

**EXHIBIT AH**

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**In The Matter Of:**

*Nevada State Public Charter School Authority Meeting*

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*May 20, 2016*

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*Min-U-Script® with Word Index*

- 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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17 Taken at Grant Sawyer Building  
18 555 East Washington  
19 Room 4412  
20 Las Vegas, Nevada  
21 On Friday, May 20, 2016  
22 At 9:00 a.m.

23

24 Reported by: Jane V. Efaw, CCR #601, RPR

25

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1 Friday, May 20, 2016; Las Vegas, Nevada

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

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

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

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

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 gong 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

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

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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

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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

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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.

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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



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

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

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,

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

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

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?

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)

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,

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

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.

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 TONDRIK:** 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

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 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 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 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

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

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 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 **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 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 gradation 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,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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 --

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

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?



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

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

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

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.

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

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?

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

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 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 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 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

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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 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 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 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



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.

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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?

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.

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 **TIBERIO 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 student 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).

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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.

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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

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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.

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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

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

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

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

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 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 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 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.

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

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 and 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

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

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

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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

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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

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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

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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).

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?

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

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

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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 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

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?

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.

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,

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.)

19 \* \* \* \* \*

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2 STATE OF NEVADA )

3 SS:

4 COUNTY OF CLARK. )

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6 reporter, do hereby certify that I took down in  
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15 my hand this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

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Jane V. Efaw, CCR #601

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