental health hospitals and
10 treatment centers. We have contracted with UNLV
11 dental --
12 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Three minutes. Thank you
13 Jill. Next three are Lisa Racine, Randy Donald and
14 Joe --
15 **JOE DIRAFFAELE:** DiRaffaele.
16 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** DiRaffaele. Thank you,
17 Joe. If you are (inaudible) testimony, that would be
18 great. (Inaudible). That would be helpful. Lisa.
19 **LISA RACINE:** Thank you for allowing us to
20 speak today. I'm here on behalf of Nevada Virtual
21 Academy, and Nevada Virtual allows families to choose
22 an education that works best for their family. I
23 know it has worked very well for our family. It
24 allows students to thrive. And yes, it's true. It
25 requires parental involvement. It wouldn't succeed

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1 without us. My family has done really well. We've
2 been there about seven years now, and we've seen many
3 changes over the years. Good changes. Trying to
4 correct problems. We are a work in progress. The
5 school is, as any school, it offers a very unique
6 opportunity to those who will take full advantage of
7 it.
8 As a parent and a learning coach, and also a
9 teacher prior to this time, I've seen how the new
10 pathways work that they have put into place to fit
11 students' needs. The kids who need additional help
12 are given it in face-to-face interaction with
13 teachers.
14 Children with special needs like Jennifer
15 detailed, they're given the special accommodations.
16 The school will meet the needs those special kids
17 have. I have full confidence in our school, Nevada
18 Virtual. I trust our administrators and our teachers
19 and even our learning coaches that we will continue
20 with progress each year, and I hope you guys will
21 consider that as you make decisions about our school.
22 It's very, very important to many of us here in the
23 community.
24 And as I detailed last time a couple months
25 ago when I spoke, the school options that are

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1 available to me where I live in the city, I gave you
2 all the statistics. You know, NVA, even at it's
3 struggling work, far exceeded where my kids have to
4 go. That means a lot to me as a mom, that I have the
5 option to put them in a school where they're going to
6 do very well and not have to go to our struggling
7 local school.
8 **CHAIR JOHNSON:** Thank you, Lisa.
9 **RANDY DONALD:** Good morning, Chair Johnson
10 and members of the board. Thank you for allowing me
11 the opportunity to speak with you this morning. I'm
12 Randy Donald. I'm the president of Beacon Academy
13 governing body.
14 I've been a resident of Henderson, Nevada
15 for over 29 years, and a business owner for 28 years.
16 As you're aware, Beacon Academy as its mission offers
17 at-risk students a choice of an innovative and
18 relevant education, which provides the flexibility
19 and support to graduate from high school with
20 concrete plans for their future.
21 The Beacon Academy governing board believes
22 in the mission of the school and supports school
23 administration in their school improvement efforts.
24 We are proud of the work we have done within the
25 school and recognize that this is a challenging

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1 student population to educate.
2 Many of the students have faced obstacles
3 that have prevented them from achieving success in
4 other schools. The school administration recognizes
5 that the Beacon Academy can improve and is taking
6 steps to implement change. The board works closely
7 with staff in making decisions in regards to
8 financial, organizational, personal, personnel and
9 school improvement efforts. The board does hold
10 staff accountable. We then support and ensure the
11 students enrolled are receiving a high quality
12 education.
13 In spring 2014 the board recognized that a
14 change was necessary to improve the school. Data
15 supports that we are getting better, and that our
16 students are more successful today than they were two
17 years ago. We are focused on student achievement and
18 operational processes. Beacon Academy has undergone
19 drastic changes since spring of 2014.
20 Our board changes since September of 2014:
21 In September of 2014, the governing body president
22 resigned, and a new board president and
23 vice-president were elected. A new board member was
24 elected to fill the vacancy. In May 2016, the former
25 board president reached term limit, and was therefore

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1 not eligible for reelection. This resulted in the
2 election of me as the current president, a new
3 vice-president and treasurer, and two new board
4 members were also elected to serve on the board.
5 The new members since September of 2014
6 brought a wealth of expertise and wealth of expertise
7 in business and educational management ensuring
8 Beacon Academy continues to make strides towards
9 school improvement.
10 Our personnel changes since August of 2014:
11 100 percent of the school administration has been
12 replaced since March of 2014. The board has worked
13 with the new administration to implement school
14 processes and procedures to improve efficiency while
15 increasing student support. The budget committee has
16 worked to reduce the budget over \$1.3 million while
17 increasing student support.
18 It is our goal to run the organization as
19 academically financially and operationally sound. In
20 August of 2014, a new principal was hired. October
21 of 2014 a new curriculum coordinator and a new
22 technology coordinator were hired. August through
23 December of 2014, the Beacon Academy governing body
24 eliminated the human resource county positions by
25 entering into a contract with Aptibility to provide

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1 human resource and business services.
2 This new administration under the direction
3 of the Beacon Academy government body, began in the
4 2014/2015 school year with responsibility to
5 developing and refining processes and services in all
6 aspects of the school. An intensive audit of daily
7 operations, curriculum procedures and staff was
8 completed in order to implement school improvements
9 for the 2015/2016 school years. Thank you.
10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you.
11 **JOE DIRAFFAELE:** Good morning, Chair Johnson
12 and members of the board. Thank you for the
13 opportunity to speak this morning. My name is Joe
14 DiRaffaele. I am the vice-president of the Beacon
15 Academy governing board. I'm a 30-year resident of
16 Las Vegas, and I've been a business owner for the
17 past 23 years. If there is one thing I do
18 understand, it is the makeup of the diversity within
19 our state.
20 I'm a proud father of two high school
21 students. My son, Tyler, a junior; my daughter,
22 Emily, a freshman. Tyler and Emily's mother and I
23 divorced before they were in elementary school. So
24 I personally understand the challenges that today's
25 students face. Tyler and Emily are lucky in the

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1 sense that they have all parents actively involved in
2 their lives, helping them navigate the challenging
3 world of education. This is certainly not the case
4 for quite a many in our community.
5 I'm also the proud brother of two adopted
6 sisters, Natasha and Stephanie. They came to be
7 raised by my parents and with my sister and I when
8 they were three and four years old. My that age,
9 they had already lived in 22 different homes. My
10 sister and I had only known one home and one set of
11 parents.
12 When my two adopted sisters reached high
13 school, their world became quite challenging. They
14 faced the normal struggles of any adopted child
15 trying to understand why they were given up for
16 adoption, and at the same time they faced a very real
17 challenge of fitting in within a normal high school.
18 There were no alternative choices for their
19 education, and had there been, our family would have
20 embraced it, and my sisters would have greatly
21 benefited from it.
22 Schools like Beacon Academy are a must for
23 the square pegs in the education world of round holes
24 that exist in our community today. Our city faces
25 many challenges, and our children had nothing to do

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1 with creating them. There are diverse options --
2 excuse me -- they deserve options for their education
3 that work to support their world, and at Beacon
4 Academy we are committed to making this happen.
5 We are confident that once you hear our
6 presentation today and see the numbers that
7 correspond, you too will be pleased and impressed
8 with the overall direction and impact Beacon Academy
9 has been making with the students.
10 I'll tell a story of a gentleman named Jake.
11 He's a friend of my wife's son. His parents were
12 divorced two years ago. Jake is one of the most
13 engaging fun-loving children I've ever met. In fact,
14 I've often thought at some point I would love to hire
15 Jake to work for our company. Although in the last
16 two years, he has definitely become distracted and
17 lost focus. Five weeks ago at a big public school in
18 Summerlin, Jake was told he needed to withdraw from
19 school because he was no longer on track to graduate.
20 I wonder where Jake is going to go.
21 In closing, I want to thank you for your
22 time. We look forward to working together to help
23 our students today to become our community leaders
24 tomorrow. Thank you.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thanks, Joe. Next up,

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1 Holly Hoffbauer, Jeri Wickers, and Spencer Bassett.
2 **HOLLY HOFFBAUER:** Hi, my name is Holly
3 Hoffbauer. I am here to speak on behalf of Nevada
4 Connections Academy.
5 First I would like to thank you for this
6 opportunity to speak in front of you today. But I
7 would also like to share with you what Connections
8 Academy means to me.
9 Every single year of my life I have attended
10 a different school. That means as of this year, I
11 have attended more than nine schools. So from
12 experience, I can honestly say out of all the schools
13 I've been to, Nevada Connections Academy has been the
14 only school where I felt I fit in the best.
15 Academically NCA has given me opportunities
16 other schools can't even come close to competing
17 with. I can go at my own pace to complete lessons as
18 well as receive one-on-one attention from my
19 teachers. As an actress and an activist in the
20 community, I can't even begin to describe how many
21 doors this has opened for me. I can spend a few
22 hours completing my lessons for the day, and then go
23 to an audition or volunteer activity later in the
24 day.
25 At one point, I was Miss Junior Teen

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1 Las Vegas, and NCA was more than willing to support
2 me in my endeavors as well as make sure I stay strong
3 academically.
4 Speaking of activities, socially NCA has
5 become a place where I've made lifelong friends.
6 It's a common misconception that home schooled
7 students don't have a social life. When in
8 actuality, NCA offers activities and events all the
9 time. I was just at an event last night where I got
10 to go rock climbing with my best friend and some of
11 my favorite teachers. Out of all the other schools
12 I've been to, I can't seem to recall a sense of
13 community that I have found here at Connections
14 Academy.
15 If I could use one word to describe NCA, it
16 would have to be Ohana. Ohana is Hawaiian for
17 family. And family means nobody gets left behind.
18 And here at Connections Academy, that saying couldn't
19 be more true.
20 No matter if a student struggles
21 academically, suffers an illness, is an aspiring
22 athlete, travels the world or just wants a chance to
23 make a difference like me. Nevada Connections
24 Academy is there for all of its students.
25 **JERI WICKER:** Good morning. My name is Jeri

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1 Wicker. And I work at Spring Mountain Treatment
2 Center. Spring Mountain Treatment Center is an
3 inpatient behavioral health facility. And we do work
4 with children from ages 6, actually up to 17 now.
5 We have worked with Beacon Academy for
6 several years. I think our work relationship started
7 in 2011. In the time that we have worked with them,
8 I can say that they have been outstanding in making
9 sure that their students got all of the opportunities
10 and all of the tools needed in regard to their
11 education while hospitalized at Spring Mountain
12 Treatment Center.
13 We all know that (inaudible) all the time,
14 and people are in crisis. They have communicated
15 with our staff on a daily basis to make sure that
16 everything is in place and going very smoothly for
17 those students.
18 I am happy to say that we partner with a lot
19 of organizations. I am happy to say that Beacon is
20 the top organization we have worked with in regards
21 to education for their students. They really, really
22 care about them, which works very well with us. I am
23 very, very happy to say that we are partnering with
24 them and happy to be their partner.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you so much, Jerry.

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1 **SPENCER BASSETT:** Good morning, members of
2 the board. My name is Spencer Bassett, and I go to
3 Beacon Academy of Nevada. I am currently a junior,
4 and each year of my high school career, I have gone
5 to three different high schools. One in Texas where
6 it was yes, sir; no, sir; sorry sir, to transferring
7 to the highly recognized regular school here in
8 Nevada where there was high disrespect, no order, no
9 lodging even in the general population of the school.
10 I didn't feel comfortable in the
11 environment. The students were not motivated. The
12 teachers did not care about their students. And that
13 is when I started looking for new resources outside
14 of what I was currently receiving.
15 Every day my sister came home from Beacon
16 Academy. She's an appearing actress. Hearing her
17 praise the academics they had to offer, how much the
18 teachers love their students, how much they care, how
19 open they are to receiving just everyday lives of
20 students.
21 So I decided to act, and I joined Beacon
22 Academy. Within my few short months of being at the
23 school, I have experienced connections. And just
24 academically, like I have not found anything like
25 this. This is like no other. It allowed me to excel

1 academically. I have no words to describe it almost.
2 It's a blessing. The teachers here, they love their
3 students. They're accessible every day of the week.
4 They'll respond to your e-mails, your text
5 messages within hours most of the time because they
6 want to help you. They love their jobs and they love
7 their students, and they love their students being at
8 Beacon. Thank you.

9 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any public comment up in
10 the north? We have Linda Lord for Virtual Academy.

11 **LINDA LORD:** Good morning. My name is Linda
12 Lord, and I am a resident of Reno. I appreciate the
13 opportunity to address the board.

14 As a parent of two Nevada Virtual students,
15 I wish to share my continued support for our school.
16 Having been with Nevada Virtual for eight years, we
17 believe online education can strengthen the family
18 unit. Not only are students empowered, but it
19 encourages even the parents to enrich their own
20 continued education.

21 Last month, hundreds of Nevada parents and
22 students representing online schools addressed the
23 Authority. We shared our personal stories and
24 achievements during the spring break meeting.

25 Today I am here to observe the discussion

1 provide. The school -- there are families and
2 students that the school takes in. They help guide
3 them and teach them so that they can have a better
4 future. They have a better education and a better
5 life.

6 I personally feel that no other school that
7 I've been to has provided this for me, has provided
8 the teachers, that has provided the teaching, the
9 care, the strength and the opportunities that Beacon
10 has.

11 For example, as for opportunities, I am an
12 actress. I have been for a while. So I go and drive
13 to LA frequently. And to have the ability to open up
14 your computer and do your school and have your
15 teachers there and supporting my dreams and my goals
16 and pushing me to do school and to do what I love,
17 it's a blessing. And it makes me emotional because
18 they have shown me that I'm smart and they're there.
19 It's all I can say. They encourage me, and I'm now
20 an honorable student.

21 And when I lived back in Texas, I was
22 getting C's and B's because my teachers weren't
23 there. And I come here, and they show me that I'm
24 smart, and I can do it, and I love the school. I
25 respect the school. And I couldn't ask for more.

1 items listed on the Authority's agenda regarding
2 online charter schools. As an active member of
3 Nevada Parents For Online Education, it's our
4 intention to have an interaction and rally thousands
5 of other online families who have had choices at
6 risk.

7 Online education has proven effective for
8 many families who are going to make that commitment.
9 As parents, we will fight for the right to choose a
10 public education option that works. Our involvement
11 in our children's education builds better citizens
12 and communities, and isn't this the goal of all
13 schools?

14 Please continue to support online schools by
15 recognizing that parent involvement is the key to
16 student success. Thank you for the opportunity to
17 address the board.

18 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you so much. All
19 right. So we have three more hear. Sarah Bassett,
20 Kim Bassett, then Tina Basset.

21 **SARAH BASSETT:** Hi I'm Sarah Bassett. I am
22 a freshman that is attending Beacon Academy of
23 Nevada. Beacon is a school that allows countless
24 numbers of students, even families to be accepted and
25 have a great quality education which Beacon does

1 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, Sarah.

2 **KIM BASSETT:** Hi, members of the board.
3 She's my daughter. So it's a little bit hard to hear
4 her be so passionate and then hear my son, who
5 doesn't like public speaking, to share his things.
6 My name is Kim Bassett. I'm the mother of six.
7 These are my two youngest.

8 When we lived here previously, my oldest son
9 attended Coronado shortly before we moved to Texas.
10 I had the blessing in Texas to work again in many
11 capacities in the school district, and specifically
12 in the high school working with at-risk kids.

13 When we moved here, after living there for
14 years -- we've been here almost two years -- I knew
15 it would be a little bit of a challenge for Sarah and
16 how we were going to go about going back and forth to
17 LA. I did home school her for her eighth grade year,
18 but I knew she needed something more than what I
19 wanted to give her, although I was very -- more than
20 capable of providing that for her.

21 I looked around at her options, and after
22 speaking with many people, I spoke with Beacon. And
23 found that to be a place as my children described to
24 be as a home and a place where they were welcomed.

25 And it has exceeded my expectations. Sarah

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1 started there first, as you heard from Spencer, and
2 she not only has been getting exceptional education,
3 and in a social aspect, she has also been able to be
4 a mentor. And how many parents can say that their
5 children can go into a school and be a mentor where
6 she learns from them, and she's able to encourage
7 them to be better?
8 So when she's not in LA and doing it
9 virtually, she's here at the campus trying to make a
10 difference. And it was really alarming to my husband
11 and I, when we saw in the paper, you know, that they
12 were threatening to close. That's what it said in
13 the paper. And I was so concerned and so alarmed
14 because I can see firsthand what this place does.
15 And I'm glad to hear that it's not, but I just want
16 you to hear from us.
17 Spencer didn't say, he's already a
18 millennial scholarship, excelled. She didn't mention
19 that she's also first in her class. So these are
20 very good students who are at this place wanting to
21 do things to live their dreams. Spencer plans on
22 attending Reno. And so they do want to make a
23 difference in this world. And this has been such an
24 exceptional place for them to do that in.
25 And I just want to thank you for this

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1 opportunity to share this with you. I'm very, very
2 grateful for this opportunity for my children to have
3 this kind of an education. Thank you.
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, Ms. Bassett.
5 **TINA BLAND:** Hi. My name is Tina Bland. My
6 daughter attends Beacon Academy High School. She
7 came to Beacon Academy in September of last year as
8 an 11th grader. However, she was so behind in
9 credits that she could still be an early tenth
10 grader. Beacon Academy wasted no time with her. On
11 her first day, she met her counselor and social
12 worker, and they sat with us and made a plan to get
13 her caught up and then some.
14 In only nine months, my daughter has
15 completed the rest of her sophomore year, all of her
16 junior year, and most of her senior year. She's
17 never completed so much work in a short period, and
18 now she is set to graduate a year early, in August of
19 2016, when she is class of 2017.
20 This school was willing to work with my
21 daughter, and it shows they actually care for her.
22 The social workers at Beacon Academy are willing to
23 help people with low income and make sure they help
24 the families with food. No other school has done
25 this for us. My daughter's previous school could

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1 care less about her or our whole household. Beacon
2 Academy gave us free holiday meals for Thanksgiving
3 and Christmas to make sure we had something to eat.
4 They help families by sending food home by
5 students, and they have wonderful field trips that
6 the student goes on. From my daughter's first day,
7 Beacon Academy High School has looked out for us, and
8 I am so grateful to them. They really care about
9 their children just as much as parents care for their
10 kids. Thank you.
11 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, Ms. Bland.
12 Our next three will be RaeAnn Morales, Amineh Harvey
13 and then Lorn Maccario.
14 **RAEANN MORALES:** I'm RaeAnn Morales. I am
15 with Beacon Academy. I am a single mom of a
16 2-year-old.
17 Beacon Academy has helped me so much. I
18 thought I wasn't going to be able to graduate high
19 school. They have helped me. They have made me and
20 encourage my brother to finish high school. My
21 sister, she is older than me, and she's like, I never
22 thought I would be so happy to go to school and have
23 somebody be there for me. All the teachers have
24 helped me tremendously. They are a big part of my
25 growth now because they helped me finish high school,

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1 and I'm so thankful for that. Thank you.
2 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you.
3 **AMINEH HARVEY:** Good morning. My name is
4 Amineh Harvey. I am here representing the Southern
5 Nevada Health District Healthy Start program. I have
6 had the opportunity to work with Beacon over the last
7 couple of years developing a partnership directly
8 with the school social worker, Jill Nester, in the
9 capacity of tapering the prevention as well as my
10 current position right now working with the Healthy
11 Start program.
12 The Beacon Academy is an excellent school.
13 It provides the teens with an opportunity that may
14 not have a chance to go into the school directly, but
15 to still obtain successful outcome and realize that
16 educational obtainment is possible. And I've had the
17 opportunity to work with a couple of their students.
18 Right now they're a very young couple. I case manage
19 them one-on-one, engaging them, making sure that they
20 have the right tools, leading them to resources that
21 they need to ensure that they can parent
22 successfully. Although they may have -- they may be
23 teen parents, that doesn't predict their outcomes for
24 the future. They have an opportunity to still be
25 able to excel in the future.

1 So with the partnership that we developed,
2 it helps us reach our goal due to the lack of impact
3 as well as through sustainability and network, so we
4 can see some build in the community. So partnering
5 with their students, we are able to promote early
6 literacy helping them parent with their young
7 children.
8 They may not know exactly how to -- how
9 healthy pregnancy, how to work with them to help with
10 kids to meet their milestones. So we have an
11 opportunity to do that with them as well as
12 (inaudible) with them, nutrition education, as well
13 as breast feeding and family planning to delay the
14 initiation of sex so that they can focus on parenting
15 one child to help them achieve their goals that they
16 may have.
17 And we do care plans with them as well. So
18 we just want to make sure that they have the right
19 tools that they need to excel.
20 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, Ms. Harvey.
21 **JONATHAN HENLEY:** Hi, I'm Jonathan Henley.
22 I was here the last time I spoke to all you guys. I
23 don't know if you remember me. I represent Nevada
24 Virtual Academy, and my little brother, Donte Harris.
25 You guys had a hard debate the last time

1 bureaucracy and all, but you've got parents up here
2 crying and people and their freaking kids cry over
3 their school.
4 So, I mean, why do you got to screw with
5 kids' education? I mean, why is online school so
6 bad? If anything, you should be happy we're not
7 having a meeting about some crappy public school down
8 here, without being an online school.
9 But leaving all that -- all that -- leaving
10 all that rhetoric aside, I know you guys will do the
11 right thing, and leave that -- you know, keep the
12 school open. Just like last time, my little brother
13 is happy, engaged. He's not in therapy anymore. My
14 mom's happier. I mean, she's an emotional wreck
15 right now, but normally she's happy.
16 Like I said, we need to go ahead with
17 virtual schools. Keep them open. Beacon, Nevada
18 Connect, Virtual Academy, they all do amazing and
19 wonderful things for students.
20 And she's sorry. She gets very emotional.
21 But thank you for your time, and I know you guys will
22 do the right thing in your hearts to keep the school
23 hope. Once again, you all look like you're all very
24 decent people. Thank you.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, Jonathan. We

1 with the school being closed. So hoping you guys do
2 it again. I just want to say it's a great asset for
3 him. Very amazing. He was bullied at school. He
4 had no sleep, didn't want to go to school. He had
5 teachers that were abusive. It was just a train
6 wreck, and it was not good.
7 I have my mom here with me. She has a whole
8 bunch of degenerative diseases, so she probably
9 doesn't have long anyway. So she doesn't want
10 virtual school, you know, taken away, and you know,
11 come up here and see people get so emotional. And
12 she felt passionate, I think, my mom.
13 I'm not an educator. I'm a regular guy.
14 9:00 to 5:00 job, pays taxes. I don't really get too
15 involved when it comes to the education. That's what
16 my mom does. She's his personal mentor, which is
17 great because he's at home. And he went from D's and
18 C's to the A and B honor roll, and A's, B's.
19 And you know, I just want to say that, come
20 up here and get the opportunity to speak with you
21 guys is great. And I know a lot of people don't say
22 it, but I know you guys -- I know you guys are good
23 people, and you all have a heart, and virtual school
24 touches so many. And I mean, come on, we keep having
25 these meetings and going around. I understand the

1 always love to hear from you. Now, we have one final
2 person who would like to give comment. Angelica
3 Pallan.
4 **ANGELICA PALLAN:** Hi. I'm Angelica. I'm a
5 senior at Nevada Connections Academy. I would like
6 to thank you for letting me speak today.
7 During my years in middle school, I was
8 attending public school. In the last year of school,
9 I started to become sick. I have severe asthma and
10 allergies. I was missing a lot of schools and
11 started to fall behind. In my first year of private
12 school I attended (inaudible), which is a home school
13 program. Unfortunately, the first program wasn't the
14 right fit for me.
15 During that summer, my mom saw a commercial
16 about Connections Academy. The next thing I knew I
17 was enrolled in Connections Academy my sophomore
18 year. I felt very overwhelmed when I first started
19 out because I was so far behind in my studies from
20 previous years. So my counselors and teachers,
21 including my learning coach, were able to work with
22 me to catch up with my studies.
23 At the end of my sophomore year, my
24 counselor told me I wasn't able to graduate on time
25 because I didn't have enough credits. Unless I would

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1 attend summer school for my sophomore and junior
2 year. So for my sophomore and junior year for that
3 summer, I took summer classes. In my last year of
4 high school I did (inaudible) council. And I hoped
5 to pass my last two proficiency exams (inaudible). I
6 was stressing to pass the exams, but my school
7 offered me tutoring live lessons a month before the
8 exams. When I went to the live lessons, my teacher
9 recommended a math book to help me pass my test.
10 When I had a question, I was able to contact any math
11 teacher, even if they weren't my regular math
12 teacher. (Inaudible) a live lesson (inaudible). My
13 writing exam, I went to in-person tutoring.
14 When I took the math and proficiency exam in
15 writing in February I passed. If you had asked me if
16 I would graduate in time in my sophomore year, I
17 would have told you no. But because of Connections
18 Academy working with me and my family, I am catching
19 up on my studies. I'm getting my 504 medical plan.
20 I am now less than two weeks from graduating.
21 I'm graduating in my ceremony, and I will
22 now be attending college. I would like to thank you
23 for giving me this opportunity to share my story
24 about Connections Academy.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you for sharing.

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1 Congratulations for your work. (Inaudible).
2 Is there anyone else who may have submitted
3 and I did not call? Raise your hand, everybody. All
4 right. We will close out public comment, and we will
5 move forward to our first topic to our agenda.
6 We're going to take number 9 out of order.
7 The first item we'll take is the alternative
8 framework update, discussion. Director Gavin?
9 **MR. GAVIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
10 Patrick Gavin from the state public charter school
11 board of directors.
12 As the board is aware, this last session,
13 2015, the legislation passed Senate Bill 460
14 sponsored by Senator Harris with significant support
15 from other members of the legislation including Chair
16 Woodbury of the Assembly for Unification.
17 Senate Bill 460 creates for the first time
18 in the statute an alternative framework for
19 evaluating schools as an opportunity that is an
20 alternative framework for alternative schools.
21 The statute provides a very clear definition
22 for what constitutes an alternative school in most
23 cases. This regulation clarifies the regulation that
24 is before you, that will be contemplated and
25 considered by the State Board of Education later this

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1 month provides additional clarity in regard to
2 academically disadvantaged children.
3 What it specifically does is provides that a
4 school -- a student is considered deficient in the
5 credits required to graduate on time. In 9th grade,
6 or two semesters of high school is zero credits. In
7 10th grade, that is four semesters of high school
8 with five or fewer credits. 11th grade, that is six
9 semesters of high school with eleven or fewer
10 credits. And 12th grade, or eight semesters of high
11 school with 17 or fewer credits.
12 This is an attempt to ensure that there is
13 no ambiguity with regard to how many credits are
14 required to determine whether a student is
15 academically disadvantaged in accordance with the
16 statute.
17 The State -- the Department of Education has
18 asked (inaudible) to request from schools some
19 additional information related to these populations
20 at their schools as part of the initial process for
21 applying to the alternative framework.
22 In the interest of (inaudible), all schools
23 have an equal opportunity to provide data. We
24 actually request this data of all schools. Some
25 schools chose not to submit the data because they

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1 recognized that they were not included particularly
2 interested in inclusion in the alt framework. Other
3 kids are interested in the spirit of collaboration.
4 We have four schools that have provided data
5 that I wanted to share with the board today. That is
6 in the last four pages of your packet. They are
7 Beacon Academy. Nevada Connections, Nevada Virtual
8 and Silver State Charter School. One thing that is
9 really critical to note, is that every school has
10 noted, and this is why I don't believe this is
11 consistent with what the testimony of each of these
12 schools have been in the past, well, each of these
13 schools does serve students in many of these
14 categories. None of these schools meets the 75
15 percent threshold set forth (inaudible) inclusion in
16 the alternative framework.
17 Specifically, Beacon based, again, on very
18 preliminary data, and I'm sure schools will have the
19 opportunity to submit some additional information to
20 the department as they continue to refine
21 (inaudible). But at this point, the initial
22 calculation shows just 48 percent of students would
23 be potentially eligible for that category, one of
24 these categories in the alt framework.
25 For Connections, that number is 22 percent.

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1 For Virtual, its 14 percent, and for Silver State,
2 it's 51.67 percent. Across all of these schools, the
3 total number -- the total percent of kids would be 24
4 percent. So I think it's really important to make
5 sure while we're considering this data, to recognize
6 that these schools do serve significant populations
7 of such students, but certainly not at the very large
8 numbers that are consistent with and included in the
9 alternative framework.

10 I've also included the draft (inaudible)
11 that the department has pulled together that listed
12 data points. That is in the middle of the first
13 section of the packet. And again, I anticipate that
14 this will evolve. I would encourage all schools that
15 are interested in potentially participating in the
16 framework to provide comments to the state board at
17 this hearing on the 16th. And certainly members of
18 this body who may wish to do so in their individual
19 capacity are encouraged to do so. (Inaudible)
20 direction of the staff relating to this issue of
21 concerns that you'd like to see raised by staff,
22 (inaudible), and I'm happy to do that as well.

23 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any questions?
24 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Remind me, where does the
25 75 percent come from? Is that based on sort of a

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1 national percentage or the definition of an
2 alternative school?

3 **MR. GAVIN:** It was a negotiated number. The
4 actual initial number was proposed to be like 100
5 percent or 90 percent. 75 percent was more pertinent
6 to (inaudible). A number of schools and districts
7 have had to have that threshold lowered to that
8 number, and that was something that both the sponsor
9 and the Department of Ed had available to them.

10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** How many schools
11 state-wide would fall in that 75 percentile,
12 percentage range today?

13 **MR. GAVIN:** It's an excellent question, Mr.
14 Johnson, I'm sorry, Councilman. We don't know yet.
15 I think the department will need to pull that
16 information. The vast majority of schools which are
17 likely to be eligible for this program are schools
18 that are currently not able to be measured under the
19 state's NSPF.

20 Typically those are schools that have highly
21 transient populations. For example, the work camp
22 schools where the size of students who are actually
23 there on validation day, are there for purposes of
24 testing or graduation is a very small number. Or the
25 schools that serve exclusively the special ed

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1 populations, typically that's very small, 1 percent
2 of students who are so profoundly disabled that it's
3 very difficult to actually measure any academic
4 attainment.

5 Again, that is a very, very small percentage
6 of students. So there are a handful of schools that
7 are -- that the current -- also (inaudible) where the
8 population is transient by nature because of the
9 changing of (inaudible) and whatnot.

10 So those are ones you know (inaudible) and
11 then there's a hole, and then there's this other
12 potential group of schools, potentially including
13 some charter schools under our portfolio or in the
14 portfolio of the districts that may be eligible for
15 this, at this point or in the future.

16 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any questions for
17 Mr. Gavin? Anything else, Mr. Gavin?
18 **MR. GAVIN:** Not at this time.
19 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Mr. Chandell?
20 **MR. CHANDELL:** I just wanted to make sure
21 that the board was apprised of this information. I
22 know it's something that you've been eagerly
23 anticipating. (Inaudible).
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, (inaudible).
25 With no further discussion, we will move forward in

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1 the agenda. The board will now take the update
2 regarding we've had discussions with Beacon Academy
3 regarding the school's plan for improvement. The
4 board received an update and may have discussions
5 which we (inaudible) and school officials starting to
6 develop efforts regarding a plan for improvement.
7 Members of the Beacon Academy board or
8 representatives, from this table down, from Beacon
9 Academy (inaudible), do you want to be included in
10 this? Director Gavin?

11 **MR. GAVIN:** I will defer to the (inaudible).
12 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Good morning. I am Tambre
13 Tondryk for the record. Chairman Johnson, members of
14 the board, thank you for the opportunity to present
15 today.

16 The report we are about to share
17 demonstrates that our school improvement efforts are
18 working. With board permission, we would like to
19 present these items simultaneously along with our
20 charter amendment. Can we segue into those two
21 together?

22 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** We can do that agenda
23 item next.
24 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Okay, great.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So it will be a

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1 continuation.
2 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Okay. Great. Thank you.
3 **MR. OTT:** Let me give a brief introduction
4 before you start your presentation. I think it's
5 appropriate that you do a lot of talking, but to set
6 the table, the board will recall two meetings ago
7 there was an agenda item for a possible notice of
8 closure for Beacon Academy. The board did not take
9 any action to issue a notice of closure, directing
10 staff to work with Beacon Academy to develop a plan
11 of improvement.
12 This school -- I've had conversations with
13 counsel. Staff has also had conversations directly
14 with the school' executive director, which I think is
15 a good thing to not always have lawyers in the room
16 because they're not needed. Not that Patrick and I
17 don't do a good job and get along. So there have
18 been substantial discussions. This item has been
19 brought back today.
20 You will notice it is not agenda-ized for
21 action. So even if you are completely unhappy with
22 the plan that has been presented or the status, you
23 cannot take action to revoke the school's charter or
24 to issue another revocation. That was done
25 purposefully so that the school did not feel like it

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1 was being in a position of constantly being placed in
2 a position where it could be noticed.
3 So to the school and others, there is no
4 action item for this today. I think that's important
5 to note. So discussions, I think, have been ongoing
6 and have been somewhat productive. There is, I
7 think, some tension between the plan to move forward
8 with a plan to improve the school and the
9 accountability for what to this far has been
10 performance which landed the school in the position
11 where it was eligible by statute for foreclosure.
12 So I think that that tension is one of the
13 things that would be a useful discussion of this, how
14 much the school has to be held accountable for its
15 performance and at the same time, what actions can
16 the school take in going forward to make sure it is
17 successful.
18 Past decisions the school has made, this
19 board has made, there have been decisions to -- well,
20 for instance, the most recent action with Silver
21 State is where the board has been replaced and a
22 receiver has been appointed. That's something that
23 in discussions with the school, the school does not
24 feel it's appropriate for it because it feels like
25 the board is relatively new and is taking aggressive

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1 actions to make the school a better place.
2 So I think that's something that will come
3 out in the presentation. But that is a distinction
4 that I think I wanted to highlight because that's an
5 area of I think tension thus far in our negotiations.
6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you.
7 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chairman?
8 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Conaboy?
9 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Just for clarification,
10 there are two agenda items. One is an information
11 item and one's an action item. So could we like sort
12 of describe where the information item ends and the
13 action item starts? Okay? Thanks.
14 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I'll make a note where we
15 are finished with gathering information, and then we
16 will begin to have some action.
17 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Good morning, Chairman
18 Johnson and members of the board. Thank you. It's
19 nice to see all of you again.
20 And I'm in agreement with everything that
21 Mr. Ott stated earlier, with one important notation;
22 that when we were here in the March meeting, Beacon
23 was returned to (inaudible), and it was recognized
24 that a high stakes review was not -- was not --
25 should not take place. And I think it's very

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1 important to put on the record before you today that
2 Beacon is in good standing, and we are not Silver
3 State, which is kind of where we feel that the
4 Authority may be trying to compare us to that. We
5 have been fiscally responsible and operationally
6 responsible.
7 We are a school that is in good standing,
8 and the only issue is that section of (inaudible),
9 that 50 percent graduation rate where this board has
10 permissive authority to determine whether they would
11 like to provide a notice of closure.
12 I don't want to belabor the point, but to
13 that end, you will see that they have put together a
14 very good presentation, if I might add, in my own
15 opinion. And with that, I will hand it over to
16 principal Tambre Tondryk.
17 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** We did want to share our
18 mission statement with you. It is to offer high-risk
19 high school students a choice that's innovative and
20 relevant education, which provides the flexibility
21 and support to graduate from high school with
22 concrete plans in their future.
23 We do not exclusively enroll at-risk
24 students, but we take all students. Some of them,
25 many of them are at risk. Our vision statement is to

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1 guide Nevada students successfully through high
2 school, help them obtain a high school diploma, and
3 prepare them for college and career.
4 The next part, we're going to go through and
5 we're going to share our student demographics. You
6 met some of our lovely students this morning, and
7 there is a whole lot of them that are at home working
8 today, or in their homes that are working.
9 But our population by grade level, we think
10 it's very important to note that on validation day,
11 which is October 1st, we had 6.9 percent of our
12 population is ninth grade, and 19 percent is tenth
13 grade. You'll notice the majority of our students
14 enroll in 11th and 12th grade, and then we have a
15 substantial amount of adult students. And it grew
16 when we moved into February 17th.
17 You'll notice that the ninth grade went from
18 38 to 58 students. Ten of those transfer-in's were
19 credit-deficient. The 10th graders increased from
20 the beginning of the year to the midyear. And so we
21 just wanted to point out, our seniors did decline a
22 bit in enrollment, but 25 of those students graduated
23 early, which has been a great product of changing to
24 the new term system, where students are earning
25 credits each term. So we have students graduating

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1 every nine weeks, which is exciting to them.
2 We would like to point out our student
3 demographics regarding ethnicity. We are very
4 representative of the Clark County. We are about 16
5 percent more white than the Las Vegas area. And
6 we're about 13 percent less Hispanic. Otherwise,
7 we're pretty even with the population that we serve
8 in Clark County.
9 The at-risk population, you know, when we
10 talk about that alt framework, there are some big
11 categories missing in the alt framework regarding at
12 risk-students. Free and reduced lunch does not
13 count, ELL does not count, and pregnant and parenting
14 doesn't count. That's a population, you know, that
15 those should be considered as well. But I just
16 wanted to point that out.
17 The way that we consider our students, 73
18 percent of our students are at-risk at the beginning
19 of the year, we do define credit deficiency
20 differently. And as of February 17th, 78 percent
21 were at risk.
22 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chair, may I ask;
23 Patrick, we were just talking about the alternative
24 schools and the alternative framework that
25 (inaudible). So is alternative, isn't it for

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1 at-risk, and what definition should we be considering
2 today as we listen to this presentation?
3 **MR. GAVIN:** Alternative is a subset of
4 at-risk. So alternative, Miss Tondryk is correct,
5 that there are many different populations of at-risk
6 students in our state.
7 We are a state that is by majority a
8 minority in our student population. We are a state
9 that has one of the highest populations of students
10 in poverty in the country. We have one of the
11 largest population of English language learners in
12 the country. So were we to classify schools based on
13 the number of students who are ELL or FRL or that
14 have IEP's, virtually all of our schools have lined
15 up not counting under the standard NSB, the standard
16 that the school performance framework developed based
17 on our state-wide context, which includes the fact
18 that we have a number of significant high-need
19 populations.
20 That is also the reason why our legislature
21 has become a process of (inaudible) special ed fund
22 per teacher, funds to a per pupil cost (inaudible)
23 starting this next (inaudible) that starts out this
24 academic year (audible) last two session, and then
25 victory rolling out (inaudible) this current budget.

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1 So I just want to clarify that while there
2 are many different populations of at-risk students,
3 and under NRS 386-580, schools do have the
4 opportunity to create a missions and ambitions
5 preference for such students to ensure that they do
6 serve such students exclusively, and that could, for
7 example, (inaudible) school survival (inaudible) make
8 sure that they serve such students specifically.
9 There are a broad number of categories that can be
10 included under that definition, but for the purposes
11 of the alt framework. The legislature was very clear
12 what was in bounds and what was out of bounds.
13 It was also a matter frankly under federal
14 law, there were serious issues that we were
15 (inaudible) saying schools that have served -- that
16 serve (inaudible) in poverty or (inaudible) are not
17 held to the same standards as schools that serve the
18 general population.
19 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry, I
20 missed I think what was an important point there. So
21 you're saying that by this definition, which I
22 certainly understand it's your presentation of
23 at-risk, that by that same definition, most Nevada
24 schools would be considered at-risk, or a lot of them
25 would. And so then I think I heard you say that

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1 performance framework somehow accommodates that
2 reality. Did I misunderstand?
3 **MR. GAVIN:** You did not. That is correct.
4 The school performance framework was developed by the
5 Department of Education and was approved by the
6 federal government based on an analysis of many
7 factors, including the overall student population
8 needs of the state. It is embedded into our
9 statewide federal programs and consolidated
10 application for federal funds. (Inaudible) that
11 still remains in effect at this point. (Inaudible).
12 It is possible as the state superintendent
13 noted during our last meeting that there will be
14 changes that will most likely roll out in 2018 or
15 2019, but at this point, the framework that exists is
16 the framework for all schools except that very small
17 number of schools that are qualified for the alt
18 framework.
19 **MS. MACKEDON:** Patrick?
20 **MR. GAVIN:** Member Mackedon?
21 **MS. MACKEDON:** Yeah, so I just wanted to
22 clarify something. I think we have to be really
23 careful because it was just stated that we define
24 at-risk differently. And so, you know, we just have
25 to be conscious of that. Because just because the

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1 school defines it differently, we have to follow the
2 state definition for what is considered at-risk; is
3 that correct?
4 **MR. GAVIN:** It would certainly be advisable,
5 Member Mackedon. I believe this board likely has
6 discretion to create a more inclusive definition, but
7 that very much is a slippery slope based on the
8 conversation we had. Virtually every high school in
9 the state would fall into the alt framework if we
10 were to start including all of these categories,
11 whether it be demographic categories, or the number
12 of students who are in some way credit-deficient;
13 that is, they're not maximizing the number of credits
14 that they should receive each year.
15 **MS. MACKEDON:** I think it is a slippery
16 slope. I mean, if we're going to all get to pick, I
17 want to count my military-dependent kids, and I'm
18 sure Cora will when they have their full (inaudible)
19 because they move every three years, and one of their
20 parents is deployed half a year. So I do think it is
21 a slippery slope, and we do have to kind of --
22 whether we like it and agree with it philosophically
23 or not, we have to play by the rules as it's laid out
24 for us by the powers that be.
25 **MR. GAVIN:** Member McCord?

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1 **MEMBER McCORD:** I need just some
2 clarification. You indicated -- maybe I
3 misunderstood -- but it's within the purview of this
4 body to change the definition that was my
5 understanding up to now the purview of the state
6 board and the State Department of Education as
7 approved in the federal definition.
8 **MR. GAVIN:** Member McCord, if this board
9 wants to hold schools to no standards whatsoever, it
10 can certainly create a framework that does integrate,
11 but it isn't advisable.
12 **MEMBER McCORD:** That isn't the question I
13 asked. But is it in the purview of --
14 **MR. GAVIN:** In terms of within the alt
15 framework, yes, you could theoretically create a
16 different definition which incorporates many more
17 factors.
18 **MEMBER McCORD:** Is there a citation in
19 our --
20 **MR. GAVIN:** We do have the authority to
21 create a performance framework. There is -- you
22 could do many things. I would simply say it's
23 inadvisable and inappropriate.
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** You said you define
25 credit deficiency a little differently (inaudible)

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1 before we got on that kind of tangent. Can you help
2 me -- help us all understand what you meant by that
3 comment?
4 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Yeah. Basically the
5 framework we were looking at that Patrick just
6 presented that -- first of all, I do want to clarify.
7 Beacon has known from the inception of SB 460 that we
8 do not qualify for an alternative education
9 framework. I think that's set up for a school
10 district like Clark County, where they can refer
11 students for behavioral, adjudicated youth, you know,
12 as Patrick said, a special code for special education
13 population.
14 When that bill came out, they removed some
15 of the federal definitions for at risk. So we are
16 not making up our own definition. We were just
17 looking at, these are at-risk indicators federally.
18 It's not as if we were trying to fall under the alt
19 ed framework. That's 75 percent of your students at
20 risk under very behavioral. But we're not set up
21 with security guards and things like that. That may
22 not be something that, you know, is the direction we
23 want to go.
24 We are just pointing out with ours that
25 using definitions like homeless, and then FRL, ELL,

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1 you know, IEP students, that we do come very close.
2 We are more at risk than most schools.
3 And so therefore, we're struggling to -- and
4 also this is what it's about today. Talking about
5 our graduation rate. So the way that we define
6 credit deficiency is for our own purposes, which is
7 scheduling and looking at these students in a
8 realistic way. When a student comes in to me with
9 three credits deficient, I know that that student
10 will take a year. It's going to take a year to make
11 up those credits. So that's how we look at it. We
12 look at it in a scheduling manner.
13 So we define -- we presented this back in
14 September where a Level 1 is really .5 to 3 credits
15 deficient. There's a big difference. If a kid is
16 half a credit behind, I can make that up in 9 weeks
17 if that student is successful in all of his classes.
18 If he's 3 credits behind, he's going to be enrolled
19 the first half of the year, the second half of the
20 year, and probably taking a credit over summer to
21 make up those 3 credits. That's a whole year of
22 school.
23 When you talk about it, the alt ed framework
24 was saying that first of all, no ninth grader can
25 qualify because then can't be credit-deficient until

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1 the end of their ninth grade year. I don't know what
2 that sounds like. But you know, it's just -- you've
3 got to look at each one. So when they're saying a
4 sophomore with 5 credits at the end of the year, that
5 student, you know -- suppose they need 12 credits, so
6 they're 7 credits behind.
7 So you're looking at students that will
8 absolutely will not graduate in four years when
9 you're talking about the alt ed framework by that
10 definition. In our case, we looked at it as students
11 trying to retrieve credits while they're continuing.
12 So they're taking their 6, and we're adding credits
13 on top of that, if that helps. So that's what we
14 were speaking about.
15 So this is just an example of a 12th grade
16 student. So a 12th grade student should have 17
17 credits by the beginning of the year. And you can
18 see that their senior year they're taking 4, 4-1/2,
19 maybe 5 credits, depending on where they are. But if
20 they have a Level 1 deficiency up to 3 credits, you
21 can see that you go all the way -- you know, you take
22 the full 8, so they're taking two additional credits
23 during the traditional school year. The 6 credits,
24 you're adding two on top of that, and then they're
25 returning that summer to finish that third credit.

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1 And then if they're a Level 2 credit
2 deficiency, which would be 3.5 to 6 credits behind,
3 they're going to need two years. They're going to
4 take 8 credits, and then they're going to have to
5 come back the following year for 3 or 3-1/2 credits.
6 And you can see by the time they reach a Level 4
7 deficiency, which Level 4 is between -- they're 9 to
8 12 credits deficient. You can see that you're taking
9 three years to graduate.
10 And this is not uncommon for students coming
11 from these big districts when they're coming into
12 school. They haven't earned a lot of credits. And
13 so when you add that on top of what they need to do
14 each year, it does add up and pile up.
15 Do you want me to -- do you have any further
16 questions on that?
17 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I do not. Does anyone
18 else? We've got to move forward.
19 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** And what we wanted to do
20 is -- I don't know if you've ever heard about Beacon.
21 I know you haven't had the opportunity to come out
22 and see us. But we are a campus. We have about a
23 hundred students on campus every day. You met some
24 of them today. And they do come in. And as you can
25 tell by the direction of our amendments, we are

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1 hoping to be a fully blended school in a couple of
2 years.
3 We have blended programming, which means
4 that some of the students are opting in to take
5 classes that require them to be on campus. We need
6 them on campus. These students are behind. The gaps
7 in their education are extreme, and the teachers are,
8 like I said, they're awesome. They're one-on-one
9 with the kid, they're working with them, and they're
10 helping them.
11 And so the student is really, truly the
12 center of our school. And when that student comes
13 in, they are supported at all times. We have the
14 social workers. We employ three social workers for
15 a student population of around 600. We also have the
16 teacher support, the academic counselors, the
17 parents, and we all work together to wrap those
18 services right around that student.
19 And if that student is receptive, we can get
20 them all the way to graduation. You have to have
21 that buy-in as well. Our social workers do a
22 phenomenal job as you've heard of linking them with
23 those community resources. For myself, when I came
24 to be in, that was one of the things that just
25 floored me, is how involved social workers can be.

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1 It's just not done. And it's a shame because so many
2 students need that service. And I'm very proud to be
3 in a school that offers that for those kids because
4 it doesn't exist in other schools.
5 So when a student enrolls in Beacon, we
6 don't just enroll them through registration. They
7 actually come in, and they interview with -- we've
8 just hired somebody to do this full-time. But they
9 also work with us. They'll meet with an
10 administrator. That'll meet with a school social
11 worker. That'll work with a school counselor. But
12 we sit down with them and discuss their social,
13 emotional and academic history in the past.
14 We then, as we're go through the pre-
15 enrollment conference, we find out, why haven't you
16 been attending school and why have you attended
17 school. What's successful. What do you like about
18 school. What's your hardest subject. Those
19 questions are all very important. What school did
20 you come from. How did you get here. So what we're
21 starting is to track that data, too.
22 But from that, though, we give them a
23 placement test. We do not give them to students on
24 track in their junior and senior year because those
25 students are demonstrating success. But for the 9th,

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1 10th and credit-deficient, there's been a placement
2 test. We use that placement test to determine the
3 leveling of the courses, because the students are
4 coming in with transcripts that you've never seen.
5 Four years of English. Never successful. A math
6 here. They have a credit here. A credit there.
7 It's really quite interesting.
8 So using the placement test, using that
9 enrollment conference, building that schedule,
10 putting them through an orientation. And then our
11 students receive their schedule, and they've been
12 through the orientation, and we talk about a success
13 plan. So what are you going to do to be successful
14 here? Because we've identified their barriers at
15 this point. We know why they haven't been attending
16 school.
17 Most kids are really honest. I think you
18 saw some examples of that today, too. But they'll
19 tell you why they haven't been; I just didn't like to
20 go, or it was for this reason or that reason.
21 So many students, and it's easy to tell when
22 you're doing an orientation, whether or not an online
23 program is really a big thing for them. So if it
24 isn't, we're going to ask you to be on campus twice a
25 week, and if you're successful, we'll keep you at

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1 twice a week. If you need to be here more, we'll
2 encourage you to come in more.
3 As we were state-wide, we were serving our
4 students remotely through tutoring in that capacity.
5 So they were logging in, and we had teachers
6 available to remote tutor those students. And then,
7 if it's our social workers, teachers, academic
8 counselors that form the support team. Every student
9 in our school is part of a house.
10 Now, house is associated with grade level.
11 Let's say you're a part of a 10th grade house. Well,
12 you're going to work with Mr. Engle, and he's going
13 to be the social worker for that house. You have an
14 academic counselor. Each week we monitor their
15 grades. So we can get real-time data. If you wanted
16 to see where my students are today, you can log into
17 our system. It's grad point. There's some products,
18 which we find very rigorous, but our students are
19 monitored weekly.
20 Students that are falling behind are called
21 and encouraged to do better. Students that are doing
22 well are called and say, you know what, you're doing
23 a really great job, you're keeping up, you know? And
24 the students that are falling behind, what's going
25 on, how do you miss conversations, why aren't you

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1 coming in so I can get you what you need.
2 All of this goes on weekly. Tutoring is
3 offered 9:00 to 3:00 Monday through Thursday. Friday
4 is by appointment. And I have a bunch of students on
5 campus today with their teachers there for tutoring
6 because we're almost at the end of the term.
7 And then in addition, we continually run the
8 services, and at the end of the nine weeks, we start
9 all over again. We start with that student's success
10 plan, look at how successful they were. Our academic
11 counselors have the challenge of looking at did they
12 pass everything. Do we have to go back and change.
13 We do not push a kid who has failed algebra semester
14 1 into algebra semester 2. Because we can't --
15 that's silly. So we stop it, we reset it, and they
16 have to do it again. Because we're not going to
17 promote them onto the next level.
18 **MEMBER WAHL:** I have a question. You said
19 pre-enrollment interview. And I'm going to be really
20 picky and ask you, do the parents understand their
21 public school and you have to take them, or do they
22 think this pre-enrollment interview is, oh, gosh, you
23 may not take me?
24 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** You know, it's really
25 interesting, and it's also really sad. They start by

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1 not being very forthcoming with information because
2 they think you're not going to take them. Their
3 transcripts -- we reassure them immediately of that.
4 It's not about whether they're going to come
5 to our school and whether they're not. It's about
6 what are you going to do once you enroll. And they
7 get that impression right away.
8 I just met with a family three days ago.
9 His daughters, in his case, were accelerated. And I
10 right away started talking about dual credit options.
11 Then wanted to travel. And he's like, this is the
12 best program I've seen because his daughters can
13 graduate early if they want. You can go year-round.
14 We don't charge for summer school. So, yeah, we do
15 get that hesitant parent that really, no, they're not
16 going to give us information. And you can tell you
17 were absent 60 days last year. Like what's going on.
18 And when they start to talk -- and that is
19 something that we have to work through, that there is
20 very little faith and trust in the school system
21 through so many of my families. It's quite
22 heartbreaking. It's been a real change when you work
23 with this population. And the troubles they've had,
24 it's very sad to say, but what goes on with parents
25 who maybe aren't as educated, what the school

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1 systems, the games they play.
2 **MEMBER WAHL:** So I'll follow up. I met you
3 yesterday informally. I go back to the word
4 "pre-enrollment." I'm just wondering if there's an
5 orientation meeting. Could there be some way
6 where -- you walk into your neighborhood school, and
7 you're enrolled that day or the next day. That's
8 just the way it is.
9 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** If we did that because
10 that's what we used to do, we couldn't identify what
11 they needed. And then they would be enrolled for so
12 long before -- that's the only time we have -- how do
13 I say this -- parental follow-through. Not every
14 parent, but it's definitely the time where they're
15 most willing to do what we ask. And I can change
16 that name absolutely.
17 I understand what you're saying. It's to
18 screen. It is to screen. But it's not just for
19 screening, it is truly to identify academic, social
20 and emotional needs. We have a questionnaire we go
21 through. So its really about getting that student
22 the services they need. I spoke to one of the moms,
23 and she said before they left, they had a social
24 worker and a counselor because some of our students,
25 it's that extreme. (Inaudible) is homeless. So when

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1 those kids come in, it's, What do you need?
2 **MEMBER WAHL:** Thank you.
3 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Sure.
4 **MR. GAVIN:** Ms. Tondryk, I would concur with
5 Member Wahl that the nomenclature is problematic from
6 perception issues, if nothing else. I would also
7 note that I think it is really critical that this
8 happened after the student is officially registered
9 so that there can be no mechanism by which
10 (inaudible) can visit him. Were there any
11 accusations that (inaudible) the school has screened
12 or sorted -- sorting a student or doing intake to
13 determine what their needs are that is materially
14 different than what could be framed or misunderstood
15 in the screening process (inaudible) that the
16 nomenclature is made very clear, that we cannot set a
17 precedent by which schools can pre -- what looks like
18 that the school does what could be perceived as a
19 preinterview to sort the kids out of the school
20 versus to assign a new curriculum pathway in the
21 school.
22 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** It's also a good
23 opportunity to (inaudible) to learn about our
24 program, too. Sometimes they don't want to enroll,
25 and they find out that, you know, they (inaudible) so

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1 sometimes they come in, and their parents want that
2 for them, but they absolutely do not. (Inaudible) we
3 can change up the name of that conference.
4 So I wanted to just go over just briefly, we
5 are doing the four-term preschool year. We can have
6 30 graduates so far this year. Dual credit
7 enrollment. We really are a personalized learning
8 school.
9 People talk about, you know, the future, how
10 are we going to personalize the way we're doing it.
11 You know, those conferences, talking about students
12 enrolling. We look at where they are, and that's
13 another reason that we need to have those meetings
14 with them before we put a schedule together. It's
15 really hard to look at any transcripts and know where
16 this kid is.
17 And so looking at the dual credit options,
18 AP options, credit retrieval and foundational
19 courses, students that have seen a progression of
20 failed math or English classes, making sure that in
21 addition to their grade level classes, they're put in
22 remedial courses to build up the gapped learning. We
23 also --
24 **MEMBER CONABOY:** May I ask a question? Your
25 pages are not numbered. So I have it in our book,

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1 page 74, the costs of supporting at-risk, which is
2 highly significant. So you talk about where that --
3 is that extra money you manage to do that and with
4 your small enrollment, how do you eke out the extra
5 resources that are needed for all this intervention
6 that you're describing?
7 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** We work really, really,
8 really hard. What we're doing is we just -- we don't
9 charge for summer school, but really, that is what we
10 base that number on, the actual credits retrieved.
11 So each student is about a credit and a half -- I'm
12 sorry, it's about a student and a half enrollment.
13 They're talking about eight classes, 8 or 9 credits a
14 year. And so you're funded for 6 credits. So we
15 were just looking at the number of credits versus the
16 number of students, and that's where we came up with
17 that figure. It is -- my teachers are taking --
18 they're compensated, but we work -- one of the nice
19 things about being online is our campus holds -- you
20 know, we can accommodate a large number of students,
21 but we don't.
22 So I don't have to do lunches at school. I
23 don't have to have security. My students come in for
24 three or four hours, and then they go home. So I'm
25 able to keep those operational costs down, and all of

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1 that money then can go towards the students.
2 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So is this 495090, is
3 that like an accounting way of putting that, or is it
4 real cash?
5 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** It would be -- I worked it
6 out with our aptibility -- our school accountant, and
7 we talked about, you know, just looking at the
8 support for those additional courses enrolled.
9 Course enrollments, is what it was tied to.
10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Okay. Thank you.
11 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** So just to kind of let you
12 know, we are very focused on student achievement.
13 And there isn't a day that goes by that we aren't
14 focused on the grad rate. We understand that the
15 charter board is under significant pressure to
16 increase their grad rate as an entity, too.
17 And we understand that we're one of the
18 contributing factors to the low graduation rate, and
19 we acknowledge that. We are working very hard to get
20 our students where they go. You're going to see in a
21 few minutes after we start going into data that we
22 found some interesting factors that may be more
23 global through all of the charter schools and some
24 things that we should look at.
25 But in order for us to reach that improved

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1 graduation goal, we're starting by looking at and
2 working towards -- our school performance plan is
3 geared towards getting every student to earn an
4 additional two credits, or at least (inaudible) of
5 credit if they're not credit-deficient.
6 We monitor weekly how those students are
7 doing and try to get those interventions or supports
8 in place. We cannot do the work for them. We have
9 some students that are able to accelerate and do
10 their work very quickly, as you heard from a parent
11 of one of those students today. Other students, it's
12 very challenging.
13 And so, other performance goals; our second
14 performance goal is to increase student retention
15 during the regular school year, increase students
16 returning every year, and increase students that stay
17 with Beacon four years, because we don't have a large
18 number of students that enroll in ninth grade. So
19 it's very hard for us to have -- basically our
20 graduation rate isn't being based on students who
21 have been with us four years. Those graduation rates
22 are being with students when they come.
23 So as we'll demonstrate shortly, they're
24 coming during their junior and senior years. We do
25 recognize -- I know that one of the recommendations

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1 that Patrick put in was that we did not put in our
2 report how we plan to validate our data. I have with
3 us an associate from the university, UNLV and college
4 of education who just started doing a very minimal
5 validation this year, but we have plans to have him
6 validate further and further next year. And so he'll
7 be speaking to you very shortly.
8 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I just want to ask a
9 question really quickly. Can we go back one slide,
10 please? Is there any way to know where we stand --
11 where you stand today? So the goals are very
12 specific goals. So the first goal at the top is
13 increased student retention. So to understand, where
14 we are today, and how we reached that or we are at
15 least at that timeline. And then go to the left,
16 right? It will say where we are today, and what that
17 looks like.
18 And then of the last two goals, those are
19 more general, increase student engagement. How do we
20 quantify those, prevention of student drop-out rates,
21 again, how do we quantify.
22 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Sure. Right now in 2015 we
23 have a 70 percent year-to-year return. And so we
24 like to increase that to 75 percent. And then in
25 2015, we had 69.5 percent stay through the year, and

1 we would like to increase that by 75 percent as well.
2 Sorry. And then our four-year retention rate is
3 currently about 39 percent. So we would like to
4 bring that up to 50 percent.

5 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** And in terms of the final
6 two goals, do you have any quantifiable measures that
7 you're going to use to track your performance there?

8 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** So the resiliency data is,
9 we were recently talking with some of you also are
10 from the charter schools, and they're using
11 resiliency data. What those are are surveys that are
12 sent to the students every nine weeks, and they ask
13 about their feelings and thoughts towards their
14 school. And we're hoping to -- this is going to be
15 new next year -- using those surveys to identify the
16 kids that seem to be at risk for dropping out,
17 leaving us.

18 You have these students that really have
19 that pressure to support the family. There's just so
20 many good jobs that you can get, you know, at a high
21 pay when you're in high school. It seems like high
22 pay in high school. And it's hard to complete with
23 that when the families are struggling. And just the
24 frustration. They don't see the point, and so trying
25 to identify that.

1 moving from your current grad rate to getting to at
2 least statutory minimum of 60 percent? I will note
3 that 60 percent would still mean, if your state were
4 (inaudible), our efficiency graduation rate goes to
5 60 percent, we would still be the lowest performing
6 such entity in the country if we were a state.

7 Nevada has the third lowest grad rate in the
8 country at 70 percent. The District of Columbia is
9 at 61 percent, and New Mexico is at 68.5 percent.
10 This 60 percent is still a really low bar, and we're
11 just trying to get people to that. When is it going
12 to happen?

13 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** That is an awesome
14 question. As you will see, 80 percent of our
15 students show up between their junior and senior
16 year. It's really hard to predict. 80 percent show
17 up between their junior and senior year. You're
18 giving us one to two years. And I don't know who's
19 showing up in the fall. And so that's why we're
20 asking for the supplemental measure towards the
21 four-year graduation rate. That's 70 percent. So
22 we're going to talk more about that. But that's the
23 reality. We take students after they failed
24 everywhere else.

25 **MR. GAVIN:** So are you saying that there is

1 So we're hoping to -- I guess, again, it's
2 earlier, and if we can identify them, then we can
3 provide an intervention. Right now we don't know.
4 Yes, we have a great relationship with 50 percent of
5 our students, but there's still, you know, that other
6 50 percent that they don't answer the phone, they
7 don't pick up. You know, they just do their own
8 thing. So try to engage to do better.

9 **MR. GAVIN:** Can you help me understand?
10 These are some really helpful indicators for their
11 taking on help to fix that. If you perform the
12 standard performances tests, there's a reasonable
13 argument to be made they will help increase your
14 graduation.

15 My first question is, these goals, I don't
16 see a baseline or a time horizon for where you are
17 right now and where you need to get to and at what
18 point. Yes. It's good to know you're going to
19 increase student retention to 75 percent. What is it
20 now, and how are you going to -- and when are you
21 going to get to 75 percent. That's my first
22 question.

23 The second one is, assuming that these are,
24 in fact, reasonably predictive indicators for
25 increased graduation rate, what is the timeline for

1 no timeline by which you believe you could achieve 60
2 percent, let alone something close to the state
3 average?

4 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** I think what I'm saying is,
5 how do you predict 80 percent that show up their
6 junior to senior year? What would you put -- I don't
7 know. I mean, if they show up and they're all on
8 track, I had 91 percent last year. There are
9 students on track to graduate.

10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I have a different
11 question. Similar vein. I understand the difficulty
12 there, right? Are there ways we could be thinking
13 about how we could be more flexible with the school
14 because you don't know who's going to show up, right?
15 And so the job of every school is should be at the
16 end of the day, students are achieving, and some
17 don't (inaudible) from that at all.

18 There are other things we can think of in
19 the process we have today to be able to provide
20 accelerated. I know you're trying to do that, but
21 even more accelerated intervention for those who
22 might be a Level 7 student and then ultimately
23 impacts your graduation. I just want to make sure
24 that we're thinking as expansive as we can to try to
25 -- because, you know, I don't think either of you are

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1 going to throw your hands up at all, but I'm just
2 wondering.

3 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Absolutely. We can go
4 into -- what we'd like to do, first of all, is in
5 2016, we have asked today - and I'm not ready to go
6 into the charter amendments. But the one amendment
7 is to ask to limit our enrollment just to Clark
8 County students. We really do want to move to a
9 blended campus. We know that the students that come
10 to school that get the intervention directly from the
11 teachers are more successful. So that is the first
12 step towards school improvement.

13 The other things that we plan to do this
14 coming school year is continue to improve student
15 attendance, retention, overall academic performance,
16 and I would be happy to work with Patrick in
17 establishing a timeline towards the retention goals,
18 where we are today versus -- and we do have that
19 within our report. Do you have all that? Patrick
20 has it. But we can do that. We are increasing the
21 amount of remediation courses. We just have
22 identified such deficits, implement a response to
23 intervention program. Providing more professional
24 development for working with at-risk students. There
25 is that compassion. At the same time you've got to

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1 be tough and firm, so building that relationship with
2 your students while being firm and setting those
3 goals for them.

4 We're undergoing our advanced accreditation
5 renewal this year. We have processes in place to
6 increase family engagement in campus life and
7 piloting in an often blended program. So students,
8 as they're coming in, we're going to encourage them
9 to enroll in those classes so that they are on campus
10 a minimum of two days a week.

11 Moving forward, we would like to amend the
12 charter next year to become a blended learning
13 assistance education school. Blended learning will
14 mean that there will be requirements for the students
15 to be on campus. We don't foresee being able to open
16 it next year, but we do plan to open it in 2018. We
17 have a lot to do before then.

18 Our current building, we will either have to
19 renovate, or we would entertain the idea of
20 purchasing or leasing a building for our school. So
21 it's going to be a very hard year of planning,
22 developing and preparing staff to become blended
23 learning instructors. It is a change, but it's
24 something that we're piloting now. We've started,
25 and will continue to go.

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1 So that is really -- when we look at it, our
2 biggest struggles are students that attend remotely
3 all the time. For our students. You have students
4 that do very well in online education, but at risk
5 and online is just not the perfect blend.

6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Do you have a question?
7 **MEMBER McCORD:** You just answered it.

8 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** So by 2018, we hope to be a
9 blended learning campus. And it would be at least
10 two days a week on campus, not the one that is
11 operating -- there's a charter school that operates
12 one day per week. We want at least the two days.
13 Our content will be online, and our students will
14 come in, and they will work in that online content.
15 But then the teachers will be able to provide the
16 intervention to each of the students. Again, really
17 personalize that learning program, which is the whole
18 purpose of blended learning, you know, seeing best
19 components of face-to-face and online and putting
20 them together. And we're really excited about it.
21 The staff is excited about it. And our students are
22 the ones that are saying, you know, that used to --
23 but the students that come in all the time now, they
24 love it. So it's just getting the students that we
25 don't get a handle on.

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1 **MEMBER McCORD:** I don't think you'll get a
2 lot of pushback from people up here concerning the
3 blended curriculum. It's a lesson that others might
4 want to think about.

5 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Thank you. Yeah, we're
6 excited. So we know that through this -- and that's
7 really why we're -- we're excited to be here today.
8 At first we thought we were going to have a history
9 review. And then it turned into a status update,
10 which we like so much better. But we recognize that
11 we just need a little time to get through this. I
12 think by the time we're blended, I think that we can
13 start (inaudible) they're going to come back. We're
14 talking about students that will remain four years,
15 three years. We'll have them longer. We'll be able
16 to keep them on track. We won't have this turnover
17 where we have students in towards the end of their
18 career.

19 So by the end of this year, you know, how to
20 open another 150 spots. So then you take in a new
21 150 juniors and seniors. So that is a very transient
22 part of the school that could be minimized more with
23 a blended program.

24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I think we're all decided
25 about the potential of the blended model. I think we

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1 will be really eager to see how this goes. But in
2 the meantime, right, there's time between there.
3 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Absolutely.
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** And there are tons of
5 kids who have to go through the system. We have to
6 make sure that they're getting a quality education.
7 What is it that we are tracking and monitoring to
8 make sure that those students aren't kind of lost in
9 the shuffle, and we're all being held accountable.
10 This doesn't just fall to (inaudible). I
11 think we all collectively are accountable to ensure
12 that our students are graduating. So what is it that
13 we can do in between now and 2018 or '19 to ensure we
14 have, not just 60 percent, because that's again, as
15 (inaudible) mentioned, that's a very low bar. Six
16 out of ten kids not graduating from high school, very
17 low bar.
18 So what is it that we're doing to ensure
19 that we have a higher level of achievement than that
20 for those students? Again, I'm thinking we could
21 take it expansively as possible. And I'll need a
22 plan saying this is what we'll do and this is what
23 we'll see. Because no kid, no child should not be
24 able to graduate from high school.
25 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Absolutely.

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1 **MEMBER WAHL:** Can I jump in and ask: So
2 you've got that six year program, right? You're not
3 saying kids aren't graduating, they're just not
4 graduating in their class?
5 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Correct.
6 **MEMBER WAHL:** (Inaudible).
7 **ANDREA DAMORE:** Hi, Andrea Damore. One of
8 the reasons why we might not hit that 60 percent but
9 we want you to look at five years, is because we get
10 them their junior year. We get them their senior
11 year. We can't remediate that much that quickly.
12 That's not the kind of education that we
13 want to give our students. So we want to make sure
14 we maintain that quality of education. We have math
15 teachers who tutor in algebra, but they have to go
16 all the way back to negative numbers because
17 sometimes, a junior or a senior in high school can
18 show up and they haven't attended school in two or
19 three years, or they have attended a school but they
20 have failed miserably the entire time because they
21 went from algebra to geometry, and they failed every
22 math class they've ever been in. So that's why we
23 take it back.
24 **MR. GAVIN:** Miss Damore, just to clarify,
25 what is the most recent picture cohort of grad rate

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1 that's just been validated by the (inaudible) Beacon?
2 **TRAVIS CHERRY:** I'm Travis Cherry,
3 technology coordinator. We just finished evaluated
4 dating the fifth year. I haven't gotten the complete
5 numbers, but based on the file, it would be 57
6 percent.
7 **MR. GAVIN:** Okay. So the state has not
8 released that. We don't know what it is yet. The
9 data that has been released, which is for the --
10 which is the 2013, would have been the 2013 cohorts,
11 and the 2014 super seniors, was 32.97. So your grad
12 rate actually went down from 37.61 through 2013 four
13 year to 32.97 four year for the super seniors the
14 next year. So negative 4.64 percent.
15 So based on the data that is available, it
16 doesn't appear that there is actually an improvement
17 in graduation rate in the fifth year. It actually
18 appears that it dilutes, and students actually do
19 worse.
20 **TRAVIS CHERRY:** So part of the fifth year
21 cohort, and why we see that maximized, is because we
22 take students in their fifth year, and we take far
23 more than (inaudible) graduate that same year. So in
24 that year, I believe we took about 80 additional
25 students, and they were all (inaudible) dropped out.

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1 And now we graduated some of them, but it wasn't
2 enough, so then continue going. If we looked at the
3 students who were in the fourth year and continued
4 with the fifth year, you see an increase of about
5 8 percent. And you see the same thing in the one
6 that we just validated, if you look at that
7 population.
8 That population actually then broke 60
9 percent, and it's about 64, if you exclude students
10 that came in the fifth year.
11 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** So we're going to get into
12 the data part now. But we do want to say that when
13 holding schools accountable, it really is imperative
14 that we recognize that factors do contribute to an
15 artificially low graduation rate, which is what
16 you're seeing in a school like ours. Transiency,
17 numbers of days enrolled and newly involved
18 credit-deficient students are contributing factors to
19 our graduation rate.
20 And I'm going to tell you, if you don't
21 think that schools are playing games, you are very
22 mistaken. Because if 80 percent of our graduating
23 classes are juniors and seniors enrolling with us are
24 credit-deficient, where are they coming from? So
25 these kids are being called in. They're being

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1 identified right now. You can't come back next year
2 because you can't graduate by the time of your senior
3 year, so you have to go to adult ed. Well, parents
4 aren't ready to send their 17 year-old to adult ed,
5 so they look for other options. And they're finding
6 them with Connections, myself. You're finding this
7 large number of students.
8 So what's happened is we're playing the game
9 to get a better graduation rate. I can fix my
10 graduation rate so easily. I really can. You know,
11 oh, I'm full. I'm full. I'm full. Oh, you know,
12 but you can't graduate by the time you're 18. You
13 better go to adult ed. Whatever the excuse, we're
14 not playing that game. These are people. And we
15 care about them. And we can help them, and we can
16 graduate them. But we're the ones -- the state is
17 playing hot potato with kids, and we're the one that
18 keeps them and retains them, because that's our job
19 as educators.
20 So that is the problem that I'm bringing to
21 you as a charter boarder. I think you need to look
22 at the transiency rate of juniors and seniors in all
23 of the high schools. Are they being kicked out of
24 other districts and landing in our schools. Because
25 those parents are extremely unhappy. We are

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1 providing a better education. We're providing
2 services for those kids, which is awesome. But we're
3 left holding the rate.
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So students are coming
5 from someplace.
6 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Uh-huh.
7 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** And I presume that their
8 previous schools were targeting them or pushing them
9 out. I'm going to assume the best in generosity of
10 spirit. But we are who we are. So my point is, if
11 we know we're in this situation, what can we do to
12 have maybe parallel tracks?
13 So thinking about your four-year students
14 who you know, if they stick with you, you said the
15 gradation rate is 91 percent, which is phenomenal.
16 What then can we do to expand the services that are
17 going to be necessary from the start for students who
18 would come in at a level four or level five, they're
19 in their 11th to 12th grade year.
20 So how can we re-imagine what we're doing,
21 what schools already have. I know it's a daunting
22 task, but at the same time, if you know who's going
23 to show up, how do we perhaps explain it to say,
24 okay, we can better serve them. And you know,
25 they'll graduate, if not in the fourth year, and we

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1 have super seniors who graduated that year but we
2 can't -- can't explain, and say, well, I know you're
3 not charging them. I think we have to figure out how
4 to better plan for the students who are coming to us
5 who are severely credit-deficient, but still, we have
6 to help graduate them.
7 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Absolutely.
8 **MR. GAVIN:** Mr. Chairman, there is actually
9 a very workable solution that's already present in
10 the statute. This school could amend its charter to
11 make it clear that its mission is to serve students
12 who are credit-deficient. Specifically students who
13 are more than two years behind, and it could
14 establish an admissions preference pursuant to NRS
15 386580, subsection 8, to establish admissions
16 preference saying that we'll serve those students
17 specifically.
18 If it does those two things, it will qualify
19 for the alternative framework next year, and we will
20 be in a position to put in these other measures. If
21 it wants to continue to exist in this netherworld
22 between being a comprehensive high school and being a
23 home school, I don't know what we can do for that.
24 We are not in a position of creating a third category
25 of school that is neither fish or fowl. It is either

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1 a comprehensive high school that meets the standards
2 of at least a 60 percent graduation rate, and it does
3 so consistently, or it needs to become an alt school.
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you, Member Gavin.
5 **ANDREA DAMORE:** This is Andrea Damore. I'd
6 like to back up. So when you were talking about how
7 we can speed up the process, right? And so we know
8 the students we're getting. And perhaps last year we
9 had a learning curve, so I joined (inaudible) the
10 principal in August. And we spend a lot of time
11 reflecting on what we were doing. And we worked over
12 the summer, and all of this year we looked at data.
13 We look at the students, obviously, that we get and
14 how we can serve them better.
15 So the first thing we implemented this year
16 was four quarters. And what that does is allow
17 students to focus and graduate on time. And it does
18 allow them to earn more credits. We've also changed
19 our program so that we have more credit retrieval
20 program. We increased our tutoring availability for
21 our students. We increased our pool-out sessions for
22 the students to make sure we are directly
23 remediating.
24 We're implementing maps testing to make sure
25 that we are hitting, you know, that sweet spot with

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1 their learning. But all of those things are
2 happening right now in this year. So we're very
3 proactive in what we're doing, but we might not see
4 those results until next year. So there is a
5 learning curve, but we are reflecting on what we have
6 and making it better.

7 **MS. MACKEDON:** Obviously your team is
8 exceptional. Every time you've come before us, I've
9 been impressed with the plans that you have. I was
10 super supportive of your idea, I believe it was this
11 fall, where you did the try semesters instead of
12 semesters. I thought it was brilliant.

13 But the bottom line is, is every school
14 without exception who is under-performed who have
15 come before this board with a new board, great new
16 leaders, just like you two, and a whole new plan.
17 And it's sort of similar to a kid, you know, getting
18 a 1.5 GPA in college and then telling, you know, the
19 law school entrance committee, I got new roommates,
20 I'm not going to party so much and I've completely
21 changed my study habits, so let me into law school.
22 It's nothing personal against the plans. I mean,
23 quite frankly, I think Beacon's plan is the best one
24 out there. There's so much I appreciate about it. I
25 love that they're offering social workers to their

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1 kids, and they have been before it was the thing to
2 do, and before there was a grant and they (inaudible)
3 to do it. They were doing the right thing by kids.

4 The fact that they are not growing their
5 enrollment, but they're saying, You know what? Man,
6 let's put the brakes on a little bit. Let's stick to
7 Clark County. Let's get it figured out. Let's do it
8 right here, and then once we've reached a certain
9 bar, then maybe we'll go back to this whole
10 state-wide idea. I mean, there's so many things that
11 I love about Beacon and what they're doing.

12 The problem for this board is, that's like
13 looking at a brand-new charter application. We're
14 not here to look at future plans, we're here to
15 assess what has already happened and what has already
16 taken place. And so it's just a tricky position. I
17 mean, again, with that being said, there's so many
18 things that I think -- that I love about this new
19 plan, and obviously you two have done exactly what
20 you said. You sat down and you looked at data. I
21 mean, these are major changes that you're willing to
22 make.

23 But that I'm not sure is our charge, is to
24 look at the major changes. It's to look at the
25 success rate. It's like the interns committee to the

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1 law school. We have to look at your past track
2 record, and that's what we have to make our decision
3 on. Not your, you know, ability to change study
4 habits now. So I just wanted to put that out there
5 on the record.

6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Wahl?
7 **MEMBER WAHL:** I also want to apologize for
8 your statement about not playing games. I really do
9 appreciate that, because I just have no respect for
10 schools that (inaudible) 12th graders. You guys are
11 not doing that. So thank you for that.

12 Patrick, you said comprehensive -- what were
13 your two things for them? (Inaudible).

14 **MR. GAVIN:** So there's basically two
15 categories at school, that we have currently have in
16 this state for high school. We have the
17 comprehensive high school, which 9 to 12, or some
18 subset of grades thereof. That takes all kids. It
19 has to meet certain standards, including this very,
20 very low minimum bar of a 60 percent grad rate.

21 The second category is the schools that
22 serve some subset of alternate opportunity and
23 schools do absolutely have the flexibility under the
24 statute to narrow that. They can say they want to
25 serve adjudicated exclusively. They can say they

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1 want to serve special ed kids exclusively, and they
2 can certainly say, we want to serve students that are
3 credit-deficient and would have to have met this
4 specific characteristic exclusively, which is
5 something that this school appears to do and do well.

6 So I struggle with this desire to somehow
7 find a third way that lets them do a lot of
8 stuff they -- and I want to add to Melissa's point
9 here. The plan -- the sudden intervention that this
10 school is thinking about is very good. They're
11 really good inputs. Our job is to figure out how to
12 make sure they achieve the outputs that we are
13 collectively accountable for, that this body is
14 accountable for, and I get yelled at about.

15 We need to ensure that all of our schools
16 are doing extraordinary work, but all our kids. This
17 school seems to be doing a lot of good work. It just
18 seems to be sitting in the wrong bucket. This is not
19 about, this school should go away; it's unless this
20 school is willing to make the actual jump all the way
21 into -- and just call it what it is, and say, this is
22 the population we excel at serving, and this is who
23 we're going to serve.

24 They're going to continue to get called
25 before this body, and it's going to continue to be a

1 negative thing every year where we're having the same
2 conversation about, your graduation rate fluctuates,
3 it's unpredictable, it's consistently below 60
4 percent. Big deal. And they're going to sit here
5 and go, Well, we can't cause of these reasons.

6 But Tambre brought up there that they're
7 entirely valid. They serve a very challenging
8 population. These are great people. But they don't
9 want to do -- at this point, at least, they're not
10 willing to do what they need them to do to stay
11 operational.

12 **MEMBER WAHL:** If they did that, would that
13 preclude them from admitting the aspiring actress?

14 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes.

15 **MR. GAVIN:** That is correct. There are
16 other online options in this state that are outside
17 of our portfolio.

18 Elko County operates a very large online
19 public school that any student in this state can
20 enroll in. Many large school districts now offer
21 exclusively online options. There are better program
22 specifics so that they're actually -- so if they're a
23 district, they can cohort, just the way Miss Tondryk
24 is able to, once she takes the kid, to say, Okay,
25 you're in this program because of your needs.

1 **TAMBRE TOMYK:** Right, and that alt
2 framework, a hundred percent at-risk is a very, very
3 daunting task. You know, when we're working with a
4 population as high as it is. My staff is taxed to
5 the limit. It's very challenging. I'm not saying no
6 to the possibility, but you know, there are other
7 ways of accomplishing the same goal.

8 The state of Arizona has an online distance
9 education framework. We need to choose distance
10 education schools. And they -- the state of Arizona
11 looked at what was going on in online education and
12 realizing that the transiency that we're facing -- I
13 mean there's no -- there's got to be a common theme
14 here.

15 The three schools that keep getting put on
16 the agenda all happen to be online distance education
17 schools. And other states (inaudible). We can work
18 with iNACOL, the International Association for K-12
19 Online Learning. And we could start to work toward
20 the framework. I am sure that Connections and now
21 Virtual and Beacon would welcome the opportunity.

22 And we are asking because right now,
23 although we keep hearing there's a framework, what is
24 the framework? It's not in existence. And we've
25 been scrutinized this whole year over a graduation

1 Something districts do all the time. In a charter
2 school, you can't do it unless you are one of these
3 very narrow mission-specific schools that say, we
4 just do this.

5 And actresses are great. And I think it's
6 wonderful that there are options for them out there.
7 Trying to be all things to all people is what gets
8 our schools in a lot of trouble.

9 **MEMBER WAHL:** Can I follow up? Has your
10 board had any discussion about the possibility of
11 changing over to only accept the students that
12 you're --

13 **TAMBRE TONYK:** We do have -- we thought we
14 had in our -- we didn't -- we thought we were giving
15 preferential treatment to at-risk students. We put
16 it in our education plan. Our charter contract
17 refers to it, and I have it, Mr. Ott, and -- I
18 forgot -- they were working on that language. So we
19 were talking about that.

20 Regarding the needing one hundred percent --
21 needing that alt framework came out this year. It's
22 not really a conversation we've had.

23 **MEMBER WAHL:** The alt framework. This would
24 be beyond looking at being the alt framework. It
25 would be changing your mission and your admissions.

1 rate by one, one data point. We are asking for
2 supplemental measures because one data point, as I
3 said, is really easy to play with.

4 Right now there really isn't a framework.
5 We're in a process. We're in between right now. ESA
6 hasn't come out. Maybe once the state adopts some of
7 the language from that, once we develop, but I mean,
8 I think what the three schools have demonstrated is
9 that we are being successful. Our numbers just --
10 it's very difficult. We need more time with our
11 students.

12 We have a common problem. And the distance
13 ed framework is one suggestion. Using SB 509, which
14 we'd love to use, it's 60 percent graduation rate,
15 we're asking to use the supplemental measures, which
16 is also in the same Senate bill. You know, we're
17 using one part of it, maybe we should look at using
18 the supplemental measures during this period where
19 there really isn't a framework so that we don't have
20 to be before you next year. And that's one of the
21 reasons we put them in.

22 We know that there's a problem, but we also
23 recognize we're helping -- we're helping the kids
24 that come to us. It's not as if we're not offering a
25 high quality education. It's not as if we're not a

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1 high quality school. Just like my students where the
2 square in the circle. We just don't fit. So our
3 data is -- I would say it supports that what we're
4 doing is helpful. And we'll get into that as you've
5 asked.

6 Where we started, we went back to the school
7 year of 2013-'14, when the charter was almost
8 revoked, and we looked at it to where we are today.
9 So our graduation rates since that date have
10 increased 37.6 percent going from 2013 to 52.6.

11 So we've had -- you can see the increase
12 there. We did have a small decrease, which I'm going
13 to go on further to explain, which is why I'm very
14 hesitant to say what our graduation rate will be next
15 year or the following year. There are so many
16 factors at play.

17 We did show you the -- this was our 2015
18 cohort. We had 152 students in it. 11th grade
19 transfer-ins, there were 54 students that came to us
20 in 11th grade. 21 of them, credit-deficient, which
21 made up 39 percent of those transfer-ins.

22 12th grade transfer-ins, we had 69 students,
23 which made up -- and 37 of them were
24 credit-deficient. The total new student population
25 that should be in an 11th or 12th grade, was 123. 27

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1 percent credit-deficient, 80 percent of cohort 2015
2 during the (inaudible) 11th through 12th grade year.

3 When we look at the fifth year cohort
4 graduation rate, as we were pointing out, if we keep
5 our students and did not enroll new students, our
6 graduation rate would increase. In 2013, from 37.6
7 percent up to 45.83 percent.

8 However, we take new students. Students
9 that have dropped out or have been kicked out or not
10 successful. These are adults. Whether we continue
11 to do that, we're trying to determine the law on
12 that. Do you have to take fifth year new, or can you
13 just keep the students that you have? I've been told
14 you don't. But you know, I don't know. The law
15 states up to 18 years of age. But that's a gray area
16 that maybe at the Charter Authority we can work
17 together and figure out, what is the law on that.
18 Because that is impacting. Look at 2014, we rose to
19 64 percent, if we just used our fifth year returning
20 students.

21 And Travis attends those meetings. And we
22 seem to be very unique in adding new students to our
23 fifth year. Other schools aren't doing that, which
24 is the reason that it exists in ours and not other
25 schools. So that that would give us -- and that is

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1 why we've asked.

2 In addition, we're telling you our students
3 are coming to us their junior and senior year. The
4 Charter Authority has the authority to make that
5 decision based on SB 509 to add this as being one of
6 those supplemental measures. We are held
7 accountable. We'll come in with our graduation rate,
8 but in addition to that graduation rate, let's look at
9 a couple other factors, is what we're asking.

10 And so the graduation rate versus the number
11 of years enrolled with us. So you can see it's a
12 nice, steady increase. 48 percent of -- you know, if
13 they're here one year, we have a 48 percent
14 graduation rate. Unless they're enrolling as a
15 senior, they're not graduating.

16 Two years enrolled, 52 percent. Three years
17 enrolled, close to 59 percent. When we have them all
18 four years, 70 percent.

19 We've pretty much talked about credit
20 deficiency, so we'll fast-forward through that.

21 So we wanted to show you what our
22 transfer-in looks like. This is when the student
23 transfers in, a Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 credit
24 deficiency, so to renew -- refresh your mind, a
25 Level 1 is .5 to 3 credits deficient. Level 2 is 3.5

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1 to 6. And Level 3 is 6.5 or greater. So these are
2 credit-deficient students trying to earn 6 credits
3 and retrieve those credits. And so you can see that
4 we are enrolling a large number -- this is how it
5 breaks out.

6 So during our senior year, 68.2 percent --
7 the number of credit-deficient students who
8 transferred in during their senior year increased 68
9 percent between 2014 and '15. So what we're
10 explaining here is the difference in the graduation
11 rates, why we did it like this. We enrolled 68.2
12 percent who were credit-deficient. In 2015, these
13 students made up 45.7 percent of all credit-deficient
14 seniors and 24 percent of the entire cohort. So you
15 can see we really have not had the opportunity to
16 remediate these students.

17 The changes to credit deficiency, what we're
18 showing here -- and this is what we will have
19 validated next year because we do focus on credit
20 deficiency -- is that 31.4 percent of our seniors in
21 '14-'15 decreased levels of credit deficiency, versus
22 10.8 in '12-'13.

23 So last year, those students got better. 31
24 percent earned more than the required number of
25 credits. Prior to last year, it was only 10 percent,

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1 and we consider that, you know, a marked improvement.
2 The percentage of students who increased
3 deficiency was 8.3 percent, which was down from 33
4 percent. So prior to last year, 33 percent of the
5 students got worse while they were enrolled at
6 Beacon. Last year, only 8 percent. And so 91.67
7 percent of 12th grade students in '14-'15 earned the
8 required number of credits or greater, which is why
9 we think again, this is something that needs to be
10 looked at in addition to our graduation rate.
11 If 91.67 are earning the required number of
12 credits, if they were on track -- and yes, that's the
13 proficiency again, which, you know, that's another
14 factor. When your kids are credit-deficient, they're
15 also non-proficient. But we're looking at the credit
16 deficiency right now.
17 The graduation rate for on-track students
18 was 77.5 percent in 2015. The graduation rate among
19 all credit-deficient students increased 20 percent
20 since 2013 to 2015. Graduation rate of the senior
21 transfer-ins increased by 13.8 percent from 2013 to
22 2015.
23 So not only have we improved, our student
24 population got worse. So as they've gotten worse, we
25 helped them improve. And so in 2014, that rate we

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1 attribute to a smaller end size, increased
2 transfer-outs and substantially few credit-deficient
3 transfer-ins.
4 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chairman, may I ask a
5 question?
6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Please.
7 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Tambre, could you talk a
8 little bit -- go back to the last slide and talk a
9 little bit about the transfers out? Because you've
10 been talking a lot about kids coming to you in their
11 11th and 12th years and being sent there from other
12 schools. So when they transfer out, they come to
13 you. They're credit-deficient. Something doesn't
14 gel for them. So where do they go, then, when they
15 transfer out?
16 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Some of them go to the
17 adult ed, I assume. Can you speak to that one,
18 Travis?
19 **TRAVIS CHERRY:** Travis Cherry, for the
20 record. Some of them go to adult ed. Some of them
21 go back to their district, high school. You know,
22 they come in, they try it online and say, that's not
23 for me. I just want to be with my friends again.
24 Some students even -- or a lot of students, even,
25 they enrolled in their freshman, sophomore, junior

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1 years. They want to finish out the year, their
2 senior year at a traditional high school. So we see
3 that a lot, too.
4 **MEMBER CONABOY:** So do you have data that
5 indicates to you what are the sending schools for
6 you? Is there a pattern in sending schools? You
7 talked earlier about the other perhaps district
8 schools that service these children.
9 And so is there a pattern in sending
10 schools, and is there a pattern in receiving schools?
11 Or at least have you looked at that data? Regardless
12 whether there's an actual pattern. Do you know where
13 they come from?
14 Is there any way -- I guess what I'm asking
15 you, is there any way to intervene in these
16 children's lives by collaborating with the sending
17 and receiving schools?
18 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** We're going to have --
19 Mr. Garza will be presenting to that piece. But I
20 believe he said he tracked it for us. It was 31 --
21 was it 31 schools?
22 **MR. GARZA:** Yeah, 31 schools.
23 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** 31 schools. But that's
24 something that we want to begin to track because we
25 did start to see patterns, but I don't have anything

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1 documented this year. But last year was the first
2 year where I had really been through that enrollment,
3 that serious enrollment, between August and really
4 November. But we will be tracking the schools, who's
5 referring them, and why they're coming because we do
6 believe that that is very important.
7 **MEMBER McCORD:** Well, with a blended
8 program -- oh, pardon me, Mr. Chairman.
9 With a blended program, you're probably
10 going to find a tighter concentration around your
11 physical location. So it's going to change that
12 pattern significantly.
13 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Yes.
14 **MEMBER McCORD:** I'm not saying that's for
15 the bad. It may be for the good, I don't know, but
16 I'm afraid it's going to make comparisons very
17 difficult (inaudible).
18 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** We've actually been here
19 for two hours and 20 minutes. So we're going to take
20 a small break. Just a five-minute break. And we'll
21 come back and we can finish up and then we'll go to
22 the next --
23 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Okay. Great.
24 (A recess was held)
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** We're all back and ready

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1 to go. Ms. Tondryk? You have the floor to continue.
2 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Yes. Tambre Tondryk, for
3 the record. So I just wanted to finish up, and then
4 Dr. Garza is going to introduce himself, and take you
5 through some. But we had just finished talking about
6 the cohort retention because that is something that
7 we absolutely have to --
8 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I'm sorry. I didn't mean
9 to interrupt. But it looks like up north -- Danny,
10 are you all --
11 **DANNY:** Yeah, we're ready to go. Sorry.
12 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** No worries.
13 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** So we just did want to show
14 that we had improved our cohort retention, though, to
15 stay through their senior year to 35.93 percent, and
16 we do have a very small in size -- our freshman
17 population is lower, but that is a group that we are
18 focused on keeping and retaining, and that was one of
19 our school improvement goals.
20 From count day to end of year, this is the
21 one that we also are really focused on. You can see
22 that in this school year -- I'm sorry, last year,
23 2014 to 2015 -- we did retain close to 70 percent of
24 our students. So we did increase that from 49
25 percent the prior year. And from end of year to

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1 count day. So this means students who returned. We
2 returned 70 percent of our population. And
3 considering, you know, we have a very large
4 percentage of students that graduate, that's a good
5 number.
6 Oh, I'm sorry. This is the 9 through 11
7 enrolled at the end of the year who returned the
8 following year.
9 And we already have indicated that 340 of
10 our students are returning for next year, so we
11 already started to make improvements on this.
12 So if you have any questions for me.
13 Otherwise, Dr. Garza will take over.
14 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Hi, I'm Dr. Tiberio Garza.
15 Thank you for this time to allow me to speak.
16 I'm from the University of Nevada Las Vegas,
17 and I worked with the Center of CREA, which is the
18 Center of Research, Evaluation and Assessment. I've
19 been asked to be an external evaluator to just look
20 at the data and kind of tell what is some of the data
21 saying about Beacon Academy. So that's kind of my
22 role here, working with Beacon, just being again the
23 external evaluator.
24 So just before I start, as an evaluator, I
25 recognized just some of the positive comments that

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1 have already been said from board members. I don't
2 want to repeat some of the things I already said
3 about it, but just the condition that Beacon is faced
4 with and the challenges and so forth, I will just
5 point them out. But I do want to address some of the
6 questions that were asked, especially from Board
7 Member McCord about the patterns and what is
8 happening there at Beacon related to patterns.
9 So I assessed the data in March of 2016.
10 The reason I say the month is because
11 month-to-month-to-month, it's always fluctuating.
12 There's always constant change. As you've already
13 heard from Beacon Academy, administrators and others,
14 you can tell that there already is a lot of change, a
15 lot of change at the board level, a lot of change at
16 the administration. And just to me as a data
17 analyst -- and I teach statistics classes for UNLV --
18 the inconsistent change, you know, it's really hard
19 to measure because of instability and time that you
20 need to just have. That way you can kind of get rid
21 of instability or unreliable (inaudible), and that
22 way you can still continue with (inaudible) to make
23 informed judgements about the trajectory or just the
24 state or the pattern of the data.
25 So in March of 2016, I was looking at the

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1 student records that Beacon had. And it was
2 expressed one of the patterns, if they were going to
3 be pattern-like changes. It turns out that actually,
4 the students that are coming to Beacon for the
5 educational classes do come from the Las Vegas area.
6 So to me it makes sense that one of the
7 supplemental measures was to consolidate the
8 educational resources and focus in on Clark County,
9 which would make sense because based on the records
10 alone, that's where the students are from, and those
11 are the ones seeking the most. The only exception is
12 the one school in Reno.
13 So other than that, we have 25 schools here
14 in the Las Vegas area, not even extending past this
15 area. But Clark County would be a bigger area. But
16 just consolidating everything to the county makes
17 sense. But here it's just 25 schools of 26 that are
18 in this area. And the number increases to 31 because
19 in 6 schools I consolidated together -- and these
20 were all the behavioral schools and juvenile
21 detention. I represented that as one school. And so
22 just to know that students are also coming from those
23 schools, too. This is 12 grade. So it was already
24 mentioned that there's a large percentage, 8 percent
25 that are coming out of 12th grade. It's also a large

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1 percent out of 11th grade.
2 But again, these are just the conditions.
3 But what I just want to add is, where these students
4 are coming from. What are the schools that are
5 involved. And in the report you can see the specific
6 schools that are listed. Again, and that's just
7 based on student records. That just means looking at
8 the student records one at a time across Beacon's
9 data.
10 Again, this is March 2016. This is just a
11 visual that I got in Google maps. All the little
12 golden stars represent the schools that the students
13 are coming to Beacon for educational services. And
14 so again, only one star resides outside this map. So
15 again, I just want to just illustrate, like who are
16 the students seeking educational services from
17 Beacon? Again, it's in this local area.
18 And this is 12th grade. And we see the same
19 in 11th grade. Again, it's the same schools, and in
20 the report you'll see several of the schools
21 repeated. I won't name them by them, but in the
22 report you can see who they are.
23 Again, this is just telling the story, where
24 are they -- where are these students coming from
25 because the more we know about them, the more, as

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1 Beacon has already stressed, the more educational
2 resources and support can be provided to them.
3 And education, we just know that it's a
4 growing trend that relationship is starting to become
5 an important factor of just overall student
6 achievement, especially among older students. Just
7 building relationships. So as was already said among
8 parents and students, I was glad to just see that
9 student-centered instruction and support from them
10 being expressed that Beacon was providing for them.
11 Because I know that's along towards the trend and
12 research, just build that relationship and that
13 learning can happen in that kind of environment.
14 So we already know that there are negative
15 influences on the graduation rate. It is a robust
16 measure. I won't repeat what was already said
17 because I feel like the board members already know
18 the conditions, or the challenging conditions that
19 Beacon's faced with. So I don't want to just repeat
20 what was already said.
21 And this is just some more graduation rates.
22 And we know that the graduation rate is being
23 criticized right now. But again, that's with the
24 idea that challenges are faced within that robust
25 measure for graduation rates. Again, the graduation

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1 rate is an equation that can -- I know it was already
2 said it can be manipulated, but again, that would be
3 at the policy implications or policy adoption at the
4 school level to be able to manipulate this score.
5 Again, at Beacon I was the external
6 evaluator, so I was a witness. So I'm just
7 testifying to what I saw and what I got from just
8 interactions with people at Beacon. Again, I'm the
9 outside person. And even now, I'm even new to this
10 area. So I've only been here since August. So I'm
11 just giving you my unbiased -- I'm just telling you
12 what I saw, what I've heard, what I've learned from
13 Beacon.
14 And again, so we know that credit deficiency
15 is a factor. The only thing I want to just state
16 here is in 2014-2015, we considered credit deficiency
17 at the state level. And so you see that .8, 11.8,
18 and 16.6 and 18.2.
19 What I want to do is just, you see the
20 visual comparing that year and with Beacon. But
21 first I just want to show you how it kind of curves.
22 So from 9th to 10th, 11th and 12th grade, there's a
23 gradual curve of credit deficiency over time, which
24 is, you know, reasonable as transfers from 10th grade
25 to 11th grade to 12th grade, and they're trying to

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1 not be credit-deficient, but as carryover that will
2 be expressed from the Beacon information credit
3 deficiency in the Beacon file.
4 This is just showing you at the state level.
5 It's a nice gradual curve. That makes sense.
6 There's progress going. But wanted to just show you,
7 again, this is 2014. Again, it's more specifically
8 to that one year, the most current year. And again,
9 this data is coming from the data interaction for
10 Nevada Report Card. So it's publicly accessible.
11 I'm just bringing it here to just illustrate.
12 What I want to illustrate is just the
13 reliability of the data or just the instability. So
14 here at the state it's a nice, gradual curve. But
15 even when we start looking at current positions at
16 Beacon, it becomes erratic. It's hard to pick up a
17 pattern. And I'm just talking from just the numbers
18 part, where it's really hard to be able to estimate
19 reliable value, like the graduation rate, from this.
20 From this, I mean, the only pattern that can
21 be derived is that it spikes at 10th grade and then
22 goes down. But again, this is going to be related to
23 a host of contributing factors. And then when we
24 include the other years, last year and the year
25 prior, these were accountability years. Again, some

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1 of it is available on the Nevada Report Card data
2 online.
3 Again, it's just -- as a data analysis
4 person, there's not this gradual curve report, nice
5 smooth lines that kind of give some kind of reliable
6 or valid estimate to be able to make sense of this
7 pattern, but again, I just wanted to show or
8 illustrate visually that instability.
9 And again, we know already the challenges
10 related to transiency rate. That's why we go through
11 that. Another thing, too, is just, transfer-outs
12 divided by the total student population, again, this
13 just refers back to the transfer-outs. This is just
14 a calculation based again on publicly available data
15 on the Nevada Report Card. So Again, this is just
16 underlining the challenges that were already
17 described. Yes.
18 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Can you go back? Can you
19 just explain this a little bit better to me? I think
20 I'm missing the point on that slide.
21 **TIBERIO GARZA:** So here I'm trying to
22 illustrate, in 2014-2015 that Beacon Academy had a
23 lot of transfer-outs compared to the total student
24 population it had, which was 64.1 percent
25 transferring out. And that's comparing it to the

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1 other estimates of 18.4 and 13.9. That just refers
2 to the State and Clark County.
3 **MEMBER CONABOY:** So 64 percent of the total
4 student population at Beacon in 2014-15 left the
5 school, transferred out to somewhere else?
6 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Right. And as Travis just
7 mentioned, that's also the ideas of -- there's other
8 slides that support this slide, but again, what I see
9 is just that those students -- there's a lot of
10 students coming from prior schools in this area. And
11 once they reach credit deficiency, they have friends
12 at those other schools. It's more likely that they
13 would go back and enjoy that senior year that Travis
14 described. There's also other factors.
15 But again, what I'm worrying about is just
16 that students come to Beacon to get back on track
17 because of the four terms they have where you can
18 make up credits every nine weeks. There's a -- it's
19 kind of like a semester, but it's a half semester.
20 But that allows for credit deficiency to be reduced.
21 So what I'm worried about is once students
22 reach that point and decide to go back to the schools
23 they come from.
24 **MEMBER WAHL:** Not being credit-deficient.
25 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Right. So why stay -- you

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1 know, why -- if most of the students are relying on
2 that characteristic of Beacon, with that educational
3 service, which is really attractive, in my opinion,
4 but if the students are really going after that, what
5 makes them stay once they reach credit deficiency?
6 **MEMBER WAHL:** So I'd like the principal
7 (inaudible). I mean, that's more than half of your
8 student body leaving every year. Although we were
9 looking earlier at your retention rates and one of
10 your goals is to increase your retention rate, and
11 you're making progress in that regard. Am I
12 misunderstanding something here?
13 This figure doesn't seem to comport with
14 some of the things you said earlier.
15 **TRAVIS CHERRY:** Travis Cherry, for the
16 record.
17 It is important to note the difference
18 between transiency and transfer. Transfer-outs is a
19 measure of the cohort population over the entire
20 four-year span from any student who transfers or
21 starts with the school. Where transiency is sort of
22 the flow of students in a school year, transfer-out
23 is looking at the entire year and the cohort
24 population.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Is this number a

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1 percentage?
2 **TIBERIO GARZA:** An absolute percentage.
3 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So you're saying in 2014
4 or '13, you're going to get 80 percent of the
5 students transferred out?
6 **TIBERIO GARZA:** That was in the previous
7 year.
8 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yeah, for the 2014
9 cohort.
10 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Okay. That would be
11 correct. It's over the span of four years.
12 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Four years in that
13 cohort, 80 percent of the students transferred out?
14 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Yes.
15 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Okay. I just wanted to
16 make sure I was clear on -- thanks for answering
17 that question.
18 **MEMBER CONABOY:** So we don't know when they
19 came in. We just know that they came in at some
20 point in the continuum. Something happened for good,
21 bad or indifferent, and they decided to go back to
22 somewhere else.
23 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Or they just left.
24 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Over the course of -- well,
25 a transfer-out, doesn't that insinuate that they went

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1 somewhere else? When you transfer students, don't
2 you transfer the records and somebody else receives
3 them as opposed to dropping out?
4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, that is correct.
5 And that also includes students in the ninth grade.
6 They are included in the transfer-out category as
7 well?
8 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** If they go to another
9 school, yes.
10 **TIBERIO GARZA:** I did not -- I have not put
11 the time element. It was over four years. And that
12 number represents the graduation rate.
13 So, of course -- but this one, the 2014-2015
14 school year, it would be based back to 2011-2012
15 those two, and 2012-2013, '13 and '14, and so on.
16 But this year, again, 80 represents the number of
17 graduates. 423 represents the student population
18 during 2014-2015, and this is the accountability
19 year, and it's also on the Nevada report card.
20 The other values just represent -- because
21 based on the definition who transferred in plus
22 students who transfer in minus students who transfer
23 out, immigrated, or died during the school years.
24 And so here this 423 versus, again, almost half or
25 more than half that are leaving.

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1 .It just creates the instability of that
2 measure, that graduation rate. Some of it just
3 reduces the calculation. We're putting in the values
4 for 121415; 80 divided by 152, which again, the
5 Nevada report card is already calculating this for
6 us.
7 But again, this just kind of just
8 illustrates all the different factors for the number
9 of graduates. I just wanted to just illustration,
10 just so you can kind of see more of the influence of
11 the transfer-outs, all those elements.
12 What I really wanted to address was the
13 patterns that were mentioned by Board Member McCord.
14 So here on the 12th grade, March 2016, all
15 those 12th graders reported that a hundred -- for
16 example, only 30 12th grade students reported that
17 they have been with Beacon ever since. And they had
18 no other school. So to me that means they've been
19 there with Beacon and no other school. They never
20 left.
21 But when I look at one school prior to
22 Beacon, I see 149 student records where students
23 reported that they were in one school prior to coming
24 to Beacon. And it continues to number 2 where two
25 schools were mentioned. 83 of them say that two

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1 schools were involved prior to coming to Beacon. And
2 the number continues to 3, 4, 5 schools and 6 schools
3 at the max. Of course, those would be considered the
4 outliers.
5 But you can see the majority as one or two
6 schools, maybe even three schools prior to coming to
7 Beacon. And this is just 12th grade.
8 March 2016. And the same pattern continues
9 in 11th grade. Again, same month, March 2016,
10 looking at where did the students come from. And
11 again, in the report you'll get, you'll see the names
12 of the schools. Here I just want to just illustrate
13 the amount of students that were in one school or
14 more than one school prior to coming to Beacon.
15 So here for 11th grade, you can see how it
16 kind of just stays the same. It's at 39. And just
17 looking at the 10th grade, how many prior schools
18 were 10th graders, what schools did they come from.
19 And again, so the range is always from 30 to
20 39 that those individual students at those different
21 grade levels have stayed with Beacon. Even here at
22 10th grade, there's almost a hundred students that
23 came from some other prior schools before coming to
24 Beacon.
25 Again, to me it's just -- these schools --

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1 these students are seeking out Beacon for the
2 educational services that, in my opinion, that
3 they've already seen that they can get from Beacon
4 Academy.
5 So again, whether they stay or not, it's
6 those students' choice. But I'm glad that Beacon has
7 worked on retention strategies and measures.
8 One other thing that I might add, too, that
9 was questioned earlier was just, what do you do with
10 students coming in at 12th grade or the fifth year.
11 Again, it would have to be an aggressive plan to be
12 able to show to those students the curriculum that
13 they would need to be able to fulfill those credit
14 deficiencies.
15 I mean, in the end, if a student finds that
16 that's too much to do to make up two years in one
17 year, or three years in one year, the student's
18 choice is (inaudible). Again, Beacon in time could
19 have that (inaudible) plan, if it's possible, because
20 even then, making up three years in one year, it is a
21 challenge, and it's going to involve almost education
22 more than eight hours a day.
23 So it's going to call for an aggressive plan
24 that's going to take up more resources because it
25 might have to involve night classes, come in at night

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1 and do more supplemental instruction.
2 So that would be my suggestion in that
3 framework because we don't want students to be held
4 back despite the preconditions they come with. And
5 again, I'm just reiterating what was already said,
6 that high transfer and transiency rate and credit
7 deficiency are just influencing the graduation rate.
8 But the reason I say that is it's taking away the
9 overall the effectiveness that Beacon finally can
10 demonstrate to everyone here and to the student and
11 to the community.
12 So in my report, I just provide eight
13 different recommendations. Here I just provide a
14 few, just a consolidation of appropriate education
15 services to the mainstream population Beacon
16 services, which we now know is this area, and that
17 Beacon should gather down the resources for students
18 transferring out to improve retention. I know that
19 was already mentioned. It's just collecting more
20 data to be able to make more informed decisions about
21 what kind of policy changes should be implemented in
22 order to affect or help the graduation rate increase.
23 Of course, in the most ethical and reasonable way
24 with the idea that we want students to succeed in
25 high school.

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1 And then of course, further observance of
2 credit deficiency among students and those entering
3 Beacon Academy, that's going to be very essential.
4 If that's the major population that's coming in, it's
5 going to be very critical to be able to address that
6 because again, it's just influencing the graduation
7 rate in a way that's not representative of the school
8 effectiveness of Beacon Academy.
9 And we just don't want that because I've
10 been there. I've visited several times. Since I do
11 get the impression that everyone there is working
12 hard to try and meet the needs of the students.
13 There's always individuals running around trying to
14 take care of things. So I get that sense every time
15 on the visits I've been there.
16 So my assumptions are that, yes, these
17 individuals are hardworking. They're trying their
18 best. They're doing everything they can. But maybe
19 they just -- we need more information related to the
20 data and what could be done, and what else is the
21 data saying. So that's the options. I'm just
22 grateful to just be a part of that.
23 And so just -- and also just -- I had
24 mentioned that this needs to be an aggressive
25 approach. It needs to be counteractive to have any

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1 effect on the graduation rate. Again, that would be
2 just -- you know, although it seems impossible to
3 make up credit deficiency for the fourth year, it
4 requires such an aggressive approach to be able to
5 counteract that.
6 So another measure would be just to make
7 sure Beacon Academy has the capacity to be able to
8 fulfill such an aggressive plan. And also the
9 student is willing to go through this aggressive
10 plan. Because again, I can bring them back with us,
11 okay, this is your plan to graduate in one year based
12 on your high levels of credit deficiency. And if
13 they choose that they don't want to do that, then
14 it's their choice, and you can't force -- that can't
15 be forced upon them.
16 I recognize that as I was looking at the
17 data and Beacon Academy, that it's also a moot issue.
18 It was already said. You know, average students are
19 in several schools, dozens of schools.
20 Transfer-outs, transiency rates, credit-deficient,
21 these are issues all schools have.
22 And so what I would plan to do is just be
23 able to develop more robust equations to be able to
24 measure school effectiveness, not graduation rate,
25 but school effectiveness that incorporates multiple

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1 factors.
2 So I would do this through machine learning
3 where I can look at mathematical relationships and
4 how these variables are related to one another. This
5 will just be a school effectiveness measure just to
6 be able to say school X or school Y is actually being
7 effective based on -- effective in this community.
8 And of course, we'll have all the factors. But
9 machine learning, I can only think of so many
10 variables at once, but with the machine learning, I
11 can list dozens more being able to make those
12 mathematical relationships, being able to come up
13 with equations that are helpful in rating them.
14 But the graduation rate again is just one
15 measure. For college entrance exams, you don't just
16 look at GPA. You look at writing, you look at what's
17 the service that the high school has done. There's
18 multiple things you look at before that student is
19 allowed to enter college.
20 So I would just reiterate that one measure
21 doesn't really help to justify good or bad in making
22 that judgment. Again, that's just a measurement
23 perspective.
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any questions for Dr.
25 Garza?

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1 **MR. GAVIN:** I have one follow-up question,
2 Dr. Garza? Did you in your research look at what the
3 transfer-out rates look like for the state as a whole
4 or for other schools that are sending kids? Is this
5 highly anomalous, or -- we are a great transient
6 state. So I think it's really helpful to understand
7 it.

8 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Yeah, and I saw that in the
9 Nevada Report Card, that there is a lot of
10 transiency. But I'm not able to see the percentage.
11 And really, my focus was Beacon Academy. But this
12 would be like future research, where I would like to
13 be able to look at more than just one school to be
14 able to -- because that will help with the equation
15 development and being able to really assess what is
16 school effectiveness across the state, or it might go
17 outside of the state, too.

18 But again, there just wasn't enough time to
19 be able to calculate all that. But it's something
20 that's interesting to me and something I would like
21 to continue to pursue.

22 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Were there any further
23 questions for Dr. Garza?

24 **MS. MACKEDON:** I'm sorry. Beacon isn't the
25 first school up here, because this isn't just a

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1 Beacon issue. So I want to be clear about beating up
2 on Beacon here, but in general, this issue of
3 transiency is making me want to scream. Everyone
4 knows, every charter school that bothered to submit
5 something today put right in their report, transiency
6 is an issue with an online school. So we know that.
7 We know that when we open the door. We know that
8 when we get our charter. And then we come back and
9 say, Transiency, that's why we're failing. We just
10 can't get these kids cause the rates are so high.

11 It's like opening a school for ELL kids and
12 saying, well, they're not fluent in English so we
13 haven't been able to teach them. Yeah, we know.
14 It's an ELL school. It goes with the territory. If
15 you open an online school, you know going into it,
16 transiency is an issue. And your charter says you
17 have a way to be successful, just to have those
18 issues.

19 Just like if you open an ELL school, you're
20 saying, we have strategies to be successful with the
21 population that this school is going to bring. If
22 you open a school for adjudicated youth, and then
23 you're in shock and awe that they have an attitude
24 problem. No. Your charter said you had -- you know,
25 if we were going to approve a charter for that, you

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1 would have strategies to be successful with the group
2 you know your school is going to bring in.

3 So I'm not saying it's not a real issue. It
4 is. Transiency is an issue. But it's an issue that
5 everyone knows when they open a charter school
6 exists. So then to be like, The transiency -- and
7 again, I'm not beating up on Beacon. I saw it in
8 every report that was in our board packet to blame.
9 transiency. It's no different than blaming the fact
10 that they, you know, English language -- you know,
11 people saying, Well, there's a lot of ELL kids here,
12 so, man, we're just not fit. We can't fill that
13 because of that. It makes it so hard.

14 So like, personally, I'm tired of hearing
15 about that because we know, everyone knows those are
16 the kids that are attracted to online schools. It's
17 a common fact. Everyone knows it when they open
18 their school. It's not unique to Nevada. It's a
19 fact that we know. That's what you said you were
20 going to do, was deal with transient students because
21 you opened an online school, and you know that that's
22 who comes to online schools.

23 So, I'm just sorry. Again, I'm not beating
24 up on Beacon here. It's just something that really
25 stood out to me over the last few months and in

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1 reading our board packet again. And it's very
2 frustrating from my perspective.

3 **TIBERIO GARZA:** I want to just say, I just
4 want to just say, that's why I didn't want to stress
5 that too much because I got the sense every one
6 already knows. What I wanted to just bring to the
7 table is just being able to assess that in a way to
8 be able to properly adjust for that in a way that
9 measures school effectiveness. But that's all.

10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Is there anything else
11 (inaudible), or do we want to move on to the second
12 half of this, which are the action items?

13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, we're ready.

14 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So we will then move to
15 Agenda item number 7, which is the consideration of
16 possible action of Beacon Academy's request pursuant
17 to NAC 386.325. Director Gavin? This is item number
18 7.

19 **MR. GAVIN:** Beacon Academy has requested two
20 contractual amendments. The first is to request to
21 limit enrollment in school to Clark County students.
22 And the second requests 6 additional measures for
23 performance framework.

24 As you're aware, the Academy and the staff
25 has not yet executed an amended contract and

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1 incorporated the last provision --
2 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Patrick, I'm just having a
3 little bit of trouble keeping up.
4 **MR. GAVIN:** Sorry. So I'll stop reading and
5 start talking.
6 They asked for two amendments. As you're
7 aware, we approved, two approved amendments back in
8 the summer. The school has not yet executed an
9 amended contract reflecting the changes that the
10 board requested.
11 The staff and the staff's attorney are
12 continuing to work with the school's counsel on that.
13 I am hopeful that that will be taken care of in short
14 order.
15 I think it's critical that any approval you
16 make be contingent upon the execution of that
17 contract. So these things do not come into effect
18 until that contract is put into effect. We can't
19 keep pushing that out.
20 Secondly, with relation to amendment 1; that
21 is the Clark County requests, staff is supportive of
22 that change. With regard to the addition of the
23 additional metrics to performance framework, staff is
24 not supporting that at this time. In the even the
25 school comes back with an amendment to request to

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1 convert to a school serving the opportunity youth
2 population we discussed earlier, the students who are
3 more than two years behind, this would be a very good
4 way of tracking progress towards those measures.
5 As currently framed, this would water down
6 accountability of every school in the state who wants
7 it. So it would be an extraordinarily dangerous
8 precedent to set because it would essentially negate
9 the whole purpose of the governor requiring us to
10 have the 60 percent graduation rate (inaudible)
11 (inaudible) absolutely unacceptable graduation rate
12 of this agency.
13 Again, I will remind you, we are the lowest
14 performing school system in the states with relation
15 to graduation rate, and we are the third lowest
16 performing state in the country. That number is
17 utterly unacceptable. We must ensure that we are
18 holding the schools (inaudible).
19 There is a mechanism for schools like Beacon
20 that are serving the population that they have
21 articulated so well. And we must encourage
22 (inaudible) created them to carve out, which would
23 allow every school to jump in because this is what
24 everyone would be want. I'm only held accountable
25 for the things I have the most control over. Great.

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1 Let me sign up for that.
2 **MS. MACKEDON:** Member Mackedon. I love the
3 fact that they want to move to just Clark County. I
4 think it shows a true sincerity about their students
5 and not just the bottom line. I think it's awesome.
6 So I would move to approve the amendment number 1 to
7 limit their enrollment in Clark County only.
8 **MR. GAVIN:** Member Mackedon, would you be
9 willing to amend that to make it contingent upon the
10 execution of the contract?
11 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Can I please be heard?
12 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yes. You may speak.
13 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Thank you, thank you.
14 Chairman, members of the board. Again, I'm Jessica
15 Sanchez. I'm here on behalf of the Beacon Academy.
16 First I want to -- I will get passionate about
17 (inaudible) that we're discussing today. First we
18 got this recommendation late last evening. It was
19 8:00 p.m. when we saw Patrick's recommendation that
20 he was going to be submitting to the board. And
21 again, there's always this timeliness issue in order
22 for us to prepare to respond to his recommendation.
23 I think that that -- you know, we were working and
24 having these discussions, and then here we are, you
25 know, with these late recommendations that are then

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1 presented both to yourself and to us.
2 **MR. GAVIN:** Mrs. Sanchez, when did your
3 client submit this recommendation?
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Director Gavin, can you
5 please let her finish?
6 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Then the other problem I
7 have is when Beacon comes in with good faith making
8 some type of amendments that we feel are going to be
9 better for the students, and we provide actual
10 contract language that we propose to be changed.
11 We're letting you become aware how it's going to be
12 impacting our charter contract. There's always this
13 recommendation that it's contingent upon something
14 else that we want.
15 So then they're holding this hostage over
16 us. You know, that's the way this occurred back in
17 July 2015. We have been working with Mr. Ott and
18 same thing with Mr. Gavin in regards to these charter
19 contracts. (Inaudible) 509. (Inaudible) what the
20 law, we talked (inaudible) to Mr. Ott in regards to
21 even if it's not contained in our charter contract,
22 you're still going to be able to do these notice of
23 closures if you deem so because that's what the law
24 says. We're so close to finalizing that part, that
25 language.

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1 So I would just say that making it
2 contingent upon this other language that we're still
3 negotiating is not appropriate, and it should not be
4 based on a contingency. We have been very clear in
5 what our amendment request is. Now if Mr. Gavin
6 says, you should not include this word, or this
7 should not be, I haven't heard a valid reason why it
8 should not be a blended school. Everyone sits there
9 and agrees, and then, Oh, wait, wait. No, no, no.
10 If they don't sign this charter contract amendment
11 that we have given you before, then we're not going
12 to agree to this? It's not fair. It's not
13 equitable. It should not be contingent. That is
14 number one. We can't help where we are today.
15 As you see, in his recommendation, Mr. Gavin
16 concedes that NRS 386.528 allows the schools to
17 provide additional rigorous and valuable and reliable
18 performance standards. He goes on and continues
19 that -- you know, the only measure that this
20 Authority has right now is the graduation rate.
21 There is no other performance framework. It's what
22 Beacon is trying to do here, is be innovative. And
23 we're like, Hey, look, we get it. We get it,
24 Patrick, but it's frustrating that the only
25 measurement you have is the graduation rate. That is

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1 the only indicator that you have right now.
2 We're saying, Hey, let's validate this other
3 measures that can determine whether we're being
4 effective or not. Again, we provided very specific
5 contract language as to what it would be. I mean at
6 this point, I was hoping -- and I understand that we
7 submitted this on May -- because of our board
8 meeting, we had a board meeting May 11th, and I
9 haven't been privy to the discussions that Tambre and
10 Patrick have been having because they have been
11 trying to work some of these things out on their own.
12 And it's my understanding that Tambre Tondryk is
13 like, We're looking at these measures because we want
14 to be held accountable.
15 And guess what, if we can't meet these
16 additional measures that we're asking you to
17 consider, then shame on us, right? Shame on us if we
18 can't do it. We're not saying, Hey, we're just going
19 to wait and see. We're saying, Hey, look, this is
20 what we propose for you to consider as well. And I
21 was hoping that Patrick would say, Hey, you know
22 what? Yes.
23 And there are some other things we want you
24 to consider, too. We should also be considering this
25 other measure. And that's should be -- where we

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1 should be heading. I think Mr. Garza, who was here
2 on behalf of the school from the Department of
3 Education; where there is this equation that, if you
4 will, that we can come into agreement to that says,
5 Hey, is Beacon being effective or not. That's the
6 bottom -- you know?
7 And I understand that the graduation rate is
8 an important factor, and I would go back to SB 509.
9 Anyway, I didn't want to get into all the legal
10 issues about, with it being retroactive. You know,
11 like how did we know? Because it's essentially more;
12 How did we know that now you're going to be making a
13 decision about our performance based on the 60
14 percent graduation rate when it wasn't in effect
15 before? It was something that was considered in the
16 prior school performance framework.
17 So the recommendation would be that it
18 should not be contingent. The language is pretty
19 straightforward what we're asking, what charter
20 contract language we're asking for amendment. And if
21 there's additional measures that you want to include;
22 please, we're at the table. We want to know. We
23 want to be held accountable.
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Wahl, you had a
25 question?

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1 **MEMBER WAHL:** Didn't we make a policy or
2 something that says we can't approve any amendments
3 unless we get them in the contract? Going from --
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I'm not --
5 **MEMBER WAHL:** -- the contract.
6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I don't know, Member
7 Wahl. I would have to figure out --
8 **MEMBER WAHL:** Aren't we doing -- aren't we
9 saying, We're not going to give you any amendments
10 unless you give us your contract?
11 **MR. GAVIN:** Yes. They already have a
12 charter contract in place. The charter contract --
13 you approved amendments to the charter contract that
14 the school has executed upon, but hadn't yet --
15 without having to sign the contract.
16 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Because we haven't agreed
17 to the contract language. It was very -- it was very
18 like -- it was like a contract in SB 509. That was
19 basically -- you know. A lot of those contracts
20 pretty much are SB 509.
21 So now we look at what that means and how
22 we're going to actually put it in our contract, you
23 know, and how we're going to word it. And that's the
24 discussions that we've been having back and forth.
25 And Greg, you can correct me if I'm wrong.

1 We're 90 percent there. So what I think is going to
2 happen, and we just had other meetings regarding
3 those, and we're going to say, Hey, my board
4 says we're in agreement with this. And Authority,
5 this is Patrick's recommendation as to this section
6 of it, and this is our span. Kind of like what
7 you've been doing with Silver State, really, you
8 know, where you're negotiating the contract language
9 back and forth. It's the same thing, you know? So
10 we'll be going back and forth. Okay, can we agree on
11 this. No, we're not going to agree on that.

12 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Mr. Gavin, do you want
13 to --

14 **MR. GAVIN:** I will defer to Mr. Ott first.

15 **MR. OTT:** I'll just clean up one or two
16 things. I agree with Ms. Sanchez. We are indeed
17 going back and forth. Do you think that we are close
18 to getting an agreement on contract language? And
19 from my perspective, when you're modifying a
20 contract, I would like to finish what we do with the
21 current amendment before we do a second amendment.

22 So I would support doing -- finishing what
23 we're doing, and then doing the second part. I don't
24 anticipate either of those would be problematic. I
25 would just like to finish before we start again.

1 And then with regard to the second thing, I
2 think it's important to note that even though I know
3 the recommendation for staff came out very close to
4 this meeting, in the interest of disclosure, in our
5 discussions regarding the contract, I did relay to
6 Ms. Sanchez last week staff's disappointment with the
7 recommendation number 2, that there was not a -- I
8 didn't tell her that that would be recommending
9 disapproval, but did relay that disappointment as
10 soon as I knew about it, which was last week.

11 So to the extent that they're claiming that
12 they're surprised that the staff was not embracing
13 this fully, I don't think that that is accurate.

14 **MR. GAVIN:** And I would note that I've also
15 had multiple conversations with Ms. Tondryk regarding
16 our concerns about the second amendments. Not the
17 Second Amendments of the Constitution, just to be
18 clear. I don't want to put that on the record.

19 But this proposed amendment number 2, I
20 think we have tried very hard to be communicative
21 with the school. The fact is, we did get this only
22 two weeks ago. We have attorneys working on crafting
23 language, going back and forth to make sure that our
24 recommendations to you are clear and transparent.

25 And, yes, that does take time. We got this

1 two tweaks ago. You know exactly how busy this
2 agency is. This is 90 percent of our job, but we
3 have no resources to do it.

4 So I take exception to Ms. Sanchez's
5 characterization of the degree of collaboration, but
6 I appreciate that it's coming out of a place of
7 passion versus -- I will also say that I would concur
8 with Mr. Ott's argument that we need to get the other
9 contract in place first. This is an attempt to say
10 yes, we'll do this, but we need to get the other
11 contract in place first because we cannot be in a
12 position where we have now multiple schools. They
13 are not signing the contract that we put out there.
14 We have under-performing centers that are in a
15 position now where they are operating with permission
16 you have given them without any accountability behind
17 it. That is a serious problem.

18 It is a function of the lack of capacity of
19 this agency, and the board's consistent ruling just
20 to overrule the staff recommendations, and then
21 wonder why everything is a disaster afterwards.

22 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Thank you. Tambre Tondryk,
23 for the record.

24 The only problem with waiting is that we
25 have students from Reno and other areas that are

1 waiting to enroll. And so they've had their
2 applications in for quite a while now, and I can't
3 process them. I can't deny them. They need to find
4 schools. And so that would be my exception to the
5 delay.

6 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Jessica Sanchez. As to
7 those -- the other contract language is not
8 time-sensitive like for the reasons that Tambre
9 Tondryk just explained. And that original -- the SB
10 509 charter contract amendments that we're talking
11 about were originally supposed to be done back in
12 July. In fact, if I recall correctly, July of 2016.

13 So we saw this lax. You know, nothing
14 happened, actually, until we said, Hey, you can't do
15 this high stakes review in February. And they're
16 like, Oh, great. We were supposed to do the charter
17 contract amendments back in July.

18 So now to say that there's this urgency that
19 that has to be done prior to these concrete charter
20 contract language that we are proposing, I would say
21 is not appropriate and -- it's not appropriate. That
22 would be bad.

23 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Conaboy?

24 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Could we solve this by
25 setting a time that the contract, current

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1 negotiations need to come to a conclusion at that
2 point in time when those provisional recommendations
3 come to the board (inaudible) fall into effect?
4 Would that help?
5 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Could we do -- I don't see
6 why number 1 has to be contingent on it. I can see
7 number 2. So I know that Tambre is going to be out
8 June. So we can do it July. I wish that that I
9 can -- if I could have another valid reason why.
10 Number 1, if everyone agrees that this school should
11 be blended, that it should be limited to Clark
12 County, that that is the goal, why would it not --
13 why would it be contingent upon this SB 509 language
14 that we're going to be incorporating into the
15 contract? I guess I don't see how they are relatable
16 to one another. And if the board -- if the Authority
17 is inclined that they think that it is, then --
18 (inaudible) goals, you know?
19 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Conaboy?
20 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Ott, is this amendment
21 1 impacted by current negotiations with the school,
22 or is the current negotiations with the school
23 impacted by amendment number 1?
24 **MR. OTT:** I don't believe that this is a
25 section that we are touching in our current

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1 negotiations. So it would be a matter of inserting
2 language into the current redline, which the football
3 is currently in my court. So I would insert that
4 language back in to the redline that I would send
5 back to Ms. Sanchez. But that section -- I think the
6 question is whether we're touching that section
7 currently in the redline. I don't believe that's the
8 case.
9 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Theoretically there would
10 be no real barrier to move forward with this as we
11 are making --
12 **MR. OTT:** Well, I guess the only barrier
13 would be if we're supposed to do them together, or if
14 we're supposed to do the second one first and then
15 postpone the one that we're currently working on. So
16 if the direction to me is, incorporate that into the
17 current draft and send everything back in one
18 package, that's different from, let's process number
19 2 right now because it needs to know, and put
20 everything else on hold so we can get this one in
21 place.
22 **MEMBER CONABOY:** My question was only about
23 amendment 1, the one -- the blended model
24 (inaudible). That's all I'm talking about.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I think when he's saying

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1 number 2, he's actually talking about amendment
2 number 1, being the second action item.
3 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I apologize.
4 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I should call it
5 amendment 2.
6 **MR. OTT:** I apologize.
7 **MR. GAVIN:** Let me clarify, and I think that
8 hope is (inaudible). I am more than amenable to
9 these being consolidated into a single piece of
10 contractual language so we're not having to do this
11 twice. My concern -- so this can all be in the same
12 language. One single contract amendment, one single
13 (inaudible) of the contract gets on the past
14 amendments and whatever amendments are approved
15 today.
16 My issue is we can't be in a position where
17 the school implements -- actually acts on the
18 amendment until it's signed. That is just not okay.
19 And that is effectively what happened the last time.
20 And if we have to take ownership for some of that,
21 then the school has to take ownership for some of
22 that, to be fair.
23 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I do think that the key
24 difference is that before we're trying to be
25 proactive, and some of you already know, I guess all

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1 the parties that are here today could sign that this
2 is going to be -- 2.5.1 is going to be the language,
3 and we can have (inaudible) they already voted on it,
4 then he can sign it today. And if the board signs it
5 today, then it will be -- then it's done, for this
6 2.5.1 as written in our charter contract amendment
7 request is going to be incorporated, everyone signs
8 it, and that's incorporated into our contract. That
9 would be my proposal as to this section.
10 **MS. MACKEDON:** Mr. Ott, I just want to make
11 sure I'm understanding both arguments here. The
12 problem is that historically what's happened -- and
13 correct me if I'm wrong because I could be super
14 confused -- historically what has happened maybe with
15 this school and/or other schools is, we've approved
16 these amendments, and then negotiations break down in
17 a contract, and the school won't sign it. And then
18 we're in this weird place where they're fulfilling
19 amendments that we've approved, but they don't have a
20 signed contract.
21 And so then they're like, you can't hold us
22 accountable because the contract hasn't been signed.
23 Is that -- is that the argument?
24 **MR. GAVIN:** That is precisely my concern,
25 Member Mackedon.

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1 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** That's not what happened
2 in the case of Beacon, though. That has not been one
3 that's taken place. I think you would agree.
4 **MR. GAVIN:** Actually, Ms. Sanchez, I would
5 disagree. Let me be 100 percent crystal clear. The
6 mechanism by which we negotiate changes to the
7 contract is through this lengthy process. Your
8 attempt to turn this into a situation where you and
9 your client and others will effectively control what
10 this agency does is seriously problematic.
11 This agency approves a standard contract
12 much like every other state agency, that's with every
13 other vendor. The fact that you want to come back
14 after the fact and make changes is something we find
15 seriously problematic.
16 We are -- I am more than willing to work
17 with you on this because I do believe that you and
18 your client are thoughtful people, and you've raised
19 really thoughtful points about some areas of the
20 contract that can be improved.
21 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I'm not quite sure what --
22 **MR. GAVIN:** But my concern is --
23 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I'm now quite sure what
24 you're talking about, Patrick, because like I said,
25 again, in July 2015, there was a very general made

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1 changes to the contract based on SB 509. That was
2 it. There was no specific -- there was no specific
3 contract language submitted as saying, Hey, we're
4 going to change Section 1.1 or whatever of the
5 contract because SB 509 requires that. That's not
6 what occurred. So that occurred July 2015. We
7 brought up issues regarding a high stakes review.
8 Then we did get a new charter contract redline with
9 proposed changes. There's a lot of things that have
10 been happening in the interim, so I don't know what
11 part you're saying that we have maybe reneged on or
12 that we're not complying with. Because you would be
13 more like, you said you were supposed to be doing X,
14 and now you're doing Y, then that would be okay.
15 But I don't know what you're talking -- I
16 honestly don't know what you're talking about, that
17 we have not participated in good faith, or that we're
18 not holding up to our charter contract agreement or
19 the amendments that were provided for in the past.
20 The only thing I can think of is maybe the student
21 enrollment, how you cap that, but we've stayed within
22 the cap. So I really don't know what part you're
23 talking about in that regard.
24 But what we're trying to be is more
25 proactive in the way that we conduct business with

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1 the Authority. I wish we had power over you guys as
2 Mr. Gavin states, but no, we're here because you have
3 the power over us, right, and at the same time, we're
4 supposed to be negotiating. And we're trying to
5 be -- make it cleaner so that we can say, Hey, we're
6 not asking -- we're trying to put precise contract
7 language that would be in effect. So in that sense,
8 I think that would cure your concern, Patrick. If
9 you can tell me how we haven't complied, then,
10 please.
11 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Wahl.
12 **MEMBER WAHL:** Okay. So this goes back to
13 exactly what I said. We have an open contract that's
14 not signed right now, and we're not supposed to
15 approve amendments until we have a signed contract.
16 **MS. SANCHEZ:** We have a signed contract.
17 **MEMBER WAHL:** You have an open contract, is
18 what I'm hearing, because you already asked for an
19 amendment that we granted that you haven't agreed on
20 language.
21 **MEMBER CONABOY:** May I ask a question? I
22 believe that what we agreed after 509 was passed is
23 that whenever a school came forward with an
24 amendment, that would create the opportunity and the
25 requirement that the schools then convert to a

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1 performance-based charter and include some of the
2 provisions under 509. Isn't that what we agreed to,
3 Patrick?
4 **MR. GAVIN:** That is correct, Member Conaboy.
5 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Okay. So then last July,
6 that was after 509 was passed, you came with
7 amendments. And so that was the time that you heard
8 other issues in your charter with regard to the
9 amendments, and then the broader issues around 509.
10 So when did that process start, Mr. Ott?
11 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible).
12 **MR. OTT:** That's probably accurate.
13 Probably early 2016, I would say.
14 **MEMBER CONABOY:** So we had some operational
15 challenges. And it took eight months to get them the
16 contract to look at. So that was February, March,
17 April, May. So we're three months into negotiations.
18 It's not an insurmountable or an outrageous amount of
19 time for something serious like this, is it, Mr. Ott?
20 And we're 90 percent there in three months' time.
21 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Because there were
22 some issues that needed to take place for the
23 March 25th meeting as well. So I assume we would be
24 able to resolve them within the next month, is my
25 understanding.

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1 **MR. OTT:** I think that's accurate. I don't
2 think the parties proceeded in bad faith. I think
3 our negotiations have largely been cordial. I think
4 I have already told Africa the things that I'm going
5 to object to and say no to, and there's probably not
6 going to be much of a change from our previous
7 conversations. So I think we're moving forward.
8 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I'll go back to my original
9 question to make everybody happy, to give you what
10 you need to inform the families that want to enroll
11 from outside of Clark County, can we set a
12 deadline -- and it's an all or nothing -- either we
13 meet the deadline or we don't. Is that an untenable
14 solution?
15 **MR. OTT:** Not from my perspective.
16 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Ms. Sanchez?
17 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** It's not -- your Honor,
18 it's not in regards to number 2. Just in regards to
19 number 1, I guess. If we do it in July. So then
20 maybe we just do that, we hold off on enrolling any
21 students until July. Because I know that Miss
22 Tondryk will be unavailable in June. What is the
23 June meeting date?
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** June 4, I think. June
25 24. June 25.

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1 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I'd say July just to be on
2 the safe side. Stick with July if that works out
3 because that will give us time to present it to our
4 board as well. We'll have to do that, too.
5 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So the solution is an
6 agreeable one. So we'll have a deadline of --
7 **MR. GAVIN:** So let me understand something,
8 Mr. Chairman. So the school would not enroll any
9 students until after the effective date of the
10 contract -- until actually the contract was executed?
11 Is that what you're saying? So those kids from
12 outside Clark County would not be -- you'd be
13 withholding their acceptance, or not telling them
14 either yes or no?
15 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** I believe that's what the
16 discussion is, is if we can't approve this amendment
17 today, then we can't -- I can't process students
18 outside of Clark County. I can process students in
19 Clark County.
20 **MR. GAVIN:** I don't know, and I'm not sure
21 what mechanism there is once the contract is executed
22 for you to deny or slow down the admissions process
23 for students.
24 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Can you repeat that?
25 **MR. GAVIN:** Until the amendment to this

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1 contract is executed, I think they're compelled to
2 enroll the students from outside of Clark County.
3 And then -- and then -- and they are allowed to stay
4 in our schools until they graduate.
5 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's our issue.
6 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** I'm trying to prevent
7 another year in statewide distancing.
8 **MR. GAVIN:** So it strikes me that it would
9 be in the interest of the school to move quickly on
10 that securing the -- on executing and perhaps hold a
11 special meeting to approve the contract and get it
12 done. Because you're going to be in a very tough
13 position until such time it's executed. And that's
14 really unfortunate.
15 **MEMBER WAHL:** Member Wahl. You're putting
16 us in a pickle because our director and our DAG said
17 no. Procedurally -- at some point we're going to
18 have to do things procedurally. It's out of
19 procedure. It's just not -- I mean, we all agree.
20 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Ott, the contract -- if
21 you come to terms with the school, that contract
22 doesn't have to come back to us, then, to be
23 approved, does it? It just gets signed by the chair.
24 We don't have -- there's nothing magic about our June
25 date. The contract is a legal document that reflects

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1 the decisions of the board. Is that not --
2 **MR. GAVIN:** The assumption is the delegated
3 authority that we requested in the original -- in the
4 original -- for the original amendments was for us to
5 make the technical changes to put the contract in
6 alignment with SB 509, no more. You approved that.
7 So unless Mr. Ott disagrees or board's counsel
8 disagrees, I believe that delegated authority
9 still stands, and then the chair can simply execute.
10 But I will defer to Mr. Ott or to your counsel.
11 **MR. OTT:** I don't disagree.
12 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** The only issue that I --
13 that we already foresee -- because like I said, we're
14 90 percent there. The only issue with that, I know
15 that they're requesting this language from the SB --
16 there's some language that is not in SB 509 that was
17 presented to us, or may be permissive in SB 509 that
18 we're saying, Hey, we would like it worded in a
19 different way.
20 And so that's why I do think it's going to
21 come before the board because you'll have the
22 recommendation from Mr. Gavin, and then you're going
23 to have the arguments from us as to what the language
24 should be. So I believe it is going to be before the
25 board.

1 **MR. GAVIN:** It sounds like you're in a
2 pickle then.
3 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** That's exactly it. And
4 that's it, you know, we're working hard. You know,
5 we're held hostage, is what we are. Even though
6 we're trying to make -- we're trying to make strikes,
7 and we're trying to make the school better, and we're
8 saying, Hey, this is how we're going to do the school
9 better. Guess, what, I guess you're in a pickle
10 then. Because if you're not going to agree, we're
11 going to strong arm you so that you can sign
12 everything the way we want to do it in the contract.
13 That's the issue.
14 And that's why we're here, because we're
15 kind of saying, Hey, we need this changed now, this
16 is the contract language that is going to be in
17 effect. It's not -- and they stated, this part,
18 amendment number 1, does not have any implications
19 with the other contract amendments that we have been
20 discussing.
21 So again, you know, I take offense that it's
22 being held hostage, and that we're being held, like
23 Hey, not, if you're not going to sign the rest of
24 this stuff, then we're going to hold you back. And
25 that doesn't seem like that comes in good faith. It

1 should be --
2 **MEMBER WAHL:** Can I clarify that it's not
3 just Beacon. I mean, that was our agreement at the
4 beginning, that all charter schools under the old way
5 would come to the new way if they asked for an
6 amendment.
7 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Beacon is here. Beacon is
8 here because they're trying to do the right thing.
9 They're coming to the right board, so it's like,
10 Okay, guess what, no. We're not going to offer
11 you -- we're not going to allow you to progress.
12 We're going to allow you to address your issues. Not
13 yet. Wait until --
14 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Conaboy.
15 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I was just going to
16 suggest, Mr. Chair, that maybe we can take our lunch
17 break now and let counsel talk with one another and
18 come back to us after lunch with a proposed proposal,
19 a proposed motion.
20 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** We can do that.
21 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yeah. Why don't we break
22 until 1:05.
23 (A lunch recess was taken.)
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Mr. Ott has returned. So
25 we can get started. It is now 1:18. So we will pick

1 up where we left off. I don't know where that would
2 be. Counsel, I know you all had discussion. Was
3 there any movement? I hope so.
4 **MR. OTT:** Deputy Attorney General, there's
5 always movement.
6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I think that if we are in
7 the right direction, we can move forward in a
8 positive direction. Language matters.
9 **MR. OTT:** To there was discussion. And I
10 think that there's pretty substantial agreement, even
11 among the areas where there was a red line back and
12 forth. I think that there are still a little bit of
13 disagreements and language that still needs to be
14 worked out. I think where there still remains a
15 little bit of disagreement is I believe the school's
16 position is still that they want amendment number 1
17 approved notwithstanding the contract and staff's
18 position, as we like to do them as a package.
19 I think that the existing language could be
20 done quickly. I committed to Ms. Sanchez to get her
21 redline back by Wednesday of next week, and asked how
22 quickly she could return it to me. I don't think
23 that we're very far apart. We're not worlds apart.
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Sorry to eavesdrop, but I
25 heard next Friday was discussed. I don't know if you

1 aligned on next Friday being the date that you think
2 that you can get it resolved. Is that not accurate?
3 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** No, it can be. He says
4 they could have -- I apologize. Greg advised us he
5 could have a revision back to us by Wednesday of next
6 week, and I believe I can have it back to him with
7 some feedback by Friday and we can have those
8 discussions. We are very, very close. We're very
9 close.
10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So if this were resolved
11 by Friday, that would make everything -- we could --
12 is there a way for us to be thinking about how to
13 move forward with this under the revision of, if it
14 is resolved by Friday, then we can make movement on
15 it. If it is not resolved by Friday, then there is
16 no action to be taken. We can vote today if the
17 contract is signed by Friday, which will be the 27th,
18 then that goes into effect. If the contract is not
19 signed by Friday, then amendment 1 is not -- not --
20 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** You know, the changes that
21 Mr. Ott, that him and I have been discussing would be
22 before our board on June 8th. So even though we're
23 having discussions about the language, and it would
24 have to be -- go before our board on June 8th. And
25 we'll take it from there obviously. If we agree with

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1 all of Mr. Ott's changes, then it will be signed on
2 June 8th when our board meets. Potentially not
3 (inaudible), then after that if we can't come to --
4 which I feel like it will be able to be resolved.
5 **MR. OTT:** I think the other thing the board
6 could do is vote on Amendment 1 to be more
7 incorporated into the current -- under the current
8 contract revisions and to be effective upon
9 execution, and I will take your direction to make
10 sure that that is prioritized and to get a redline to
11 Africa by Wednesday and work as expediently as
12 possible. So even if we missed that deadline, it
13 wouldn't defeat amendment 1, it would just postpone
14 the enactment of it.
15 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'll move.
16 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Do I have a second? Oh,
17 sorry.
18 **MR. WHITNEY:** Oh, thank you, Miss
19 (inaudible). That makes sense. The only -- another
20 option you can consider -- but under the
21 circumstances, it doesn't sound like anybody wants to
22 use that -- but you can always follow the -- have a
23 special meeting, but then you'll have to comply with
24 the open meeting law, you know. But it sounds like
25 Mr. Ott's proposal is great.

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1 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** We had always wanted an
2 amendment, but it sounds like we might be able to
3 move past the stalemate. So we have a movement. Do
4 I have a second?
5 **MEMBER McCORD:** Second.
6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So all in favor of
7 (inaudible). So (inaudible), all in favor?
8 **MR. GAVIN:** Mr. Chairman, could someone
9 please state the exact motion for approval, what is
10 being approved, and what the action is because I'm
11 scared about what the action would make the school
12 look like.
13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** When I moved -- I was
14 quoting Mr. Ott when I made my motion, Mr. Chair.
15 And that motion was that the language relative to
16 amendment number 1 be incorporated into the contract
17 negotiations currently underway and be effective upon
18 execution of that contract.
19 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** With some expedited.
20 **MEMBER CONABOY:** And hope that it's
21 expedited for everybody involved.
22 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** All right. Motion was
23 seconded by Member McCord. All in favor?
24 **ALL:** Aye.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any opposed? There

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1 aren't any? All right. So we move to the second
2 part of this issue, which might be a little more
3 contentious. It's hard to imagine.
4 **MR. GAVIN:** Mr. Chairman, the staff
5 recommends that the second amendment not be --
6 amendment number 2 not be approved at this time. We
7 request the authority to continue to work with the
8 school to tweak this language, and request
9 resubmission by the school in conjunction with
10 amendments related to certain alternative population.
11 **MS. MACKEDON:** This is Member Mackedon. I
12 know you're dying to hear my two cents. I agree with
13 Patrick. Everyone's graduation rates would go up if
14 they got to play by these rules. Every single school
15 in the state, if they could keep track of -- and
16 hopefully they all are doing that internally, right?
17 I mean, that's what we do. We look at our kids that
18 we've had from kindergarten, when we get to see our
19 key data, see how did they do compared to other kids.
20 I mean, hopefully everyone is keeping track
21 of this stuff on their own internally to shape their
22 practice. But every school in the State's graduation
23 rates would go up if they were playing by these
24 rules.
25 But what I do really, really -- the one I

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1 love in here is the Number 5 about reengaging
2 students. I think that's super cool and leans more
3 towards mission specific than anything. And I do
4 really like that one. And that's just my opinion.
5 **MR. GAVIN:** I would wholeheartedly concur
6 with Member Mackedon's point regarding that. And I
7 do want to say, she didn't mention that that is that
8 the school has clearly been very thoughtful about
9 that.
10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any discussions or
11 questions for Mr. Gavin or the Beacon staff and
12 counsel?
13 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chairman, can I ask a
14 question? Maybe this will be a good opportunity for
15 Director Gavin to come -- because I've been an
16 advocate for mission-specific metrics in the
17 contract. I mentioned it several times. We just
18 mentioned it again last week at our retreat. And I
19 used to write the contracts when I was a chair, and I
20 thought that they were all pro forma. And I never
21 got the deal from our schools particularly, what they
22 were, what their mission was by reading the contract.
23 So I applaud Beacon for thinking about these things.
24 To me this is -- as Member Mackedon said,
25 this is almost just a new way to work with the data

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1 that you already have. So I don't particularly see
2 this metrics, although I think there was some
3 discussion at the last inter-community on education
4 about new ways to look at things. There was a
5 national speaker, and also there was some Clark
6 County school district schools if I remember back, to
7 the point who said that they could tell a whole
8 different story (inaudible).
9 So I think there may be policy discussions
10 going forward about the way we look at things, and
11 (inaudible) (inaudible) and access all these data.
12 But would you like to take this opportunity,
13 Mr. Gavin, to talk about what a mission-specific
14 measurable goal actually looks like, in two minutes
15 or less? To my way of thinking, these are data
16 points that somebody, as Member Mackedon said,
17 already had that we might want to look at and talk
18 about among ourselves. These aren't really goals.
19 **MR. GAVIN:** Certainly. So in terms of
20 mission specific goals, it is typically an academic
21 or non-academic measure that is not reflected in the
22 rest of the framework. So one example would be a
23 school that could emphasize the community service and
24 could say that their goal is that every student
25 graduates with an Eagle Scout badge or the equivalent

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1 for the Girl Scouts. That could be an option. It
2 could be a school that emphasizes college and
3 career-readiness. It could say, every student will
4 be admitted into a four-year college, and they will
5 graduate within six years, which is a (inaudible).
6 Or a school that is a military school can
7 say that every kid either goes into a college or
8 enlists in the military. Those are some things that
9 come to mind.
10 Other things I've seen in other states that
11 work really well, schools that emphasize civics.
12 They require kids to pass the U.S. citizenship exam
13 as a condition of graduation, which is an academic
14 measure. But it is not reflected in the data that we
15 currently look at.
16 So there are lots of ways of doing this,
17 thinking about what a mission-specific goal is, but
18 it should be something that supplements it, but does
19 not supplant. But we're attempting another bite at
20 the apple with the same data performance we already
21 looked at.
22 This body has the authority to (inaudible)
23 the contract to determine what the metrics and
24 measures are related to these areas. And I think it
25 would be an abrogation of our duty and our obligation

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1 to the state to start allowing anything that waters
2 down those key measures.
3 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** The things I've been
4 thinking about, because I looked at this over and
5 over, and I keep trying to determine if these aren't
6 just key point indicators of your progress. Because
7 ultimately, at the end of the day, like the
8 graduation rate is what it is. Because even if you
9 knock all these out of the park, and you still
10 graduate 20 percent of students, and no one is saying
11 you're not doing a good job, and you say, well, we're
12 kind of spinning wheels, we're doing a lot of good
13 things, well -- so the ultimate output is -- so the
14 ultimate output, that's why I've been really torn
15 because you said more than once that you don't want
16 to add a single metric to be a determining factor.
17 And I would tend to agree with you. I think
18 there's a lot of good things that happen with
19 students along the way, right? You're supposed to
20 have these outcomes, but, you know, it sounds like
21 (inaudible). But at the same time, if you had a lot
22 of touchdowns but no points, you're not going to win.
23 So it's very hard for me to look at
24 indicators toward an ultimate goal and the way that
25 we should be measuring, because feels like it's very

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1 tough to say, if you still aren't hitting that end
2 goal of graduating X percentage of your students,
3 that you've done a good job. Because I don't think
4 you would agree that you would otherwise.
5 So that's just the only -- that's been very
6 difficult for me to kind of comprehend here in terms
7 of how we would measure the school's overall
8 performance if we're not looking at a metric. Do you
9 want to respond?
10 **ANDREA DAMORE:** Andrea Damore. For the
11 record. You're absolutely right. So there are
12 specific indicators. But the 60 percent is something
13 that will sit there. And we aim to graduate every
14 single one of our students. The problem is, it might
15 not be in their fourth year of high school. So if we
16 measure what we do as a school, and we come back to
17 you and say, we are graduating them in their fifth
18 year because they came their 11th grade year, and it
19 took us three years to get them there on time.
20 We want recognition for that because our
21 goal is to graduate students, okay? And they
22 happened to come to us a little late in their career.
23 And that's -- you know, last year's cohort,
24 80 percent of them came to us in their 11th or 12th
25 grade. We also believe that looking at schools with

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1 a whole academic performance framework is really
2 important. There's not just one data point.
3 And we're not going to (inaudible), and we
4 didn't want to supplant and take away the 60 percent.
5 You can obviously always use that, but we want to
6 show you additional metrics. So if you measure our
7 goals to deal with at-risk students, we want to look
8 at the fifth year graduation rate. That's definitely
9 one of the things. We also want to look at students
10 that stay enrolled with us throughout the year.
11 And the reason for that is because students
12 come to us and they may leave at some point. Maybe a
13 week. Maybe a day. You know, students show up and
14 they exit quickly. Night school wasn't for them.
15 But we want to make sure that our dedication
16 to our students is to keep them enrolled, to keep
17 them enrolled year to year so that we can expand our
18 population and our cohort population, but also to
19 make sure that we can graduate them as quickly as
20 possible.
21 **MEMBER McCORD:** Mr. Chairman, graduation
22 rate as summative evaluations is dichotomous. You
23 either get there or you don't. Unfortunately,
24 schools do okay with summative evaluations. They
25 move forward based upon a formative evaluation; a

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1 series of formative evaluations.
2 And I would suggest to the Authority that
3 one of the things that we might want to ponder and
4 wander around in our minds is a combination of both
5 formative and summative evaluation. Not walking away
6 from graduation rate because it's a significant
7 issue, but maybe a collection of formative
8 evaluations that create a picture of progress on
9 particular matters.
10 I think much that you have applied here is
11 formative in its evaluation. We're working on this.
12 These are things that are important. These are
13 reflective of the kind of institution we have.
14 If you could demonstrate to me, as just one
15 member here, that you're making statistically
16 significant advances of those in a formative way,
17 then I would become a lot more persuaded about your
18 plan and how things work.
19 So to the members of the Authority, as you
20 start thinking this through, thinking about how you
21 look at it, I hope we look at both summative and
22 formative evaluation design as an assessment of where
23 the school is and how it's complying with its
24 charter. So that's something that isn't developed
25 now.

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1 This is all about formative evaluation.
2 It's all about it. It's not about summative
3 evaluation. You already acknowledged the fact that
4 there has to be a summative evaluation, and you're
5 not making it on it. You have to work on it in a
6 formative way. If you can plot those steps in a
7 formative way by creating a (inaudible) in
8 performance. That's just my viewpoint on it. I just
9 ran an R&D in a big district, so (inaudible).
10 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** If I may. I'm
11 (inaudible). I know what Beacon was trying to do
12 with this amendment was because there is -- I know
13 that Mr. Gavin said, you know, there is a performance
14 framework, but there really isn't a performance
15 framework that we're basing it on.
16 And so here, you know, we're trying to say,
17 Hey, here's some measures that we can use to
18 determine our progress. And, yes, I wish that the
19 board would say -- the Authority would say, Hey, yes,
20 let's make up this evaluation form so we can really
21 determine whether the schools are being effective or
22 not.
23 And Mr. Garza, who had spoken earlier -- I
24 don't know if he's still here or not -- from the
25 department -- from UNLV Department of Ed, when he

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1 talked about an equation, making up an equation that
2 determines all these different factors, Beacon would
3 be very, very amenable to maybe form a committee or
4 form, you know, with Mr. Gavin where we come and we
5 tailor this equation. We come up with this equation
6 that's is mathematical, that it's not -- you know,
7 it's mathematical and it shows whether you are an
8 effective school or not.
9 It may be more beneficial to this body. I
10 know that it would be beneficial to Beacon because
11 even though Beacon may not have that 60 percent
12 graduation rate, I know that they believe that
13 they're being effective and that they're meeting the
14 needs of these particular students.
15 So we're trying to be innovative and trying
16 to be proactive. With that being said.
17 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I think it's difficult
18 because there's an effectiveness with a group of
19 students, and then there's some who -- obviously
20 there's some that haven't been touched.
21 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yeah.
22 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** And so results are what
23 they are. I mean, it's never easy to slice a knife
24 around it, though, and we are in an environment
25 where, like Member McCord said, things are summative,

1 and that is the important summative value that we all
2 agree is the most critical. You know, we aren't
3 there yet. So it's very hard to use the term we're
4 being wholly effective when there's so many students
5 who haven't met the minimum bar of being able to be
6 successful to (inaudible).

7 And it's not due to lack of trying and
8 certainly not without finger pointing, but they are
9 not there just yet. So we have to maybe try and
10 figure out what's the best way to get them there and
11 how do we measure ourselves against that.

12 So is there any further discussion or
13 questions?

14 **MEMBER CONABOY:** So are we perhaps thinking
15 of taking amendment 2 off the table? I mean, well,
16 Patrick's recommendation was to deny. I'm wondering
17 if we just want to withdraw it and come back when we
18 can give it some more thought? Because I think
19 naturally what you're hearing is that it's a good
20 idea to look at things through a different lens and
21 see what the information tells you. If someone
22 showed up with an (inaudible), how about that? Would
23 that (inaudible) going up? That's what an
24 (inaudible) looks like, it's a dramatic grafting.

25 So I think you would and work to help. I

1 where we water down from that 60 percent down cohort.
2 I think it's an extraordinarily slippery slope.

3 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Ms. Tondryk?

4 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Tambre Tondryk for the
5 record. In September, Andrea and I sat at this
6 table, and we presented the preliminary data of
7 cohort 2016. At that time we told you that 48
8 percent of our students are not credit-deficient, and
9 they have been on track to graduate. And this is
10 from collecting proficiency information.

11 Of the students in cohort 2016, 51.61
12 percent were credit-deficient. 45 percent were
13 returning, and 67 percent were new.

14 We also explained that the percentage of
15 students did not include students who may be on track
16 with credits, but not pass that high school
17 proficiency. We stated at the time we were
18 potentially facing less than 48 percent graduation
19 rate if we did not remediate our students.

20 So we gave you the baseline data at the
21 beginning of the year. In spite of this, since then
22 we've continued to enroll students. 38 percent of
23 our newly enrolled credit-deficient seniors
24 transferred in or arrived after validation day,
25 October 1st. This increased our total of newly

1 wouldn't want to quash that mind-set by denying
2 something rather than just have it withdrawn. Is
3 that possible?

4 **MR. GAVIN:** Member Conaboy, I just want to
5 emphasize that I -- that Chairman Johnson's
6 point about the (inaudible) as being the leading
7 indicators, formative indicators that inform the
8 schools in some ways of its progress toward -- or
9 predictive of its likelihood of achieving BPM
10 summative goal.

11 So I don't think that we should in any
12 way -- should the Authority decide not to act on this
13 or to deny it, that this is a reflection that these
14 are bad measures. It's just that they are not
15 appropriate measures for a contract.

16 If this school were to come back with some
17 kind of a goal around students, you know, achieving
18 some kind of a credential, or scores on the ASVAB or
19 some other indicator that is not currently in trend
20 with the contract, but that would give a broader
21 picture of how the school is doing that might be
22 formative in a very different way.

23 I think that it's helpful. Especially --
24 unless this school elects to become an alternative
25 school, I just don't think we can be in a position

1 enrolled credit-deficient 12th graders from 67
2 percent to 75 percent. I repeat. 75 percent.

3 In spite of this, we've increased the
4 percentage. We can state with reasonable certainty
5 that our graduation rate for cohort 2016 will be
6 between 50 to 58 percent, which is higher than
7 projected because we do remediate our students and
8 help them.

9 We started out with 48 percent. We've
10 enrolled more. 75 percent of our newly enrolled
11 students are credit-deficient. We're going to hit a
12 50 to 58 percent graduation rate.

13 So what this means -- this is me speaking
14 now -- this is my fifth time before the board this
15 year. And as much as I enjoy being here and speaking
16 to you and sharing about my school. That is time.
17 We're a very small school. I don't have an EMOB
18 framework. I have Andrea, and I have Travis.

19 The three of us, we put all this data
20 together. We put the reports together. And so the
21 reason that we turned in the supplemental measures is
22 because we are doing a lot with these students.
23 We're coming in with 48 percent grad rate, and we're
24 graduating more than that.

25 I think that that demonstrates that we're

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1 hitting that population, that target.
2 The reason we're asking for supplemental
3 measures is because we can't invest this much time
4 every year trying to keep our doors open. And I
5 understand Patrick is saying, Go all in, Go all in,
6 but in the interim, I can't do that magically, and I
7 know that next year I'm going to be below the 60
8 percent threshold, and I know that that means that I
9 will receive a notice of closure because we're using
10 that SB 509, which actually contains the word "may"
11 be closed. I recognize that.
12 Using this isolated graduation rate is
13 causing schools to play games, and they're not
14 getting caught. They're not the ones sitting here
15 five times, you know? It's me because, you know, we
16 want to support, welcome the students. We would just
17 like the assurance that our doors will remain open.
18 I mean, what more do you want from a school that
19 started out the year with a 48 percent graduation
20 rate than to be above that number? That's all.
21 **MEMBER McCORD:** And my guess, if the data
22 comes out right, you'll be statistically significant
23 at the .05 level or better, which was my point.
24 **MEMBER WAHL:** So would you like to withdraw
25 this?

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1 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** I think that if the
2 Authority were to continue to work with us -- we
3 serve a very unique population. We serve a niche.
4 These kids in this state need some options. It's
5 charter schools that have this innovativeness. And
6 this is really a chance, in my opinion, for the
7 charter authority to make its impact and statement on
8 the State of Nevada.
9 We are in a position where we can create
10 some additional measures and a framework that should
11 be looked at in addition. You know what I'm saying?
12 So I don't know if it's a withdrawal or it's
13 something where we agree to continue to work
14 together? Is it that we develop a team?
15 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Well I think that -- as
16 I'm thinking about this, if they know that they are
17 going to be mission-specific, they need to, you know,
18 be tied to a specific thing that's going to happen.
19 So it sounds like we're going to measure a couple of
20 things, but, you know, would you put this thing to
21 the ground and say, you know, 75 percent of our
22 credit-deficient students will be at this point by
23 this date. You know, 85 percent of our 10th graders
24 will be at this point at this date.
25 That, I think, makes me more comfortable

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1 because I can measure it. I can understand. You can
2 use all of the measures you need internally to get
3 you to that point. But if we know we have a very
4 ambitious goal, and you said, You know what, I'm
5 going to tether myself to that goal, then I would
6 feel much more comfortable.
7 But as I'm looking at some of these six
8 figures that you said you want to measure, they're
9 all kind of indicating and leaning towards just the
10 graduation goal, but they don't necessarily tie you
11 down to say, here is what we absolutely will do and
12 can accomplish over the course. So it's hard for us
13 to measure how absolutely effective you have been.
14 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** So just to make sure I
15 understand. In creating mission-specific goals, they
16 need to be tied to a specific time frame? Because
17 they go in the charter contract. That's where I'm a
18 little confused. So if he were to say -- if we
19 validated, let's say, our population October 1st, and
20 then from that we had to -- our students needed to
21 grow this much, is that what you're looking for? Or
22 does it have -- you know, is it tied per year?
23 That's the confusing piece.
24 **MEMBER WAHL:** Member Wahl. (Inaudible) that
25 all of the students in 11th and 12th grade. I don't

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1 see why that -- I think the idea is you're doing
2 great things. Give us those measures that you can
3 realistically accomplish.
4 **MR. GAVIN:** Yeah, I mean, so staff can
5 support that when they come back. When they come
6 back, and it shifts to being an alt ed school. Until
7 that time, all we're doing is just creating another
8 get-out-of-jail-free card that traditional public
9 schools don't get, and that's not okay.
10 Cause their charter is no different than
11 many, many other comprehensive high schools in this
12 city and in this state. The fact is that they have
13 presented evidence that they serve a population that
14 is somewhat different than that. So they need to
15 become a school that serves that population and stop
16 trying to be all things to all people. If they don't
17 do that, they are going to continue to fail. And
18 none of this will matter.
19 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Can we perceive that as a
20 better way to look at things?
21 **MR. GAVIN:** I stand by my previous
22 statement. Thank you.
23 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Well, I'm taking it
24 differently. So Member Conaboy?
25 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chair, (inaudible), but

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1 I don't think this board can sit here and write
2 measurable --
3 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Me either.
4 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I'm not qualified to do
5 that. I'm hearing what you're saying. The chairman
6 has asked a legitimate question, what do we want from
7 you to satisfy.
8 I think to Mr. Gavin's comment, there exists
9 frameworks that the state establishes. Our framework
10 is based on and expands on the state's framework.
11 Everybody knows that those frameworks are in
12 need of change, and in fact, there's effort under way
13 to do that now. And if you go back, as I referenced
14 earlier, look at the presentations at the last
15 interim committee on education, you will see that
16 there are other people thinking along these lines.
17 You will see that it was a district comprehensive
18 high school that feels the same way that you do.
19 So I would encourage outreach and
20 collaboration among the charter schools. I know your
21 charter schools association is looking at legislative
22 agenda. We need to unify their voices, and we need
23 to (inaudible) and make the case to policy makers
24 that there are different ways to look at things that
25 truly reflects what's going on in the lives of the

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1 children of the state, not just the charter school
2 children.
3 And that's what I would advise as a very
4 near term next step given the fact that the education
5 committee is looking for specific recommendations for
6 consideration at their work session.
7 So that gives you a little bit of a
8 different near term action item that could possibly
9 take on this board and in collaboration with some of
10 the other charter schools.
11 But I think the idea of looking at things a
12 little bit differently is getting some legs. I think
13 today you've made it very clear to this board that if
14 we look at things differently, the picture is
15 different.
16 As your colleagues from Clark County said at
17 this last meeting, My good news is it's never going
18 to get on the front page. I think that we want to
19 celebrate good news. You heard you say today that
20 you impact the lives of individual children, and that
21 will make a difference for the future of them and
22 their families, and our economy of the state. That's
23 all good.
24 But we can't go outside the parameters that
25 exist for us as a framework and that's developed by

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1 the state and adopted by the Board of Education. So
2 we want to change, the voices need to be united and
3 request a policy change at the state level, and you
4 can help us do that.
5 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** With that said, we would
6 like to withdraw our amendment request, Member
7 Conaboy. So we would request that be withdrawn, and
8 at this point as we do need to move forward.
9 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Thank you all so much for
10 coming here today.
11 **MR. GAVIN:** May I add one thing,
12 Mr. Chairman?
13 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yes.
14 **MR. GAVIN:** I continue to be appreciative of
15 the school being willing to sit down with the
16 Authority on these matters. I do think we have a
17 sense of urgency to get things straightened out.
18 So I would request that the school be
19 prepared to bring its improvement plan with specific
20 goals for how it's going to reach those objectives,
21 or how it's going to enter into the other structure
22 by the next meeting so that we're in a position to
23 act before -- this board is in a position to act
24 before the end of this fiscal year. Otherwise, we're
25 going to be coming back to talk about other probably

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1 unpleasant things.
2 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Patrick, I don't understand
3 what that means. What are you suggesting?
4 **MR. GAVIN:** We need a plan of improvement.
5 That was the -- that is the expectation. There needs
6 to be specific goals that shows how this school is
7 going to either achieve the 60 percent graduation
8 rate, or how it is going to move into a different
9 category of school. We need clarity on this. We
10 cannot be sitting here waiting another year. There
11 needs to be a real plan that shows how this is going
12 to happen.
13 Because right now what we're doing, we're
14 dithering. We have an obligation to make sure that
15 our schools meet certain standards, or that there is
16 a real plan in place to make that happen.
17 And right now, this was a very useful
18 conversation, and I'm very appreciative of the
19 school's work on this. I think that the school is
20 actually a lot closer to resolving some of these
21 issues that may be apparent. But it just requires
22 making some decisions and being willing to draw a
23 line in the sand and say, this is what we're going to
24 do.
25 I would request that the school be in a

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1 position, and if June is too early, then by the July
2 meeting, that there be very clear plans presented by
3 staff that you're okay with so that we can be in a
4 position to perform without having to do closure,
5 which is what we want.
6 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** I thought we just did. We
7 talked about what we were going to do in this next
8 year, and we'd be a blended campus two years from
9 now. I'm not clear where this -- this was not
10 brought up before.
11 **MR. GAVIN:** I think the question is how are
12 you going to get to 60 percent. Nothing we've seen
13 here says that you're going to get to 60 percent.
14 You've essentially told us you're going to continue
15 to hover in the 50s.
16 That is an issue unless something changes.
17 I very much want you to continue to operate, but I'm
18 greatly concerned that we're going to be in the same
19 place next December.
20 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** I think like the "may" in
21 that statement probably needs to be a factor. "May"
22 be issued a notice of closure. When I'm sitting here
23 saying 48 percent of my students can graduate this
24 year based on their levels of credit deficiency,
25 what -- and we're getting higher than that.

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1 I don't quite know how to make a plan for
2 80 percent of unknowns in the next two years. I
3 mean, we know that we are going to educate them. Our
4 goals are to get them at least two credits less
5 deficient each year. That's our goal. And so that
6 they're getting 8, 9 credits every year I think is a
7 reasonable goal. Keeping them longer. Making sure
8 they come back and get their high school diploma.
9 You're wanting to tie credit-deficient
10 students to the same standards as students that are
11 on a higher academic track.
12 **MR. GAVIN:** Ms. Tondryk, let me be a hundred
13 percent crystal clear. I don't intend to tie our
14 students to anything. I intend to tie you as the
15 adult who is responsible for the outcome of those
16 students. And if you can't do the job, well, find
17 somebody else that can. Period.
18 **TAMBRE TONDRYK:** Oh, I can do it. It's
19 fine, though.
20 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** There's no other
21 action, right, before the board and we withdrew?
22 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Correct.
23 All right. We will move on to agenda item
24 number 5. (Inaudible) Nevada Connections Academy.
25 (Inaudible). I know there are several people from

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1 the school who will want to come to present.
2 **MS. MACKEDON:** I think they want to start up
3 here in the north. If that's okay with you.
4 **MS. JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Good afternoon,
5 everybody. I'm not normally the type of person who
6 uses a script, but I just want to be able to be a
7 little bit more on point and being sensitive of time
8 as well.
9 You should have all received a graduation
10 rate improvement plan from me. Yes, I'm Jessica
11 Sanchez. I'm the Connections Academy Board of
12 Directors president. And I'm an assistant professor
13 in the College of Education at the University of
14 Nevada Reno in our educational leadership program.
15 So as I mentioned, you should have received
16 that graduation rate improvement plan, and hopefully
17 you had an opportunity to review that. It is a
18 creation of hundreds of hours of some of our
19 individuals, our school leaders, our school boards,
20 Connections education. And we benefitted also. I
21 just want to thank you for the meetings that we had
22 with Director Patrick Gavin, and yesterday as well
23 with Chairman Johnson.
24 So thank you for your time and being able to
25 provide us with feedback and make this as robust as

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1 it is, and as specific as it is at this point. As
2 you might remember from the last time I spoke with
3 all of you, my professional background is in
4 educational leadership, and continued school
5 improvement, and I know that raising achievement in
6 our schools is always a challenge. And it's not
7 something that's easy, but it's a target that we all
8 want to have.
9 And the term "continuous" is definitely a
10 key part to that, but it does take the same efforts.
11 And hopefully you'll be able to see that that's what
12 you have in front of you. And even though there's no
13 silver bullet, you have a detailed plan with what we
14 plan to do. And in this plan, it does reflect the
15 reality that we see with Connections Academy, our
16 students and their families. It lays out a variety
17 of initiatives. It's implemented over multiple
18 years, and we are confident that we'll be able to see
19 the success we are able to achieve.
20 On Tuesday our board met and approved the
21 plan, so it will be fully implemented at this point.
22 And I want to just be able to highlight that some of
23 the areas that are addressed in here, are the early
24 systemic interventions, and you have a breakdown of
25 what that means as well as enhanced investment in our

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1 credit recovery program, summer school program
2 creation, more efforts that are intensified to really
3 individualize (inaudible) for our students, where
4 students are going when they do withdraw. To, again,
5 easily verify that piece for the graduation date, and
6 then general validation of our student body are
7 characteristics which once more contribute to the
8 cohort rate.

9 So you'll see that all these trends in the
10 graduation rate, it truly is an improvement plan for
11 that effort, and have it be something that is
12 assessed and evaluated through what you were
13 mentioning, through formative means so that we can
14 obtain that summative full outcome that we're seeking
15 in the graduation rate.

16 So this is going to implemented by our
17 school leaders, and our board will be sure to follow
18 it, monitor it, and see that continuous process as it
19 does go underway, and along with our education
20 partner with Connections Education.

21 Part of that you'll see that there is some
22 information about our board in general. So as Nevada
23 Connections Academy is proud to be able to work with
24 these greatly qualified individuals, I just want to
25 just highlight them a little bit, as well. It's on

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1 our website, and you have it in the document.

2 But just some brief things about our board
3 members. So as I mentioned, my background has been
4 in education, right now in the College of Education
5 for Educational Leadership. So this is part of what
6 I do. You talked about statistical significance.
7 These are things that I do with the researchers
8 regularly, whether it's been an out-of-state
9 (inaudible) grant or whether its school, high school
10 and consulting, and things like that.

11 But we also have Dr. Scott Harrington. He's
12 our vice-president of our board. And he's worked
13 with individuals with disabilities since 1990. So he
14 often uses that lens in the way that we look at
15 students and how to assess their fits and their
16 needs.

17 He has a doctorate in psychology from the
18 University of Nevada, Reno, and he founded the first
19 elementary charter school in Nevada, Sierra Nevada
20 Academy, and was a former math teacher.

21 Kelly McGlenn, she's a CPA and has over 14
22 years of experience with us. She's currently
23 president of her own company, specializing in tax
24 preparation, bookkeeping services. She became with
25 involved with Connections in 2011 searching for an

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1 alternative type of public education for her then
2 8-year-old daughter, and has been with our board
3 since 2013, and very fittingly is our board
4 treasurer.

5 Marissa Delgado received -- she earned her
6 Master's degree in (inaudible) leadership from the
7 University of Cincinnati. She holds her
8 administrative certification within our state right
9 now. And she's a math department chair at Bishop
10 Gorman High School, and the chair of teaching and
11 learning leadership committee, which through
12 accreditation, through WCEA. And Marissa has been
13 part of Connections since 2013, the end of 2013. So
14 really, the end of her second year on our board.

15 Mindi Dagerman, she has an MBA from the
16 University of Nevada, Reno, and has a mechanical
17 engineering professional license here in our state.
18 She's the engineering supervisor design at Southwest
19 Gas for our Northern Nevada division. And Mindi's
20 been on our board since 2008. So you get the benefit
21 of some of that variation in terms of service,
22 flexibility, background diversity.

23 For Tessa Rivera, she has her Master's
24 degree in educational counseling from San Jose State
25 University, and she's the dean of students at Bishop

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1 Gorman, and she's pursuing her doctorate at North
2 Central University. She's on our board, one of the
3 more recent ones from 2015, along with Gene Stewart,
4 who joined our board in 2015.

5 He has over three decades of experience on
6 the entrepreneur/civic leader side. He has his MSB
7 in comparative psychology from the University of
8 California. He founded multiple companies in fields
9 as diverse as real estate development to
10 biotechnology. He served on the board for our Center
11 Street mission, helping homeless to regain their
12 foothold in life. He's been with us since 2013, and
13 he's also fairly new to our board.

14 And the reason I'm sharing this piece to the
15 document that you have in front of you, I want you to
16 be able to see that we have these incredibly talented
17 individuals serving on our board, holding our leaders
18 accountable. I really could not seek volunteer work
19 from more relevant, qualified, professional,
20 experienced individuals. They've been a joy to work
21 with, and you'll be able to see that in this
22 document. It reflects their efforts to work together
23 and be collaborative, and work with you as well.

24 So I'm really very pleased about the
25 progress that we have made during the 2016 school

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1 year, and you'll hear more about that and the efforts
2 being made to improve graduation rates.
3 Overall, its of course our interventions,
4 that we have the programs that are making a
5 difference in our success rate, and we have actions
6 that are outlined and in fact will continue to
7 accelerate. And we will relate that to that
8 continuous improvement goal that we have.
9 So with that opportunity, I'd really like
10 Steve, our principal, to take the lead and guide you
11 through some of the more specific efforts detailed in
12 the plan.
13 And I thank you for your time, and again,
14 thank you to Patrick and Chairman Johnson for giving
15 me the opportunity to have the one-on-one contact
16 with you. As I said when I got off the call with
17 Chairman Johnson yesterday, I said, I know who I'm
18 talking with, and it's really nice to know who's on
19 the other side. So thank you for your time.
20 **STEVE MOLINE:** Thank you. Steve Moline, for
21 the record, school leader at the Nevada Connections
22 Academy. I want to walk through some of the specific
23 pieces of the graduation rate proven plan that you
24 received earlier this week.
25 I want to, first of all, express my

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1 gratitude to my board of directors (inaudible), of
2 not only vetting this plan, but supporting our
3 development of it. This plan that you have in front
4 of you that you received is the first step working
5 with the Charter School Authority staff. It
6 acknowledges the population that we serve and the
7 challenges that they bring, those students bring to
8 us.
9 We're not here to make excuses. I'm not
10 going to go through every bit of data and talk about
11 our population. We really want to look forward. We
12 want to look at what we can do to improve our cohort
13 graduation rate.
14 There is a lot to be said for formative
15 measures and alternative measures. We know that
16 we're here because of our cohort graduation rate.
17 We've had feedback -- we've gotten feedback from
18 Authority staff. We look forward to continued
19 feedback. The plan that you see in front of you is
20 the result of the work of many people, and again,
21 that's a first step, and we know it's going to get us
22 where we want to be.
23 So I hope you've had the time to review it
24 thoroughly, and we of course welcome your questions
25 and feedback both today and ongoing.

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1 So a couple of highlights. As an online
2 school, our program is very much individualized just
3 by the nature of being an online program. What we're
4 doing now with our -- especially our credit-deficient
5 students to increase our graduation rate, we're
6 targeting and individualizing our program even more.
7 Students are, when they enroll with us,
8 identified based on their social and emotional needs,
9 their level of credit deficiencies, and they're given
10 the right supports, the right interventions and the
11 right coursework to help get them back on track and
12 graduate on time.
13 We do acknowledge that we have a high
14 transiency rate, which is described in this plan.
15 And without going into greater depth now, what we
16 want to do with that, we want to do a better job of
17 knowing where kids go when they leave us, but also
18 why they come to us. That goes along with
19 (inaudible) of helping meet their needs when they
20 come to the door.
21 Our group of students, this year's cohorts
22 that are going to be graduating, we literally go
23 student-by-student to know their story, their
24 situation. They have contact with their advisor,
25 their counselor, their homeroom teacher, and they

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1 know that the adults at our school care about them.
2 We know that the foundation for any level
3 for academic success is the relationship that
4 students build with adults in their life.
5 So in addition to validating their data
6 internally, tracking their kids very carefully,
7 tailoring their programs to them and ensuring that we
8 know when they withdraw where they go, tracking
9 them -- because that affects our cohort rate to a
10 great degree -- we're also in the process of working
11 with the Charter Authority and identifying a
12 third-party agency or individual to validate the
13 claims that we make, validate the data that we're
14 using, and not only that, but to take that feedback,
15 take that information and act upon it.
16 We know that a lot of our students are
17 disengaged in the school process. That is a very
18 difficult statistic to quantify. But we also know
19 that reengaging them and again, focusing on those
20 relationships, will result in the data that we want
21 to see and increase our cohort rate.
22 Academically we've piloted a credit recovery
23 program. The pilot has shown great success. We're
24 expanding it. We have expanded it, and continue to
25 do so. It's not just online coursework, it's

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1 interaction with highly qualified, highly motivated
2 teachers, who get support and development in working
3 with this credit-deficient population and helping
4 them reengage in school.
5 Our board has also made a significant
6 commitment to summer school programs. We know that
7 many students will not be able to finish their school
8 by spring just by nature of the fact that they come
9 in so late. The summer school is a great opportunity
10 for them to get caught up and to continue the
11 relationships they've built with staff.
12 A couple other things that we're really --
13 not just proud, but want to expand -- we've piloted a
14 mentoring program for students that are behind in
15 credits and struggling. They get much more targeted
16 specific and regular contacts with adults in a
17 one-to-one fashion, and that one-to-one mentoring
18 relationship for a lot of students, coupled with the
19 fact that they're being monitored by multiple adults
20 and getting the academic supports they need, we're
21 confident that's going to lead to an increase in our
22 cohort graduation rate and the overall success of our
23 school.
24 I'd like to introduce my colleague, Dr.
25 Brian Rossman, to talk some more about our program.

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1 **BRIAN ROSSMAN:** Mr. Chair, members of the
2 board, Dr. Brian Rossman with Nevada Connections
3 Academy. I think would I'd like to speak to briefly
4 are some of the curricular changes and programs that
5 are part of our overall improvement plan.
6 One of them, before I begin -- and I will
7 keep this brief -- one of the comments made earlier
8 was, you know, for schools who have not reached
9 certain levels in grad rate, for example, how do you
10 as a governing body have confidence that the folks in
11 charge of those schools are able to provide you with
12 an improvement plan that will lead you to the points
13 where you're looking.
14 Fortunately in working with schools
15 supported by Connections, there's been an opportunity
16 to have several pilots over the last year. And many
17 of those pilots deemed successful will be implemented
18 as part of this plan in Nevada. So certainly
19 speaking to pilots that have been successful in other
20 schools, perhaps in other states. And I want to
21 outline some of those here.
22 For example, the Freshman Focus program on
23 page 15 of the plan. This was piloted in a couple of
24 other schools supported by Connections during this
25 current school year. And it resulted in a positive

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1 difference in ninth grade promotion rates, which
2 obviously is one of the first steps in long-term
3 helping with the success of overall cohort grad rate.
4 A universal course has already been planned
5 for Nevada Connections Academy for the 2016-2017
6 school year. And basically -- and obviously you have
7 more information in the plan -- this orients students
8 to the resources available. Obviously many students
9 are coming in to an online environment for the first
10 time. That type of orientation already exists in all
11 Connections supported schools. However, to provide
12 something like this specifically for students who are
13 our cohort or perhaps at risk coming in to kind of
14 help them reengage, we feel it's important. It's
15 proven successful in other schools. We look forward
16 to having that same success in Nevada.
17 It introduces also students who have shown
18 that they need interventions at the middle school
19 level to have more success for truly high school
20 coursework which (inaudible) a challenge. It's a
21 whole new set of intensity in coursework material.
22 The idea of having a senior success program
23 which was based on the success of the Freshman Focus
24 program, a version of this kind of orientation or
25 reorientation, if you will, for seniors who have

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1 fallen behind. You know, it's possible that students
2 weren't caught in the Freshman Focus. They weren't
3 recognized as students that were behind cohorts in
4 the first couple of years of high school, or that
5 have come into Nevada Connections Academy as juniors
6 or seniors. This allows them to be provided with
7 those kind of resources and issues to assist them in
8 graduating on time.
9 In addition, a program called Every Student
10 Succeeds has proven successful in other schools that
11 Connections supports. Again, to support all cohort
12 students, encouraging accountability and
13 participation. This is not grade level specific.
14 This is available to all students at the high school
15 level. And what it entails is face-to-face and
16 virtual synchronous instructional sessions, which
17 allows the school to really customize each individual
18 student to keep them on track.
19 There is staff that is dedicated solely to
20 working with these cohort students, and there in fact
21 is a lower staff-student ratio to support this
22 initiative with these students.
23 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chair, I have a
24 question.
25 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yes, Member Conaboy.

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1 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Is it Dr. Garza?
2 You said a couple of times already, and it's
3 a question I asked for cohorts, as well, that these,
4 what's called interventions, have been successful
5 elsewhere. Can you tell us a little bit about how
6 that success has been measured?
7 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Absolutely.
8 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Thank you.
9 **TIBERIO GARZA:** For example, I've had the
10 opportunity -- and I'll share a little bit more about
11 my position -- I'm actually formerly the principal of
12 the Arizona Connections Academy five years ago. So
13 you heard earlier mention of the Arizona framework.
14 And I was fortunate, and with all respect, I've seen
15 this before. I saw it five years ago in Arizona
16 where the governing body, that charter board was not
17 sure -- obviously in Arizona there are a lot more
18 charter schools than there are in Nevada. And the
19 fear was that by having discussions about grad rate,
20 you would perhaps create grad mills where students
21 are suddenly becoming caught up in two weeks, you
22 know?
23 So the challenge is to still be able to
24 create quality educational experiences, that will
25 still allow students who are behind to get caught up.

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1 I think Arizona has ultimately found that balance,
2 and they've created a framework which is fair and not
3 just comparing -- because it certainly isn't
4 apples-to-apples.
5 So at my current position as director of
6 schools, I oversee the Connections supported schools
7 in the southwest. And so I've had the opportunity to
8 work, for example, the Freshman Focus program was one
9 that was implemented in Oregon during this school
10 year. And this is already -- you know, we're at that
11 time of the school year where students are getting
12 promoted from 9th grade to 10th grade, and some are
13 being held back.
14 And utilizing that same subset of students
15 from last year to this year, there's been
16 considerable improvement -- and I apologize for my
17 voice. Travel has gotten to me. There's been
18 considerable success in terms of student promotion
19 going from 9th grade to 10th grade and based on
20 credit approval.
21 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Wahl?
22 **MEMBER WAHL:** Do you know what the grad rate
23 was in the Arizona school?
24 **TIBERIO GARZA:** In the Arizona school, for a
25 particular year, or -- you know, prior to the new

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1 framework -- again, I don't want to give you numbers
2 that I don't have in front of me. We can certainly
3 get that information.
4 **MEMBER WAHL:** Should we listen to you?
5 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Pardon?
6 **MEMBER WAHL:** Was the school you were a part
7 of, was it a high quality school in Arizona?
8 **TIBERIO GARZA:** Yes. It was
9 considered -- well, again, you can say I'm slightly
10 biased, but I'll tell you that during accreditations,
11 it was called the golden standard (inaudible) of
12 education in the state of Arizona. And considering
13 there's 80 some programs, and I consider Vanstead
14 (phonetic) to be experts in making that decision.
15 And in fact, Arizona Connections Academy was
16 sort of the leader in working through that framework.
17 And they're currently a state (inaudible). So I
18 think that qualifies. So to get back to the question
19 again. It's looking at as much trends as you can
20 year over year. Looking at the same level of states.
21 And certainly I think, especially in the online
22 virtual world, we're often accused of using students
23 as labs, petri dishes, that we throw things against
24 the wall and see what sticks. I'd like to believe,
25 especially here in Nevada, we're trying to take a

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1 very targeted effort to make sure that we're
2 utilizing programs that have proven to be successful,
3 and not just simply throw them at students as in
4 often cases.
5 This is additional work. This is for
6 teachers as well. So if you utilize programs that
7 have proven successful in other places, so that
8 there's at least a greater possibility that they'll
9 be successful here in Nevada.
10 **MS. MACKEDON:** Chair Johnson, can I ask a
11 follow-up related to that?
12 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yes, please.
13 **MS. MACKEDON:** So I just want to -- the
14 answer doesn't matter. I'm just trying to educate
15 myself. So is how it works with Connections like --
16 well, first of all, this report is really well done.
17 And in fact, it's very easy to read. It's really
18 well done. It's very well organized, etcetera.
19 I have all the notes written down for all
20 the different initiatives, like the Freshman Focus
21 and the Every Student Succeeds. Is how it works with
22 Connections is they kind of have a menu of, you know,
23 intervention strategies, et cetera, and then the
24 local school kind of looks at that and say, okay,
25 this one would meet our needs, this one would meet or

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1 needs, and this one would meet our needs?
2 **TIBERIO GARZA:** I don't know that I would
3 necessarily call them (inaudible). I know that our
4 school leaders and our leadership teams are part of
5 the professional communities. And that typically
6 when schools, whether it be a traditional brick and
7 mortar or virtual, working PLCs, one of the main
8 steps, you're obviously trying to look at common
9 data.
10 But then ultimately, actually, one of the
11 main steps that success solution tree will tell you
12 about a PLC is that you then go out and seek out best
13 practices. And I think unfortunately the online
14 virtual community is realizing it isn't as easy as
15 seeking out traditional districts that have existed
16 for years, that you do very well in a particular
17 area.
18 So oftentimes someone like Steve would seek
19 out partner schools that are doing particularly well
20 in an area. And it may be anywhere around the
21 country. Maybe someone he's working with in that
22 professional learning community where they'll reach
23 out to him. Nevada Connections Academy actually does
24 a really good job of their testing benchmarks
25 throughout the year and getting students to

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1 participate in those.
2 So if California is struggling with that,
3 they may reach out and say, what strategies are you
4 using that are working for your students. This is
5 one where obviously (inaudible) and all those pieces
6 connected to it, he does have a group of -- I
7 wouldn't call it a menu. I would call it colleagues
8 that he can reach out to, and his AP's can reach out
9 to, and say, You're doing really well in this. What
10 are you doing well that we can learn from.
11 **MR. GAVIN:** Can you clarify one thing for
12 me, sir? So you mentioned that Arizona has a
13 different framework for the virtual school
14 accountability. So is there a different methodology
15 for calculating graduation rate, then, for virtual
16 schools? I'm not quite clear. There is state
17 reporting grad rate for a four-year cohort rate, for
18 Arizona Connections which is about on par with what
19 Nevada Connections has done. So I'm curious, how is
20 that done? What is incorporated in that?
21 **TIBERIO GARZA:** I want to be very careful
22 because I also have sort of a standing rule with
23 Connections that when you've been a school leader in
24 the state, you do not then support them. So taking
25 that from their perspective.

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1 So although I live in Arizona, I have not
2 been supporting them (inaudible). But I will say
3 that there is a framework there that takes into
4 consideration that there is a different population
5 coming into certain schools (inaudible), and I'm
6 concerned it's something that can be provided to the
7 members of this board as well.
8 But I will say it is a model that has been
9 shared by several states who seem to be having these
10 types of discussions.
11 **MEMBER McCORD:** Member McCord. Let me just
12 ask you a couple questions real quick. And it
13 relates to your paper. And it goes on, (inaudible)
14 on page 3 it discusses the transiency rates. I
15 started to say, Oh, here we go again. And then I
16 looked at the following paragraph, which talks about
17 what I'm going to do, if you would, to do follow-up.
18 I'd really like to congratulate you on that.
19 That's an element we don't see very often. You also
20 on that same page -- and you mentioned it already, or
21 maybe your predecessor, the previous speaker
22 mentioned it, on the external data evaluation. And
23 you said you've worked with the authority staff on
24 trying to designate. Have you identified that
25 evaluator?

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1 **TIBERIO GARZA:** We're still in -- Director
2 Gavin and I have had several conversations. We're in
3 the process of identifying, first of all, the scope
4 of what we want to have done, and then second of all,
5 we'll pursue potential agencies to do that.
6 **MEMBER McCORD:** Okay. Let me -- that really
7 brings the point to serve as the scope. Can you
8 share the scope of how you're going to do this
9 external -- the specifications of how you're going to
10 do external data evaluation? In generalities, I'm
11 asking you, what, in fact, do you mean by that?
12 **TOBERIO GARZA:** I think it came up at one of
13 the last meetings because we presented a lot of data
14 that's not readily available on the campus.
15 **MEMBER McCORD:** What you recall?
16 **TIBERIO GARZA:** So whatever agency or
17 individual we end up working with will define some of
18 the data points that we're using, make sure that the
19 claims that we're making about number of
20 credit-deficient students, withdrawal rates,
21 transiency rates are, in fact, verifiable and check
22 them against each other.
23 And I think -- that's very broad, but I
24 think in our ongoing conversations we're going to
25 drill down to more specifics, but we want to be as

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1 comprehensive as possible, hoping that we'll get
2 items (inaudible) that we can then determine the
3 action, what are the processes and see what we can
4 improve on.
5 **MEMBER McCORD:** It gives me a sense in
6 reminding me about the data that you presented
7 earlier. One more just quick question, and that is
8 the section on summer school starting on page 5. Is
9 that more of the same? I don't mean that to be
10 offensive. But is that more of the same, or is there
11 a difference in the design of the instructional
12 program during summer school?
13 I guess I didn't get it out of here, but
14 I've got a hint that there was something different
15 about this. I just didn't understand. Can you
16 enlighten me?
17 **TIBERIO GARA:** Yeah, I'd be happy to.
18 Summer school, we use -- we have used various vendors
19 for the courses. This particular summer we'll be
20 using grad points, and there will be direct contact
21 between competent teachers and the students that are
22 in summer school. That has not always been the case
23 in all of our -- and it still isn't for some of the
24 enrichment-type programs.
25 But we will have full-time teachers here in

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1 Nevada supporting the grad point credit recovery
2 initiative, as well as counseling staff to really
3 keep tabs on kids, make sure that regular contact is
4 going on, and that targeted synchronous support is
5 given to students so there's accountability, and they
6 will not only accumulate credits, but hopefully get
7 back on track to being our cohort.
8 **MR. GAVIN:** Madam Recorder, I would note in
9 my conversations with Connections, a couple of things
10 have come up with regard to that evaluation. One key
11 thing we've actually shared was there was some
12 (inaudible). Transcript audits, for example, what
13 the students credit load, accumulation looks like.
14 What their original year of graduation was on their
15 sending school transcript, all those things, and then
16 look at these other issues related to whether they
17 keep on track or not.
18 So being able to really just verify those
19 kind of key data points. When did the kid enter.
20 When did the kid exist. What did their real credits
21 look like.
22 Because so much of this stuff right now is
23 still on paper. As you're well aware, we don't have
24 state editions set up to allow for easy transitions
25 back and forth for the transcript and whatnot. At

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1 some point that may be updated by technology, but
2 we're not there yet. Even in the case where
3 technology is in play, I think there still going to
4 be some need to go ahead and verify and validate the
5 data to make sure that key stroke errors (inaudible)
6 deliberate and number of changes didn't happen.
7 **MEMBER McCORD:** I congratulate the school
8 for putting this in there. It speaks to the
9 integrity of the data collection, but it does one
10 other thing. It actually defines the actionable
11 data. It starts to get there. What did you with
12 what you have? And it says you have a commitment to
13 that. That's commendable. You're never going to get
14 your arms around it unless you have a firm grip on
15 the data.
16 Having said that, I always have to announce
17 the fact that I'm a member of the board of directors
18 invested in the largest research laboratory in the --
19 **MR. GAVIN:** Universe.
20 **MEMBER McCORD:** -- in the country, and I am
21 not advocating a contract with them. And I know what
22 you're thinking, and (inaudible).
23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible) actually,
24 that question about grad point, I think will make my
25 presentation shorter. The one thing I'll mention is

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1 you will hear various schools and school districts
2 utilizing grad point. I think it's very -- it's
3 become very popular because it still is a
4 comprehensive grad rate recovery program. It isn't
5 viewed as something that might be used as a credit
6 mill type school. It is based on mastery, which
7 allows students to move through and focus on areas in
8 which they've struggled and to relearn it and have it
9 retaught.
10 I think one of the things -- I won't say
11 it's unique about the way Nevada Connections Academy
12 is handling this as this whole-world invention, is
13 that it's going -- a lot of times students are placed
14 into grad point courses, and it's just not
15 (inaudible) by themselves. So the fact that this is
16 also going to be monitored not only by actual
17 teachers in realtime, but Nevada certified teachers
18 along with counselors. That the board has
19 supported -- committed to and financially supported,
20 I think is important.
21 The other piece that I personally in my
22 experience working with the students, with the grad
23 point, which I think the way that grad point is set
24 up, it understands that the students that are taking
25 courses within its framework were unsuccessful in

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1 their first attempt, and sometimes their second and
2 third attempt at a particular course. And so it
3 works with them.

4 There's pretests. It learns what they need
5 to master, what they need to relearn, and then allows
6 them to focus on those areas where some credit
7 recovery starts from day one and makes them go
8 through even items that they already know. It can
9 make it for a student that's disengaged boring very
10 quickly.

11 Where this focuses purely on the areas that
12 they've shown in the past that they've struggled, to
13 let them focus on those areas.

14 And then the last piece that I'll share is
15 obviously Nevada Connections Academy has a group of
16 teachers, those who are dedicated to the programs
17 that I mentioned here that are particularly for
18 students who are off cohort. But also, obviously
19 these students are being taught by the entire staff,
20 such as the high school, and the (inaudible) of the
21 school.

22 And that requires a good amount of
23 professional development to make sure that it's a
24 message that's being heard from every teacher in
25 every class for all students. A student that is on

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1 cohort today can very easily fall off, and oftentimes
2 they do it at the most inopportune time for anyone.
3 It's not particularly about them.

4 So it's important that teachers, just like
5 the old initiatives of writing across the curriculum,
6 but we wanted students to write in every class. You
7 learn how to write, and we all remember that. It has
8 benefits, but it's also important to constantly
9 remind students of the importance of staying in the
10 cohort in their courses. And it's focusing, working
11 with teachers on reteaching and relearning
12 strategies, because so many times teachers say, this
13 is the way I teach this course. The student either
14 gets it the first time or they don't. And it's
15 oftentimes changing their mind-set to assisting
16 students and allowing them back to back to their
17 given area, and that moving on until you're sure that
18 each student has been provided with those
19 opportunities.

20 At that point, those are sort of the
21 programs and curriculum changes that support this
22 improvement plan. I'm certainly answer any
23 questions, and thank you for your time.

24 **SCOTT HARRINGTON:** My name is Dr. Scott
25 Harrington, and I am a vice-president for Nevada

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1 Connections, and I've been involved in the charter
2 school movement since 1997 when Senator Washington
3 first proposed it, and was an employee and board
4 member for Sierra Nevada Academy, the first charter
5 school, elementary charter school in the state.

6 And I have ten years of working at UNR in
7 the college of education, teaching special education
8 teachers and working at the Nevada Center for
9 Excellence and Disability. And I've been working at
10 the (inaudible) Center for Excellence in
11 Disabilities, and I've been working with persons with
12 disabilities for the last 26 years, with serious
13 maladies.

14 And if you don't mind, I want to make sure
15 that I read this accurately. (Inaudible) so I'm
16 going to read from my notes, and then I wrote down a
17 few.

18 So the one thing I want to reiterate from
19 (inaudible) earlier presentation is that our board is
20 volunteer. So we're all there on our own time to
21 support the school and the students and the families
22 that go there. As a board we're committed to
23 providing and improving the school's graduation rate.
24 There's a context that must be accounted for because
25 the current graduation rate methodology only shares

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1 part of the realty at Nevada Connections Academy.
2 And as educators, we should be seeking a complete
3 picture and all of the data to make an informed
4 decision.

5 I've worked with many non-traditional
6 at-risk students in my educational career, and we
7 need to validate and recognize that nontraditional
8 paths also have value. Education in whatever form is
9 valuable, and we need to recognize that if our school
10 creates opportunities for continued learning and
11 future economic and post-secondary success, then
12 persisting in learning should be credited to the
13 school.

14 We should also need to value that every
15 student has a unique learning path. It's just that
16 some students may graduate early from high school in
17 two or three schools, there are other students that
18 may take six or seven years. And in any scenario,
19 what we should want as educators is our students to
20 earn a credential that has prepared them to move
21 forward to college and career aspirations.

22 I encourage you to review the plan in depth,
23 and it sounds like you have. But when doing so,
24 please consider the context of the population served
25 by our school. It's statistically calculated to

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1 dramatically change the result under ESSA, and the
2 graduation rate calculation should change.
3 Our graduation would increase by 12 percent,
4 12 percentage points in 2015 if students were
5 enrolled in 75 percent or more of the school year.
6 The graduation would also change dramatically if we
7 improve -- sorry, remove students who enroll for a
8 fifth year going to adult ed or enter a GE program
9 for the cohort calculation. And the graduation rate
10 for NCA would be above the 60 percent threshold at
11 63.3 percent for 2015.
12 Finally if we look at continuous
13 improvement -- I'm sorry -- continuing enrollment for
14 our graduation rate would be 79 percent for students
15 who enter into the ninth grade and stay all four
16 years in the 2013 and 2014 graduation cohort. We are
17 doing a good job with students who consistently stay
18 with us.
19 In closing, I would like to focus on the
20 future. Each board member takes their
21 responsibilities very seriously. As a board, we
22 believe in continuing this improvement, which
23 includes improving the graduation rate. And our plan
24 for you today proposes a path for the future. We are
25 confident that we have developed a reasonable and

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1 strategic plan that will achieve this goal. You've
2 heard from Steve and Brian with the details of
3 specific strategies and supports and interventions to
4 increase the graduation report.
5 You've heard from Dr. Sanchez and myself on
6 how competent and involved the school board is in
7 operating this school and holding our employees
8 accountable for the results. And we know you, as the
9 school's authorizer, will in turn hold the NCA board
10 accountable for improvement.
11 We have already seen some indicators of
12 success which is outlined in appendix C. There are
13 some successes that we are seeing in the data for the
14 2016 cohort. We anticipate there will be some
15 improvement in the graduation rate due to efforts
16 that began many months ago leading up to the start of
17 the current school year.
18 The percentage of anticipated graduates for
19 2016 that enter behind in credits is 14.2 percent
20 compared to last year's 10.1 percent. Even so, the 4
21 percent increase in students entering behind in
22 credits may anticipate that our graduation rate will
23 increase for this year as a result of the efforts
24 that we put into place.
25 We believe that this is an indication that

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1 NCA is doing a better job in helping students that
2 enter credit-deficient to graduate on time. The
3 percentage of students who enroll with two or more
4 credits behind and who enroll with six or more
5 credits behind will also be significantly higher in
6 2016 despite having a significantly more challenging
7 population of students this year affecting
8 graduation, shows an increase in indication of the
9 stats taken to improve the graduation rate are
10 showing results.
11 Thank you for the opportunity to engage in
12 this conversation today. As a board we welcome you
13 to visit our school and continue this conversation
14 and show the progress being made to improve our
15 schools graduation rate. After today's discussion
16 and listening to the questions that you guys had
17 asked, that the board have asked, I am very confident
18 and impressed with the information that you tried to
19 get from us. The formative versus summative
20 evaluation I think is a very good point and will help
21 determine good measure of progress.
22 Another thing that I wrote down, the pattern
23 in sending and receiving schools. If there could be
24 a little check box or something when someone exists
25 schools to where they go, then there would be a

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1 better way of tracking where the students are coming
2 from and going to.
3 Then the last thing we mentioned are the
4 measures of fidelity. So we have in place a way to
5 look at the records to make sure that fidelity is
6 being met.
7 There's one number I wanted to throw out
8 very fast, and Steve didn't mention it, is over the
9 years, over the last six years that I've been on the
10 board, we've looked at summer school as an
11 opportunity for us to get these students caught up.
12 And the amount of money that we have approved for the
13 summer school has increased each summer of 268,000
14 this year, just for summer school. So we could pay
15 for the teachers to help remediate students to help
16 get them to graduate.
17 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I just had a question. I
18 don't think I heard. Maybe you did discuss it and I
19 missed it. What is the projected graduation rate for
20 this year, and then what do you -- you know, if you
21 implement this really stellar plan that I think we've
22 all been impressed by, what do you expect that rate
23 to be in the coming year?
24 **STEVE:** Not to be evasive -- Steve Wirline
25 (phonetic) for the record. We anticipate at least a

1 10 percent increase this year and significant
2 increases moving forward. Given that just this year
3 we saw an increase in the number of credit-deficient
4 kids coming in, I think would be -- wouldn't be
5 responsible to say we will have an exact percentage,
6 an exact improvement for a year or two years. Our
7 goal is to go well beyond 10 percent. We're being
8 conservative with that, just in the improvement this
9 year.

10 But with the influx of kids that are coming
11 in late that are still enrolling in April and May
12 that are significantly behind, that's going to have
13 an impact on our overall graduation rate.

14 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Steve, what was it based,
15 though, on?

16 **STEVE:** We were -- last year I believe our
17 cohort was 36.7 percent. But we're anticipating a
18 substantial increase over that this year. Just based
19 on interventions so far.

20 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member McCord?

21 **MEMBER McCORD:** Let me just ask you
22 specifically; are you talking -- that 36, are you
23 talking about getting to 46, or are you getting to
24 40?

25 **STEVE:** We're starting at 40 -- I'm sorry,

1 but we also want to look at credit approval rate. If
2 a students enters in 11th grade, how many credits do
3 they accrue? What success do they have in our
4 program? Do they graduate from us, and that kind of
5 goes back to the data piece as well. Why are
6 students coming to us, where are they coming from and
7 if they leave, where are they going.

8 What's the success that we're having with
9 kids while they've been with us. We have seen this
10 year a decrease in our during-the-school-year
11 withdrawal rate, which is good, but we want to make
12 sure that when kids are with us, they are engaged.
13 They are developing relationships with the teachers,
14 and most importantly, of course, the results have
15 been (inaudible).

16 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I think we're starting to
17 go down a path here, which is where I wanted to go.
18 A number of concerns and issues.

19 This is a great narrative description of
20 what you intend to do problematically, and some of it
21 is operational. I don't see in here -- this goes
22 back to our conversation with Beacon. I don't see
23 measurable metrics in here. You just referenced some
24 of the (inaudible) about things that will be
25 important to you and will be benchmarks to you. But

1 46.7 percent, yes. Sorry.

2 **MS. MACKEDON:** Does the board have a goal in
3 mind, like by, you know, such and such a year we will
4 breach that 60 percent mark? Do they have a target
5 in mind?

6 **STEVE:** We have not spoken about a specific
7 target in mind. I will note to the board that that
8 is something that we should discuss. I believe
9 that -- and this is where I agree with Patrick --
10 that a 60 percent rate is too low. I think we can do
11 better than that. I think that is 60 percent. That
12 is something that we need to be -- could be looking
13 at. And pardon my metaphors here. I thought of a
14 couple of them.

15 One is like the forest with the trees. With
16 a 60 percent graduation rate, you're looking at one
17 specific measure. We need to take a bigger
18 perspective and look at the forest with this. And
19 the other one I thought of is if we get kids, students
20 in at 11th and 12th grade that are so far behind,
21 it's like -- I thought of someone who is severely
22 obese trying to run a marathon. It's just too much
23 too fast, and it would be impossible to do.

24 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm sorry, just to
25 expand on that, we know the cohort rate is important,

1 I don't see measurable metrics in here. And what I'm
2 concerned about now is that we're sort of deciding as
3 we sit here as we've had discussions, what is an
4 acceptable improvement plan, and we have to be
5 careful about doing that on an ad hoc basis. And so
6 I mean, I am representing ones that have measurable
7 goals, and we all know how important that is. It can
8 be formative. Some can be summative.

9 But I'm still not sure where this is getting
10 us. So I'm learning a lot today. I've learned a lot
11 from Beacon. I learned by reading your documents.
12 But as far as the process is concerned, I'm not sure
13 exactly what the process is which we are attempting
14 to adhere to today.

15 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I'm not trying to answer
16 your question so much as I'm just trying to
17 understand how we can know where you will be a year
18 from now. (Inaudible) (inaudible). The reason why we
19 may do that is because we can't have 400 out of 1,000
20 kids not graduate from high school. And I don't
21 think any of us would agree that we have different --
22 not different, but we have students who have varying
23 situations (inaudible) and not every situation is a
24 nontraditional one, and we understand that,
25 (inaudible) with which you are working, and we

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1 certainly are happy that you (inaudible) need people
2 who are going to support them through that.
3 But the bar still remains here, and so when
4 that is the case, you know, we need to make sure that
5 again, 60 percent is a minimal. A leap over. If we
6 can't get there, I think we've done our students an
7 injustice.
8 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
9 just wanted to -- Dr. Sanchez wants to pipe in, Chair
10 Johnson, if that's okay.
11 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Please.
12 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** This is (inaudible) in
13 regards to the graduation rate and our board. I know
14 that it's certainly something that we'll always be
15 discussing at every board meeting to see where that
16 process is, and based on the metrics that we have
17 here, the question about what metric are we using,
18 all of this is to target the graduation cohort rate.
19 So it's a compilation of various efforts and
20 initiatives that we will ultimately at the end of the
21 academic year be able to see which ones broke apart
22 or didn't or how they all supported efforts of the
23 graduation rate.
24 As was mentioned, and with some of the
25 things that have already been put in place, we can

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1 see that there's going to be approximately 14 percent
2 growth over the prior year. And when you asked about
3 this two year thing, I don't even know that at the
4 whole state level -- there is this threshold of 60
5 percent right now because of SB 509 -- I don't know
6 that we're going to see that as the whole state for
7 increases that any higher level person can say, I
8 want to see a 10 percent increase from private here
9 when we have a framework that's being developed based
10 on the new ESA regulations for potential changes in
11 how to calculate the growth based on having
12 end-of-course exams and doing away with high school
13 proficiency.
14 So in any statistical research that you see
15 where something new is implemented; one, we're asking
16 if you would compare prior years to that year because
17 of those different measurements, but two; there's
18 always the expectation that at least for three years
19 when something happens, you're able to then
20 reestablish a benchmark that has some of that
21 baseline data.
22 So from my personal perspective as board
23 president, I know that this is constantly a piece
24 that I'm going to see for graduation rate. And
25 clearly I want to go above the 60 percent, but also

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1 the logical reasonable side of me sees that as a
2 state, we're in this sort of kind of middle, in
3 between piece, where I would love for you to tell me
4 what you would expect to be something reasonable in
5 light of not knowing what end-of-course exams are
6 going to show graduation rates, that you know, doing
7 away with high school proficiency exams, and how do
8 you then do framework (inaudible) having ESSA.
9 So we're functioning under a lot of
10 unknowns, but we're being absolutely so optimistic
11 about each of these different pieces hardening the
12 graduation rate. If I can say within two years I
13 want to reach 60 percent, I absolutely want to do
14 that. And hopefully it's a possible if we increase
15 from 38 to 46 to 60, if we were to keep that trend.
16 But we all know in education, things change from year
17 to year, which clearly I'm not going to, you know,
18 jive with the conversation that's been repeated here
19 and what we see.
20 But I know that we are going to continue to
21 work on the graduation rate and to have those
22 multiple measures. So the metrics are here. All of
23 this is aiming to meet the 60 percent graduation
24 rates. I can't guarantee that it's going to happen.
25 But no principal at any school, whether it's online,

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1 charter school, traditional brick and mortar school,
2 can do that, either. We have trend lines in a
3 traditional somewhat layout.
4 I'm going to hold our principal accountable.
5 I'm going to ask every time, where are we, what do
6 you foresee, what can we do, and are you meeting the
7 rigorous expectations that we want to have, and how
8 is your school leadership in general, and how are we
9 as a board doing this in the best way possible.
10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Wahl?
11 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I heard there was maybe
12 going to be a question from somebody?
13 **MEMBER WAHL:** Yeah. Not a question.
14 Sometimes you guys are placing us in a bad place.
15 We've got five-star schools, and we know from the
16 charter schools, from NACSA and from people who have
17 been doing this nationwide and know all the best and
18 the best stuff and training us. How are schools
19 going to do in (inaudible) of the first few years of
20 existence? You guys have been in existence for so
21 long. And so you're putting us in a bad position
22 because you've already known this for how many years.
23 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** That's the same case as a
24 brick and mortar school. Is that a (inaudible)
25 across the state? (Inaudible).

1 **MEMBER WAHL:** We're not over them. We can't
2 do anything with them. We want --
3 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Right.
4 **MEMBER WAHL:** -- in the schools. And we
5 have them.
6 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Right.
7 **MEMBER WAHL:** They've got the same baseline,
8 they've got the same problems, and yet they're doing
9 it. And so --
10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** (Inaudible)?
11 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.
12 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I would love to be able to
13 replicate any of that. But that's the whole beauty
14 of our education system, that there is no silver
15 bullet. And we value our students at heart, and we
16 do everything that we possibly can, and we take in
17 those other students that many other traditional
18 brick and mortar settings haven't been able to take
19 or maybe have under the radar, been able to push out
20 and things to that regard.
21 I'm not in any way disagreeing with you. I
22 absolutely see that there are models out there, and
23 we want to be able to serve that model.
24 And our conversations with Director Patrick,
25 you know, have gotten -- you know, you said that you

1 would love to see NCA be that model, and as board
2 president, I would absolutely want to be able to do
3 that as well.
4 So we do see eye-to-eye, and I find it
5 interesting that you say that we're placing you in
6 a -- I don't want to quote you -- in an awkward
7 situation. But from my perspective, as somebody
8 that, I see you as my authority for this particular
9 role. I see that as being your role. From my
10 understanding, the Charter School Authority was made
11 to be able to have these conversations so that there
12 is support and understanding that there's a
13 distinction in the brick and mortar layout to the
14 online setting, and that we have that understanding
15 of support for --
16 **MEMBER WAHL:** I have to interrupt you.
17 Sorry. There is no difference in my mind at all
18 between an online school and a brick and mortar
19 school. They are charter schools. I see no
20 difference at all except we know there is how that
21 delivery is taken by the student.
22 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Well, that's the
23 difference. We already have --
24 **MEMBER WAHL:** We have no different
25 framework. We have no different expectations. You

1 can't ask us to have a lesser expectation of you
2 because you're a distance ed. That's not going to
3 happen.
4 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I'm not --
5 **MEMBER WAHL:** It's not reality.
6 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I'm not asking for lesser
7 expectations.
8 **MEMBER WAHL:** It's not reality, and I'm not
9 authorized to meet and respond to parents sometimes
10 and say, they're not upholding their end of the deal.
11 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** I take offense to the
12 comment that I'm asking for a lesser expectation.
13 I'm not in any way asking for a lesser expectation.
14 I'm sitting here saying that we've collaborated and
15 the charter has collaborated with Patrick Gavin and
16 Chairman Johnson to be able to meet those goals that
17 are the expectation, but I'm asking for the
18 understanding that there are distinctions.
19 Differentiated instruction is everything we say.
20 It's a cliché, but it's exactly what we are doing as
21 a school.
22 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Miss (inaudible)?
23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Thank you,
24 Mr. Chairman, members of the board. I'd like to pick
25 up right there and try to help frame where we're

1 going.
2 We understand you need accountability. And
3 the school wants to be held accountable. The school
4 has been completely transparent. As to the -- the
5 school went to work focusing on the same objectives
6 you all have, improving the outcomes immediately and
7 putting together a plan that is, I think incredible,
8 and that the school team is very proud of that is
9 substantive and tells you, as Member McCord noted,
10 exactly how the outcomes are going to be improved.
11 What the school didn't do is try to assign
12 some arbitrary, uninformed benchmark. What we wanted
13 to do was start this dialogue with you, and we
14 understand that there has to be a measure of student
15 growth. And we want to talk to you about what those
16 measures should be and what those benchmarks should
17 be.
18 For example, when the school gets -- you
19 know, the cohort percentage rate does not mean that
20 hundreds of kids came to Connections in 9th grade and
21 stayed in Connections for four years and didn't
22 graduate. That is false, and it is improper to judge
23 the performance of this school based on how those
24 students were served for 12 plus years before they
25 ever got to Nevada Connections Academy. So when

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1 these students show up and they are credit-deficient,
2 the school is achieving exactly what you want them to
3 achieve. They take these students in, and they catch
4 them up and graduate them on time sometimes against
5 all odds. Sometimes it's in five years, but they're
6 getting graduated. So what we can't do, and I don't
7 think what you would want us to do is arbitrarily
8 pick a number and say, we're going to be at 48
9 percent -- 46 or 48 percent for 2016.

10 We have no idea what the student population
11 will look like. We know, starting in February, I
12 think, we continue to get a larger and larger influx
13 of students who are exiting the public schools, or
14 the traditional schools, that are credit-deficient.
15 It's clear they're not going to graduate, and they're
16 coming to our school, and we take them with open
17 arms, and the school is serving them successfully.
18 Knowing full well that every one of those students
19 that comes in the door, means we're back in front of
20 you because that cohort rate, it gets harder and
21 harder to hit that benchmark.

22 So we're not evading the benchmark. We want
23 to have meaningful dialogue with you about what's a
24 reasonable benchmark. Someone made reference to
25 credit mills. And there's concerns about, are these

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1 numbers -- nobody wants a numbers game. Nobody wants
2 a school to say they're going to hit 60 percent, and
3 then they play whatever games they need to hit that
4 60 percent.

5 We all want it to be meaningful. We want
6 these kids to be successful. And so, you know, I
7 think the question -- and it takes us back to the
8 May -- the May SB 509. And the testimony at the
9 legislature was that there would be compelling
10 evidence considered behind that number. And we
11 appreciate what you're doing here today, and we
12 appreciate that you are considering our plan and the
13 data because that's the compelling evidence that the
14 legislation was promised, for you to exercise your
15 discretion to decide whether to close a school based
16 on that single data point.

17 It also goes to Dr. Camiverido (phonetic)
18 having said that there could be a flexible graduation
19 rate to deal with these kinds of situations relative
20 to the SB 509.

21 So that's the dialogue that we want to have
22 with you so that we can talk about this in a
23 meaningful way, we can talk about student growth and
24 hit benchmarks based on accumulation of credits, for
25 example, which holds this school accountable for what

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1 it's doing, not for what schools in the past have
2 done for these particular students.

3 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Other questions? I don't
4 want to be like I'm being obtuse about it. I wonder
5 if there's a way to think about, you know, look at
6 some of the trends that are happening and trying to
7 determine if -- I know you cannot predict who is
8 going to come to your door on October 1st, December
9 1st or April 1st.

10 But is it impossible -- I'm asking -- is it
11 impossible to try to figure out if scenario A
12 happens, where we have a student that comes in 6
13 credits short on October 1st, she is in 11th grade.
14 This may enrich what could happen. This is the way
15 that they can get to the path of a fifth year
16 graduation. I don't know if it's possible to create
17 those types of scenarios so that we can better serve
18 more kids, and that when they do come, it doesn't
19 feel like we are initially kind of caught off-guard
20 and aren't able to kind of meet their needs as
21 quickly as we can. I don't know if that's possible
22 or not.

23 **SCOTT HARRINGTON:** That's a very good
24 question for the record. This is Scott Harrington.
25 And I was speaking with the gentleman, the doctor

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1 from -- researcher from UNLV about developing a
2 mathematical model that will capture just that. So
3 when them come in, we'll find out how deficient they
4 are, and then what direction we should be going in to
5 support them. That would be a very valuable tool for
6 any of the virtual schools.

7 So the other thing I was thinking about is
8 having a summit. This issue is a big one. And if
9 there could be a two-day summit, or even a one-day
10 summit, to address this issue specifically about the
11 challenges with mobility, how to get our finger on
12 it, because it's a tough one.

13 The other thing that I was thinking, I heard
14 a lot about -- Ms. Wahl, you mentioned understanding
15 where the students ended up, like working and things.
16 Is there a way you can determine why they leave and
17 track that data yet?

18 **SCOTT HARRINGTON:** Yes, there is.
19 Unfortunately, the means right now are very much
20 dependent upon the family providing the information
21 and for a traditional student who will in ninth grade
22 transfers back to their zoned school, when they leave
23 the school, we ask very specific questions; was it
24 the online environment, was it you wanted more
25 socialization, change in schedule. Lots of different

1 things.
2 Or particularly those students that we're
3 talking about, the highly transients,
4 credit-deficient students, the highly mobile, often
5 times they will literally, for lack of a better
6 phrase, go off the -- fall off the face of the earth,
7 they disappear. And then we go -- we try to track
8 them down, find out where they are. But if they
9 don't go to public school, we don't want to make the
10 assumption they just moved back to their zoned
11 school. So it's more challenging, but it's
12 definitely something we want to get more of a handle
13 on, too.
14 CHAIRMAN JOHNSON. Thank you. Any more
15 questions?
16 JESSICA SANCHEZ: Just about comments. Even
17 without the -- Jessica Sanchez -- even without the
18 mathematical formula, what you have in this
19 improvement plan for graduation rate includes some of
20 those pieces that identifies if a student comes to us
21 as credit-deficient, this is what we're going to do,
22 and we have the different levels for it, which is why
23 we want to emphasize those grad points and have our
24 tiered system for intervention and augment our summer
25 school program.

1 appropriate place.
2 I will note that 16 percent in this last
3 year's 60 percent grad rate would put this school --
4 would put any school at approximately the 16th
5 percentile. That's how -- I mean, it's
6 extraordinary. We have a cluster of schools that
7 sits at the very bottom in this distribution.
8 Connections is one of them.
9 So we may want to think about -- on thing in
10 the conversation would about, instead of a 60
11 percent, we say it moves into the third decile by X
12 date, and then the fourth decile by this date.
13 We're talking about improvability to other
14 schools while also recognizing that the actual grad
15 rate calculation could evolve. But it's basically
16 measuring the same thing all the time, it's just
17 different than this. Or maybe the same thing. That
18 would be one way of getting at it and allowing for
19 the apples-to-apples comparison to happen.
20 It's a -- to try to get to this issues of
21 how to do this, and certainly this would be discussed
22 with Beacon, and listen to anything they want to do
23 as part of their target. I think that would
24 certainly useful means for considering how to frame
25 this. Thank you.

1 So without the mathematical model, we have
2 those interventions that we want to specifically
3 target to increase our graduation rate.
4 MR. GAVIN: Mr. Chairman, I just want to
5 provide a little bit of contextual data.
6 This school has (inaudible) ranking
7 statewide. It has its highest intervention in the
8 11th percentile. The lowest is per one year, usually
9 it's been around the 7th or 8th percentile.
10 Recognizing that the calculation could change. It
11 would be because of lots of reasons. Number one,
12 there is the possibility that the legislature or the
13 state department will change the graduation rate
14 calculation (inaudible), or they may choose not to
15 regardless of what consequences that would have for
16 the state.
17 There is also, of course, the advent of
18 course exams, which right now we're seeing it move
19 upwards in grad ratings. And as we move from no HSP
20 to the gradual (inaudible).
21 So your organization's (inaudible). But I
22 think one way of framing of how the improvement could
23 be looked at, instead of saying a hard and fast 60
24 percent by X date, we could instead talk about moving
25 this forward from the bottommost decile to a more

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to your
2 question regarding potential measurements. Obviously
3 there are a lot of initiatives in this improvement
4 plan, and how do you benchmark that not knowing the
5 students that are coming in? When a student comes in
6 and is working through the program at Nevada
7 Connections Academy, they're assigned a tier,
8 basically, how far are they behind. And so at that
9 point, if there's a measurement based on credit
10 approval, it doesn't matter who walks in your door,
11 you have a system -- if you have an appropriate
12 system in place, of how quickly you're going to be
13 able to move that student along, provide them with a
14 customized education, then to me no matter what
15 school you're dealing with, I would assume that's
16 what you folks are looking for.
17 These kids aren't going away. So you need
18 to come up with the most successful way to get them
19 everything they need and make sure that the schools
20 are doing everything they can teaching to get them
21 caught up.
22 So rather -- you know, again, to
23 Mr. Gavin's point, rather than just sort of saying,
24 here's where it's at, I would, you know, would just
25 put out the possibility of -- you know, the school is

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1 not providing a plan saying, students at these
2 various tiers, when they come in, you have to have a
3 name to them. Because they're going to come in at
4 these various levels. Is the school doing what it's
5 saying it would do to assist these students to move
6 from a tier 3, where it looks like they have no
7 chance to ever graduate, how are they the next year,
8 have they moved down to a tier 1? Where we're now
9 within shooting range, where they've got a chance to
10 do this. That way you're not just following an
11 arbitrary, you know, just a general number. But
12 actions, the actions behind what's been promised.

13 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any further discussion?
14 Member Wahl, do you have any questions?

15 **MEMBER WAHL:** Patrick, can you refresh me?
16 We're talking only about high school. Are they only
17 watching them about high school? Or how is the
18 online (inaudible)? Is this a plan of improvement
19 for the whole school or for high school?

20 **MR. GAVIN:** This is a high school graduation
21 rate. While the school has 3 star levels, or 2 stars
22 levels, there's been no case that they've had any
23 (inaudible) for any three consecutive years. So
24 we're not talking about that. And I would note that
25 other than on this matter of grad rate, the school is

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1 currently -- was in good standing as of the most
2 recent full framework. So I did want to put that on
3 the record. It is worth knowing.

4 I think this is -- I would ask this question
5 before the board has this discussion, I think it
6 would be helpful for staff and for the school to get
7 some guidance on what this board wants to see next.

8 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Thank you for that,
9 Patrick. This is Jessica Sanchez.

10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Mackedon.
11 **MS. MACKEDON:** I would just say, I think,
12 you know, we said that we wanted like an update and a
13 plan, and they have provided that. And I think
14 now -- I mean maybe that wasn't wise on our part when
15 we said it. Maybe we wouldn't do that again if we
16 had it to do over again. But that's what we did.
17 They provided the plan. It's foolish for us, in my
18 opinion, to sit and argue about all of this -- the
19 little nuances and the numbers and the timelines.

20 The law is the law. The rules are the
21 rules. It's their responsibility to put forth the
22 plan, which they did, and to get results on it. And
23 it's our responsibility to make a decision when the
24 results come out in a year or six months or whenever
25 it is they come out. And I don't really thing that

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1 there's much else we can do but say, good work, we
2 wish you luck. We hope that you meet all the marks
3 that are required to meet before we -- you know,
4 before we're are in this situation again. I think
5 that's all there is for us to do at this point.

6 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chair and
7 members of the board, board members. The school
8 would respectfully ask to work with you to set
9 benchmarks together so that we can show student
10 growth, so that we can show the success of this plan
11 that took hundreds of hours to put together.

12 The school doesn't want to just go off and
13 then come back next year and be talking again about
14 what is behind a single data point. And that is how
15 the law -- that's frankly what the law requires. You
16 know, the charter school law that created this body
17 says you will be a collaborative environment to
18 nourish schools. Absolutely there's accountability.
19 But we've come this far.

20 I don't think it was a mistake at all. I
21 think it was the right thing to do to let the school
22 show you how they intend to improve outcomes, how
23 they intend to continue serving credit-deficient
24 students effectively. And now we're asking you for
25 the next step, to direct staff with your input to

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1 work with the school to come up with proposed bench
2 marks that show student growth. We'll have third
3 party validation of the data. We would want your
4 input about what they would like to see validated.
5 We want to help give you the information to show you
6 that the plan is working; and work with you to change
7 it if it needs to be changed.

8 But we want to continue the dialogue. We
9 don't want a long period of time and then
10 (inaudible). That's simply not what the law
11 provides. I also just want for the record to make
12 two quick points. One is, our middle school is a
13 four-star middle school. So we appreciate Director
14 Gavin saying on the record that the school is in good
15 standing. It received the unanimous vote for renewal
16 in 2013, and that was with the recognition of the
17 population that the school serves.

18 As then as a housekeeping matter, I wanted
19 to ask Mr. Chair just for the record; given the March
20 meeting and the item was removed from the agenda, I
21 think we're in this kind of legally uncertain area.
22 We're not sure that there's any past record. And I
23 ask respectfully request that, for purposes of today,
24 the record include any -- all the testimony including
25 any documents that were submitted in March just so

1 that we can, for housekeeping purposes, maintain a
2 separate (inaudible) on site.
3 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I'm not sure how to
4 respond to that. Our two attorneys are looking like
5 they want to respond, so I'll let them go at it.
6 **MR. OTT:** I don't understand the need to
7 incorporate everything from the prior agenda item
8 into the record today. This isn't agenda for action,
9 so there can't be action taken today. So I'm not
10 certain the reason behind the request. Maybe Robert
11 understands. Maybe he can clarify.
12 **MR. WHITNEY:** Honestly, I was thinking along
13 the same lines. It's not actually an action item set
14 for today. It was just to really provide information
15 about where this school is headed. I don't think
16 there's -- as far as anything in March, I don't think
17 it's really (inaudible).
18 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** And thank you. And I want
19 it to be clear for the record, it's really just a
20 housekeeping request not knowing where things are
21 headed. So to kind of be sure that we know what
22 record exists on this issue that started in February
23 and then March, and it was removed from the agenda.
24 And I'm happy to work with you guys off-line to
25 figure this out, so that we don't take up everyone's

1 time. I just wanted to make a request.
2 **MEMBER WAHL:** Wouldn't it just be fair to
3 say work on your graduation rates?
4 **JESSICA SANCHEZ:** We respectfully ask for
5 more guidance than that. Again, we want to work with
6 you. We want to set benchmarks. I don't think
7 anyone expects that those benchmarks can be decided
8 today. It's not actually on the agenda. That's not
9 what we're asking. We are simply asking that with
10 your input, that staff work with us to come up with
11 proposed benchmarks to satisfy you and provide you
12 compelling evidence that the gradation improvement
13 plan is working and student outcomes are improving,
14 and there is student growth. That's what we're
15 seeking.
16 **MEMBER WAHL:** Do you agree that's part of
17 the law, that we collaborate with them what their
18 goals should be?
19 **MR. GAVIN:** Member Wahl. I don't know that
20 I do agree with (inaudible) on what the law
21 specifically requires in essence. I do think that
22 if this body is choosing to not exercise its
23 authority to close a school with a graduation rate
24 under 60 percent, it is useful for the purposes of
25 not having to have this discussion essentially every

1 month to say, by this date this will happen, and by
2 this date this will happen and have those be outputs
3 versus inputs, and that was the recent conversation
4 we had with Beacon about, there really needs to be
5 some metrics that are tied to this. Much like we did
6 with Silver State, as well. They don't necessarily
7 have to be the same. These are different contexts,
8 different needs. And frankly, lots of different
9 system performance issues with different places and
10 (inaudible) with what's going on.
11 So I do think it is valuable to do so, but I
12 think it will also be helpful for staff to understand
13 if there is at some point essentially a drop-dead
14 date by which the board wants to see a certain level
15 of improvements. And recognizing if that cannot be
16 acted on, it would be helpful to get a sense of what
17 the spirit -- a sense of the board's thinking on that
18 during this discussion, because I believe it
19 will inform the conversations with each of these, and
20 that's when we prefer (inaudible) discuss as part of
21 the final item with the final school that is talking
22 about that rate issue.
23 There were actually no other issues today,
24 so I guess we can (inaudible). Nevada Virtual does
25 not have the same graduating challenge.

1 I think it would be useful just to have a
2 sense of what we should be doing. You guys help me
3 with this, and I'll just try to make this possible as
4 an option.
5 **MEMBER WAHL:** Another question. Member
6 Wahl. So they're under a notice for closure.
7 **MR. GAVIN:** Member Wahl, just to be clear,
8 no notice was issued, no notice or attempt to revoke
9 or reconstitute was ever issued by this body. I want
10 to be very clear of that. There was a discussion of
11 such an item. The board took no action.
12 **MEMBER WAHL:** Okay. So where do we stand
13 today is they fall under the 60 percent graduation
14 rate, and we need to do something. Would you like us
15 to do something? Because I'm asking.
16 **MR. GAVIN:** It would be helpful for staff to
17 have a sense of what the board would like to see
18 next. (Inaudible) having some kind of a target, at
19 least a specific measurable time-bound goal. So I
20 recognize that this is not -- you would not in any
21 way be making an action, but if you have particular
22 thoughts on this, it would be helpful for staff and
23 for the school so that we don't spin our wheels in
24 our conversations on the phone for the next four
25 weeks.

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1 **MEMBER WAHL:** (Inaudible).
2 **MR. GAVIN:** (Inaudible).
3 **MEMBER WAHL:** (Inaudible) Go ahead and
4 finish what you're saying. I just thought
5 (inaudible).
6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I wanted to -- I would
7 like to -- we understand the path towards 60 and as
8 quickly as it can be -- again, I think we've all been
9 a bit disheartened that 60 is the kind of target.
10 But if that is the target, we have to -- we're
11 saying, this is the plan that we've asked to see.
12 **MR. GAVIN:** It's not a target. It's the
13 floor. We're trying to get people to the floor.
14 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** But it's the target,
15 right, for all intents and purposes, right. It's not
16 our target, but it is the target, it is a target. So
17 I will feel comfortable in understanding over what
18 point in time do we know that, you if -- at the next
19 point in time you're so far from the target, we need
20 to take another type of action. So creating some
21 sort of model that you would want to put together to
22 try to figure out what are the benchmarks to show us
23 that there will be a clear path to our floor/target.
24 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Mr. Chair, realistically
25 we're talking about graduation rates. We're a year

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1 away from a new graduation; is that correct? Is that
2 a fair way to frame this?
3 **MR. GAVIN:** I would say it's realistically,
4 it's actually closer to 18 months. The graduation
5 rate they have got right now will probably go up to
6 (inaudible) December. So it will be another
7 (inaudible).
8 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Okay. So the statistics
9 relative to the '16-'17 graduation cohort, whenever
10 they're available to us, are the statistics that
11 we're looking to impact from the discussions we're
12 having today; is that correct? So if we all agree to
13 that, that's the target. Why don't we ask the
14 schools, both Beacon, because there were some
15 unresolved issues when they stepped away from the
16 table, and Connections, to work with Patrick. I
17 think it's incumbent upon the schools to suggest the
18 benchmarks and for the staff to sign off on them, and
19 let's have it in writing.
20 So that -- and then it can be in the file.
21 I don't know that it needs to come back here at all.
22 I'm not qualified to say what benchmarks are being
23 reached and how they should be reached. Bob is, but
24 I'm not. So let's (inaudible), and when we come to
25 report on those '16-'17 statistics, we'll do it

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1 (inaudible) in writing so everybody can agree.
2 **MEMBER WAHL:** I kind of think that we
3 already have metrics, and that we all agreed to them
4 from the beginning. The school is supposed to -- and
5 really, when you start a school; you're supposed to
6 do that. I would think 60 is -- I don't think they
7 started the school saying, let's just graduate 60
8 percent of the people. Their goal probably was
9 higher than the floor. I hope it was higher than the
10 floor. And they haven't made it. And then, so now
11 we're putting it out to 18 more months, and then
12 we're going to have the same conversation in 18
13 months. (Inaudible). I'm sorry --
14 **MR. GAVIN:** So Member Wahl, I would note,
15 the board -- since this is not an agenda for action,
16 there is no action that the board is taking. So we
17 will have to come back and have a conversation about
18 what you actually want me to do and what you want
19 them to do. And that could just mean, we're going to
20 think -- we're going to wait and see, and we'll make
21 a decision based on our hearing (inaudible). That
22 could be what you decide to do.
23 I don't think that's what the school is
24 asking for. But you certainly can -- there are lots
25 of things -- you can make lots of decision at

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1 whatever time that is. Certainly I do think it would
2 be valuable for the school to propose timelines and
3 benchmarks for us and then come back and share those
4 with you. Because otherwise, I do tend to concur
5 with Member Wahl. We don't know what will happen if
6 it just sits in a drawer. I do think that the public
7 process of the conversation is useful, even if it
8 isn't even always fun for any of us. I think
9 (inaudible).
10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So it sounds like we have
11 an actionable next step, which is to see staff and
12 the school be working together to try to determine
13 some benchmarks so that when you come back to us,
14 you'll have something in writing we can be able to
15 measure its progress. You asked for an action step.
16 That's next. That's an action step. Excuse me.
17 That is next.
18 **MR. GAVIN:** So to be sensitive to time, I
19 think we should just plan on coming back in July for
20 each of the schools that has this particular issue to
21 have that conversation. Thanks very much,
22 Mr. Chairman.
23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Just for a bit of
24 clarification, we would be coming back in July to
25 have an updated information item discussion about

1 proposed benchmarks, and then hopefully that --
2 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** I am envisioning that you
3 and staff would talk with one another about what
4 those benchmarks would look like. Why don't you let
5 me know, Jack, because that's something we can just
6 kind of toss around.
7 **MR. GAVIN:** At this point I'm not asking,
8 I'm just telling you, we'll be back in July. The
9 school has proposed some things. We will propose
10 some things. And hopefully we will be in agreement
11 and everyone will be happy. And if not, then we will
12 then -- the school will have a proposal, we will have
13 a proposal, and then the board will then have an
14 opportunity for information, discussion and possible
15 action.
16 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member McCord?
17 **MEMBER McCORD:** And certainly expect that
18 when the graduation rates come out in late fall,
19 that's going to be a point of discussion. And that
20 discussion is going to take place. I'll be right
21 here.
22 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Member Conaboy?
23 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I'd like to reframe this
24 just a little bit. What I heard from the schools
25 this morning and this afternoon, is how productive it

1 has been to work in a collaborative fashion with
2 staff, and rather than frame this as a dictate, I'd
3 like to encourage further collaboration so that the
4 schools and our staff come to us with a joint
5 proposal on the metrics. That's the attitude and the
6 philosophy that I would like to propose we use going
7 forward.
8 **MEMBER WAHL:** Can I ask, then, to what
9 extent are we going to collaborate?
10 **MR. GAVIN:** I feel like I've opened up this
11 can of worms by asking for guidance at a point where
12 there's no authority to take action. We'll work on
13 it. And I would request that we put it on the next
14 agenda item. I don't know that we can do it anything
15 productive other than just having a bunch of
16 discussions or arguing (inaudible) philosophical crap
17 without actually doing anything. And it's 3:30 in
18 the afternoon.
19 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I'm not arguing. I'm
20 saying that I heard something loud and clear today,
21 which is that collaboration works. It got us to a
22 point where people came with some productive ideas to
23 solve what we all agreed is a terrible platform. And
24 the collaboration is twofold, Patrick. I'm trying to
25 complement everybody. I'm not trying to start a

1 fight. I'm not trying to sound angry. I'm not
2 trying to kick the can down the road.
3 What I'm trying to say is that when we work
4 with one another, we can solve problems. If we work
5 at odds with one another, the problems will continue
6 to exist.
7 **MR. OTT:** I just want to clarify one of the
8 items. I just wanted to clarify that there is no
9 limitation -- there's no action item, so we're unable
10 to limit what is going to be brought back in July.
11 So to the extent you're looking for a limitation on
12 what's coming back, I don't think that the capability
13 is there to do that today. I just wanted to make
14 sure that that's clear.
15 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I wasn't looking for
16 any limitation. I was just hoping for a better
17 understanding of the collaboration so there's no
18 surprise on either side, hopefully.
19 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** (Inaudible)
20 collaboration. Conversation is always helpful, and
21 so I don't think that anything bad will come from
22 having good conversations with the board. What is
23 going to happen next, though, we're going to move on
24 to agenda item number 4. So this is an update, as I
25 understand, on discussions with Nevada Virtual

1 Academy, on the school's plan for improvement. The
2 board will receive an update, and it may discuss the
3 status (inaudible) and school officials and attorneys
4 (inaudible) their efforts to develop a plan of
5 improvement.
6 We'll take a five minute break before we get
7 started.
8 (A brief recess was taken.)
9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** It is 3:30. We will call the
10 meeting back to order, and we have representation
11 from Nevada Virtual.
12 **RICHARD GORDAN:** Thank you, Chairman Johnson
13 and members of the Authority board. My name is
14 Richard Gordon, and I am the vice-president of the
15 governing board for Nevada Virtual Academy. Here
16 today with me is the president of the board, Don
17 Curry, and our head of school, Amanda Santos, and our
18 school counsel, Carrie Hendricks. And you're
19 familiar with most of us from prior meetings.
20 And I would like to begin really by echoing
21 certainly what Member Conaboy highlighted a few
22 moments ago, and what we heard from various of the
23 other schools who have been on the agenda for today
24 that this has been -- in the last six weeks, we as a
25 school have had, I think, the most productive, the

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1 most collaborative, the most useful, and I think
2 ultimately beneficial conversations to the benefit of
3 our students, who are also your students.
4 In these recent weeks, we had conversations
5 with staff, Mr. Gavin and with Mr. Ott. We had three
6 telephonic conferences, and ideas and proposals were
7 exchanged back and forth that I think have merit.
8 And we're happy to share some of those thoughts with
9 you all today. And you may already be familiar with
10 some of those thoughts and conversations you have had
11 with the executive director.
12 But it has been welcomed, and I know I speak
13 on behalf of the entire board of Nevada Virtual
14 Academy in thanking all of you for this -- I hate to
15 say it, but it is true -- change in tone and
16 attitude, that I think ultimately will be for
17 everyone's benefit, but most importantly, the
18 children at Virtual Academy.
19 And to just briefly touch on something that
20 Member Wahl had mentioned before we went on record
21 because I do have -- and once I saw the materials, I
22 suspected that we might get this question from some
23 or a multiple of you. Where are the materials from
24 Nevada Virtual Academy? We got substantial materials
25 from Connections Academy. We got substantial

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1 materials from Beacon. Nevada Virtual, where are
2 your materials?
3 And perhaps there was a bit of a
4 miscommunication between -- in otherwise very
5 productive calls. It was our understanding that this
6 meeting today, and it is reflected in the agenda for
7 today, that the purpose of this meeting was to
8 discuss the status of the discussions that we've had
9 with staff, and not be presenting to the board a
10 substantial data-driven presentation.
11 We discussed in our last call that we had
12 with Mr. Gavin, we didn't know we were officially
13 going to be on this agenda until Monday of this week,
14 the last call we had. Mr. Gavin certainly invited
15 us, suggested we provide some materials if we wanted
16 to, but as sort of a status of discussions-type
17 agenda item, and only learning about four days ago,
18 it really was not a great deal of time, and really
19 not knowing you wanted more.
20 I will say, though, to the extent you would
21 like to see more from Nevada Virtual Academy, I would
22 refer you all simply to the materials that were
23 provided in advance of the March meeting. And I have
24 a binder of it. It's substantial. It's about 200
25 pages of things that really touch on everything that

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1 you've heard from the other schools today.
2 And our issues that of -- certainly
3 concerning to the Authority, I think that we have
4 already substantially addressed; namely, the
5 graduation rate and all items toward a plan of
6 improvement. Part of these materials included the
7 school's state grant, which I know the Authority
8 board is probably familiar with.
9 In there we have goals and targets for
10 graduation rate. Nevada Virtual is different from
11 certainly Connections and Beacon on that particular
12 data point, as we are currently above that 60 percent
13 threshold.
14 And in the SI grant application, you'll see
15 the targets that we anticipate over the next four to
16 five years in accelerating that grad rate above the
17 floor. And also in materials from March, you will
18 see the plan that Nevada Virtual had for its blended
19 learning program. We heard a lot about blended
20 learning today from the other schools. I think it's
21 a wonderful idea, and I think a fruitful and
22 potentially very beneficial idea for all of the
23 schools, particularly those who have traditionally
24 been primary online and virtual.
25 Nevada Virtual has already come to the board

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1 requesting to convert itself to -- to create a
2 somewhat blended program. And so materials from
3 March include some of that data from prior board
4 meetings when that was approved.
5 And I tell you this because that's been a
6 discussion point with Mr. Gavin in the last few
7 meetings as well. We started in the process -- this
8 is our first complete year with a set of blended
9 learning pathways, and we're valuing how fruitful and
10 successful it's been thus far. And we're all already
11 (inaudible) because of the collaborative discussion
12 we've had with Patrick talking to the board
13 specifically about how can the blended pathways be
14 expanded. It's been an agenda item on our school
15 board meeting to discuss the pathways and what we can
16 tell thus far from the pathways and where we might go
17 with them.
18 You know, so an additional item I know that
19 has been discussed in these conversations with
20 Patrick concerned the possibility of creating an
21 ombudsman person. This was an interesting concept
22 proposed by Mr. Gavin that we individually -- we
23 haven't yet had a board meeting at the school where
24 we could fully flush it out and discuss it, but we
25 have one-on-one discussed with some of our individual

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1 board members this position, I guess.
2 And we're trying to also get clarity also
3 from the Authority and staff just to see what it
4 envisions with regard to an omnibus person for school
5 complaints. You know, we've heard in prior meetings
6 from parent meetings, complaints you see from
7 parents. How fast can we respond to that.
8 An omnibus person may be a good alternative
9 that we certainly want to flesh out with our board
10 and with you, the Authority. Those have been, I
11 think, some very good and healthy discussions. We
12 don't come to you today, again, with a lengthy
13 presentation. That may be -- some of you may be
14 happy about that after a very long day, some of
15 you welcome that. And we certainly will have no
16 problem with that. It's very difficult to put
17 together. We thought about it like most of these
18 schools have, for hundreds of hours.
19 You've seen it in some capacity in various
20 forms, the SI grant applications and materials, other
21 materials that were provided to you in prior
22 meetings.
23 But I hope that explains why you don't have
24 something from Nevada Virtual Academy specifically
25 for today. I think we have many of these areas

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1 included or highlighted before, we are already
2 responding to or are already in fact putting into
3 place. Right now we're looking to see how fruitful
4 certainly blended learning has been for us.
5 I'll turn it over to Mr. Curry for a moment.
6 Mr. Curry certainly is the president of our board.
7 He's been immensely valuable in reaching out to all
8 board members to make sure they're -- that our school
9 board members are made aware of all of these
10 discussions that we've been having.
11 **DON CURRY:** Thanks. Chairman Johnson and
12 board members.
13 I sat and listened to the other comments
14 today about their board, and we made a pretty
15 significant change, I think, in our board since 2013.
16 We had that meeting in June of 2013. And since that
17 time, we brought four new members to our board.
18 And I think it's probably significant to say
19 who they were. Not so much names, but what they
20 represent and their background. But one of those
21 members does have a Ph.D., has taught at the
22 university level, but has specialized in distance
23 learning, distance education. And that's their
24 focus.
25 We felt like that was an improvement

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1 probably coming on our board. Offered comments and
2 commentary to our board members about trends in
3 distance education and distance learning.
4 Another one of those was a parent who has
5 had a number of children at our school over the past,
6 I believe, six, seven years. So very familiar with
7 curriculum. Familiar with staff members. And pretty
8 much one of the more familiar people with the school
9 that sits on our board.
10 Another is an engineer in the community with
11 a focus in science and math. That seems to be a weak
12 piece across our nation today. We could compare to
13 other nations in the sciences, math, engineering. So
14 that was one of the four people. Another is a leader
15 in the state level and STEM education. So with those
16 four new board members, we have a different flavor, a
17 different perspective, I think, as a full board.
18 One of the other things that I'd like to
19 mention while I have the floor here, is that we've
20 recently appointed board members to be specific
21 committees of the school to look primarily at this
22 improvement plan -- I use that phrase.
23 We've done a number of things, we think, to
24 improve the grad rate as well as achievement levels.
25 So we now have board members sitting on those school

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1 committees. The SI grant that we received, which I
2 understand we're the only school in Nevada that
3 received a school improvement grant.
4 I sat in on those meetings itself. When the
5 school improvement leadership team meets to discuss
6 the details of the SI grant and how we get from point
7 A to point B to point C, I sit in there as a board
8 representative to make sure that I can then convey
9 that to the rest of the board.
10 We also have a committee that looks at key
11 issues that are coming to the school that we feel
12 like need attention. Here more, I think, most of the
13 time, information came from staff alone. So we
14 appointed me to sit in on that group that identifies
15 these issues and how to deal with them.
16 So I think from a board perspective, we have
17 a much stronger board today than we've had in the
18 last four years.
19 **MEMBER WAHL:** Can I ask a question?
20 **DON CURRY:** Sure.
21 **MEMBER WAHL:** I don't remember the date, but
22 Mrs. Macintosh relayed to us that local TV marketing
23 falls under local board governance. So tell me about
24 your board. Will your board be making different
25 marketing apportionments this year (inaudible).

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1 **DON CURRY:** Actually, I just got word
2 yesterday that a new local marketing person is being
3 vetted. And so, you know, I can't speak to marketing
4 itself, necessarily. I know that we were under some
5 restrictions for certain types of marketing, I
6 believe suggested by Mr. McCord, I believe, at one
7 point. And so we do have a new person taking that
8 position.
9 **MEMBER WAHL:** I have a different variation
10 of that question. Is that new vetted person going to
11 understand our Nevada laws and accurately represent
12 them to the public?
13 **DON CURRY:** I'll tell you, that person is a
14 Nevada native, lives here, has grown up here, and is
15 familiar with Nevada law.
16 **DON GORDAN:** Ms Wahl, I could just add as
17 well, any person that we retain in that capacity,
18 that we'll make sure they are well vetted, not simply
19 by the fact of their birth from here, you know, that
20 they do have familiarity and knowledge of the
21 governing law here. I try to make that a point in
22 most every decision that's being made because I
23 know -- I'm aware by trade.
24 **MEMBER WAHL:** Were you both on the board
25 last year?

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1 **MR. GORDAN:** Yes.
2 **MR. CURRY:** Yes.
3 **MEMBER WAHL:** So you're both aware of what
4 I'm speaking about?
5 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Say that again?
6 **MEMBER WAHL:** You're both aware of what I'm
7 speaking of?
8 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I believe I am, Ms.
9 Wahl. I believe I am. But -- obviously, you know,
10 we can -- any questions you have, obviously, you
11 know, we can get answers to. I'm not necessarily --
12 **MEMBER WAHL:** I just want to make sure that
13 marketing this year is appropriate and legal and
14 appropriate for the public. It doesn't exclude any
15 segment of students.
16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's correct.
17 That's certainly the intention.
18 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Let me just say that
19 we'll see to that.
20 **MS. WAHL:** Thank you.
21 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Any further questions or
22 discussion? Member McCord?
23 **MEMBER McCORD:** Refresh my memory. What is
24 your enrollment now?
25 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'll let Amanda speak

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1 to that. I think we're at 2,200 on that.
2 **RYAN DOS SANTOS:** Ryan Dos Santos for the
3 record. 2,150, I believe.
4 **MEMBER McCORD:** Two years ago your
5 enrollment was?
6 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I don't have that
7 number off the top of my head. But in excess of
8 4,000.
9 **MEMBER McCORD:** Two years ago? No? Am I
10 wrong? Three years ago.
11 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Three years ago it
12 probably was, yeah.
13 **MEMBER McCORD:** And we had the outstanding
14 question out there, where do those kids go? That's a
15 rather dramatic policy decision you folks made during
16 this time of transition. Is there any additional
17 (inaudible) on that, any sense of that? Because I
18 had looked at the data of transfers, and I don't see
19 a tracking of where those kids went.
20 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm under the
21 impression from discussions just in the last few days
22 with administration that the board formally requested
23 information. And I know that that came from
24 somebody. Perhaps Ms. Conaboy today asking about --
25 asking another school, do we have information about

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1 where people go when they leave and where people come
2 from when they come to us, regardless of who they are
3 and what they are and what classification they go
4 into. Mr. Dos Santos might speak to that, but I
5 think the board formally requested they have the
6 school to gather data in that regard just this week.
7 I know we talked about it.
8 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** The calculation of
9 graduation rate, as you know, factors in the
10 whereabouts of student who leave you, and our
11 graduation has grown every for four consecutive
12 years. So those students, if you're ask me where
13 they went, I can't give you specifics, but I can tell
14 you that's it's tracked and verified that they've
15 gone somewhere.
16 **MEMBER McCORD:** Did you -- when you had a
17 (inaudible) in positive enrollment, did you apply for
18 (inaudible) funds?
19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Mr. McCord, my
20 concern here is I know we submitted a substantial
21 amount of documentation to Greg Ott, the DAG, for
22 review. We haven't been informed yet what the
23 purpose of that review even has been. To the extent,
24 though, there is -- you know more perhaps, I would
25 hesitate -- you know, what the scope of that would

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1 be.
2 **MEMBER McCORD:** That is a question about you
3 more.
4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Right. But we are --
5 I certainly, when we are given a request for
6 documentation for review by authorities, and when we
7 assure that there is -- and I would be hesitant to
8 speak prior to even knowing what the scope of that
9 review is.
10 **MEMBER McCORD:** I respect that of you. Let
11 me ask you, is that 2,200 level, that can be kind of
12 a static level, or are you going to be growing that?
13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I mean, it could
14 grow, I suppose. It's been -- the historic data in
15 the last few years, but I don't know the specific
16 historic data. But I'll let you speak to that,
17 (inaudible).
18 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, there is a cap.
19 So we can only grow 10 percent higher than the 2,200
20 that we have. So can we grow? We can grow
21 10 percent, but no more.
22 **MEMBER McCORD:** Got you. Thank you. I just
23 want to make sure.
24 **MR. GAVIN:** Can we get back on the topic of
25 academic improvement? I don't mean to -- I know I

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1 wasn't prepared for this particular line of
2 questioning. I just want to make sure that we're
3 focused on the topic at hand. I mean, ultimately
4 it's the rules of the board.
5 **MEMBER WAHL:** I have a question (inaudible),
6 depending on the answer. So we heard from other
7 schools that it is hard to track sometimes when kids
8 drop out. My specific question to you guys is, do
9 you know how many of your students this year went to
10 home schooling, and the specific purpose in mind in
11 asking this question and I hope -- because there were
12 some missteps earlier in the year -- I hope those
13 were not nefarious missteps that could lead to
14 changing outcomes of things.
15 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I can't speak to
16 (inaudible) how many of our students went to home
17 schooling. I think, though, Member Wahl, I recall
18 you having a communication with our administration
19 about, I think, documentation that was given to a
20 prospective student.
21 **MEMBER WAHL:** Students upon enrollment last
22 year.
23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, enrollment
24 documentation that had forms in it that suggested
25 these were home schooling forms, I believe.

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1 **MEMBER WAHL:** I asked if it was an intent to
2 home school.
3 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** And so at least --
4 again, we looked at that as to what are the materials
5 they're given at enrollment, and that form is not
6 part of the packet of materials that we --
7 **MEMBER WAHL:** I'm so glad you guys were
8 responsive to that. I really do thank you for that.
9 My concern is what happened to those, and were they
10 used in any way for kids that we couldn't follow up
11 on.
12 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Inaudible)
13 absolutely not. As we had spoken before, you know,
14 we're very aware of the difference between home
15 school and the services we provide. And so no, the
16 direct answer is no, we absolutely do not use the
17 home school forms in that way. But I can't give you
18 the number off the top of my head as to how many
19 students we had that have gone to home school.
20 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Anything further from the
21 DAG?
22 **MR. GAVIN:** (Inaudible) if the board is
23 closing out, I wanted to ask for -- I wanted to
24 propose some next steps or request feedback for next
25 steps. So I'm going to suggest the next steps.

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1 Unless someone hates them, we'll go with them. Rich,
2 Don, Orlando, Carra, (inaudible) I think it would be
3 useful to put something down in writing versus
4 approve a plan you're working on, here are our goals,
5 much like the other schools. I think (inaudible)
6 consistent in our conversations, recognizing you have
7 a different set of challenges, and there will still
8 be different targets and different interventions.
9 And we talked about what some of those changes or
10 interventions might be.
11 To the degree that you are comfortable doing
12 policy shifts, I would suggest you put a timeline and
13 say, we'll make these changes by this date. So, if
14 you (inaudible) (inaudible). There can be some
15 actual (inaudible) points for when these decisions
16 get made because I want to make -- we cannot be in
17 this situation two years from now, three years from
18 now, four years from you. It's untenable for you.
19 It's untenable for us. It's not good for kids.
20 We've got to figure out what the targets are and what
21 changes will happen. And if that means, likewise,
22 (inaudible) (inaudible) there's something, there's a
23 point where it's like, okay, there's a point where
24 (inaudible). I'm not suggesting that, I don't know.
25 But I think it's useful to put it in writing and have

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1 it be forward-looking and have it be very intentional
2 and structured versus all forward-looking statements
3 with no actions taken. So, with that idea, let's
4 (inaudible).

5 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes. Well, I have a
6 couple of comments. As you all know, we've seen what
7 I feel would be a significant increase in graduation
8 rates year by year for the last four years. Without
9 getting into any detail, I think the board feels now
10 that we have a significant increase coming here in
11 this year. You never know. But, you know, I know
12 this from -- I have some rationale for believing
13 that.

14 And so, there's been a lot of talk about
15 grad rate today. And I think that's a significant
16 thing, that we look at those programs, the policy
17 shifts that you're talking about, too, that have
18 implemented some of those things. And I think that
19 that's been a very important facet for the board
20 to -- and I give credit for some of the new people,
21 too, who have come on the board (inaudible) move
22 things along and that sort of thing.

23 But before we finish today, I do want to say
24 that for whatever reason, I suspect you woke up in
25 the middle of the night and had an epiphany of some

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1 to the Authority board. That's how I saw some of
2 what came from the state when you were formed. And
3 that has happened with us for sure. So I just wanted
4 to get that off my chest, Patrick.

5 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Yes, thank you,
6 Patrick. I certainly think your proposal is
7 something that I think we can work with and discuss
8 more. The only thing I would mention, we've had
9 these discussions in our prior calls. You know,
10 usually a quick and hasty change for the sake of
11 making a significant change without it being fully
12 vetted or evaluated leads to bad results.

13 And so, you know, will we come up with --
14 right now we're finishing our first year of blended
15 learning, and are fully about to begin to digest that
16 to see how fruitful it's been.

17 I think that -- and so we're sort of right
18 now in an evaluative phase. And the board is already
19 looking as an item, can this be expanded. I think
20 step one is the evaluation of how things have gone
21 thus far. I'm not suggesting that we're going to
22 bring, you know, bigger decisions into the
23 future without -- to say, you know, will we come back
24 with, we're going to do all blended, I think there
25 needs to be at least an evaluation done first since

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1 sort, I don't know. But communication between staff
2 and the board has been significantly improved. That
3 is a major, major accomplishment. I don't want to
4 give you very much credit, Patrick, but I will have
5 to say that I give you some credit for that.

6 The last conversations we've had -- and
7 we've had three -- not very brief, but three
8 conversations that I walked away from feeling this
9 was really positive. We got something accomplished.
10 We agreed on some things. There were some
11 guidelines. There were some goals established,
12 sometimes among board members after we finish.

13 But I compliment you and the board for
14 whatever happened with that. That communication link
15 has really been enhanced. And I think that that sort
16 of communication has resulted in maybe a change of
17 attitude. And, you know, speaking very finally,
18 which I do sometimes, there have been times I met
19 with Patrick in years past where I walked away, and I
20 didn't feel like I wanted to do anything. You know,
21 that happened (inaudible). But these last
22 conversations -- and I think that's important to say.
23 And you know, I'm not giving him praise where it's
24 not due, I don't think. That's so important.

25 I always saw that as a responsibility given

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1 we started that process to see where we thing it
2 should go.

3 But in general, I don't disagree with the
4 proposal, and we can -- you know, we certainly
5 welcome conversations and discussions.

6 **MEMBER WAHL:** Inaudible. So Beacon has been
7 working with Mr. UNLV back there. And I think
8 Connections Academy said, would you guys welcome that
9 intensive machine looking into your school to give
10 them a really good evaluation of what's going right
11 and what's goings wrong?

12 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Unfortunately I was
13 stepping out for most of those conversations. So I
14 didn't hear what was going on in that regard. I had
15 to file an appellate brief today in the morning.

16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Sure, yeah. No, I
17 think we would certainly be open to doing something
18 like that. I will point out to you that we do have a
19 third party as part of the SI grant, the accrued SI
20 grant that's evaluated our data, at least in the high
21 school. And all that information is in the packet
22 that you all can see where the margin is. So there
23 is third-party validated data on us, on your behalf.

24 **MR. GAVIN:** May I ask a follow-up question
25 on that? It's really -- it's not necessarily a

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1 gotcha at all, I just want to -- I just want to
2 understand something better. And it's not -- and may
3 result in a potential next step.
4 So what Carl is doing for you, is Carl
5 actually going and looking to, you know, for example,
6 things like looking into transcripts of incoming kids
7 to say how many kids, that yes, they were actually 4
8 to 15 credits behind, where they should have been
9 when they got here? Or are they looking in your data
10 (inaudible)?
11 I think it's useful to think about -- data
12 integrity I think is going to be a bigger
13 conversation for everybody statewide as we move to
14 much more stuff being technology-based. So I'll stop
15 editorializing and ask you to answer the question.
16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Well, we never asked
17 Carl to look at that kind of data. So it's basically
18 student achievement data, and it's grad rate, and
19 it's demographics, all that kind of stuff. But it's
20 not -- I mean, (inaudible). (Inaudible).
21 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Anything further? All
22 right. We thank you so much for coming and sharing.
23 And we look forward to the next steps.
24 **MR. GAVIN:** Mr. Chair, can we just have a
25 one minute recess?

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1 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** Yeah. We can ask for a
2 one minute recess.
3 (A recess was had)
4 **MR. GAVIN:** Okay. So I'm recognizing it's
5 22 minutes before --
6 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** My question was, can we
7 postpone the (inaudible) plan? Because I think it's
8 going to take longer than a 22 minute conversation.
9 It's just how we have conversations. They're always
10 over 22 minutes. And what we can do is move our
11 minutes to a time so we can approve our minutes from
12 the April 29th meeting.
13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'll move.
14 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I'll second.
15 **MS. MACKEDON:** I'll second.
16 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** We have two seconds. All
17 in favor of approving the minutes from the April 29th
18 meeting?
19 **MEMBER CONABOY:** I have a question first
20 about our minutes. Because it's much abbreviated
21 from what we're accustomed to see.
22 So our new process is what we said, is that
23 we have just a record of actions in the written
24 minutes, and there will, going forward, be a
25 transcript available of recordings of the meetings,

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1 if they're here in this building, and a transcript,
2 full transcript is that what the due process is?
3 **MR. GAVIN:** That is correct, Madam Chair.
4 We will be working with (inaudible) to ensure there
5 is a mechanism to getting a link to the transcript
6 online, but to ensure that can't be printed or
7 downloaded because of course the court reporters make
8 their living on copies, and we want to make sure that
9 they get their money.
10 **MEMBER CONABOY:** But they would be available
11 for purchase?
12 **MR. GAVIN:** They will be available for
13 purchase.
14 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Okay. So we will have a
15 full record. That's really what I'm interested in
16 protecting. So we'll have a full record going
17 forward.
18 **MR. GAVIN:** Yes.
19 **MEMBER CONABOY:** Thank you. That's very
20 helpful.
21 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** So all in favor of
22 approving those minutes from April 29.
23 **ALL:** Aye.
24 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** All right. We'll move
25 forward. No worries.

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1 We do have one last item, it's public
2 comment, and we have one person. Our standing closer
3 of our meeting, Dr. John Hall, is standing tall and
4 handsome.
5 **JOHN HALL:** Jerry Johnson, members of the
6 board, thank you very much for that. My intention is
7 not to be there, but listening to the audio,
8 something alarmed me, so I'll get to that in a
9 moment.
10 I just wanted to tell you, all of you
11 reminded me of graduation tomorrow. I am glad and
12 happy to report we had 20 graduates with Associates
13 degrees on Monday walking with CSN. And we're
14 graduating 152, not 20 out of 150. We only have 90
15 kids that returned to us for a second year. So we
16 have 60 newbies, (inaudible) Associate's degree in
17 one year. So it's really 20 out of 90. It's pretty
18 good.
19 Five indicated that they received over 70
20 credits, when 60 will get you an Associate's degree,
21 but we had five kids deciding that they would rather
22 take Calculus 3, Physics, going through the
23 Bachelor's of engineering rather than taking some
24 course that's not going to be useful for them.
25 What was alarming to me is the discussions

1 earlier on. It was about the contract and not being
2 able to operate if we didn't have a signed contract.
3 I do appreciate all of the work that you do and all
4 of the time that you're spending with the schools
5 today. I still don't have a signed contract.
6 So if you could maybe light a fire. I know
7 that Mr. Gavin , we just spoke moments ago, so I'm
8 happy to be here, answer any questions, but I'm still
9 looking for a contract.
10 **MR. GAVIN:** Thank you, Dr. Hall.
11 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** All right. Is there any
12 further discussion? I'll move to have our meeting
13 adjourned at 4:11.
14 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Aye.
15 **CHAIRMAN JOHNSON:** All right. Meeting
16 adjourned. 4:11.
17 (Thereupon the proceedings were
18 concluded at 4:10 p.m.)
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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2 STATE OF NEVADA)
3 SS:
4 COUNTY OF CLARK.)
5 I, Jane V. Efaw, certified shorthand
6 reporter, do hereby certify that I took down in
7 shorthand (Stenotype) all of the proceedings had in
8 the before-entitled matter at the time and place
9 indicated; and that thereafter said shorthand notes
10 were transcribed into typewriting at and under my
11 direction and supervision and the foregoing
12 transcript constitutes a full, true and accurate
13 record of the proceedings had.
14 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed
15 my hand this ____ day of _____, 2016.
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19 Jane V. Efaw, CCR #601
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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2 STATE OF NEVADA)

3 SS:

4 COUNTY OF CLARK.)

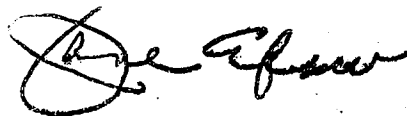
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11 direction and supervision and the foregoing
12 transcript constitutes a full, true and accurate
13 record of the proceedings had.

14 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed
15 my hand this _____ day of _____, 2016.

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Jane V. Efaw, CCR #601

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