

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

5:30 p.m.

Held At:

441 Fourth Street, N.W.

Old Council Chambers

Washington, D.C.

Reported and transcribed by: Gervel A. Watts,
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A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

- Jack Jacobson, President
- Karen Williams, Vice-president
- Mary Lord, At Large
- Laura Wilson-Phelan, Ward 1
- Ruth Wattenberg, Ward 3
- Joe Weedon, Ward 6
- Tierra Jolly, Ward 8
- Bethe Asfaha, Student Representative
- Jessie Rauch, Executive Director

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1	C O N T E N T S
2	I. Call to Order
3	II. Announcement of a Quorum
4	III. Approval of the Agenda
5	IV. Approval of Minutes
6	V. Comments from the President of the D.C. State Board of Education
7	
8	VI. Comments from the State Superintendent of Education
9	VII. Public Comments
10	VIII. Honoring the Teachers of the Year Winners:
11	
12	2015 DC Teacher of the Year - Jennifer Ramacciotti
13	2014 DC History Teacher of the Year - Barrie Moorman
14	
15	2014 Milken Educator Award - Michelle Johnson
16	Finalists:
17	2015 DCTOY Finalist - Sarah Rikken
18	2015 DCTOY Finalist - Jordan Kerstetter
19	
20	2014 PAEMST Finalist - Michael Mangiaracina
21	2014 PAEMST Finalist - Kristina Kellogg
22	
	2014 PAEMST Finalist - Vanessa Ford

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IX. Adoption of the Committee Report,
"Recommendations on the Adoption of
the Waiver Renewal and Subsequent
Amendments"

Panel on Enhanced School Report Cards:

Kristin Ehrgood, President and Board
Chair

Melissa Bryant, Stanton Elementary
School

Keesha Cox, Parent, DCPS

Suzanne Greenfield, Director, Citywide
Youth Bullying Prevention Program

Bob Rothman, Alliance for Excellent
Education

X. Adoption of the Committee Report:

"Challenges Associated with the
Implementation of the District of Columbia's
New Compulsory Attendance Laws"

XI. Adjournment

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

2 CALL TO ORDER

3 MR. JACOBSON: On behalf of the members
4 of the District of Columbia State Board of
5 Education, I want to welcome you, our guests and
6 our viewing public to our Wednesday, March 18,
7 2015 State Board State Board of Education meeting.

8 The State Board holds its regularly
9 scheduled meetings on the third Wednesday of every
10 month, here in the Council Chambers at 441 Fourth
11 Street, Northwest.

12 The State Board will be holding a
13 special meeting on Thursday, March 26, 2015 at
14 4:30 p.m. at this location to review and discuss
15 the proposed ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal
16 Application with our partners with OSSE. The next
17 public meeting of the State Board of Education
18 will take place at this location on Wednesday,
19 April 15, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. We look forward to
20 you joining us.

21 The members of the State Board of
22 Education welcome your participation and your

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1 support in our efforts to improve education in the
2 nation's capital.

3 The State Board of Education meeting for
4 March 18, 2015 is now called to order. The roll
5 will now be called to determine the presence of a
6 quorum.

7 ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM

8 MR. RAUCH: Jack Jacobson?

9 MR. JACOBSON: Present.

10 MR. RAUCH: Karen Williams?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: Present.

12 MR. RAUCH: Mary Lord?

13 MS. LORD: Here.

14 MR. RAUCH: Laura Wilson-Phelan?

15 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Present.

16 MR. RAUCH: Ruth Wattenberg?

17 MS. WATTENBERG: Present.

18 MR. RAUCH: Kamili Anderson?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. RAUCH: Mark Jones?

21 (No response.)

22 MR. RAUCH: Joe Weedon?

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1 MR. WEEDON: Present.

2 MR. RAUCH: Tierra Jolly?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. RAUCH: Brian Contreras?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. RAUCH: Betel Asfaha?

7 MS. ASFAHA: Present.

8 MR. RAUCH: Mr. President, you have a
9 quorum.

10 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA/MINUTES

11 MR. JACOBSON: Wonderful. And I want to
12 make Board members aware and staff aware that if
13 the Board takes any official action, we will have
14 Board Member Kamili Anderson dialing in to vote on
15 anything that we might vote on this evening. Our
16 Bylaws allow electronic voting.

17 A quorum has been determined and the
18 State Board will now proceed with the business
19 portion of the meeting. Is there a motion to
20 adopt the agenda items that are before us?

21 MS. WILLIAMS: So moved.

22 MR. JACOBSON: Is there a second?

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1 MR. WEEDON: Second.

2 MR. JACOBSON: Is there any discussion?

3 (No response.)

4 Seeing none, the motion has been properly moved

5 and seconded and we're ready for a vote. All those

6 voting in favor, please say "aye."

7 (Board members collectively vote

8 "aye.")

9 MR. JACOBSON: Any opposed?

10 (No response.)

11 Any abstentions?

12 (No response.)

13 The ayes have it and the agenda is approved. Is

14 there a motion to adopt the minutes from our

15 February 4, 2015 working session?

16 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: So moved.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Is there a second?

18 MS. WATTENBURG: Second.

19 MR. JACOBSON: The motion has been moved

20 and seconded. Is there any discussion?

21 (No response.)

22 The motion has been properly moved and seconded

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1 and we are ready for a vote. All those in favor

2 please say "aye."

3 (Board members collectively vote

4 "aye.")

5 MR. JACOBSON: Any opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 And any abstentions?

8 (No response.)

9 The ayes have it and the meeting minutes from our

10 February 4th working session are approved. Is

11 there a motion to adopt the minutes from our March

12 4 working session?

13 MS. WILSON-PHELEN: So moved.

14 MR. JACOBSON: Is there a second?

15 MS. WILLIAMS: Second.

16 MR. JACOBSON: The motion has been moved

17 and seconded. Is there any discussion?

18 (No response.)

19 Hearing none, we'll vote.

20 MS. WILSON-PHELEN: Mr. President, I do

21 think we should review the actual attendance taken

22 at that meeting for accuracy.

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1 MR. JACOBSON: We will do that. So do
2 the mover and second allow for technical
3 corrections to the minutes as proposed?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

5 MR. JACOBSON: Yes. Okay. Then I will
6 work with our staff to ensure that any technical
7 corrections are made to those minutes. Given
8 that, any other discussion on the minutes from
9 March 4th?

10 (No response.)

11 All those in favor of adopting, please say "aye."

12 (Board members collectively vote
13 "aye.")

14 MR. JACOBSON: Any opposed?

15 (No response.)

16 And any abstentions?

17 (No response.)

18 The ayes have it and the meeting minutes from
19 March 4th have been approved.

20 COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

21 Good evening. My name is Jack Jacobson and I'm
22 president and Ward 2 representative of the State

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1 Board of Education. The items are tonight's
2 agenda are a demonstration of the tremendous role
3 that the State Board plays in the District's
4 education governance system. First, we will be
5 honoring some of our most influential leaders, the
6 2015 Teacher of the Year, the 2014 History Teacher
7 of the Year and the 2014 Milken Educator Award
8 winner.

9 After that, the State Board will
10 consider adoption of two powerful committee
11 reports. The first report, titled,
12 "Recommendations on the Adoption of the Waiver
13 Renewal and Subsequent Amendments," would allow
14 the State Board to share its recommendations for
15 improving accountability of our publically funded
16 schools.

17 Later this year, the State Board will
18 consider approval of a Revised Elementary and
19 secondary Education Act Flexibility Waiver Renewal
20 Application, along with other amendments
21 throughout the year. We look forward to working
22 together with our partners at OSSE on these

1 important issues.

2 We will also consider adoption of the
3 report from the Truancy and Student Engagement
4 Committee. The report, titled, "Challenges
5 Associated with the Implementation of the District
6 of Columbia's New Compulsory Attendance Laws" is
7 the result of over a year of work by more Board
8 members and staff to analyze the Board-approved
9 compulsory attendance rules to determine if they
10 require amendment.

11 Finally, I am happy to announce that we
12 are in the process of making an offer to a chief
13 student advocate candidate. I want to thank Karen
14 Williams, Chair of Selection Committee, for her
15 diligent work in making this happen. Additional
16 Board members, including Ms. Lord and others have
17 participated significantly in the candidate
18 selection and interview process. And I think
19 Board members and a significant community panel
20 for their input and participation in our selection
21 process.

22 Given that the State Superintendent is

1 not here to speak with us today, we will not hear
2 remarks from the Superintendent's Office.

3 PUBLIC COMMENTS

4 MR. JACOBSON: We'll now hear from
5 public witnesses who wish to speak on education-
6 related matters. Public witnesses are asked to
7 contact the State Board staff by telephone or
8 email if there is an interest in providing
9 testimony at our public meetings.

10 Are Alex Peerman or Marilyn Holmes here?

11 Alex, come right on up. Mr. Peerman is
12 with D.C. Lawyers for Youth Policy and Advocacy.
13 You have three minutes to provide public comment.
14 Before you start, just make sure the green light
15 is on for your microphone.

16 MR. PEERMAN: Good evening, members of
17 the State Board of Education. My name is Alex
18 Peerman and I am the Policy and Advocacy Associate
19 at D.C. Lawyers for Youth, a research advocacy and
20 direct service organization that seeks to improve
21 D.C.'s youth justice system.

22 Thank you for the opportunity to

1 testify. My testimony today will focus on the
2 ability of schools and the courts to comply with
3 their obligations under the compulsory attendance
4 regulations issued by the Office of the State
5 Superintendent of Education. In the '12/'13
6 school year, 63 percent of high school students
7 were chronically truant, missing more than 10 days
8 of school. By the '13/'14 school year, that
9 figure had dropped to 48n percent.

10 In general, attendance figures are
11 improving in both DCPS and PCSB schools at all
12 grade levels and in all wards. These improvements
13 are laudable, but far too many students are still
14 missing school, with about one of every six D.C.
15 students being labeled chronically truant last
16 school year.

17 Last week, D.C. Lawyers for Youth and
18 the Children's Law Center released a report on
19 school attendance in D.C. Its two key findings,
20 which form the basis of my testimony, are one,
21 that schools lack the capacity to make robust,
22 early interventions with students showing signs of

1 poor attendance; and two, that current law would
2 require the District to expend scarce resources on
3 ineffective court referrals if it were followed.

4 Let me first address the early
5 interventions. A major component of D.C.'s
6 truancy response required in OSSE's compulsory
7 attendance regulations is the school-based student
8 support team, which is supposed to meet after a
9 student accumulates five unexcused absences; to
10 identify the barriers faced to that individual to
11 attending school and create a plan to address
12 those barriers.

13 This is the part of the protocol that
14 are supposed to ensure students receive early
15 intervention before accumulating too many
16 additional absences. In practice, however,
17 schools lack the staff resources to perform SST
18 meetings with students in the majority of the
19 required cases. Through January of the current
20 school year, DCPS reported that it was only 38
21 percent complaint with the requirement to hold SST
22 meetings.

1 Now let me turn to the issue of court
2 referrals. The Attendance Accountability
3 Amendment Act of 2013 lowered the unexcused
4 absences, the number of unexcused absences after
5 which schools are required to refer a student to
6 family court from 25 absences to 15 absences.

7 D.C. Lawyers for Youth is concerned that
8 the current threshold required for court referral
9 places a large number of youth at risk for
10 counterproductive court interactions. Our
11 understanding is that the Council intended for
12 court referral to occur only after a student has
13 received robust school-based early intervention
14 that proved ineffective.

15 In practice, however, schools lack the
16 staff resources to perform the required volume of
17 early interactions and because there is no legal
18 requirement that support services be provided
19 before court referral, students are placed at risk
20 of inappropriate prosecution. Indeed, the data
21 show that between calendar year 2012 and 2013, the
22 number of family court complaints that a youth was

1 a person in need of supervision of which truancy
2 is a subset, nearly doubled. And the family court
3 received approximately 750 more referrals that
4 were returned to schools due to "Failure to
5 demonstrate efforts to intervene and abate the
6 truancy."

7 An increasing number of referrals is
8 concerning for two reasons; first, research in the
9 delinquency context has consistently shown that
10 sending low risk youth to court increases their
11 likelihood of future misbehavior, compared to
12 community-based aversion.

13 Second, family court has neither the
14 capacity, nor the appropriate tools to address the
15 root causes of truancy for every student. These
16 observations bring me to our recommendations. A
17 full report attached to my testimony include six
18 recommendations that I hope the Board will
19 support. I'll focus on three of those now.

20 First, a school's failure to hold an SST
21 meeting and provide appropriate support of
22 services should be an affirmative defense to

1 truancy prosecutions. This would make the law
2 more consistent with the Council's intention when
3 it passed the Attendance Accountability Act that
4 students should receive comprehensive school or
5 community-based intervention first and only be
6 referred to court if they continue to accumulate
7 absences once services are in place.

8 Second, the District should provide
9 funding for the staff necessary for increased
10 compliance with the SST mandate and other early
11 intervention programs, like the JGAs, Show Up,
12 Stand Out and the Access Youth Truancy
13 Intervention and Prevention Mediation Pilot
14 Program. These sorts of programs are the ones
15 that can actually address the root causes of poor
16 school attendance and they should be the focus of
17 the District's anti-truancy efforts.

18 The third, we recommend a revision of
19 the 80/20 Rule to ensure that only students with
20 serious attendance problems receive the
21 chronically truant designation. As the Board is
22 well aware, students who miss 20 percent of the

1 school day are considered absent for the full day.
2 Being tardy is a problem to be sure, however, it
3 is not the sort of problem that the court system
4 is appropriate to address. It is a matter of
5 common sense that a student who is late 15 times
6 over the course of the school year and another
7 student who doesn't come to school for 15 straight
8 days require different responses; however, the
9 current regulations would treat those students in
10 the same way.

11 The State Board has been, perhaps, more
12 focused on the 80/20 issue than any other body in
13 the District, so it's well positioned to press for
14 reform on this issue. And I look forward to
15 hearing the recommendations of the Board in its
16 Committee report.

17 In closing, I want to thank the State
18 Board for its commitment to student achievement
19 and its interest in school engagement issues.
20 Truancy is an incredibly complex problem and the
21 Board has an important role as the body that
22 approves state rules for enforcing attendance

1 requirements. We hope to work with you on these
2 recommendations and future efforts to ensure that
3 every student is in school every day.

4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify
5 and I welcome any questions.

6 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Peerman.
7 For our public comment period, we don't normally
8 do questions from the Board, but this is something
9 that the Board is focused on and we have a report
10 that we will be considering adoption of later this
11 evening.

12 D.C. Lawyers for Youth was very helpful
13 in our drafting of that report. So we will
14 continue to work with you and other stakeholders,
15 as well as the Council at OSSE and anyone else who
16 can help solve these problems to move forward on
17 these issues. So thank you so much for your
18 testimony tonight.

19 MR. PEERMAN: Great. Thank you.

20 HONORING THE TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

21 MR. JACOBSON: And at this time, I would
22 like to invite the Teacher of the Year winners to

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1 come forward. I'm going to apologize because I'm
2 not going to be able to pronounce everyone's name
3 correctly.

4 We are welcoming three winners, to start
5 with. The 2015 Teacher of the Year winner, Ms.
6 Jennifer Ramacciotti.

7 MS. RAMACCIOTTI: Ramacciotti.

8 MR. JACOBSON: Come on up. The 2014
9 D.C. History Teacher of the Year winner, Ms.
10 Barrie Moorman. Ms. Moorman, thank you for
11 joining us.

12 The 2014 Milken Educator Award, Ms.
13 Michelle Johnson. Thank you, Ms. Johnson. And we
14 have a number of finalists, as well, which will be
15 on a second panel, just given our space
16 constraints. Each of the winners, you'll have
17 five minutes or less to speak and we will then
18 take questions from the Board.

19 So why don't we start on your left and
20 just go ahead.

21 MS. RAMACCIOTTI: Okay. Great. Thank
22 you. Good evening, and thank you for inviting me

1 here tonight. My name is Jennifer Ramacciotti and
2 I am the 2015 Washington, D.C. Teacher of the Year
3 and the eighth grade math teacher at KIPP DC AIM
4 Academy in Ward 8.

5 I have served as both teacher and
6 administrator at AIM Academy for the last seven
7 years; two years as the sixth grade math teacher,
8 three years as the vice principal, and last year,
9 I made the decision to return to the classroom as
10 the eighth grade math teacher.

11 Returning to the classroom was extremely
12 challenging decision for me. I had to weigh
13 having a broader impact on our entire school
14 community as our math and science instructional
15 coach with having a more direct impact on our
16 students as their classroom teacher. Ultimately,
17 the relationships, the results, and the more
18 immediate change I knew I could foster, led me
19 back to teaching.

20 Everything that I do as a teacher,
21 everything we do as teachers, from engaging
22 students in conversation during breakfast and

1 homeroom, to running musical rehearsal and
2 tutoring after school and all of the classes that
3 I teach in between. Everything. Every decision I
4 make, every action I take, everything is about
5 relationships and results. The relationships with
6 students must be built on trust, and teamwork, and
7 accountability and those relationships can lead to
8 outstanding results seen in student growth and
9 achievement and one cannot happen without the
10 other.

11 My relationships are grounded in the
12 notion that we will not give up on one another and
13 we will do whatever it takes to succeed. In my
14 planning and in my teaching, this means utilizing
15 a variety of engagement strategies to reach every
16 student so that all of my students can meet the
17 needs of the constantly growing and increasingly
18 rigorous list of content.

19 Students must learn to work together in
20 teams. They must learn to discover on their own
21 and direct their own learning. They must make use
22 of technology and apply material from a full year

1 of learning at any moment in order to problem
2 solve. I work to provide as much differentiation
3 and individualized learning as possible so that I
4 can support every student to reach their greatest
5 potential, no matter where they were when we
6 started the year together. The greatest thing
7 about teaching, besides our kids is that we, as
8 teachers can continue our own individual learning
9 to reach our own greatest potential.

10 Going back to the classroom gave me the
11 great opportunity to put into action all that I
12 had learned, all that I had suggested and all that
13 I had taught the teachers at AIM Academy as their
14 coach. And in the last year and-a-half, through
15 professional development, collaboration with my
16 colleagues, and recently, even in networking with
17 other Teachers of the Year, I have continued to
18 learn and I have continued to grow, but I am not
19 done learning and I cannot stop growing. We, as
20 teachers, cannot stop until all of our children in
21 D.C. and around the country are receiving the
22 highest quality instruction from the most

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1 effective teachers. Thank you again for having me
2 this evening and thank you for the great honor of
3 being Washington, D.C.'s Teacher of the Year.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much. Ms.
6 Moorman.

7 MS. MOORMAN: Good evening. Thank you
8 so much for having me today; it's an honor to
9 speak with you this evening. My name is Barrie
10 Moorman and I teach U.S. History and sociology at
11 E.L. Haynes High School.

12 As an American Studies major, exploring
13 race, class, and gender in U.S. History in
14 college, I was convinced that the most important
15 way to create systemic change and interact
16 institutionalized inequity is through education. I
17 continue to teach because I believe that schools
18 are a critical force in both shaping individual's
19 lives as well as our society and that either
20 maintain the status quo or challenge it through
21 our actions.

22 I want to be a leader for equity, both

1 in my school and in our society. As a history
2 teacher, my first key belief that influences my
3 practice is that history has shaped our present
4 and that we can learn from the past in order to
5 change the future.

6 My most meaningful example of this is
7 leading a weeklong civil rights tour of the south,
8 through which my students and I meet with civil
9 rights activists and visit landmarks where young
10 people took action to interrupt in justice. We
11 connect the struggles of the past to the present
12 and students return to school inspired to create
13 change.

14 We take advantage of local resources,
15 like the African American Civil War Memorial and
16 Museum to question who tells the stories of
17 history and whose voices are left out of the
18 dominant narrative, then unearth those stories to
19 make sure that they are heard.

20 My second key belief is that students
21 need to see the relevance of what I teach to their
22 lives and should be able to use what they are

1 learning in school to understand their current
2 context. In class, I strive to connect historical
3 topics to current events, whether by framing a
4 study of the history of colonization with a
5 discussion of the Washington football team name,
6 or holding a war on poverty convention on its 50th
7 anniversary to discuss its relevance today. This
8 also includes bringing in current issues to the
9 classroom.

10 Students in D.C. are seeing rapid change
11 occurring in our city and are questioning where
12 they fit in. My senior sociology class explored
13 gentrification and displacement by partnering with
14 two local organizations, D.C. and the Latin
15 American Youth Center, to explore these topics and
16 collect stories from residents and business
17 owners, short-term and long-term in different
18 neighborhoods.

19 This was an important opportunity for
20 students to see their communities as classrooms
21 and to connect history to the present, inspiring
22 students to create change for the future. I also

1 believe that relationships are key. My students
2 have to have trust in me in order to take risks to
3 perform at high levels and to push themselves out
4 of their comfort zone.

5 I've had the privilege of moving up with
6 cohorts of students at two growing schools and
7 know how powerful it can be to have multi-year
8 relationships with both students and their
9 families. I also think that relationships are
10 important among colleagues. I feel fortunate to
11 work with a team of exceptional educators that I
12 trust, who I invite into my classroom constantly
13 to ask for feedback when I'm struggling, or to
14 problem solve when I'm having a hard time meeting
15 the needs of particular students.

16 Being able to form alliances, especially
17 with people who bring different perspectives and
18 ideas is critical for me to be able to evolve as a
19 teacher. I think that the relevance and
20 relationships are also the keys to increasing
21 student achievement. I have seen student produce
22 amazing work when they have an authentic audience,

1 a real world problem to tackle and a genuine
2 passion for what they are doing and when I'm able
3 to both support and challenge them to produce
4 meaningful work.

5 I think that the most significant
6 impacts I can make in my students' lives are
7 unlikely to all be recorded within one year, but
8 in the ways that they think about the world around
9 them and their ability to take action in order to
10 make our community a place where we all want to
11 continue to live and to learn.

12 Thank you again for having me this
13 evening; it's really a pleasure to speak with you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much. And
16 Ms. Johnson.

17 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening. My name is
18 Michelle Johnson. Thank you so much for having me
19 here. Currently, I'm a second grade teacher at
20 Seaton Elementary School in the Shaw neighborhood
21 of D.C. I actually began my professional career
22 in the political sphere, working first in polling

1 before moving onto a lobbying firm, and finally,
2 in a congressional office.

3 On the Hill, I actually had the
4 opportunity to work on the congressman's education
5 portfolio and had an impact-related amendment
6 passed in the House version of the National
7 Defense Authorization Act. That work led to a
8 deepening passion to increase the quality of
9 education in our nation. I decided to jump into
10 the trenches, as they say, and get firsthand
11 experience in the classroom. That was six years
12 ago, and it's clear, more than ever, that teaching
13 is my calling.

14 As an educator, I know that all students
15 can learn. My task is not to equip them with the
16 right answers, but to teach them to question and
17 to light a fire that will ensure they become
18 lifelong learners. I believe that we will live in
19 a more peaceful world when we ensure our youth
20 have a true love of learning.

21 One of my students actually said it best
22 a few weeks ago, "So if everything I learn makes

1 my brain grow, then each day I learn something new
2 is like a puzzle piece. When I put the puzzle
3 together, I will have a better life." She said
4 this as if it was more a question than a
5 statement, and then she looked to me for
6 confirmation.

7 "Yes," I said. "And the world will keep
8 opening up for you with possibilities." I like
9 that type of fire for students in my classroom
10 each day by creating a student-centered classroom
11 that uses data analysis to ensure each student has
12 a personalized education. As a class, we work to
13 strengthen the deficits of each individual child
14 through technology, movement, guided instruction,
15 conferencing and goal setting, just to name a few.
16 As such, my students come to school each day
17 unafraid to make mistakes, excited to see how
18 their brains will grow and securing the trust they
19 place in me to help them reach their potential.

20 I have found success in the classroom
21 through a myriad of other avenues, from the
22 incredible leaders we have in D.C., to the

1 meaningful PDs that are offered, meticulous
2 planning among my team, data analysis, to what is
3 known as whole brain teaching.

4 Whole brain teaching is essentially a
5 method of delivering instruction that pairs visual
6 queues or physical movement with every vocabulary
7 word, strategy, formula. This method not only
8 keeps all children engaged, but also gets those
9 neurons firing in ways that help them retain
10 information.

11 Over the years, however, nothing has
12 aided in the achievement of my students more than
13 the relationships I have with them and their
14 families. When the aforementioned student
15 inquired about school being a series of puzzle
16 pieces, I promptly texted her mother. She knows I
17 support her child and would do anything to ensure
18 her growth because I work on our relationship
19 every single day. In turn, I have an academic
20 partner waiting for that student each day.

21 Together, we're closing the achievement
22 gap. Together, we're supporting the whole child.

1 Academic partnerships with families through
2 organizations like Flamboyan that promise home
3 visits, consistent communication and deep dives
4 into data during conferences, are invaluable to
5 the achievement of our students. It's my hope
6 that every school in D.C. and throughout the
7 nation will implement this model.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. JACOBSON: I want to thank you all
11 for coming to join us tonight and for sharing your
12 talents with D.C. students and families. It's
13 really wonderful and very inspiring.

14 We're going to take a round of questions
15 from Board members. I'd suggest three-minute
16 rounds. One three-minute round if that is
17 appropriate.

18 Board members with questions? Ms.
19 Wattenberg from Ward 3.

20 MS. WATTENBERG: Congratulations to all
21 of you and thanks for sharing with us. All three
22 of you, in one way or another, did talk about how

1 important the relationship was between teacher and
2 student and I'm reminded that some of us --
3 there's a new movie out that shows what happened
4 to some of the students who were in D.C. a number
5 of years ago who were promised college
6 scholarships and didn't necessarily take a narrow
7 or straight path to college, but in the end had
8 done pretty well. And one of the things they talk
9 about is how the relationship that they had with a
10 single mentor and a set of teacher was so
11 important.

12 And I wonder if you could reflect a
13 little bit on what, in particular, how your school
14 is structured or how you particularly structure
15 your day so that you are able to have that kind of
16 relationship with your kids.

17 MS. RAMACCIOTTI: I actually think that
18 the relationships I've developed are in the
19 smallest ways. That no matter what the school
20 structure schedule is it's the genuine moments and
21 the very authentic relationships and the
22 conversations.

1 I just got married this weekend. It's
2 been a big year. I came back to school this week
3 and every student, "Congratulations." "Did you
4 have fun?" "How was it?" That, to me, is how
5 that relationship develops, sharing part of me
6 with them. And it could happen over lunch, it
7 could happen in the hallway, passing. I don't
8 think -- I mean, there are certainly big ways:
9 running the musical and spending hours
10 and hours after school and on Saturdays with them
11 helps, but it's the small ways, for me, that has
12 helped to develop those relationships.

13 MS. MOORMAN: I think I've had the
14 opportunity to screen Southeast 67 when it came
15 out and I think that's one of things that was
16 really striking to me about that, and I think
17 about with relationships, it's kind of the long-
18 term nature of that investment. And so I think,
19 as you were mentioning, the students who they
20 showed in the film didn't necessarily all graduate
21 within four years, go to college the next year,
22 graduate from college within four years, but it

1 was clear, particularly, that their children,
2 almost all of whom were pursuing higher education,
3 had really been influenced by what their parents
4 had experienced in middle school.

5 And so I think one of the things that
6 I've been thinking about a lot since screening
7 that is how do we, as schools, make sure that we
8 are having that impact without necessarily seeing
9 the results within a year, even within four years.
10 And how do we make sure that we are looking at
11 data kind of in a broader way because I think that
12 it was striking to me in the film that the effect
13 of the mentorship didn't really become evident by
14 some of our metrics and for a whole generation,
15 which is a pretty long-term investment.

16 And I so I think the way that I think
17 about relationship building really is in a long-
18 term way. As I mentioned, I've had the
19 opportunity to move up with some cohorts of
20 students and so I think that the biggest thing
21 that has fostered my relationships with them has
22 been them seeing me as someone who is a part of

1 their lives and making a multi-year commitment,
2 both to them and to their families and being
3 around for a long-term investment has been really
4 critical.

5 MS. JOHNSON: I would echo with what
6 both of my colleagues are saying. I think that
7 there are ways that you can structure the school
8 and the culture of the school to ensure that
9 you're building relationships with students and
10 families through organizations like I mentioned,
11 Flamboyan.

12 The day-to-day, though, however, with
13 the students and the interactions that I have with
14 them are what ensure that they trust me. I show
15 an interest in them. I know everything that's
16 going on with them. I constantly ask them
17 questions about what's going on with them. So
18 it's more about how I interact with them, minute-
19 by-minute than some sort of prescription that you
20 could give every teacher to have success with.

21 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you all. Ms. Lord.

22 MS. LORD: Thank you, Mr. President.

1 And congratulations. I particularly want to give
2 a shout out to Mr. Moorman, who will be graduating
3 the first senior class from E.L. Haynes Public
4 Charter School. I've seen your students grow and
5 I just think that's great.

6 We, as a Board, spend a lot of time
7 thinking about data assessment and holding schools
8 accountable. And each and every one of you has
9 mentioned the individualism, the tailored
10 instruction you're able to deliver, the
11 relationships you're able to build.

12 What role does standardized state
13 accountability testing play in your curriculum and
14 in your relationships with your students? And what
15 would you recommend that we, you scrap, have more
16 of, or do differently to capture the kinds of
17 metrics that I believe you were talking about,
18 which is the impact that you have now that shows
19 up later?

20 MS. RAMACCIOTTI: I think that there has
21 -- sorry. I mentioned that the relationships are
22 built, a piece of that is, on accountability. And

1 I think there has to be some measure that my
2 students know that they are growing and that they
3 hold me accountable for their results and then I
4 can hold them accountable. Whether it is a
5 standardized test, I think there is some level of
6 rigor that we are really reaching for this year
7 and I think that that has been a true challenge
8 for me, as the teacher, and for my students. But
9 I think that also, using assessments like our MAP
10 Assessment, our NWEA Assessment at school, allows
11 for the demonstration of growth as well, and our
12 students can be held accountable to that growth
13 and I can be held accountable for their growth, in
14 addition to just the results of one individual
15 standardized test.

16 MS. LORD: So let me make sure I
17 understand. So you're giving interim assessments.
18 You're constantly measuring where your kids are
19 starting and where your students are finishing.

20 MS. RAMACIOTTI: Yes. They take the MAP
21 test, so we're provided with that data three times
22 a year. And then in addition to that, benchmarks

1 that are aligned to the curriculum and that data
2 is very transparent for our students and very
3 transparent to our families. And I think that
4 that piece holds me accountable, as their teacher,
5 but it is also is a chance for us to celebrate the
6 progress and the achievement and the growth they
7 are making. I think it's important to hold them
8 accountable to that data too.

9 MS. LORD: Thank you.

10 MS. JOHNSON: I agree. Not knowing what
11 PARCC is going to look like, I'm hopeful. I'm
12 proud of the Common Core, but those are not the
13 things that I use each day to measure my student's
14 growth. We actually progress monitor. We call it
15 interim monitoring, done weekly, and those
16 students that are on red on a number of measures,
17 whether it's reading, writing, math, are
18 consistently progress monitored. They know
19 exactly where they are. They know exactly the
20 goal that they have to reach, and those
21 incremental increases are what keep them engaged
22 and sort of buying into the whole classroom.

1 MS. MOORMAN: I think one of the things
2 that we talk about a lot at Haynes is the idea
3 that intelligence is not fixed that we can all get
4 smarter. And so our seniors have read Carol
5 Drake's work and think about what it means to have
6 a growth mindset.

7 And I think, for me, I am sometimes
8 concerned that standardized tests have become sort
9 of a single, metric defining success. I
10 definitely think collecting data on students and
11 knowing where they are, being able to see that
12 they're moving forward and making growth is really
13 important, but I'm really interested. I've been at
14 two schools that have explored some more
15 performance-based assessment and project-based
16 learning and I think that opportunities,
17 particularly when students can reflect on how
18 they've grown, areas they've struggled and then
19 produce really high quality work can be really
20 meaningful and I think that it's really important.

21 As we kind of embark on our new journey
22 with the PARCC Assessment that we think about how

1 to make sure there's not the single defining
2 metric of student intelligence because I think
3 that that then really undermines the idea that we
4 can't all get smarter.

5 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you very much. Ms.
6 Jolly from Ward 8. And I want the transcript and
7 record to reflect that Ms. Jolly joined us just
8 before this panel began speaking.

9 MR. JOLLY: Thank you. My question is
10 specifically for Ms. Moorman. I want to hear a
11 lot more or as much as time will allow, about the
12 race and equity and education seminars that you
13 developed for the staff for your school, just what
14 that entails, how it has impacted the way that
15 your staff interacts with students and impacted
16 your work overall.

17 MS. MOORMAN: Definitely. So the
18 seminars are something that's become a really
19 important part of our professional development at
20 E.L. Haynes and the model are kind of based on I
21 was also -- before I was at Haynes, I was at
22 Capital City, and we had a facilitator that who

1 came in and did some training with us. It's been
2 of the big belief that our staff holds and our
3 school is that as adults and as teachers, we have
4 to be able to talk with each other about race and
5 equity. I think that this year has proven in many
6 ways that as a country, we have a really difficult
7 time doing that, particularly a cross difference.
8 And I think at this point where our city is
9 changing a lot, demographically, the school system
10 is changing, it's really important that as
11 teachers and with our administration, with other
12 staff in our school that we can have conversations
13 about race because we are serving students from
14 different racial backgrounds, where race plays a
15 role.

16 So this started out over a series of
17 years. A colleague of mine, our former elementary
18 school principal, who's now doing this work full
19 time, facilitating race and equity work around the
20 country and has made this a critical part of our
21 professional development. And so for new teachers
22 who come to Haynes, too -- and half our five days

1 of new staff training are around developing some
2 common language about how we can talk to each
3 other about race.

4 And I think it's a balance of both
5 having people think about their personal
6 experiences, the experiences with race that we may
7 have all had that have been painful. Doing a lot
8 of work to connect kind of our head and heart, and
9 then also taking a look at students, looking at
10 students with an eye towards how could this be
11 impacting students from different racial
12 backgrounds. How can we engage with our students
13 in conversations, and then ultimately, from
14 conversation, I think, leading to action to try to
15 interrupt the inequities that we have in our
16 school and we have in our society.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Just the one? Okay. Ms.
18 Wilson-Phelan from Ward 1.

19 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Thank you, and
20 congratulations to all of you. I'm really
21 curious. As you likely know, we're a policy
22 approval board that at a state level, even though

1 D.C. is sort of weird because it's a city/state
2 structure, and so I'm curious, just from your
3 perspective, is there one or a set of policies
4 that you think we're not getting right here or
5 that we could make tweaks to that would either
6 make your jobs easier or the jobs of your
7 colleagues easier?

8 MS. MOORMAN: I know one area that I
9 think you are doing a lot of work in that I feel
10 really excited about is how we look at high school
11 graduation, moving away from Carnegie units and
12 being able to think about how do we have more
13 opportunities for competency-based measurements of
14 where students are. How can we look at
15 alternatives for what students are doing during
16 their day so that seat time isn't a determining
17 factor for whether a student is ready to move on.
18 And I think really thinking this is, as Ms. Lord
19 mentioned, this is E.L. Haynes' first senior
20 class.

21 And so it's been a really exciting
22 opportunity to grown and to see students who I met

1 the first year of the high school move on, but I
2 think also, have really been thinking a lot about
3 high school graduation and college readiness and I
4 think that those are not always synonymous right
5 now. And it's been really important to us in
6 conversations about our first class of seniors.

7 I feel like we made a commitment around
8 college readiness, but some of the ways that
9 graduation is defined don't feel like they are as
10 aligned with that as I'd like them to be. And so
11 that's where I'm excited to see kind of how we can
12 move forward as a city and really be a model for
13 other places in the country.

14 MS. JOHNSON: I believe a discussion
15 needs to happen around our special needs students.
16 Currently, they're, in a way, cut off from the
17 total school community. They are often annexed
18 and then they remain in those classrooms, at least
19 in elementary school, through the fifth grade.

20 I think we need to, moving forward,
21 ensure that they're part of an inclusion effort
22 that's going to include more personnel to ensure

1 that they have support in the general classroom,
2 but I believe moving forward we can make that
3 happen.

4 MS. RAMACIOTTI: I, as teacher and
5 administrator, have seen both sides of our
6 struggles to fully hire the most effective
7 teachers for the greatest quality of education for
8 our students. I know it is a big point of
9 discussion around providing equitable access for
10 all of our students in D.C., and I think it is a
11 place for us to continue to grow. What will it
12 take for teachers to be satisfied with the working
13 conditions at their school or to be fully trained
14 for classroom culture and instruction, but
15 ensuring that all of our kids across the city have
16 the best possible educator in front of them.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Weedon from Ward 6.

18 MR. WEEDON: Just let me echo the
19 congratulations from my colleagues up here for all
20 the work that you do and the awards you received.
21 It was interesting to hear you talk about data.
22 In all of your testimonies, I'd like to note, not

1 one of you really talked about data; you talked
2 about well-rounded education, hands-on learning
3 experiences.

4 Data, it was there, it was mentioned,
5 but it was secondary and I think we need to keep
6 that in mind as we look at the new assessments and
7 how we use data. I wanted to continue on the less
8 train of thought there about equitable access to
9 teaching. It's one of the issues that the Board
10 is going to be looking at over the next couple of
11 months with OSSE.

12 What can we do to better support
13 teachers and ensure that teachers are willing to
14 work in schools in all parts of the District?

15 MS. RAMACIOTTI: I think there are a lot
16 of factors that come into play. Just looking at
17 what's being done so far, in DCPS, the opportunity
18 for greater impact awards if you are teaching in
19 those schools is a good step forward. I don't
20 think that it's enough.

21 I think that a lot of times our teachers
22 do not stay with us as long as I hope they would

1 because they don't feel fully prepared for all of
2 the challenges. In our schools with the highest
3 needs, it's not just about being a teacher, it's
4 about being a counselor, and it's about being a
5 social worker, and it's about being a teacher. And
6 I think we often just feel very ill-prepared or
7 overwhelmed by the great demands of that.

8 So whether it's additional school
9 staffing and support, whether it's additional
10 support for our special education students or
11 training for our teachers in that regard, I think
12 that that would do the greatest good that would
13 lead teachers to a place where they felt like they
14 could stay. And that length, that tenure with our
15 schools leads to those stronger relationships to
16 be able to see students all the way through. But
17 I do think it comes down to having a teacher who
18 has attended all of the professional development
19 or who has the support within the school or from
20 outside of the school, in order to continue.

21 MS. MOORMAN: I think for me, there has
22 been a few things that have been really important,

1 professionally and that I think are important to
2 other people who are looking to be teachers, and
3 one has been having autonomy to make decisions. I
4 feel like I'm in a place where I have -- my
5 professional judgment is respected and trusted.
6 And so I'm able to make decisions about what I do
7 in my class and feel a lot of ownership, then,
8 over what I'm doing.

9 I think that having opportunities for
10 coaching in a professional environment where it's
11 okay to feel like I'm not perfect, has also been
12 really important. And as I mentioned, you know, I
13 feel like I'm in a place where if I'm struggling
14 or having a class isn't going the way I want it
15 to, I can ask my administration to come and
16 observe, not in a way where I feel fear that I
17 might lose my job or will be judged, but that I
18 can ask for help and get it. And I feel that with
19 my colleagues as well.

20 And so it's been really important to me
21 to be in an environment that feels like we're a
22 team and people can look in and, you know, come in

1 anytime and say here are some areas that I can
2 grow, without a fear that that is only happening
3 in a way with a number attached to it on an
4 evaluation.

5 And I think that part of what I think is
6 also really important, going back to the question
7 about our race and equity work is really thinking
8 about what are the things in our community and in
9 our schools that we want to see who do we want
10 students to see in front of them teaching and how
11 do we make sure that we're asking the right
12 questions and having processes that feel really
13 accessible. And I think right now we're seeing,
14 as the demographics of our city are shifting, a
15 need to really have open and honest conversations
16 about race and equity at schools. And it's been
17 important to me, professionally, that that space
18 has existed so we can grapple with some of the
19 challenges that we may be having as teachers and
20 make sure that people who are coming are committed
21 to doing the work of interrupting inequity, which
22 is what we want to make sure, so that all of our

1 students can achieve our mission.

2 MS. JOHNSON: I believe leveraging the
3 human capital in the building a lot of times goes
4 overlooked. There is a lot of talent within the
5 classrooms that goes untapped, and breaking into
6 that and having teachers lead PDs within their
7 school, having their classrooms be open for their
8 colleagues to come through, make observations,
9 take notes, debrief, and really be a professional
10 learning community would go a long way to
11 retaining the most effective teachers.

12 Beyond that, I believe when the budget
13 comes through and movements are made, a lot of
14 times -- I have not been an administrator, but
15 it's looked at as pawns and you're just sort of
16 moved around to whatever grade level needs a
17 teacher. And I believe if you want to create
18 experts within grade levels or within subject
19 areas, a teacher needs to be in a grade level or
20 within a subject for a minimum of three years.

21 So baring that in mind, ensuring that
22 schools have the funds to retain our teachers and

1 have enough staff to service all of the students
2 is vital.

3 MR. JACOBSON: Thank so much. Do any
4 other Board members have questions?

5 MS. LORD: I just have one quick
6 question.

7 MR. JACOBSON: If it's quick, we can do
8 it.

9 MS. LORD: I'm going to say it real
10 slow. As someone who is absolutely besotted and
11 passionate about science, technology, engineering
12 and math education, I wanted to ask our KIPP AIM
13 math teacher, how do you deal with students who
14 come in at widely varying levels of competency and
15 what is the definition of success when they leave
16 your eighth grade class?

17 Do they need to be prepared for Algebra
18 I success or are they already doing Algebra I?

19 MS. RAMACIOTTI: Yes is the answer to
20 that question. Some of our students are fully
21 prepared for maybe a little more than just Algebra
22 I. We are covering a great deal of Algebra I

1 content. I think it's necessary to provide them
2 with a background and with a foundation that will
3 lead to success in high school and beyond. And so
4 with the shift to Common Core, it has been a lot
5 of content to cover at a very deep level, but I do
6 feel it is necessary for every student.

7 In a nutshell, I would say all of the
8 differentiation, any remediation time and
9 remediation blocks they can get to catch students
10 up; the ability to use technology for a lot of
11 individualized plans and for differentiation has
12 helped to bring students closer and closer to
13 grade level so that then I can send them off to
14 high school knowing that they are solid and ready
15 for what lies ahead.

16 MS. LORD: And just very briefly, would
17 you support holding students back at eighth grade
18 if they weren't prepared for high school?

19 Is that something the Board should even
20 entertain?

21 MS. RAMACIOTTI: I think that more time
22 is necessary for some students. That that's all

1 it is, it's the opportunity for them to have more
2 time. I do think it is dangerous or scary to send
3 students to high school with the possibility of
4 them needing to spend more time there and then
5 ultimately, maybe not making a decision to
6 continue when they reach the age that they can
7 make that decision on their own.

8 And so I do think there are individual
9 cases in which more time in eighth grade or
10 whatever grade is necessary, is important for the
11 student's success in the future.

12 MS. LORD: Thank you. That really
13 helped clear my mind. It just seems that math is
14 a huge gatekeeper and we almost do more students
15 to a five-year high school experience because of
16 that lack of preparation for Algebra I success.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MR. JACOBSON: I'm going to release the
19 panel.

20 MS. LORD: Thank you for your
21 indulgence.

22 MR. JACOBSON: You bet. I'm going to

1 release the panel, but please don't leave, we're
2 not done with you yet. I'm going to invite our
3 finalist panel to come up.

4 Our 2015 D.C. Teacher of the Year
5 finalist, Sarah Rikken; 2015 D.C. Teacher of the
6 Year finalist, Jordan Kerstetter.

7 Our 2014 Presidential Awards for
8 Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching,
9 there are three finalist here. I'm not going to
10 read that whole title again. Michael
11 Mangiaracina, Kristina Kellogg and Vanessa Ford.

12 And I think we're going to need to bring up one
13 additional chair.

14 We'll do three-minute rounds. If
15 witnesses can't stick to that, that would be very
16 helpful. We'll start on my left and just proceed
17 down one-by-one. When everyone is settled, you
18 just make sure that the green light is on. You
19 can start. Each witness has three minutes. Thank
20 you so much.

21 MS. KERSETTER: Hello and thank you to
22 the members of the State Board of Education for

1 inviting me to participate in today's Teacher
2 Recognition Panel. I'm honored to participate in
3 this important discussion.

4 My name is Jordan Kerstetter, and I am a
5 pre-kindergarten teacher at D.C. Prep's Edgewood
6 Elementary Campus, which is in Ward 5. This is my
7 third year; I've been teaching there since 2012
8 and I actually also have a daughter who attends
9 kindergarten there.

10 At D.C. Prep, along with teaching pre-K,
11 I am also a core member of the early childhood
12 Curriculum Planning Committee, where I write and
13 provide whole group lesson plans for all pre-
14 school and pre-kindergarten classrooms across the
15 D.C. Prep network.

16 Prior to this year, I was a pre-K grade
17 level lead at D.C. Prep, and prior to coming to
18 D.C. Prep, I taught at Apple Tree Early Learning
19 Public Charter School. I started as an assistant
20 in pre-K and moved to a master teacher.

21 I grew up in the Midwest, graduating
22 from the University of Northern Iowa, with my B.A.

1 in leisure youth and human services, and then
2 recently, last year, I graduated from George Mason
3 University with a master's in special education.

4 My influence to become a teacher has
5 been my students. Growing up, I never dreamed of
6 being a teacher. I knew I wanted to work with
7 youth and make a difference in their lives and in
8 the community, but it was just never going to be
9 as a teacher. Even in my early years at Apple
10 Tree, I ignored the signs that I already was an
11 educator. And after coming to D.C. Prep, I
12 realized that I had a talent for teaching early
13 childhood and accepted and embraced my calling as
14 a teacher.

15 The students' progress in academics and
16 social and emotional skills continues to reinforce
17 and affirm my dedication to my time and talent to
18 my youngest learners. I can see their academic
19 progress when they come in at the beginning of the
20 year with maybe little or no learning environment
21 and they aren't able to recognize what a letter is
22 or what a number is. And by the time they leave my

1 classroom in pre-K, they've mastered the alphabet
2 and number recognition and are ready to enter
3 kindergarten at or above grade level.

4 I also see the same progress with social
5 skills, where kids may come in my classroom at the
6 beginning of the year and have little vocabulary
7 to describe the emotions that they're feeling and
8 resort to tantrums. We're seeing them grow
9 throughout the year where they can independently
10 calm their bodies down and use words to describe
11 how they are feeling.

12 My calling is in early childhood and
13 underserved communities, where I can provide high
14 quality education at an early age and a strong
15 start to their education careers. I balance
16 structure and nurture with my students, where I
17 focus on both academics and character education.

18 My students achieve rigorous standards
19 because I have consistently strong classroom
20 culture, where students are learning
21 developmentally appropriate content in a fun,
22 joyful and nurturing environment. I reflect on

1 teaching and student growth to meet the needs of
2 all learners, whether that's one-on-one
3 interventions, small group or whole group
4 instruction.

5 I believe all students can learn and
6 achieve high standards when given the correct
7 tools and correct learning environment.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much. Next.

10 MS. KELLOGG: I didn't want to be
11 second. Good evening, everyone. Thank you for
12 having me. It's a pleasure to be here to speak
13 with all of you. My name is Kristina Kellogg and
14 I am a current fourth grade math and science
15 teacher at the Capitol Hill cluster of schools at
16 Watkins Campus.

17 I have been teaching now for 14 years.
18 I started out in Montgomery County Public Schools
19 as an instructional systems of mathematics and
20 left Montgomery County Schools because I wanted to
21 come back to D.C., the place where I live, the
22 place where I grew up. As a product of a D.C.

1 Public School and a graduate of the University of
2 the District of Columbia, I thought this is where
3 I need to be, so I came back and here I am.

4 So I have this love affair with D.C.
5 Public Schools, where, over the years, I have gone
6 through trials and tribulations with reform, with
7 changes of best practices and have wondered, over
8 the years, why did I choose to be a teacher.

9 Well, as a young girl growing up in a
10 household of strong independent women, who are
11 also teachers and educators, education was vital.
12 You did nothing else but learn. It was important
13 that you ask questions and that you took on the
14 curiosities of everything you were exposed to, to
15 what to take to extract, you know, what the
16 meanings meant and how you can use those to be a
17 problem solver.

18 And so after watching my grandmother for
19 30 years run D.C. Parks and Recreation at Rose
20 Park Historical Recreation Center, which is now
21 torn down, thanks to D.C. Parks and Recreation,
22 but a historical site all in itself. And then my

1 mom, who attended D.C. Teacher's College, which is
2 also no longer, I felt as though with those forces
3 and that legacy that it was my mission to continue
4 that in the Kellogg household.

5 So with those things that I live by, my
6 mantra is building people, big people and little
7 people. And so over the years, I have thrust
8 myself in those opportunities to share things that
9 I have learned over the years with other teachers,
10 with co-teachers, with mentor teachers, with
11 first-year teachers and senior teachers, and there
12 alike, the learning process continues.

13 So in the classroom, what I have found
14 as a safe place for our students to be able to
15 explore is letting them know, this is the place
16 where you come and make mistakes. This is where
17 you come to learn through that process of ah, man,
18 I didn't get it that time, but with these tools
19 and this experience, you will become a better
20 problem solver and here are some ways that we can
21 get there.

22 So through a math workshop model, which

1 has been a model that I have studied and
2 researched and practiced, I feel this would be a
3 place where students can not only learn from me,
4 but learn from each other, be reflective about
5 what it is they're learning. It gives me the
6 opportunity to be observant, to assess, to take
7 that data back so I'll know how to push them
8 forward the next time we come to meet.

9 While students are learning in their
10 groups, I'm able to pull my small groups and work
11 with them and meet them where they are. So it's a
12 cycle of learning, where it's just not Ms. Kellogg
13 as the frontier and the one who's at the board, at
14 the white board being the one who's always telling
15 them this is the way that you must learn, but it's
16 also a learning community where we're all invested
17 and the students are held accountable to be able
18 to speak the same language as I do and challenge
19 each other as I challenge them myself.

20 So I'm still here in this marriage and I
21 love DCPS. I believe that this forum is an
22 awesome forum where we can all learn from each

1 other. As being recognized with this position, I
2 have learned, through networking with other
3 teachers and have been very reflective of what's
4 next, what's the next step. And so I'm honored to
5 be here today to continue that discussion with you
6 all. Thank you.

7 MR. JACOBSON: And thank you so much for
8 being here. Next.

9 MS. FORD: Ms. Kellogg and Mr.
10 Mangiaracina and I are all still weighted with
11 bated breath for NSF to make their decision on who
12 wins. So we're all finalists together, so luckily
13 we just get to learn together, which is the most
14 important part.

15 Good evening. My name is Vanessa Ford.
16 I am a Think Tank teacher at Maury Elementary in
17 Northeast, D.C. I'm also the STEM coordinator at
18 the school. I currently also serve as an NGSS
19 curator for NSTA and do NGSS work with Achieve as
20 well, and I'm a Presidential Award finalist for
21 science for K through 6th.

22 I'm going to tell a little story about

1 where I came from and how I got here. The road to
2 how I got here started when I was quite little.
3 My dad was an elementary principal, a phenomenal
4 one, and my mom is a music teacher and we would
5 spend our summers in our VW van, traveling across
6 the country and I would play teacher with my
7 little sister, which I thought meant worksheet and
8 stickers. Oh, I was so wrong, but I fell in love
9 with teaching then and I said I'm going to be a
10 teacher and I'm going to become a ski racer.

11 And so when I decided to go to college,
12 I needed to have a Division I Alpine Ski Racing
13 place and a place with an education program. So I
14 got accepted into Bates College and in my freshman
15 year, blew out my knee for the third time and
16 switched majors to psychology and decided a new
17 path, new journey, until senior year when I said
18 no, I really want to be a teacher.

19 And in 2001, at the time, there was this
20 little known organization that was taking people
21 who wanted to be teachers and bring them to cities
22 to help develop teachers called Teach for America,

1 and that brought me here in 2002. I've been here
2 for 13 years and have taught third, fifth, and
3 middle in three different wards in the city,
4 actually, four to five-year chunks in various
5 locations, charter and public.

6 Truthfully, around my philosophy of
7 education and as a teacher, it has not changed
8 since I began. My ability to implement that
9 successfully in a room full of children has
10 changed dramatically, and I'm glad for that, but
11 my philosophy is really quite simple. If you give
12 children access to enriching opportunities, you
13 allow them varied ways to approach content and you
14 build a really strong web of relationships around
15 that child, there's nowhere but up for that child.

16 I remember around my third year of
17 teaching, I had a student who was struggling,
18 academically and in many different ways and his
19 father came to me and said I just want him to be a
20 better man than I am. And I said well, I want to
21 be a better teacher to him than I am. And
22 together, we were able to start to build that web.

1 And that classroom, when I got nominated for this
2 award, three students from that third class in
3 2004, wrote me nominations for this award, many
4 years later.

5 Currently, I am enveloped strongly in
6 the STEM world. I am STEM teacher at Maury
7 Elementary. I see three-year-olds to fifth
8 graders every single week, 372 of them. Student
9 achievement, late to standardized test is often,
10 math and reading and we're still waiting to find
11 out what it's going to look like for NGSS this
12 year and we may be the first in the country to
13 actually attempt a NGSS-aligned exam, so we are
14 waiting to see.

15 But for me, my main focus is
16 collaboration, risk-taking, perseverance, problem
17 solving, 21st Century skills that we measure
18 formatively through the year and through those
19 relationships. I have to say, in this forum, up
20 until about two hours ago, even with all of this -
21 - and last week I was asked to sit with Secretary
22 Duncan and speak to him about where we are in STEM

1 education and where's we're going. Up until a few
2 hours ago, I wasn't even having a job next year.

3 I am really, really lucky to have the
4 principal who I have, who is here, who fights for
5 me every single year. And I found out a few hours
6 ago I was approved again to have a job. I do not
7 have a classroom. And that's just me, who has a
8 principal behind me and a staff and a community
9 behind me in my program, but the inequities in
10 science education at the elementary level in
11 particular, are inexcusable. We shouldn't need to
12 have so much fight for STEM leaders within our
13 elementary schools and we shouldn't need so many
14 people fighting for them all the time. Because
15 sometimes STEM is the "in" that we need for
16 students to buy in to the education that they
17 deserve.

18 Sorry I went over.

19 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. That's
20 powerful testimony and we appreciate it.

21 MR. MANGIARACINA: Okay. Thank you. My
22 name is Mike Mangiaracina. Seven years ago, I

1 made the choice to leave my career in private
2 schools to come teach in DCPS, and I'm happy to
3 report that this was the right choice.

4 I current teach first through fifth
5 grade science at Brent Elementary and I love it.
6 I get to help kids start noticing the world around
7 them for the first time. I am there when they
8 begin marveling at the invisible forces of gravity
9 and magnetism, when they first keep track of bird
10 migration and when they see for the first times in
11 their lives that shadows change shape and
12 direction throughout the day and that this is
13 caused by the earth turning.

14 This job is a privilege. We call the
15 subject science, but that's not really the best
16 word for what we teach. Instead, we're teaching
17 kids about nature in its broadest sense of the
18 term, and we're showing them to observe well and
19 seek answers. Most importantly, we're teaching
20 them that sometimes their assumptions are wrong
21 and that we all grow when we change how we think
22 and what we believe.

1 We need to teach our children to trust
2 science and to learn to love the natural world as
3 their own and we can see what happens when this
4 trust breaks down. Two examples. Far too many
5 Americans embrace doubt and denial about climate
6 change, and the consequences of this doubt will be
7 enormous. We can also look at the growing measles
8 outbreak, which stems from an anti-vaccination
9 movement that has, at its heart, a mistrust and
10 misunderstanding for the methods of science that
11 we're trying to teach our students right now.

12 It's my job to introduce students to the
13 subjects and methods of science, as I would
14 introduce them to some good friends, whom they can
15 grow to trust and love. I wish this was happening
16 in all of our city's elementary schools, but to
17 echo some of Vanessa's concerns here, it pains me
18 to notice that in too many elementary schools,
19 teachers aren't given the tools to teach science
20 this way, or in many elementary schools, there is
21 no science instruction at all.

22 Our schools have, by in large, embraced

1 the idea that closing the achievement gap depends
2 on students mastering ELA and math. Of course,
3 these skills of reading and writing and
4 mathematics are paramount to success in the world.
5 And I say that as a former math teacher for 10
6 years. But we don't have to limit ourselves.
7 There is room for a broader narrative in our
8 students' lives, one that puts science and its
9 joyful scrutiny of the natural world on equal
10 footing with the rest of our academic priorities.

11 Part of my job at Brent is to elevate
12 elementary science to where it belongs, right
13 alongside math, language arts, music, visual arts
14 and social studies in a liberal education. And
15 part of my commitment to D.C. Schools is to do
16 what I can to elevate science at all of our
17 elementary schools, especially those without
18 science specialists like me and Vanessa, or where
19 science is not even taught.

20 Thank you for inviting me here today. I
21 hope that our time together tonight, we can talk
22 about the place of elementary science in D.C.'s

1 future. I ask you to consider ways that we could
2 give our hard-working elementary classroom
3 teachers the resources, training, and confidence
4 they need to teach science as well as they teach
5 math and ELA already and to ensure that science is
6 taught and supported at all elementary schools.

7 Our students would embrace this and we
8 would all enjoy the rewards of a more confident,
9 better informed, more critical and more thoughtful
10 citizenship. Thank you.

11 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you for your
12 testimony. Ms. Rikken.

13 MS. RIGGEN: Hello. I currently teach
14 eighth grade physical science at Oyster Adams
15 Bilingual School, and I've also taught previously
16 at Wilson High School to 10th and 12th graders,
17 both physical science and environmental, Capital
18 City with Ms. Moorman and Mr. Hopkins and Seed
19 Public Charter School.

20 I also, similarly, to Ms. Kellogg, I am
21 the daughter of two educators. My mom was a
22 teacher and my father was a principal. And I

1 first became a teacher at the age of six, in my
2 basement to the neighborhood children. And I
3 actually modeled my room exactly as my first grade
4 teacher and I invited her over to see my school,
5 and she was blown away by how it was literally a
6 mirror image of what she had created in her room
7 and was kind of freaked out by it, but now I know
8 because my parents love to tell that story.

9 My brother was my most successful
10 student. He had the highest attendance rate and
11 by the time he went to kindergarten, he was
12 reading fluently and able to talk about books. So
13 all of that is to say, teaching was definitely in
14 my blood and in mid-high school, I changed my mind
15 and decided I was too smart to be a teacher. That
16 I was going to go into the sciences instead.

17 And so I went off and I majored in
18 environmental science and geology, went on to be
19 an environmental consultant for three years, but I
20 felt a bit empty, like my work didn't have enough
21 meaning. I had watched my parents be so
22 passionate about their work, and yet I felt like I

1 was pushing papers. So I read a quote that you
2 should pay attention to what you pay attention to
3 when looking for your career. I was like, gosh, I
4 mean, I care a lot about the environment and I
5 care a lot about education, particularly the fact
6 that education can be this equalizer and I was
7 living here in D.C., seeing inequity all around
8 me, so I decided to go back to grad school for
9 urban ed.

10 So teaching, to me, is a beautiful
11 profession. I think it's real. You're dealing
12 with people who you're growing and supporting
13 every day. It's dynamic. You can never expect
14 the same thing. Becoming a teacher, making that
15 change from the office to the classroom was, by
16 far, the hardest thing I had ever done. And I'm
17 so thankful for my administrators that I had that
18 first year, who were nothing but supportive of me.
19 I'm super Type A and hard on myself, and they were
20 nothing but kind and compassionate and I attribute
21 my being here today to them and the fact that they
22 never once put me down and only built me up.

1 And I have a ton more, so I'll cut back.
2 As a science teacher, I love the new focus on the
3 5 E's and the NGSS. I just came back from NSTA
4 and was super excited to spend a day at the
5 Professional Development Institute on how to
6 implement these standards in a meaningful way. And
7 I'm like, anxious for the summer to get here so
8 that I can start, just tearing apart what I
9 currently do and putting it together in a coherent
10 way.

11 But similar to what you've heard, I
12 think that it's going to be a very big challenge
13 for people in my position as a middle school
14 teacher, when it's depending on this foundation,
15 this six- year foundation preceding it. And as
16 you've heard here, it really doesn't exist for
17 most students here in D.C. and the country, to be
18 honest.

19 And so we're asking our students to do
20 these very complex tasks, which are awesome, but
21 it's a little bit unrealistic, unfortunately, if
22 we continue to put science on the backburner in

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1 the lower grades. Thank you.

2 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you all for your
3 testimony tonight. Let's give our finalists a big
4 hand.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. JACOBSON: And we'll do three-minute
7 rounds for Board members. We'll start with Mr.
8 Weedon from Ward 6.

9 MR. WEEDON: Thank you. First,
10 congratulations. I'd like to note that the three
11 Presidential Award winners are all Ward 6. Our
12 finalists, sorry. We'll find out who wins.

13 And I think that says lot about our
14 community and where we would need to lead the
15 city. Science, as you said, can't be on the
16 backburner, it has to be an integral part of the
17 community. I want think want to think Principal
18 Albert-Garvey from Maury for leading the charge at
19 our school.

20 Full disclosure, my kids are at Maury.
21 There was a stinky science photo tweeted out today
22 of my son and with his long blonde hair. Just

1 great stuff. And we see how that engages and
2 changes the kids on a daily basis.

3 What can we do, as a Board of Education,
4 to take what you were doing and spread across the
5 rest of the city?

6 MS. FORD: So elementary, we have to
7 make sure of a few things. Ultimately, even at
8 the detriment of my own job, ideally, you don't
9 need a science resource person at the elementary
10 level. If we didn't need to have us, that means
11 that things were going really, really great.

12 So what needs to happen is that our
13 elementary teachers have to have access to really
14 rich, professional development. They need to have
15 a voice, saying to them science is important. I
16 expect it in the classroom. Here is how I'm going
17 to support it in existing. Here's the
18 professional development that you're going to get
19 and here's some ways to integrate everything
20 because science could be the base. Kids who
21 really dislike math will graft temperature with
22 like "Banded" and not even realizing that they're

1 using mathematical skills.

2 Initially, I think putting back into the
3 budget or pushing back in a STEM leader at each
4 school, whether it's a classroom teacher or a
5 resource position to get that going at every
6 single elementary school may be critical. And
7 then, perhaps, phasing us back into the classroom.

8 MS. RIGGEN: I actually just had a
9 conversation with my principal about this
10 yesterday because I understand that for elementary
11 school teachers, a lot of the time, it's a
12 materials management issue, it's a content issue,
13 it's the fact that they feel pressure for
14 literacy. But what we're throwing around would be
15 me potentially being a science specialist, maybe
16 even for a while, where I would have the plan in
17 my mind of, you know, recognize a few really high
18 quality kits, for example, for every grade because
19 there are some great minds out there who have
20 already created these things, but then teaching
21 the teachers how to use the kit, how to manage the
22 materials, the content, and then do a slow release

1 over the course of a year so that you've now
2 taught the teachers to fish, so to speak, as
3 opposed to you being the expert. And they will
4 also be, I would think, empowered and excited to
5 be teaching a subject that their kids can't wait
6 to do because that's the way science is received
7 in classrooms everywhere, I think.

8 MR. MANGIARACINA: Do you mind?

9 MS. RIGGEN: Go ahead.

10 MR. MANGIARACINA: Okay. To go right
11 along with what they're saying, I think the most
12 bang for the buck would in training our classroom
13 teachers because we have a lot that are feeling
14 very uncomfortable about teaching science, for a
15 lot of really good reasons. And there's a lot we
16 could do to get them content and there is a really
17 D emphasis on content in all of our professional
18 developments. The trend is now towards the
19 structure of teaching, but not toward the content
20 of science or the content of mathematics.

21 I think it's imperative that we swing
22 back the other direction because from that content

1 comes the methodology. If we have an
2 understanding of science -- if we have an
3 understanding about how natural phenomenon works,
4 ways to teach it will flow from that. And we have
5 a huge reservoir of talent in this city, from all
6 the science professionals that work here who would
7 probably be happy to be tapped to share content to
8 the handful of us that our elementary science
9 specialist -- I, for one, have offered on numerous
10 occasions over the years to try to help to lead
11 PDs, and the way that the bureaucracy is
12 structured, makes that a very difficult process.

13 If there is a way that I could access
14 our classroom teachers and say hey, I'm going to
15 do a PD for you all, we'll get some, but there are
16 way too many obstacles right now for us to
17 accomplish that without some institutional shift.

18 MS. KELLOGG: What I find the challenge
19 as well is just being able to provide those
20 opportunities and materials across the city. I
21 have gone to some NGSS DCPS PDs where I meet with
22 a cohort of 20 teachers and we talk about

1 materials that they have access to. Some do, some
2 don't, depending on where they are. Depending on
3 the principal putting their budget to either
4 refill those FOSS kits or to purchase FOSS kits
5 that are NGSS aligned, whether or not they've done
6 the process of project-based learning.

7 And so that seems to not be a nice
8 continuum across the city, where when we do meet
9 with teachers, say from Ward 6 versus Ward 4,
10 wherever they are, they don't have access to the
11 same materials. Where I have also been to blended
12 learning sessions and have talked to some of the
13 social studies teachers and they have great
14 resources in middle school, but none in elementary
15 school. So it's that same type of forward
16 thinking if we're providing the same materials for
17 math and literacy, we need it for science all
18 across the board.

19 MS. KERSTETTER: And I would say, as far
20 as science being an early childhood education
21 teacher, our kids come in as early as three years
22 old and we have units around science. Currently,

1 we're talking about aquatic animals. We have
2 outer space, we have living things with life
3 cycles and so that's just interjecting that
4 passion for them and age-appropriate level, where
5 they can understand we are learning science in a
6 pre-school and pre-K environment that's hands-on
7 learning and I think that would be setting them up
8 for success as well, through elementary and middle
9 school.

10 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. Ms. Phelan.
11 Wilson-Phelan.

12 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: That's okay. Just a
13 quick question. I wanted to come back to Mr. Man
14 -- I'm sorry, your name is long.

15 MR. MANGIARACINA: Mangiaracina.

16 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Mangiaracina.

17 MR. MANGIARACINA: Yes. Thank you.

18 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: You said there were
19 many obstacles to you being able to deliver PD to
20 your colleagues. I'd be curious to understand
21 what those actually look like.

22 MR. MANGIARACINA: Sure. So on a simple

1 --

2 MS. LORD: Can you pull the mic closer?

3 Pull the mic a little closer. Thanks.

4 MR. MANGIARACINA: Yes. How's that?

5 Good. So I don't feel the need to have a lot of
6 structure and templates around the kind of thing I
7 would do with teachers. I'm more the kind of
8 person that would like to just gather everyone in
9 the room that shares an interest and see where
10 they are and sort of assess what their needs are,
11 but I found that we need to have a lot of
12 structures in place before we can even offer a PD.
13 And a lot of those structures tend to limit us.

14 For example, I've been to a DCPS PD,
15 where everyone in the room was asked to create a
16 next generation science standard unit for second
17 grade, regardless of what grade they were teaching
18 because the philosophy was well, the structure of
19 this activity will help you. And it was very
20 frustrating to everyone but the second grade
21 teachers.

22 Another obstacle I've had was I felt

1 like I had proven my medal as someone who is
2 competent at this stuff and I said can you just
3 get me the email addresses for all the elementary
4 school teachers in the city and I'll hold monthly
5 meeting myself, you don't have to do anything.
6 And I have no access to those emails. And I have
7 no help in communicating. So just the basic
8 networking that I need to do has to go through a
9 few levels of bureaucracy and I find that to be
10 unnecessary. Let me give it a shot. If it doesn't
11 work, fine, but just being able to contact some
12 teachers would be great.

13 MS. WATTENBERG: Thanks. And
14 congratulations again to you. And for the three
15 of you that I guess are competing together --
16 against each other, good luck.

17 MS. FORD: He stands alone. She's the
18 math finalist.

19 MR. MANGIARACINA: You'll win.

20 MS. FORD: No, you'll win. It'll be
21 great. We have a deal; whoever wins, takes the
22 other to dinner.

1 MS. WATTENBERG: Sounds good. So I want
2 to push a little further on what Joe had also
3 raised. It's interesting that all of you raised
4 being neglected of science in the elementary
5 grades. And of the issues that we're going to be
6 dealing with next, after your panel is done is how
7 can we, as a Board, put into place some incentives
8 that recognize the importance of the other
9 subjects that work against the narrowing of the
10 curriculum that you're talking about and that many
11 of us have heard constantly, from both parents and
12 teachers.

13 So Joe asked you in sort of a positive
14 way, what could other schools do to follow your
15 lead. I want to put it kind of more in a policy
16 way, if I can, which is to ask you how we might,
17 from where we sit, create some incentives for
18 elementary schools in particular, to broaden the
19 curriculum.

20 And let me throw out one -- a couple of
21 ideas that may or may not be useful. One of the
22 things we're looking at is how to broaden the

1 school report card, which you're probably all
2 familiar with. It's mainly focused on test scores
3 that has some staffing information. What could we
4 put in there -- how could we enhance that so that
5 the message would be sent to schools, to teachers,
6 to families, both that this is important work on
7 it in your school and to families, you should be
8 looking at this when you look at report cards. Let
9 me throw out two ideas, one that I'm not sure
10 would work, although I like it, and one that might
11 work if we could figure it out.

12 So one idea was to try to get schools to
13 indicate how much time do you spend on science and
14 social studies. And personally, I would really
15 like to know that. As a parent, I would've like
16 to know that. I wonder how honestly that
17 information would come forward and if there's
18 anything we could do to know that it was honest.
19 So that might be an idea. I'm curious about your
20 reaction to it.

21 Another idea that we've talked about is
22 doing school climate surveys, where you would

1 actually have surveys that went to teachers, that
2 went to kids and you could ask different kinds of
3 questions that would allow you to make some
4 reasonable research-based assumptions about what
5 was going on. And it did occur to me, as you were
6 talking, that you might ask teachers a question
7 that was more like did you have a situation this
8 year where you didn't have materials to teach a
9 lesson in science or social studies. Maybe that
10 would get you better, more honest information.

11 So with those two examples, I want to
12 throw it back to you and see if you have any
13 thoughts about how we could try to incentivize
14 this in the schools.

15 MS. FORD: Very quickly. The report
16 card, actually, this year, right before the
17 beginning of the school year, they placed all of
18 the performance expectations of the next
19 generation science standards on all K-6 report
20 cards. So we actually have a report card now that
21 is majority science language on one page,
22 including the Banded Engineering Standards. So

1 there are these same performance expectations
2 listed for K, 1 and 2, 3, 4, and 5, and they're
3 listed each year.

4 So we may want to first go back and look
5 at that because it's now visible, like, this
6 should be there, but there may not be the support
7 that that's actually existing. So the elementary
8 report card is very visibly science and also,
9 potentially, very visible to parents, not science
10 when it's coming home n/a, n/a, n/a, potentially.

11 I like the climate idea. I think that
12 the phrasing of the words to teachers, to
13 students, much like you do with school safety and
14 to administrators looking at what is the climate
15 around science education in your elementary, could
16 be really critical. And the wording, to ensure
17 that it was not negatively faced because you might
18 find some places that really great things are
19 happening. It could be really valuable
20 information. The time probably wouldn't give you
21 -- they'll say 45 minutes.

22 MS. KELLOGG: So you also asked about

1 the time, or instructional time spent with science
2 and social studies or just science.

3 MS. WATTENBERG: Yeah. I'm equally
4 interested -- sorry guys -- in the social studies
5 end, history, geography and so on.

6 MS. KELLOGG: Yeah. Different strokes
7 for different folks at different schools. I can
8 recall a long time ago that I believe it was a 30-
9 minute block that had to be for instruction for
10 either one, every day. You guys recall that?

11 MR. MANGIARACINA: I've heard 45
12 minutes.

13 MS. KELLOGG: Forty-five minutes?

14 MS. FORD: And actually, OSSE's mandate
15 is a 180 minutes of science a week.

16 MS. KELLOGG: Right.

17 MS. FORD: That's the recommendation
18 from OSSE for science for elementary, but we
19 don't, obviously, get that.

20 MS. WATTENBERG: So I'm going to ask
21 you, does that happen?

22 MS. FORD: In some classes, in some

1 schools, but rarely. It's a lot of minutes.

2 MS. KELLOGG: Yeah.

3 MR. MANGIARACINA: Yes. I think what
4 you're bringing up is, to me, one of the hearts of
5 the matter, which is that there's no direct way to
6 have a mandate. There is no effective mandate
7 structure in place. DCPS has no statistics on
8 this and before coming here, I called someone at
9 central office to ask, there are no records of
10 which schools have science specialists. There are
11 no records of which schools teach science at all
12 and they have no intention of keeping those.

13 It seems to me that the only place that
14 we can touch the schools is through the
15 instructional superintendents. They could lean on
16 principals to say you guys aren't teaching
17 science, you need to do that. But to me, the
18 breakdown comes where are priorities are. With
19 the testing, it's the ELA and math and the
20 requirements that are already on schools are
21 enormous.

22 And it's not in anyone's self-interest

1 to teach science because it doesn't affect the
2 bottom line for a principal's job. And it's got
3 to change at that level because people aren't
4 going to do it just for the love of science,
5 unless there was some way to put some teeth into
6 some kind of mandate.

7 MS. KELLOGG: The unfortunate piece,
8 though, is at fourth grade, they take the NAPE.
9 And so they have their testing for science and
10 that's like setting them up for failure. Those
11 students don't understand that that assessment
12 isn't used to give them feedback to let them know
13 how well they've done because they don't get that
14 feedback, it's for the nation's report card.

15 So when we translate that to our
16 students, unfortunately, not having science taught
17 on a consistent basis from grades pre-K to third,
18 you know, fourth grade, it's setting us up for
19 failure all the way around. And so in fifth
20 grade, that's when they take their state
21 assessment in science. That hurts even more.

22 And so there are some schools that have

1 science that's in place. We have a science lab.
2 We have a full kit of FOSS kits that are NGSS
3 aligned. We also have a FoodPrints program, which
4 is urban farming and cooking and it includes all
5 the ecosystems and everything else that goes along
6 with it. And so yeah, you have some schools that
7 have that in place and they embed it in their
8 daily schedule. And so the problem is, here
9 again, is are these opportunities afforded to
10 every school across the city. And so if there is
11 a mandate that's going to say that, let it be.
12 We're providing these opportunities. We're
13 providing these materials to all the schools in
14 all of the District for all the students,
15 especially at the benchmark grades, if not all of
16 them. So that when they get to these testing
17 grades where they are for the nation's report card
18 and for fourth and fifth grade, where it does
19 become a reflection of the city, that they're not
20 coming to this assessment with nothing.

21 MS. RIGGEN: I also think it doesn't
22 need to -- science and social studies don't need

1 to be taught separately. Right. So Capital City
2 is an expeditionary learning school and so
3 everything was funneling through science or social
4 studies in an ideal world and it didn't always
5 happen and as it got into higher grades like
6 middle school, it was hard to implement enough
7 math in the correct niche within your expedition.

8 But I think in the elementary grades, so
9 much of that literacy could be happening about the
10 science topic, about the social studies topic.
11 Maybe the first half of the year you're doing
12 science as your base and then the second half of
13 the year you're doing social studies and teaching
14 literacy and math as much as possible in that
15 context and it would be a richer experience
16 overall.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. We're running
18 a little behind, so I'm going to ask Board members
19 to try and keep to the three-minute mark. Ms.
20 Lord, our At-large member.

21 MS. LORD: So I can speak even more
22 slowly. Needless to say, I'm going to follow up

1 on my colleagues' questions. Make no mistake,
2 this is a total crisis. If we want to close
3 achievement gaps, let's look at science on the
4 national assessment, our African American students
5 are the lowest scoring in the nation and our white
6 students are the highest scoring in the nation.
7 Thirty-three percent of the jobs in the District
8 of Columbia are in science, technology,
9 engineering and math.

10 This is locking the door of opportunity
11 to students and I think every single one of us who
12 has heard this testimony tonight should get up
13 there and demand better for our students. That's
14 just me. It has been my privilege, with my
15 colleague from Ward 6 to attend a fabulous hands-
16 on science lesson at Maury Elementary for
17 Engineer's Week, with an engineer, Representative
18 Paul Tonko from New York City.

19 I couldn't tell you who was a special ed
20 student. I couldn't tell you who was a struggling
21 reader. I could see every single one of those
22 students engaged. There were no one right

1 answers. They were working in teams. They were
2 expressing themselves. They were taking care of
3 the materials, so I know we can do it, each and
4 every one of you.

5 If I could just share some of the bios,
6 the Great Outdoor New Year's Bird Count, we have a
7 fabulous teacher from Brent Elementary who take
8 students out to count birds as part of a citizen
9 science project that has been going on with
10 Cornell University. Each and every one of these
11 teachers has hands-on, project-based learning
12 where the students and the teachers are working
13 together to create knowledge.

14 My question is really quite simple.
15 Should science count for classifying schools the
16 way reading and math now does and would that help
17 get us to a better spot?

18 MS. FORD: So classifying with high
19 stakes assessment?

20 MS. LORD: Just as we have reading and
21 math scores for schools, science should be right
22 up there in the pantheon.

1 MS. FORD: Got it. Who wants to go
2 first?

3 MS. KELLOGG: So when you think about on
4 the elementary school level with the
5 accountability to what teachers hold with a report
6 card, that's the way we communicate with parents
7 on the forefront of where their students or where
8 their children lie.

9 When we look at the fourth grade one,
10 there are more science standards than math. There
11 are 15 versus 10 or 11. And so it's overwhelming
12 as a parent and as teacher when you see that which
13 one weighs more. And although, historically, math
14 and reading -- well, it was more reading than
15 math, but now math is catching up, science needs
16 to be held just as high.

17 It is unfortunate, with the statistics
18 you just said with our African American and our
19 white population. Now we're talking about
20 engineering and the new technology advances that
21 we have, running a classroom of students who are
22 curious about why things work the way they do

1 without talking about science, doesn't make any
2 sense.

3 And so it's getting them ready for the
4 world, and yes, I agree, I feel like science
5 should be held just as the same.

6 MS. FORD: For the record, I think that
7 high stakes tests are actually quite valuable in a
8 lot of ways and the formative assessments that
9 lead up to it, at least how I see them used at
10 Maury, are really valuable for people. I would
11 say I'd be totally onboard if that's what was
12 going to push us to the next level, but I would
13 see it as a release and I would ensure that
14 whatever assessment we were using was valid and
15 aligned to what we expected students to do. And
16 having just attended the Achieve Leadership
17 Conference, where all the states who were adopting
18 these standards were discussing that D.C. was the
19 only one rolling out this year, a test. The only
20 one.

21 Kentucky is doing formative assessments
22 over the next two years, developed in coordination

1 with teachers, professional development and state
2 leaders before they do anything summative because
3 they want to do it right and have it be
4 performance-based. So I am gung-ho, let's do it.
5 But if we don't do it right, it'll be alienating.
6 It will make our teachers and our kids feel
7 horrible, but if we do it right, NGSS are set up
8 in a way that we could have really interesting
9 assessments that actually are assessing students
10 problem solving, their abilities to engineer and
11 their science content.

12 So yes, I think it should and I think it
13 should happen over a series of time with
14 formatives coming first.

15 MR. MANGIARACINA: First, thank you for
16 that recognition about the bird count. I really
17 appreciate it.

18 MS. LORD: Birdwatcher.

19 MR. MANGIARACINA: Fantastic. But I
20 think it speaks to a point that I've been trying
21 to make which is that this is an achievement gap
22 issue and that I would love to see more schools

1 say, you know what these kids need to close the
2 achievement gap? They need to go birdwatching.

3 MS. KELLOGG: Yes.

4 MR. MANGIARACINA: And that makes sense
5 to me. It makes perfect sense and I think making
6 that case is something I could use some support
7 with. And as far as your question about the
8 testing, I sort of agree with Vanessa in that be
9 careful what you wish for issue.

10 I would love to see something that does
11 assess how much kids apprecia5te the world around
12 them. How well they ask questions. How well they
13 pursue those questions. How long they could
14 struggle with a challenging problem. Yes, if we
15 could assess that, absolutely.

16 If it looks like the DC CAS for Science
17 last year, absolutely not. And as Vanessa has
18 mentioned, we're not going about this is a
19 careful, teacher driven way. If we do, sign me
20 up.

21 MS. RIGGEN: I know for me personally, I
22 take the standardized test, even for DC CAS and

1 eight grade very serious. It is high stakes for
2 me because I use it as an indicator of how well at
3 my other job I did.

4 At NSTA, just last week, they were
5 showing -- I mean, I'm very curious to see what
6 D.C. is going to give us in June because they're
7 currently creating individual questions that are
8 being piloted in very small numbers. I mean,
9 there really isn't a test that exists. So I'm
10 wondering what will show up in our schools in
11 June. It may very well be the DC CAS.

12 But I absolutely agree. I think that
13 going in that direction where students have to
14 look at datasets, create graphs, analyze graphs.
15 Like, do little simulating experiments on the
16 computer, which I did see with my own eyes, but
17 they're all in like, beta form. I think that
18 would be amazing, and that's creating engineers. I
19 mean that's creating thinkers for society. So I
20 think making it high stakes makes people care, so
21 it's a good direction to have.

22 MS. FORD: And it's fear-invoking for

1 teachers to know that we may sit our students in
2 front of something in six weeks when we don't know
3 what it is. And here in D.C., we know for a fact
4 is not being -- we don't know what it will be. We
5 don't know what will exist. I believe they cover
6 third through fifth grade performance assessment
7 and we just adopted it two years ago, so there may
8 be missing content.

9 We've heard there's some scenarios, but
10 it's multiple choice. We don't know, and if we
11 don't know, there's no way, not about teaching to
12 the test, but there's no way to prepare our kids
13 for what that could even look like. And if we're
14 the first in the nation, that's fine, but it would
15 be nice if we were piloting something like the
16 beta forms that we've seen that exist that are
17 really meaningful around these three-dimensional
18 types of learning because I don't think that's
19 what we're going to have six weeks from now is
20 three-dimensional test, it'll probably have a one-
21 dimensional test.

22 MS. LORD: Thank you.

1 MR. JACOBSON: Thanks so much. Ms.

2 Jolly from Ward 8.

3 MS. JOLLY: Yes. Thank you. Ms. Lord

4 already addressed part of my question, but I guess

5 I would just like, perhaps, some more reflections

6 on the role of assessment. I'm also a teacher. I

7 teach secondary social studies. I started

8 teaching in Louisiana where there was a state

9 graduation exit exam for social studies.

10 So I found that as a Louisiana public

11 school teacher, my time with my students were

12 sacrosanct because it received standardized

13 assessment. When I came to DCPS, there was no

14 standardized test for social studies and my time

15 was considered useless by my principal, and often,

16 I was asked to suspend teaching of my own

17 standards to teach other teachers content and

18 reinforce it. And I find myself wondering,

19 constantly -- and this, again, it does build off

20 Ms. Lord's question. Do we need assessments to

21 protect that time for kids?

22 Do we need assessments to protect our

1 impact scores? I mean, in DCPS, my entire impact
2 score was based off of observations and none of it
3 was based off of actual data about student
4 achievement.

5 Again, it's just kind of reflections
6 because you've already answered this question in a
7 much more specific way, but where do we -- do we
8 need assessments to ensure that kids are getting
9 these things that they need and at what point do
10 we draw the line?

11 How many assessments are too many and
12 when do they stop being student driven?

13 MS. FORD: That's a lot of questions.

14 MS. JOLLY: I know. It's just that it's
15 much more reflective of the prison of it.

16 MS. KELLOGG: I feel like in the essence
17 of the classroom, you have to assess to know how
18 much they know so that you can plan your better
19 lesson for the next time. So you can find those
20 holes in the slice of Swiss cheese.

21 So in that essence, you know, where it
22 be progress monitoring, whether it be just

1 observation when you're working with them in a
2 small group, an exit ticket, a quiz at the end of
3 the week. Some way, I believe, assessing matters.
4 However, in the bigger realm when you hit fourth,
5 fifth grade, where they really start taking big
6 assessments that matter, it becomes very
7 frustrating. Some schools shut down when testing
8 comes and there's no field trips, there's no
9 FoodPrints, there are no extracurricular
10 activities or anything special during the day and
11 everything is in the box of testing mode. And so
12 it builds anxiety with the students. Parents
13 become all hysterical. Did they sleep? Did they
14 eat? Did they eat too much? My baby has got a
15 cold. This is around allergy season, so everybody
16 is sneezing and sick. So it's just all those
17 things that go into play when you talk about
18 what's too much.

19 Fourth grade takes a lot of tests
20 because it's the first year that matters. And so
21 it's crucial that those grades prior to have given
22 them exposure to what it means to bubble in. And

1 then that shift to now it's on the computer. Wow,
2 I have to know how to use technology to take test,
3 whereas, in the student's mind, it's always been
4 paper/pencil for them. Not only that, sometimes
5 it might be more than one answer. Wow.

6 So it's thinking about that process of
7 the assessment itself, thinking about what's too
8 much, how it's presented, how often throughout the
9 school year. Yes, I agree that assessments do
10 have its place with teaching and learning, it's a
11 part of that cycle, but I don't agree with the
12 fact that there is five assessments in one year.
13 And not only just the state ones, but we have our
14 in-house ones that we give as well. So there's
15 your pre-post test for what I'm teaching in that
16 window, that instructional window. There are all
17 these other benchmark and diagnostic assessments
18 on top of those.

19 And so yeah, I feel like every other
20 month, every few weeks I'm talking about alright
21 guys, we're going to take a temperature check,
22 just to make it so that the students aren't

1 anxious and it's all about your vocabulary and how
2 you present it to them because I want to shield
3 them and keep them in that comfort zone of you're
4 going to shine. You're going to show everybody
5 how well you've learned what it you know at this
6 grade level.

7 So I'm not sure of what's a good fix or
8 what's a good number because we do need assessment
9 to understand where they are so that we can best
10 teach them, but yeah, it's hard. And it's a lot
11 for students at that grade level.

12 MR. MANGIARACINA: A student in testing
13 grades take a standardized test, on average, one
14 out of every 11 days. And as far as I'm
15 concerned, we're past the tipping point because
16 it's not just that, it's our resources being
17 poured into the infrastructure with PARCC testing.

18 Our instructional coach, who does an
19 amazing job, is devoted to testing and that's not
20 her job. We're losing that. The number of things
21 that we're losing to testing is already too much.
22 So certainly not more testing. Let's not just add

1 a science test.

2 What I would say is let's redefine
3 assessment so that we are looking at the schools
4 that do performance assessments, schools that do
5 expeditionary learning. Let's broaden our range.
6 Let's certainly abolish value added judgments on
7 teacher evaluations and let's abolish value added
8 on principals because that the bottom line.
9 Principals are on one-year contracts and it
10 depends, in a huge part, on our test scores. We
11 need to get the fear out of it.

12 MS. FORD: I actually don't have an
13 answer, but I had never really thought of
14 assessment in line with that safeguard of civil
15 rights. We've put this assessment here to hold
16 schools accountable to providing this level of
17 education in ELA and math. I hadn't thought about
18 it, in terms of science. And when I think about
19 it that way in ensuring that we're meeting what
20 you're saying, Mary, and fixing that, then I start
21 going, yeah, we need a really good assessment if
22 we're going to hold people accountable.

1 I also hear what Mike is saying because
2 there is a tipping point, so maybe there's that
3 whole reevaluation. So I just want to thank you
4 for that idea and maybe we can talk about it more.
5 Okay. We'll chat.

6 MR. JACOBSON: Real quick, last comment
7 and then we've got to move on. I want to thank
8 everyone.

9 MS. KERSTETTER: I mean, as a pre-k
10 teacher, we clearly do not have standardized
11 assessments, however, we are a school that goes
12 preschool through eighth grade. So the teachers
13 that do early childhood are still affected by the
14 PARCC. We're receiving professional developments
15 on how can we get kids as young as that age to
16 really think critically about their answers and
17 how did you come up with this answer. It's
18 developed appropriately in fun and playful ways,
19 but getting them ready not to take a test, but to
20 have that critical thinking. And we do
21 assessments in preschool and pre-K, and I think we
22 can all agree that some amount of assessments are

1 necessary to see the student growth that our kids
2 are making and how that impacts us as teachers.
3 How do we reach kids that may not be meeting their
4 goals or they're exceeding their goals because our
5 job, as teachers, is to meet the needs of all our
6 learners. So using that assessment and that
7 information to kind of drive instruction and
8 giving kids what they need. Thank you.

9 MR. JACOBSON: Do any other Board
10 members have questions?

11 (No response.)

12 I want to thank these wonderful finalists for
13 joining us and really allowing us to have a
14 dialogue on what our students need and what they
15 deserve, frankly. So thank you all for coming.
16 Please don't go because we're going to do a quick
17 photo after we do our ceremonial resolutions and
18 one of them will include you, so please don't go.
19 You can go to your seats, but please don't leave
20 the building quite yet.

21 MS. KELLOGG: Thank you.

22 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. We have

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1 ceremonial resolutions to honor our Teachers of
2 the Year and we will start with the Ceremonial
3 Resolution honoring Jennifer Ramacciotti. Sorry
4 about that again. She is our 2015 District of
5 Columbia Teacher of the Year. That Ceremonial
6 Resolution is being read by whom?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Ms. Jolly.

8 MR. JACOBSON: Oh, Ms. Jolly -- I'm
9 sorry -- from Ward 8.

10 MS. JOLLY: Ms. Ramacciotti, correct?

11 MS. RAMACCIOTTI: Yes.

12 MS. JOLLY: Ceremonial Resolution
13 honoring Jennifer Ramacciotti, 2015.

14 WHEREAS, every year, a teacher who is an
15 exemplary educator is named the District of
16 Columbia Teacher of the Year and receives public
17 recognition and an unrestricted financial reward
18 of \$5,000.

19 WHEREAS, the State Board of Education is
20 proud to recognize a public charter school
21 teacher, Jennifer Ramacciotti as the 2015
22 recipient of this prestigious award.

1 WHEREAS, Ms. Ramacciotti, an eighth
2 grade mathematics teacher at KIPP DC AIM Academy,
3 exhibited excellence in the classroom by helping
4 94 percent of her students score proficient or
5 advanced on the DC CAS.

6 WHEREAS, Ms. Ramacciotti's excellence
7 beyond the classroom is demonstrated by her
8 service at the musical director for AIM School
9 Musical. Support for teachers across the country,
10 as the KIPP share eighth grade math community
11 leader and as a participant in AIM's Girls on the
12 Run 5K.

13 WHEREAS, Ms. Ramacciotti has received
14 praise from both parents and colleagues for her
15 leadership and ability to empower her students to
16 seek opportunities and explore the greater
17 possibilities that result from their academic
18 achievements.

19 WHEREAS, the State Board of Education
20 recognized the extraordinary example set by Ms.
21 Ramacciotti as setting high expectations for all
22 of her students to multiply their potential,

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1 which, in turn, leads to every one of her students
2 working exceptionally hard to succeed.

3 BE IT RESOLVED, that on March 18, 2015,
4 the District of Columbia State Board of Education
5 honors Jennifer Ramacciotti, 2015 Teacher of the
6 Year recipient and recognizes her commitment to
7 providing an excellent education to students of
8 the District of Columbia.

9 Congratulations.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. JACOBSON: I move that that the
12 Ceremonial Resolution be adopted. Is there a
13 second?

14 MS. LORD: Second.

15 MR. JACOBSON: It's been moved and
16 seconded. All those in favor, please signify by
17 saying "aye."

18 (Whereupon, Board members collectively
19 respond "aye.")

20 MR. JACOBSON: Any opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 MR. JACOBSON: Any abstentions?

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1 (No response.)

2 Congratulations, Ms. Ramacciotti.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. JACOBSON: Now, we will read into
5 the record a ceremonial resolution honoring Barrie
6 Moorman, the 2014 District of Columbia History
7 Teacher of the Year winner.

8 Ms. Wilson-Phelan from Ward 1.

9 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Ceremonial
10 Resolution honoring Barrie Moorman, 2014 District
11 of Columbia History Teacher of the Year winner.

12 WHEREAS, every year, an elementary or
13 secondary school teacher who is furthering
14 excellence in education is named the District of
15 Columbia History Teacher of the Year and receives
16 public recognition and an unrestricted financial
17 reward of \$2,000.

18 WHEREAS, the State Board of Education is
19 proud to recognize Ms. Barrie Moorman, a founding
20 member of the high school campus of E.L. Haynes
21 Public Charter School as the 2014 recipient of
22 this prestigious award.

1 WHEREAS, Ms. Moorman encourages her
2 students by taking them out of the classroom and
3 into the community, including an annual weeklong
4 civil rights trip for her students, during which
5 students visit civil rights landmarks, meet with
6 social justice activists, and brainstorm action
7 plans to interrupt injustice in their own
8 communities.

9 WHEREAS, Ms. Moorman facilitates E.L.
10 Haynes' race and equity and education seminars
11 which require staff members to examine how they
12 teach and lead as affected by race.

13 WHEREAS, Ms. Moorman was also recognized
14 by teaching tolerance with their 2014 award for
15 Excellence in Teaching for her work to reduce
16 prejudice and promote equity within the school
17 community.

18 WHEREAS, the State Board of Education
19 recognizes the extraordinary example set by Ms.
20 Moorman of setting high expectations for all of
21 her students to multiply their potential, which,
22 in turn, leads to every one of her students

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1 working diligently to succeed.

2 BE IT RESOLVED, that on March 18, 2015,
3 the District of Columbia State Board of Education
4 honors Barrie Moorman, the 2014 District of
5 Columbia History Teacher of the Year recipient and
6 recognizes her commitment to excellence in
7 education for the students of the District of
8 Columbia.

9 Congratulations.

10 MR. JACOBSON: I move that that the
11 Ceremonial Resolution be adopted. Is there a
12 second?

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Second.

14 MR. JACOBSON: The motion has been
15 properly moved and seconded. Any discussion?

16 (No response.)

17 MR. JACOBSON: All those in favor say
18 "aye."

19 (Whereupon, Board members collectively
20 respond "aye.")

21 MR. JACOBSON: Opposed?

22 (No response.)

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1 MR. JACOBSON: Any abstentions?

2 (No response.)

3 Congratulations, Ms. Moorman.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. JACOBSON: And now I believe Mr.

6 Weedon from Ward 6 will read into the record a

7 ceremonial resolution honoring Michelle Johnson,

8 the 2014 Milken Educator Award winner.

9 MR. WEEDON: Thank you. Ceremonial

10 Resolution honoring Michelle Johnson, 2014 Milken

11 Educator Award winner.

12 WHEREAS, every year, the Milken Family

13 Foundation awards unrestricted financial awards of

14 \$25,000 to elementary or secondary schoolteachers

15 across the United States and the District of

16 Columbia. Milken Education award winner receives

17 public recognition for furthering excellence in

18 education.

19 WHEREAS, the State Board of Education is

20 proud to recognize the District of Columbia public

21 school teacher, Michelle Johnson as the 2014

22 recipient of this prestigious award.

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1 WHEREAS, Ms. Johnson, a first-year
2 teacher at Seaton Elementary School exhibits
3 excellence in the classroom, as demonstrated by
4 the 90 percent of her students that moved up in
5 their proficiency level or reached proficiency
6 and/or advanced level.

7 WHEREAS, Ms. Johnson is continually
8 growing as an educator, exemplified by her
9 participation in the Common Core reading corps,
10 where she helped write curriculum in use by DCPS's
11 second grade teachers.

12 WHEREAS, Ms. Johnson enables strong
13 parent and family engagement by reaching out to
14 families before the year begins so that she can
15 develop strong relationships with them.

16 WHEREAS, the State Board of Education
17 recognizes the extraordinary example set by Ms.
18 Johnson of setting high expectations for all of
19 her students to multiply their potential, which,
20 in turn leads to every one of her students working
21 exceptionally hard to succeed.

22 BE IT RESOLVED, that on March 18, 2015,

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1 the District of Columbia State Board of Education
2 honors Michelle Johnson, 2014 Milken Educator
3 award winner and recognizes her commitment to
4 excellent educational practices for the students
5 of the District of Columbia.

6 Congratulatory.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. JACOBSON: I move that that the
9 Ceremonial Resolution be adopted. Is there a
10 second?

11 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Second.

12 MR. JACOBSON: Any discussion?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. JACOBSON: Then all those in favor,
15 please signify by saying "aye."

16 (Whereupon, Board members collectively
17 respond "aye.")

18 MR. JACOBSON: Any opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. JACOBSON: Any abstentions?

21 (No response.)

22 Congratulatory, Ms. Johnson.

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1 (Applause.)

2 MR. JOHNSON: Now, we're going to do a
3 quick presentation and photographs in the well.
4 Board members, kind of stand in the back and stay
5 put. We'll have all of the teachers please come
6 forward and then we'll do the winners and then
7 we'll do individual winners.

8 Thank you.

9 (Whereupon, photographs were taken.)

10 ADOPTION OF THE COMMITTEE REPORT

11 MR. JACOBSON: While we're milling
12 around, I will have a panel come up on the ESEA
13 Waiver. Our panel includes Ms. Kristin Ehrgood,
14 President and Board Chair of the Flamboyant
15 Foundation; Melissa Bryant, Stanton Elementary
16 School; Keesha Cox, DCPS parent; Suzanne
17 Greenfield, the Director of the Citywide Youth
18 Bullying Prevention Program; and Bob Rothman with
19 the Alliance for Excellence in Education. Please
20 come up, take some seats. And as soon as all five
21 are here, we will get started.

22 I also want to just, for transparency

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1 sake, make clear that are Ward 1 member, Ms. Laura
2 Wilson-Phelan has asked me to clarify that she
3 works for Flamboyant Foundation. She is an
4 employee there. So that is on the record.

5 We'll start our testimony with Ms.
6 Greenfield and then we'll just move right on down.
7 You can do it however you want to do, we'll just
8 get it done.

9 Oh. Everyone is here to talk about the
10 ESEA Waiver, which is D.C.'s accountability plan.
11 The Board is considering, later tonight,
12 considering the adoption of a report on the ESEA
13 Waiver Renewal.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. WATTENBERG: Just one of the issues
16 that we're discussing, and it's very relevant to
17 the prior panel, is how to present a fuller
18 picture of the quality and achievement that goes
19 on in our schools. And so one of the issues is
20 expanding our report card. And each of you is
21 here because you may have something to contribute
22 to that as well as how to display it. So thank

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1 you very much for being here.

2 MR. JACOBSON: Wonderful. Thanks so
3 much. Suzanne, go ahead.

4 MS. GREENFIELD: Good evening. My name
5 is Suzanne Greenfield; I am the Director of the
6 Citywide Bullying Prevention Program in the Office
7 of Human Rights, and I really welcome this
8 opportunity tonight.

9 I do have something. I would certainly
10 like to suggest that you look into and that is
11 school climate data. I just want to briefly say
12 the law that my program works under, the Youth
13 Bullying Prevention Act of 2012 does require us to
14 collect data from schools. In the process of
15 developing the policy, the model policy that we
16 used, we worked very extensively with principals
17 and teachers and school personnel. One of their
18 comments that they echoed over and over again was
19 that please do not make this just about incident
20 data. We really need to have a much more
21 comprehensive picture about what goes on in
22 schools, what's working and what isn't working in

1 order to understand how we want to address this.

2 I can't echo that statement more, as
3 somebody who is interested in looking at us --
4 look at the issue of bullying prevention not as a
5 find the bully, punish the bully methodology, but
6 instead, really starting to understand, from a
7 prevention of health model, how do we best support
8 our youth and how do we best build the kinds of
9 relationships and work that we heard very
10 thoughtfully spoken of from our first panel of
11 teachers. So I would just to sort of quickly,
12 just briefly outline what school climate data
13 does, why we should collect and an opportunity
14 that we have to do this work that is just around
15 the corner.

16 So school climate data really looks at
17 three major categories. It looks at engagement,
18 it looks at safety and it looks at environment. It
19 does this in a broad research-based model. The
20 surveys would be given to students, but it would
21 also be given to instruction staff and non-
22 instructional staff in the school, as well as

1 parents.

2 So it really is an attempt for us to
3 understand what's going on, if students feel
4 engaged, if they feel empowered, if they know who
5 -- if they hear racist comments in the school, if
6 they hear homophobic comments, how are they
7 responded to? Who is in charge of helping them
8 develop those supports and services?

9 This is evidence-based data that has
10 been collected across the country for years. This
11 is not something that we do uniformly in the
12 District, but it is something that I think would
13 provide our schools a lot of really invaluable
14 information about what is working and what isn't
15 working. So that is the kind of data that we
16 would like to see collected.

17 I think the reasons for collecting it
18 are numerous, but the three that I want to talk
19 about is we talk a lot about in the city of doing
20 data- driven decision-making. And in all honesty,
21 we don't have any data around our social and
22 emotional learning framework in the city. We

1 don't know what's working and what isn't.

2 I have sat before the Education Council
3 and will many times again, I am sure and they ask,
4 very blatantly, is this program working? Does
5 tools for the mind work? Does restorative justice
6 work? I don't know. I don't have the data. And
7 what I care about is it is working here in our
8 schools in a very specific way and that's what
9 school climate data will do, it will give us that
10 ability to look school-by-school and understand
11 what's working for them and what isn't. What
12 supports are needed and how do we best implement
13 whatever social, emotional learning framework you
14 are using.

15 A second reason that I think is
16 critically important, as a District that we start
17 collecting this, is most of the federal funding
18 that some of us will be looking for in the future
19 to do this kind of work, money that comes from the
20 Department of Justice, money that comes from
21 SAMHSA and money that comes from the Department of
22 Education, all require valid, research-based

1 school climate data. That's just part of the
2 proposal that you have to send in and the sooner
3 we start collecting it, the sooner we are in a
4 position to go forward on some of the work that I
5 think we would all like to be doing.

6 I would also just says that I think it's
7 something that when you look at your report card,
8 as a parent, what do I look for in a school. And
9 I'm not saying that standardized testing isn't an
10 indicator, but I think we heard a lot in the last
11 panel that it can't be the only indicator.

12 I think the kind of information that we
13 get from school climate data is something that I
14 think would resonate strongly with parents about
15 what they want to look for in a school and the
16 kind of information that they would want to get.

17 So lastly, I just want to quickly say
18 that we are in an interesting position right now.

19 the Department of Education feels very
20 strongly about schools collecting this data. So
21 they have created a free platform that will be
22 available next fall for all secondary schools to

1 download the software and the platform, each
2 individual school. I personally prefer we do this
3 through OSSE, for other reasons that we can talk
4 about later, but for each individual school so
5 they will automatically have access to these
6 climate surveys. They can run them right through
7 in a timeframe that they want to. They will get
8 the data analyzed, scored and reported back them
9 immediately. They can be then seen how their
10 school climate data matches up to other schools in
11 the District, but it will also have a national
12 standard model that they can rate against.

13 So that is an opportunity then, I think,
14 we didn't know about until a month ago. And I
15 will be honest with you, for those of us that have
16 been working on it for a while, we've been looking
17 for funding opportunities through OSSE to do this
18 and that has always been a question of how were we
19 going to fund this, more than did we want to do it
20 and this is an opportunity that we have. Our only
21 goal then would be to figure out how we match what
22 school data we're collecting in secondary schools

1 with the elementary schools, but there are some
2 option out there that we can talk about.

3 So that's what I wanted to share.

4 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much. And
5 now we'll move onto parent and home engagement,
6 and our witnesses there. You can speak in the
7 order that you choose.

8 MS. COX: Hello, everyone. Good
9 evening. My name is Keesha Cox; I'm a parent of
10 two DCPS students. One is in Dunbar Senior High
11 School, a junior and the other is a seventh-grader
12 at Wheatley Education Campus.

13 Starting out, I was the gung-ho parent.
14 I was the parent every teacher probably wanted -
15 so I thought. But I kind of felt like, you know,
16 I wasn't wanted, you know, in the classrooms or in
17 the school at all sometimes. So over the years,
18 my enthusiasm dwindled and I want to talk to you
19 today about some of the things that I found that
20 have worked to remotivate me and my students.

21 Student--led conferences is one of the
22 first things I'd like to talk about. Love the

1 student-led conferences. My son is being held
2 accountable for what he did do, what he didn't do.
3 He has to tell me about it himself, not have a
4 teacher tell me. Then I go home and talk to him
5 about it and, you know, it's a different story
6 now, you know.

7 Now it's him, me, and one of his
8 teachers and it's one of his teachers that sees
9 him every single -- well, almost every day. I'm
10 sorry. The advisory teacher is not seen. He
11 doesn't see her every day. It's A and B days, I
12 think, or something like that or every other day
13 or something like that. I enjoy, you know, having
14 the sit down with them and this last student-led
15 conference, we actually got to go around to a
16 couple of the teachers because there were some
17 discrepancies as to what was being done and why or
18 what wasn't being done and why it wasn't being
19 done or if it was actually being done in the
20 computer, you know, how it was being put in the
21 system or something like that. But we were able
22 to get that knocked out and squared away. I

1 didn't have to leave with no answers. The
2 teachers were there. They were available, so we
3 were able to talk to them. I enjoyed that. I
4 love having my son have to look me in the eye and
5 tell me, "I didn't do it." And it's right here.
6 It's right here in front of my face on the laptop
7 and he has to tell me he didn't do it.

8 So I love the student-led conferences.
9 I don't want to do away with the student-led
10 conferences ever. Let me see. I want to make
11 sure I don't forget anything. I get my one-on-
12 one time. Great. Okay.

13 The next thing I want to talk about is
14 Engrade. Engrade is something that the high
15 schoolers use. Now, the thing about Engrade, at
16 first I had to go and check it out. I had to log
17 in and find out what's going on. Now, the problem
18 I was having with Engrade at first was the
19 teachers were not updating the information in a
20 timely manner. So I'm thinking my child is not
21 doing well, but she was doing well. She had done
22 these assignments but it hadn't been put in yet

1 and I would find that out later on. But in the
2 meantime, me and my child are at conflict and now
3 she's like -- she's already busting her butt
4 trying to keep me happy, she thinks. You know
5 what I'm saying? And the next thing you know,
6 it's not. And she's like, but I did do it.

7 So anyway, I'm just saying I like the
8 Engrade. I love Engrade, actually and now we have
9 texts. They send us texts, which is even better.
10 So I get notification of if her grades are low or
11 her percentage is low, I get notification. I get
12 notification if she's missing class and I get
13 notification of missing assignments. So I have
14 that right on point. But again, that's only as
15 the teachers are putting it in.

16 I have gotten very many notifications of
17 the missing assignments at this time, but I have
18 gotten when her grades are low. So then it's like
19 well, I don't know why her grades are low. You
20 know what I mean? I like the Engrade, but I just
21 need for the teachers to really put the
22 information in, in a timely manner. I will say

1 that it is very useful and I do love it.

2 The last thing I'd like to talk about
3 are the home visits. The home visit has made the
4 biggest impact on myself and my son. I'm sorry,
5 this part makes me emotional because I had given
6 up on my kids, you know, because of what I was
7 saying at first in the beginning in that, you
8 know, I didn't feel needed or wanted in the
9 school. I didn't feel that anything that I did
10 was working. My son was starting to be labeled.
11 He was having behavior issues. I wasn't seeing
12 him work to his full potential and all these
13 things, you know, I just got tired. Excuse me.

14 I just got tired. So when Mr. Johnson
15 and Mr. Davis came to talk to me at the home visit
16 -- I'm so nervous right now. When he came to talk
17 to me at the home visit, I just found out that the
18 teachers do care and I thought that they didn't
19 for a while. I was thinking that, you nobody
20 cares. They're not here to teach, they're here to
21 get a check. These were the things that were
22 going through my mind. I finally felt, you know,

1 better about it and different because I learned
2 that they were just as interested in my son's
3 success as I was.

4 They motivated my son. He came home
5 telling me how inspired he was. And for him to
6 say that in the fifth grade, to me, was a big
7 deal. He had never told me that before. I had to
8 always pull from him, "How was your day today?"
9 You know, "What did you learn in school today?"
10 He would say, "I don't know." But now, I don't
11 even have to ask him anymore. He came home
12 telling me what he learned today. And this is as
13 a result of his relationship with his teachers, my
14 relationship with his teachers.

15 Now I'm also participating in weekend
16 boot camps that the teachers are holding. I'm
17 more involved again like I used to be and I felt
18 more proud of myself and my son and more proud
19 that my kids go to a D.C. Public School.

20 I guess that's it. Sorry.

21 MR. JACOBSON: That's incredible
22 testimony and we appreciate you spending your

1 night with us and for sharing your experiences
2 with us. That's incredibly powerful and moving.

3 MS. BRYANT: Well, it's going to kind of
4 actually be hard for me to top that. But just as
5 my colleague and friend, Keesha, was just sharing,
6 I would like to share with you, from a teacher's
7 perspective, some of the things that I found to be
8 really powerful and motivational. I'm kind of
9 inspired by listening to all the teachers that
10 were up here that won Teacher of the Year. I
11 think that one of the teachers, even when you read
12 her -- I don't know what it was called, her like
13 little speech --

14 MS. GREENFIELD: Proclamation.

15 MS. BRYANT: -- proclamation. She
16 talked about all these things she did with
17 families, right. And I think that when we go to
18 look at schools, we think of two things; 1) how do
19 we keep our good teachers because sometimes
20 teachers get burnt out, right. So one of those
21 things is just sharing work. So family engagement
22 is really about sharing the work between teachers

1 and between parents.

2 Previous to me being trained by
3 Flamboyant, I used to be a teacher that was -- I
4 mean, I was a good teacher. Parents seem to like
5 me, but they never would really do things. And I
6 thought I was doing great family engagement, you
7 know, potlucks, and Back to School nights and
8 Curriculum nights, and bake sales. We would do
9 all these things, and yet, when parents were
10 coming, they really -- we couldn't like, link it
11 to learning, right. Like, they would be nice to
12 us, but they then they really wouldn't do anything
13 for us. And what I need you to do is like, be on
14 my team and then like, do things, academically,
15 for your child as well.

16 So the three things that I found to be
17 super and very powerful was 1) home visits, right.
18 I think that Keesha did a great job of bringing
19 that home to everybody, right. It's all about
20 relationships. We'll all human beings, right.
21 You have to meet parents where they are. You have
22 to talk to them. They have to know that you're a

1 person that's not here for money, and we do care
2 about parents and we do want parents to be a part
3 of what we are doing in school systems.

4 Like the panel before, you see like,
5 great teachers. Like, they bring parents into
6 what they are doing, they don't do it by
7 themselves. So home visits is what I found to be
8 very powerful.

9 The second thing is after you have these
10 great relationships with parents, and after you
11 pull them in, they're like, yeah, I'm ready to do
12 all these things, well, you've got to tell parents
13 what they need to be helpful because I think a lot
14 of times parents want to help, but they don't know
15 how to help or what they can do for their
16 children. And so I found that academic
17 parent/teacher teams was a very good way to bring
18 parents in to really link what they're doing at
19 home to what we're doing in school. So it's
20 really taking the relationships and really linking
21 it to learning and what's happening in the
22 classroom.

1 I teach at Stanton Elementary School,
2 which used to be 71 out of 72. We used to be one
3 of the worst schools ever -- worst behaved schools
4 five years ago and it was the worst school
5 probably in all of DCPS and now it is on the up-
6 and-up. We just went to developing school from a
7 priority school. We skipped focus. We've had
8 Arnie Duncan come to our school. Like, family
9 engagement absolutely works. When you walk down
10 our hallways, kids are happy to be at school.
11 Parents are happy to be doing things with their
12 kids. And most importantly, we keep great
13 teachers because we don't have burn out, right,
14 because it's not like we're running, running,
15 running, trying to do everything ourselves. It's
16 really like a partnership effort.

17 So I wanted to say that as we think
18 about family engagement, as we think about one of
19 the things that may be on these report cards to
20 really think about like, what's powerful in the
21 realm of family engagement. Thank you.

22 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much. Ms.

1 Ehrgood.

2 MS. EHRGOOD: Thanks for having us this
3 evening. I'm super excited and I'm going last to
4 sort of tie it all together, but for us, at the
5 Flamboyant Foundation, what we're learning, not
6 from sitting in our offices, but from working
7 directly with parents and with teachers, is that
8 when family engagement is truly focused on
9 accelerating a child's learning, when it's really,
10 truly, deeply, deeply rooted in providing kids a
11 better education and helping parents and teachers
12 be on a team, that's the definition of great
13 family engagement that pushes a child's learning.
14 So that's number one.

15 Number two, what we've come to learn,
16 through looking at the research but then also
17 playing it out in schools is that there are five
18 key things that families do that actually improves
19 a child's learning and we heard all of the
20 examples tonight.

21 First, is having high expectations. So
22 what can schools and teachers do to set families

1 up to have high expectations? So your child comes
2 home from school and you say, "What did you learn
3 today?" And what does your child say?

4 All together: Nothing.

5 Now, if your child's teacher had sent,
6 you know, like Melissa does and like Keesha gets,
7 sent just a little something. It could be a text
8 message, it could be an email, it could anything
9 at the beginning of the week that says we are
10 studying Egypt. Ask about the child's favorite, I
11 don't know, you know -- well, we're studying Greek
12 mythology. Ask your child their favorite Greek
13 God, right. And why. You now know what to ask
14 and you can hold this high expectation. That's
15 productive family engagement.

16 So high expectations is one. The second
17 is monitoring the child's performance. Engrade is
18 a perfect example of monitoring a child's
19 performance. It's an opportunity for parents to
20 be able to say you missed two homework
21 assignments. Or congratulations, you got all your
22 homework assignments in. Way to go. I'm really

1 proud of you and I know you're going to do that
2 again next week and I'm going to be looking. It
3 allows the parents to play that role that they
4 need to play, but they need that teacher on the
5 other side to fill in the information.

6 The third one is supports learning at
7 home. Both women spoke to that. Are teachers
8 able to provide families with the things they can
9 do at home to continue learning at school?

10 I'll use lattice multiplication as an
11 example. If kids are learning lattice
12 multiplication at school but mom is at home
13 teaching multiplication like the good old
14 fashioned way, the child actually doesn't know who
15 to listen to. Should I listen to my teacher or
16 should I listen to my mother?

17 Hmm, I want to listen to my mother, but
18 I gotta listen to my teacher. So they actually
19 get confused. So if the teacher and the parent
20 are on the same page around supporting that
21 learning at home is a tremendous opportunity.

22 The other two are guiding a child's

1 education, which is one of the things I think this
2 ESEA Waiver and looking at whether or not putting
3 something on like, a school report card around
4 family engagement may or may not make sense, but
5 that is certainly -- those school report cards are
6 a way of guiding a child's education. And there
7 are lots of other ways of doing that and then
8 advocating for the child, but then also teaching
9 the child to self-advocate over time.

10 So those are the five roles that
11 research tell us families should be doing. And
12 our schools should be setting families up to be
13 able to play those five roles as we just heard.

14 Now, the thing that struck me about both
15 of them is Keesha used the word, "gung-ho" and
16 Melissa used the phrase, "Keeping great teachers."
17 "Retaining great teachers." Both of these women
18 were very frustrated. I mean, Melissa will tell
19 you, she was willing to leave the school system.
20 She was ready to quit. Ms. Cox had, in some ways,
21 quit. I mean, you had you gave up. That is not a
22 recipe for ensuring that all our kids are able to

1 learn at the highest optimal levels that we know
2 they all can. We need these two players on the
3 same team.

4 Now, I'm not convinced that a report
5 card solves for that. Like, I'm actually not
6 certain that a report card is the way to go,
7 primarily because I'm not convinced that we can
8 create all of the right criteria for the right
9 things to be done. So you don't want to create a
10 report card and make people go do family
11 engagement and have it not be the most meaningful
12 family engagement. We don't want people going out
13 and having potlucks. Potlucks are lovely, right.
14 Everyone likes to eat, but they're not academic.
15 You sit around and you chat and you have a nice
16 time and you share and you get to know one another
17 and there is nothing wrong with that, but it is
18 not an academic forum. You can make it a little
19 bit academic here and there, but my point is that
20 if we are going to look at an ESEA Waiver and
21 looking at school report cards and that kind of
22 thing and putting something on the report card, I

1 would offer the suggestion that we really look at
2 the criteria for what would count as family
3 engagement. And not only that, but we would
4 actually go to the source. We would go to
5 teachers and we would go to parents and get their
6 feedback around what really mattered and what were
7 the most important things that they felt looked
8 authentic to them and meaningful to them as they
9 were thinking about family engagement.

10 I'll leave it there. But thank you. We
11 do appreciate the opportunity to share with you
12 this evening.

13 MR. JACOBSON: And hopefully, you'll all
14 be sharing more during question and answer, if you
15 wouldn't mind sticking around.

16 MS. EHRGOOD: Happily.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Rothman.

18 MR. ROTHMAN: Yes. Thank you very much.
19 It's a pleasure to be here. I'm pleased that
20 you're addressing this issue. It's very timely.
21 Our organization recently released a report on
22 this very topic and we've been talking about it

1 with congressional staff and with states around
2 the country as they prepare their ESEA Waivers.
3 And there are lot of interest in it, so I'm very
4 pleased that D.C. is there as well.

5 In the report -- and I think the reason
6 you're looking at this is that you want to look at
7 a broader measure of school outcomes beyond test
8 scores. Test scores are certainly important. My
9 daughter took the PARCC test today and I made sure
10 that she did.

11 MS. BRYANT: Good job. Great guy.

12 MR. ROTHMAN: But that doesn't define a
13 school and I think the testimony you just heard
14 shows the aspects of schools that test scores will
15 never capture. So finding some way to measure
16 that and provide incentives for schools to address
17 that and focus on that in the right way is a
18 positive step.

19 At the same time, these enhanced report
20 cards also display the results in a transparent
21 way. A lot of states have used different measures
22 of school performance, but have combined them all

1 into a single measure, an index or a letter grade
2 and that's completely opaque to parents and the
3 community. You got to see and you have no idea
4 why and you could have high performance in one
5 area to compensate for low performance in another,
6 but by displaying all the measures out front, you
7 make sure that you could address what really needs
8 to be addressed. A lot of times these are
9 referred to as dashboards because like in a car,
10 you want to know that your gas is low, you don't
11 want to know that you're a failing car.

12 So I put together a few examples of
13 places that have done this and I think they've
14 been in your packet. Just to give you some idea
15 of how this might be done, one is marked 2012/2013
16 school progress report that is from Philadelphia.

17 There, they've combined a number of
18 indicators into four categories: achievement,
19 progress, climate, college and career. And this
20 year they're adding additional indicators in
21 equity, educator effectiveness, and stakeholder
22 feedback. They show this in a color-coded way so

1 you know that in each category, if it's low
2 performing, that time for intervention. If it's
3 close to the target, then watch and make sure that
4 it continues to improve, reinforce if it's meeting
5 the target, but you want to make sure that it
6 continues to. And then if it is high performing
7 that it becomes a model for the rest of the
8 District, giving you an idea of what comprises
9 those scores -- I had it somewhere.

10 I've included the measures that make up
11 the climate indicator. There's student
12 attendance, retention, suspensions, and teacher
13 attendance. There could be others as well, but
14 that's what Philadelphia does.

15 The bright colorful chart is from the
16 Province of Alberta in Canada. They
17 have measures in seven categories. It's kind of
18 hard to read because this was taken from a
19 website, but the seven categories are: safe and
20 caring schools, student learning opportunities,
21 student learning achievement, both for K-9 and 10-
22 12; preparation for lifelong learning, and world

1 of work and citizenship, parental involvement and
2 continuous improvement. Again, they combine a
3 number of indicators to make up those seven
4 categories and provide a color-coded display so
5 that you can see exactly what needs to be
6 addressed and focus your resources on that. And
7 importantly, it isn't just, in all these cases,
8 it's not just the District coming down and saying
9 you better do this, this provides an opportunity
10 for school communities to look at the data
11 themselves and address what needs to be addressed
12 before it becomes a bigger problem.

13 And finally, because this interest in
14 climate and parental engagement, I wanted to bring
15 to your attention the system that is being
16 developed by a group of districts in California
17 called Core. They have received a waiver from
18 ESEA as districts and have laid out a plan to
19 measure schools by their academic domain, social,
20 emotional, cultural and climate factors and social
21 emotional skills.

22 So this gives you a range of

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1 possibilities, based on things that already exist.

2 I'm very encouraged that you're moving in this

3 direction. Thank you very much.

4 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. And thanks to

5 all of our wonderful witnesses. The Board has

6 been working for years. I remember Ms. Lord

7 conducting a ward roundtable on ESEA Waiver in

8 2011?

9 MS. LORD: 2012.

10 MR. JACOBSON: 2012. And this is

11 something the Board continues to work on. We did

12 a lot of work last year with OSSE on our ESEA

13 Waiver and we are currently up to our elbows, I

14 think I'd call it, in discussions with OSSE and

15 stakeholders on how D.C.'s accountability systems

16 should look. How schools can be appropriately

17 categorized or more appropriately categorized,

18 perhaps. And data and information that is

19 important to families as they make their school

20 choice options.

21 So with that, we're going to start Board

22 member questions. If Board members don't mind,

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1 I'd like to do five-minute rounds. Is that okay?

2 Wonderful. I'm going to ask our student
3 representative if she'd like to start. You don't
4 have to. No?

5 MS. ASFAHA: I don't have anything.

6 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Wattenberg.

7 MS. WATTENBERG: Thanks to all of you.

8 I know it's getting late, so I'm going to try to
9 be quick, but obviously, picking the right
10 indicator is really important. You all have
11 talked about that, the people in the previous
12 panel spoke about it as well. So I wonder if each
13 of you, in the area that you know most, could talk
14 about what is a right indicator.

15 And you talked about not an incident
16 report. So what's the right question or is it
17 really you do a whole survey and there is
18 something that comes out of the survey and that's
19 the right way to do it?

20 The same question on the family
21 engagement. And then Bob, to you, you've looked
22 at a lot of these and you've given some good

1 examples of the displays. I wonder if you could
2 zero in on, just having looked at these, sort of
3 one or two of the indicators that just struck you
4 as well, that really makes a lot of sense.

5 MS. GREENFIELD: Okay. I'll go first.

6 School climate data has been collected over the
7 last 30 years, so it's not a new research area and
8 it's something that we have a lot of models and I
9 appreciate some of the models that were discussed
10 over there because I think that there are many
11 ways that we can go with this.

12 We're looking at the whole frame, and to
13 be honest, some of it is the cost. A lot of the
14 models that we wanted to adopt, like the
15 California model, the California Healthy School
16 Act survey section is first of all, three times as
17 long as the regular one that the Department of
18 Education is launching and it is property rights
19 that we would have to purchase from California. We
20 can't just use it. There are some free tools out
21 there that we can use and we sort of did an
22 analysis of all the free ones that were out there

1 and what was best.

2 What we're really looking for is
3 something that will give tangible information to
4 school leaders. The most important people that
5 need to know if their students feel connected, if
6 their parents are getting the information that
7 they need. They're the ones that need this
8 information and that's what we're looking for,
9 something that will be very immediate and useful
10 or them. We do like the idea of it's more
11 expensive, you need to hear from all parts of the
12 community.

13 As Flamboyant, I think has really helped
14 us understand, it's where are we meeting each
15 other and how are we doing it in a way that really
16 supports both students and parents in this type of
17 engagement. So we're looking at models that will
18 help us give that immediate resource to schools,
19 but also help us to understand across the
20 District. We are piloting a lot of different
21 things in a lot of schools, particularly because
22 the charters have a lot of freedom to do different

1 things. What can we tell from these surveys that
2 help us understand that's why it works there?
3 This is what you need in order to make it work for
4 you.

5 MS. EHRGOOD: Let me clarify an
6 assumption before I dive into an answer. Is the
7 purpose of the report card for parents -- like,
8 who's the audience for a report card? Is it
9 parents as they're thinking about choosing options
10 in schools? Is it school leaders?

11 The answer we all might give might be
12 different, depending on who the actual end-user is
13 that is.

14 MS. WATTENBERG: I think the answer is
15 or could be multiple audiences. That is, we know
16 parents go on to the Learn DC website and they
17 look at schools and they make choices based on
18 that. We also know that school leaders, as we
19 heard before, think about how am I going to look
20 on that Learn DC report and so this is what I'm
21 going to pay attention to, so it signals people.

22 MS. EHRGOOD: I tend to look at things

1 through the lens, obviously, of family engagement.
2 And knowing that families are using these
3 resources regularly to make decisions about
4 schools, so when I think of that from that point
5 of view, if I am a parent, which I am, and I am
6 looking at schools, I'd want to know a couple of
7 things. I'd want to know the depth of the
8 relationship that the schools has with families. I
9 don't know exactly how I might characterize that
10 right now. I don't know what the indicator or the
11 measurement is right now, but that would be a
12 bucket of it. And I'm talking about an authentic,
13 equal relationship.

14 And the second thing I would say is does
15 that relationship -- how does that relationship
16 translate to academics and academic partnering?

17 What else would you guys add to that?

18 MS. WATTENBERG: Can I -- let me just --
19 you asked what else it's used for. And I think
20 the other thing it could be used for, I don't
21 think our current ones are, but I think it's
22 important and I think Bob's report talks a little

1 about this is that it could also be a system that
2 helps everybody at the school, but also at our
3 level. Know what's going right and what's wrong.
4 It's an earlier indicator system in a way.

5 MS. EHRGOOD: So I would say one thing
6 that would not be a great indicator but one that
7 we tend to jump to regularly, and we've seen this
8 is a number of conversations that I've been a part
9 of is percent of parental participation at a
10 parent/teacher night. That is not a good
11 indicator. And the reason why that not a good
12 indicator is because you have no idea of the
13 quality of the conversation going on and frankly,
14 if it is not a quality conversation, I'm not going
15 either. Nobody's got time, right? The two things
16 that everybody has little of is time and money.

17 So I'm not interested in wasting in
18 either of these women's time or all of our
19 taxpayer's money, having people look at, you know,
20 are we measuring attendance at parent/teacher
21 conferences if we don't know what the real outcome
22 and the quality of those parent/teacher

1 conference. So that makes it hard to grapple
2 with, but that academic partnering somehow does
3 need to get pulled in, but I don't have the
4 perfect indicator for you right now, but I'm happy
5 to think about it.

6 MS. WATTENBERG: Please do.

7 MR. JACOBSON: Great. Ms. Lord, would
8 you like to question the panel. I'm sorry. We're
9 a little over time. We might do a second round of
10 questions, but I'd like to give other Board
11 members a chance to ask a couple of questions as
12 well. Ms. Lord.

13 MS. LORD: Well, first of all, thank you
14 all for coming down tonight. Basically, what
15 we're talking about is how do we, as I guess,
16 consumers of education hold schools accountable
17 for improving education for our students and most
18 importantly, outcomes and opportunities for our
19 students.

20 Every person up here has had a different
21 angle on that and it's very refreshing to hear
22 something that isn't a lot of acronyms, frankly.

1 I'd like to follow up a little bit about the
2 parent part of it and also the school climate and
3 engagement to see if we can figure out, if not on
4 the report card, are there alternative ways. Are
5 there ways, through policy, to kind of encourage
6 the amazing work that is going on at Stanton
7 Elementary, which, for the record, was the highest
8 achieving gains in science instruction last year.

9 So it's not just parent engagement,
10 there is science going on there too. But how to
11 sort of highlight these great practices and
12 wonderful outcomes for kids to turn around in the
13 parent/teacher relationship in a way that's going
14 to encourage or almost compel more schools to get
15 there.

16 And to Ms. Greenberg's point (sic), what
17 kinds of questions would be most useful to ask so
18 that we get sort of the school climate parent
19 relationship as well as the things that the
20 Department of Education is kind of asking us to
21 do.

22 MS. EHRGOOD: From a parent perspective,

1 do you want to -- I don't want to put you on the
2 spot.

3 MS. COX: Because I'm really not sure.

4 MS. EHRGOOD: So you mentioned like, a
5 parent Bill of Rights or other avenues or other
6 forums or venues for a parent -- for policy around
7 parents, right. Is that it?

8 MS. LORD: Exactly. So you're almost
9 obliged to say how many parents attend
10 parent/teacher conferences as the only way we can
11 measure that engagement part.

12 MS. EHRGOOD: Right. Go ahead.

13 MS. BRYANT: So it's kind of hard, right
14 because if like, me and you are friends, right,
15 and we felt like we both have a really good
16 friendship, it's hard for somebody else to come
17 and be like, well, your friendship really as good
18 as that friendship over there. You know, even
19 though we feel like what we have is very
20 authentic, I almost would push to say that if you
21 have to have something that has to go on
22 something, it's better to say what are the best

1 practices so that people will be encouraged to do
2 those as opposed to saying how many people came
3 and did this.

4 We know, through a lot of research,
5 things that moves to an achievement that we've
6 seen and we've tried at the worst schools and have
7 seen rapid instant gains, it's like we know home
8 visits work. We know student-led conferences
9 work, we know constant positive ongoing
10 communication works. I'm between a rock and a
11 hard place, almost, but I feel like if you
12 actually have to put something down, so you know
13 these schools are actually like authentically
14 engaging parents, right. We know that all of
15 these things are linked to learning that push
16 learning forward, where the school says this is
17 how we engage family.

18 MS. EHRGOOD: It's almost like school
19 profiles. Like a family engagement profile per
20 school, potentially.

21 MR. ROTHMAN: If I could just add one
22 thing. One thing that several districts have done

1 is it's not as detailed as a profile, but they've
2 done surveys of parents and teachers and it's they
3 are well designed, can draw out a lot of this
4 information and it's especially revealing if they
5 do both and they find that the teachers say
6 engagement is great and the parents say no, it's
7 not. Then you need to do something.

8 MS. GREENFIELD: I couldn't agree more
9 and that's a really important point. I just want
10 to clarify here. I am speaking as the director of
11 a program that is very interested in getting this
12 climate data, so I'm not speaking as a DCPS
13 parent, which I am too, although I will if you
14 want me to. But I really think that piece of it,
15 and I would love with the Board -- and I don't
16 remember if I sent it to you, Jack, or not -- we
17 have a copy of what the survey tool that is being
18 launched in the fall is and it includes a parent
19 survey and it really does get at the heart of are
20 you being allowed in to help support your kid's
21 education. How is that happening?

22 It's a research-based survey. It's not

1 just a series of questions of do you like your
2 school. I couldn't agree with you more as a
3 person who walks around saying please don't do an
4 assembly about bullying. You know a one off is
5 not going to do anything anymore than a one off of
6 bringing your parents for Back to School Night.
7 We need to actually build the supports and the
8 structure so that schools really know what does
9 work. I would love some feedback from the folks
10 on this panel, particularly, but we're working
11 this where we're talking to school leaders and
12 we're talking to parents and we're talking to kids
13 about what this feels like to actually take so
14 that we can start seeing what kind of information
15 we're going to gather from it because I think the
16 whole purpose of doing something like this -- and
17 yes, I am more interested in collecting data. I
18 don't actually care if it goes on the report card,
19 but I can't help schools if they come to me and
20 say I don't know what's going on, they they're
21 going to have to do their own survey. They're
22 going to have to do this research. They can't --

1 I can't tell you that you have a problem with your
2 seventh grade girls because of this particular
3 issue unless I have something to look at.

4 So I do feel like schools need it in
5 order to also talk about what they're doing right.
6 And I have to be honest with you, one of the
7 things that has been interesting about when
8 schools start collecting this data, they actually
9 also find out what they're doing well and that is,
10 you know, data doesn't have to be punitive. We
11 have a history of using data punitively in this
12 city and now I'll speak as a parent, it drives me
13 crazy. It breaks down the trust between our
14 families and our schools. It puts our school
15 leadership in an impossible position a lot of the
16 time. That's the last thing we need to add to.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. Thank you
18 very much, Ms. Greenfield. I'm sorry. We've got
19 to move to Ms. Williams if she has a question or
20 two.

21 MS. WILLIAMS: Actually, I just want a
22 point of clarification. Thank you for doing this

1 work, it's very important work. So we are saying
2 if we do include environmental factors and
3 parental involvement factors as part of our report
4 card that the information should not come directly
5 from the administrators at the school but from the
6 families and the students?

7 In other words, the information should
8 not be gathered from the, you heard me,
9 administrators but from the people who are
10 actually participating in the process. The
11 students and the parents judge the environment and
12 the depth of parental involvement or how they feel
13 about the parental involvement programs.

14 MS. GREENFIELD: I would just say
15 quickly, what we're looking at, parents would be
16 surveyed, students would be surveyed, school
17 instructional leadership as well as school staff
18 as a whole would be surveyed. So all four parts.

19 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. Thanks.

20 MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Weedon from Ward 6.
21 No questions? Mr. Jolly? Ms. Wilson-Phelan.

22 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Thank you so much

1 for your time tonight. I know you've been here
2 for a while, especially Keesha. Thank you for
3 coming. Just one question Ms. Greenfield. You
4 earlier referred to socio emotional data. And I
5 wondered if that is also what you're talking about
6 capturing in a survey form or are you also talking
7 about somehow tracking what's going on at a
8 classroom level?

9 MS. GREENFIELD: No. This socio
10 emotional data would be what we would be able to
11 lift up from these surveys.

12 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Thanks.

13 MR. JACOBSON: Terrific. And you
14 mentioned something about if this survey is given
15 or administered that it be housed at OSSE. Can
16 you talk a little bit about what would that mean
17 and how that would look and why that's important?

18 MS. GREENFIELD: From my perspective,
19 it's important because I would like to do
20 something that crosses both systems. There are
21 bullying prevention policies in all of our
22 charters, as well as our D.C. Public Schools.

1 So to have one system creating a set of
2 data that the other system isn't using is
3 problematic for a program like mine. So we would
4 be interested in something that really crossed
5 both systems and that's where OSSE would come into
6 play. And OSSE has some specific skills and
7 abilities to help get that information out if we
8 wanted to provide information for the school
9 report card or something.

10 Right now, the way the system is set up,
11 any school can download this platform next year
12 and start doing it on their own and they can
13 measure themselves against sort of a standard
14 across the country, not across D.C., but just by
15 themselves. So schools can start doing it
16 immediately.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Great. I'm certainly
18 interested in this and I will be an advocate of
19 yours, both at DCPS and the charters and at OSSE,
20 but I'm going to work with my colleagues as well,
21 of course.

22 With that, I'm inclined to release this

1 panel that's been here for quite a while, if Board
2 members don't object.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. Sure.

4 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, because we've
5 got a little more work to do ourselves. So thank
6 you all for coming today. You've been wonderful.
7 That discussion actually helps propel us into the
8 next to last portion of our meeting here tonight,
9 which is about the ESEA Waiver.

10 The ESEA Waiver Committee has been
11 chaired by Ruth Wattenberg, our colleague from
12 Ward 3. They've been reviewing the District's
13 draft ESEA renewal application to the U.S.
14 Department of Education. Today, we're going to be
15 considering adoption of recommendations towards
16 improving the waiver and the District's
17 accountability system, not only in the short-
18 term, but also the long-term.

19 I want to commend the Committee for
20 their dedication to this very important issue.
21 Additionally, I appreciate OSSE's continued
22 efforts to engage the State Board, and we look

1 forward to working together, continuing to move
2 together to move to an extension request and to
3 further improve the lives of the District
4 students.

5 With that, I'm going to turn it over to
6 Ms. Wattenberg, who is Chair of the Committee to
7 give any additional comments or to frame this
8 issue a little bit more when we move on towards
9 your Committee Report.

10 MS. WATTENBERG: It's very late and I'm
11 going to be very quick. What I want to say is
12 that what we tried to do in this report and in our
13 recommendations is acknowledge and reaffirm the
14 enormous and longstanding commitment of this Board
15 to a strong accountability system in D.C., and we
16 do that in a number of ways in this report, as
17 OSSE does in the waiver.

18 We also wanted to be sort of clear and
19 forward thinking about acknowledging also the side
20 effects that come from that accountability system.
21 And part of what we try to do in this report is
22 acknowledge that and think about some smart ways

1 to end up with the right mix of accountability
2 indicators, the right mix of tests and other
3 measures of quality and achievement.

4 We do that in a few ways; one of which
5 is to talk about an enhanced report card and we
6 had witnesses talking about some aspects of that.
7 We also call for OSSE to undertake a study of what
8 is going on, in terms of testing and test prep in
9 our system. Again, we've heard from a number of
10 witnesses about on the one hand, the enormous
11 value of end-of-year testing and we heard it from
12 members up here as well. And we also heard about
13 how it can drive other things out of the school.
14 And we need to look at it and we need to look at
15 it smartly and we need to begin with a good study
16 and we call for that.

17 We talk about some other data that we
18 need so that we as a Board, but also so that other
19 advocates around the system, again, such as the
20 people on the panels, have data from which they
21 also can make reports and discuss how we can
22 improve schooling for all the kids in D.C.

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1 So that's the content of the report. I
2 want to just thank all of my colleagues for all of
3 their input over a number of meetings. I want to
4 thank OSSE for helping us understand it all; the
5 staff for getting this out the door, my colleague
6 Mary, who was also on the Committee with me, who
7 was enormously helpful, and Jack, for helping to
8 shepherd all of this through.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MR. JACOBSON: Are there additional
11 comments or discussion from Board members
12 surrounding the report that's been circulated?

13 (No response.)

14 Then I would entertain a motion to adopt the
15 Committee Report.

16 MS. WATTENBERG: I so move.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Is there a second?

18 MS. JOLLY: Second.

19 MR. RAUCH: Roll call?

20 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Jolly we'll say is
21 the second on that. Is there any discussion among
22 Board members?

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1 (No response.)

2 MR. JACOBSON: Wonderful. Then we will
3 vote. Roll call, please.

4 MR. RAUCH: Jack Jacobson?

5 MR. JACOBSON: Aye.

6 MR. RAUCH: Karen Williams?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Aye.

8 MR. RAUCH: Mary Lord?

9 MS. LORD: Aye.

10 MR. RAUCH: Laura Wilson-Phelan?

11 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Aye.

12 MR. RAUCH: Ruth Wattenberg?

13 MS. WATTENBERG: Aye.

14 MR. RAUCH: Kamili Anderson?

15 MS. ANDERSON: Aye.

16 MR. RAUCH: Kamili Anderson is joining
17 us via telephone pursuant to our Bylaws.

18 MS. ANDERSON: Aye.

19 MR. RAUCH: Try again, Kamili.

20 MS. ANDERSON: Aye.

21 MR. RAUCH: Thank you. That has been
22 recorded as "aye."

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1 MR. RAUCH: Joe Weedon?

2 MR. WEEDON: Aye.

3 MR. RAUCH: Mark Jones?

4 (No response.)

5 MR. RAUCH: Tierra Jolly?

6 MS. JOLLY: Aye.

7 MR. RAUCH: For the record, Betel

8 Asfaha?

9 MS. ASFAHA: I'm sorry. Aye.

10 MR. RAUCH: And Brian Contreras is
11 absent today. Just for the record, Board members,
12 our student representative votes are only being
13 recorded for the record, but they do not impact
14 the vote on the underlying resolution.

15 Mr. President, the vote passes
16 unanimously.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so very much.
18 This report is the beginning of our discussion
19 with OSSE on what our accountability system should
20 look like and we intend to have quite a few
21 additional conversations and probably a couple of
22 more reports along these lines that the Board can

1 of the District of Columbia, the Office of State
2 Superintendent of Education and others.

3 Ms. Anderson is joining us by telephone.

4 I'm not sure if she has any comments or is able to
5 make those comments, but if she is, I'd invite her
6 to do so at this time.

7 (No response.)

8 MR. JACOBSON: Otherwise, I would just
9 say that this report is the result of well over a
10 year of hard work by Board members, by staff, by
11 our student representatives, a couple of
12 roundtables, a lot of discussions with
13 stakeholders. And it's a pretty thorough
14 assessment of what still needs to be done,
15 frankly, in this area.

16 MR. RAUCH: She doesn't have comments.

17 MR. JACOBSON: No comments. I would
18 then entertain a motion to adopt the Committee
19 Report.

20 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: I have a comment.

21 MR. WEEDON: I have a comment as well.

22 MR. JACOBSON: If we could make a motion

1 and second and then there will be time for
2 discussion.

3 MS. JOLLY: I move.

4 MR. WEEDON: Second.

5 MR. JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Jolly and
6 seconded by Mr. Weedon. And discussion?

7 We'll start with Mr. Weedon.

8 MR. WEEDON: I would just like to state
9 for the record that I think we all understand that
10 being present in school is critical for learning
11 and we need to look at this 80/20 Rule and the
12 impact and how it's being implemented across the
13 District.

14 At this point, I think there's a lot of
15 information that's missing and I think there's a
16 lot of policies that need to be flushed out on how
17 they're being implemented at the local level.

18 I wanted to use this opportunity to
19 highlight another case that's not in the report
20 that was highlighted in the Washington Post just a
21 few weeks ago of a Ward 6 parent who took her son
22 out of school for, I believe, 10 days, two school

1 weeks, for an overseas adoption. And that parent
2 was reported as truant, taken before the court
3 system before the courts dismissed the case.

4 I believe that we need to ensure that
5 there are clear definitions of what counts as
6 truant versus what is an excused absence versus
7 what is tardy. And until those definitions are
8 clear and we have agreement among all the
9 stakeholders and public charter, we need to be
10 very clear in how we move forward.

11 So with that, I'll yield the rest of my
12 time.

13 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you for those
14 comments. Ms. Wilson-Phelan.

15 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: I appreciate the
16 amount of work that went into this and the study
17 that took place before my tenure on the Board. And
18 I appreciate that I don't have the full context of
19 those conversations or discussions, however, I
20 will say for the record, I do find contradictory
21 comments in our set of recommendations. I have
22 brought those to light and I don't see them

1 incorporated, which is absolutely fine. I can
2 appreciate that the Committee should present the
3 report that they believe that the Board should
4 consider.

5 However, as an elected representative of
6 citizens of Washington, D.C., I feel incredibly
7 responsible to make sure that each and every word
8 that we put forth as a recommendation to the rest
9 of the city government is very carefully thought
10 out and worded. And if that is the case for this,
11 this report that we see before us, then it is not
12 something I can support in its present form.

13 And I want to state for the record why.
14 Because I do support interventions associated with
15 truancy. I believe they are extraordinarily
16 important. I think that it's a serious issue in
17 our city and it necessitates lots of attention;
18 however, when we call, at the same time,
19 consideration of a set of recommendations by an
20 outside organization and then we also call for
21 further study, I worry that it sends mixed signals
22 to our partner government agencies about what we

1 actually think is the most important.

2 So I just want to share that, that I

3 don't disagree with the spirit of what we're

4 trying to accomplish and I don't mean any

5 disrespect associated with the work that went into

6 this during the time in which I was not a member

7 of the Board, but I do think we have to be very

8 careful about what we say and what we recommend.

9 And for those reasons, I am not fully supportive

10 of the way that we've laid out the recommendations

11 in this document.

12 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you for those

13 comments. Any comments from other Board members?

14 Ms. Wattenberg and then Ms. Lord.

15 MS. WATTENBERG: Yes. I would just like

16 to offer one comment, which is there needs to be

17 more study, and that comes through clearly in the

18 report that there are a number of issues that need

19 to be looked at. But I just want to clarify that

20 what's also true and comes through in the report

21 is the importance that immediately, and not after

22 there is more study that we're expecting schools

1 to clarify and be a lot fairer about what is
2 tardiness and about what is absence and about what
3 is excused absence because I'm assuming that we
4 are asking for those things to move forward,
5 operationally, as implementation issues
6 immediately. I just wanted to clarify that.

7 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. That's
8 helpful. Ms. Lord.

9 MS. LORD: As somebody who attended both
10 roundtables and was struck by the passion of
11 principals, of teachers, of students, that this
12 was severe problem. Essentially, what we have,
13 for a variety of reasons, is a rule that
14 implementation is essentially, transforming tardy
15 students into chronic truance, whose families are
16 starting to get in trouble with the court system,
17 just like your Ward 6 colleague that the immediacy
18 of the action on this one 80/20 Rule, I think is a
19 pretty clear recommendation.

20 That said, there is a lot of support for
21 keeping our eye on the ball, forcefully, on
22 truancy. There is a chronic truant problem.

1 Students who aren't in school aren't learning.
2 They are not going to make proficiency benchmarks
3 -- well, there are a whole lot of good outcomes
4 for staying in school. So there is no
5 backtracking on the five unexcused absence rules.
6 There's no backtracking from the daily attendance
7 requirement so that every school has to report to
8 OSSE or through the Public Charter School Board
9 daily attendance. So these are important
10 safeguards and important new anti-truancy
11 measures, but I think that the report, the call
12 for more study is to really clarify how we can
13 have improving truancy rates and yet, but poorer
14 performance in terms of having student support
15 teams meeting with truant students.

16 So there's sort of a discrepancy, a
17 conundrum, if you will, that we seem to be
18 improving, in terms of reducing truancy rates, but
19 yet there are all these problems at the
20 schoolhouse door.

21 So one of the other recommendations is
22 to my Ward 6 colleague's point, to have an

1 examination of what is the schoolhouse practice.
2 Who do they consider tardy? Do they have a way of
3 marking tardy kids if the student comes 10 minutes
4 late because the bus is late, does that
5 automatically kicked them into an absent status?

6 But it was a lot of work and I really
7 applaud our policy analysis, Amaya Garcia and the
8 staff for just helping us get this robust amount
9 of research done and to you in a rather condensed
10 form.

11 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms. Lord. Our
12 student representative, Ms. Asfaha.

13 MS. ASFAHA: I just had a question.
14 Okay. So I understand that the 80/20 Rule would
15 be different for each school when a student is
16 considered tardy, depending on the percentage of
17 the day that they miss. Is that the same for each
18 -- would it be considered the same for each
19 individual student, depending on their schedule?

20 I mean, I know some students have half-
21 day schedules. So if they attend the same school,
22 how does that work? Maybe I'm not laying this

1 properly. Do you understand what I'm saying?

2 Like, they may attend the same school,
3 but one student has a half-day schedule and one
4 student has a full day schedule. So is it just
5 how much of the day that is missed?

6 Like, basically, does every school have
7 the same standards for each student when it comes
8 to tardiness or is it individualized and
9 personalized?

10 MR. JACOBSON: I'm going to allow my
11 executive director to correct me, but my
12 understanding is, through conversations with
13 parents and school leaders, that the Committee and
14 that staff engaged in that there were
15 discrepancies among how individual schools counted
16 attendance. Is that correct?

17 MS. LORD: In the half-day, the rule is
18 sort of instructional day. So if a student has a
19 half-day schedule, it would be 20 percent of that
20 half-day. But there does seem to be an awful lot
21 of discrepancy about whether somebody who is -- a
22 student who comes late is then held out of that

1 first period class so that they don't disrupt
2 their fellow classmates, and then that becomes
3 missing instructional time, which then translates
4 to absence.

5 I've also heard there are some problems,
6 just system-wide, like how do you account for a
7 late coming student. There may be no easy way for
8 the attendance person to just put that in.

9 Does that answer your question?

10 MS. ASFAHA: Yes. Thank you.

11 MR. JACOBSON: Is there additional
12 discussion among Board members?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. JACOBSON: If not, then I would
15 entertain a motion. Actually, I already had a
16 motion. So I'm at the point where I'll let Ms.
17 Wilson-Phelan make one last comment.

18 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Twenty seconds. I
19 would just say I'd be more than happy to work with
20 my colleagues on what I think could be some
21 relatively simple edits that maintain the spirit
22 of what we're trying to achieve, while enabling us

1 to really drive home a consistent message about
2 what we hope will change or actions to be taken.
3 But I also understand there's urgency to push this
4 through and I believe there is probably
5 significant enough support to do that, but I just
6 want my colleagues to understand I'm not trying to
7 be an obstacle or disagreeing with the spirit of
8 it, I just really believe this body needs to be
9 putting forth our best work at all times.

10 And I know this is our best effort right
11 at this moment and I don't want time and the
12 pressure of time to lead to us not putting forth a
13 document that's really consistent in terms of what
14 we're recommending.

15 MR. JACOBSON: Other discussion?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: So if we vote on this
17 tonight, what's our rush? Is there a rush?

18 MR. JACOBSON: The document has been in
19 some form of draft for about four months.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay.

21 MR. JACOBSON: And the Chair of the
22 Council's Education Committee is very interested

1 in finding out our views on truancy and attendance
2 rules as they currently exist because I believe
3 he's interested in addressing a lot of these
4 problems that we've raised and identified in this
5 report and providing that sort of information to
6 the Council's Education Committee, can help some
7 of these issues be addressed more quickly.

8 I understand the concerns with what
9 could potentially be viewed as contradictory
10 recommendations. I see this as more of a call to
11 action for what leaders throughout the city in
12 education policy need to start focusing on.

13 The bottom line, this report, as I read
14 it, we don't have enough information to fix the
15 problem. It's a multi-faceted problem. We need a
16 holistic approach and right now students aren't
17 receiving that and the system isn't seeing that.

18 My preference tonight would be to move
19 forward with this with potentially, an ability to
20 make some technical corrections that might
21 eliminate one or two of these ambiguities.

22 So that would be my preference, but this

1 body is an independently elected and operating
2 body and I am happy to go with the will of the
3 Board. Ms. Lord.

4 MS. LORD: Just a suggestion, we could
5 approve or vote tonight and withhold the
6 publication until we had something that we were
7 really comfortable with, with our best foot
8 forward. So I don't know if that's possible or if
9 we should consider delaying the vote.

10 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: The other thought I
11 had is because we scheduled the meeting for the
12 26th, that is one week from now. There is a
13 possibility of taking four more days, where I
14 don't think that there will be significant action.

15 I'm getting confirmation from the
16 representative from Councilmember Grosso's Office,
17 in order to make some quick fixes to this and
18 reconsider on the 26th. There is already a motion
19 on the table, though, so I recognize you can't
20 consider that until after.

21 MR. JACOBSON: There is. What I can do
22 is poll the Board to see if we would have a quorum

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1 at our meeting on the 26th. If you are able to
2 attend that meeting, can you so indicate by
3 raising your hand?

4 (Board members comply.)

5 MR. JACOBSON: One, two, three, four,
6 five. That's five.

7 MS. WATTENBERG: We can call in. Okay.

8 MR. JACOBSON: Yes?

9 MS. WATTENBERG: I can call in.

10 MR. JACOBSON: Okay. Then we would have
11 a quorum and then could take action at that time.
12 Given that, Board members have the opportunity to
13 ask to table the motion that is currently on the
14 table.

15 MR. WEEDON: Move to table.

16 MS. JOLLY: I wanted to make a comment.

17 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Second.

18 MR. JACOBSON: And there will be a
19 second on tabling. And then Ms. Jolly can make a
20 discussion comment.

21 MS. JOLLY: I have to say I'm getting
22 frustrated. Every time that a Committee on this

1 Board comes up with something that is worth
2 adopting and something that will be good for kids,
3 we vote to table it and we vote to postpone it.
4 We did it with competency-based learning, we did
5 it with the state diploma and now we're doing it
6 with this and I'm just frustrated that if we do
7 this one more time, then one more thing that we've
8 put forward that is good for kids will end up not
9 happening.

10 MR. JACOBSON: We have a table motion,
11 which actually, I don't think was debatable, but I
12 wanted to give our colleague from Ward 8 an
13 opportunity to speak. So we will now take a roll
14 call vote on the motion to table action on --

15 MS. WATTENBERG: Point of order. I
16 think there's a way to table with a time-certain
17 that it will be taken back up.

18 MS. JOLLY: Great idea.

19 MS. WATTENBERG: And that's what I want
20 to do. Tierra Jolly's comment is absolutely
21 correct. So I only want to table it if we know
22 that it will come back up on the 26th.

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1 MR. JACOBSON: Do the sponsors consider
2 that a friendly amendment?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

4 MR. JACOBSON: And a second as well?

5 MS. JOLLY: Yes.

6 MR. JACOBSON: Wonderful. We will take
7 a roll call vote on the motion to table. Mr.
8 Executive Director.

9 MS. LORD: Point of order. I think you
10 have to make an official motion to table by -- it
11 has to be phrased, "And bring it up again by the
12 26th for it to be --

13 MR. JACOBSON: That was her friendly --
14 that was Ms. Wattenberg's friendly amendment to
15 the motion to table. So that is correct, it has
16 been accepted.

17 So we are now voting on the motion to
18 table. Mr. Rauch, please call the roll.

19 MR. RAUCH: On the motion to table, Mr.
20 Jack Jacobson?

21 MR. JACOBSON: Aye.

22 MR. RAUCH: Karen Williams?

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1 MS. WILLIAMS: Aye.

2 MR. RAUCH: Mary Lord?

3 MS. LORD: Aye.

4 MR. RAUCH: Laura Wilson-Phelan?

5 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Aye.

6 MR. RAUCH: Ruth Wattenberg?

7 MS. WATTENBERG: Aye.

8 MR. RAUCH: Kamili Anderson? Ms.

9 Anderson, are you still with us on the line?

10 (No response.)

11 Kamili, can you hear me? Hello?

12 MR. JACOBSON: Next.

13 MR. RAUCH: We're having some difficulty

14 with Ms. Kamili on the line. Mr. Jones is absent.

15 Joe Weedon?

16 MR. WEEDON: Yes.

17 MR. RAUCH: Tierra Jolly?

18 MS. JOLLY: No.

19 MS. ANDERSON: Hello?

20 MR. RAUCH: Yes, Ms. Anderson. How do

21 you vote on a motion to table on this item until

22 the 26th of March, next Thursday?

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1 MS. ANDERSON: I can't hear the -- I
2 cannot discern what's being said over the
3 telephone. It's very difficult to hear.

4 (Technical difficulty with phone.)

5 (The motion is repeated to Ms. Anderson
6 off the record.)

7 MR. RAUCH: Ms. Anderson, can you
8 restate your vote, please, for the record?

9 MS. ANDERSON: I will have to abstain
10 because I was not able to understand with the poor
11 reception over the telephone and the conversation
12 was very mutes and very muffled and very hard to
13 understand. Every other word was pretty much cut
14 off, so I'm going to have to abstain.

15 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Anderson abstains.

16 MR. RAUCH: Betel Asfaha?

17 MS. ASFAHA: Aye.

18 MR. RAUCH: Mr. President, on the motion
19 to table this measure until next Thursday, March
20 26th, passes.

21 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. We will work
22 with Board members and staff to finalize and

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1 refine the recommendations included in the report.

2 With that, our business is concluded. I would

3 entertain a motion to adjourn.

4 ADJOURNMENT

5 MS. WATTENBERG: So moved.

6 MR. JACOBSON: Is there a second?

7 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Second.

8 MR. JACOBSON: All those in favor?

9 (Whereupon, Board members collectively
10 respond "aye".)

11 MR. JACOBSON: Motion passes and we are
12 adjourned.

13 (Whereupon, at 8:50 p.m., the
14 Public Meeting was adjourned.)

15 * * * * *

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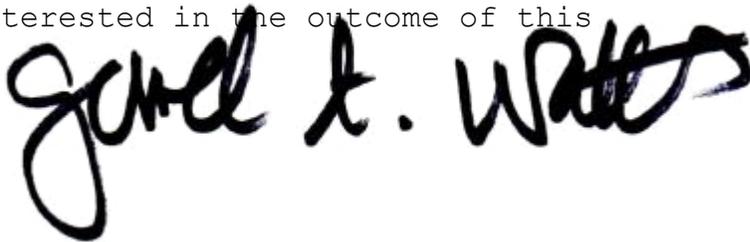
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22

1 CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

2 I, GERVEL A. WATTS, the officer before whom the
3 foregoing meeting was taken, do hereby certify
4 that the testimony that appears in the foregoing
5 pages was recorded by me and thereafter reduced to
6 typewriting under my direction; that said meeting
7 is a true record of the proceedings; that I am
8 neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by
9 any of the parties to the action in which this
10 meeting was taken; and further, that I am not a
11 relative or employee of any counsel or attorney
12 employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or
13 otherwise interested in the outcome of this
14 action.



15
16 _____
17 GERVEL A. WATTS
18 Notary Public in and for the
19 District of Columbia



20
21
22 My Commission expires: February 14, 2019

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