The Regular Meeting of the District of Columbia State Board of Education convened at 441 4th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., at 5:30 p.m., Jack Jacobson, President, presiding.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

JACK JACOBSON, President, Ward 2 Representative
KAREN WILLIAMS, Vice-President, Ward 7 Representative
KAMILI ANDERSON, Ward 4 Representative
TIERRA JOLLY, Ward 8 Representative
MARK JONES, Ward 5 Representative
MARY LORD, At-Large Representative
LAURA WILSON PHELAN, Ward 1 Representative
RUTH WATTENBERG, Ward 3 Representative
JOE WEEDON, Ward 6 Representative
JOHN-PAUL HAYWORTH, Executive Director

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION:

HANSEUL KANG, State Superintendent

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

DESTINEE WHITTINGTON
ALSO PRESENT:

ERICH MARTEL, Retired DCPS High School Teacher, Ward 3
MARILYN HOLMES, Executive Director, Total Sunshine, Inc.
ALISSA PELTZMAN, Vice President, State Policy & Implementation Support
DAVID TANSEY, Math Teacher, Dunbar Senior High School
HEATHER WATHINGTON, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer, Maya Angelou Schools and See Forever Foundation
PAUL KIHN, Former Deputy Superintendent, the School District of Philadelphia
DONNA ANTHONY, Assistant Superintendent for Health & Wellness, Office of the State Superintendent of Education
CHARNETA SCOTT, Ph.D., District Department of Behavioral Health

ABIGAIL KOEMER, 11th grade, Wilson Senior High School

JAMES PETERS, 12th grade, Bell Multi-Cultural High School

RAHEL MIDEKSA, 11th grade, Columbia Heights Education Campus

JHIRBRON TONGE, 12th grade, School Without Walls

CAROL BRISTOL, Director at Sunshine Early Learning Center
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(5:33 p.m.)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Good afternoon.

The time is 5:33 on January 20th, 2016 and this public meeting of the District of Columbia State Board of Education is now called to order.

The roll will now be called to determine the presence of a quorum. Mr. Hayworth?

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jacobson?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Present.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Present.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord? Ms. Lord?

Ms. Wilson Phelan?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Present.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg? Ms. Wattenberg? Ms. Anderson?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Present.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones? Mr. Jones?

Mr. Weedon?

MEMBER WEEDON: Present.
MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: Present.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contraras? Mr. Contraras? Ms. Whittington?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Present.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. President, you have a quorum.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. A quorum has been determined and the State Board will now proceed with the business portion of the meeting. Let the record note Ms. Wattenberg is in attendance.

Members, we have a draft agenda before us. Are there corrections or additions?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: There being no corrections, I would entertain a motion to approve the agenda.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: So moved.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Williams.

MEMBER JOLLY: Second.
PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Second by Ms. Jolly. The motion being properly moved and seconded, I will ask the yeas and nays. All in favor, please say aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Any opposed?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: The motion is approved. And we're going to slow down just slightly for our colleague from the at large seat to get settled in. Each year, the State Board of Education elects two of its Members to serve as President and Vice President of the Board.

Together, the President and Vice President provide leadership to the State Board, represent the Board at public events, and work with Staff to ensure that the Board's priorities are realized.

Our election for president is chaired by our longest tenured member. As such --

(Off microphone comment)

MEMBER LORD: Change into my superman
clothing.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: We will turn the chair over to our at large member, Ms. Mary Lord.

MEMBER LORD: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson.

I'm honored to be considered as the Dean of the Board. In fact, my mother's name was Dean and she worked at a university. So this is sort of a triple honor for me.

It is my distinct pleasure and honor to ask if there are any nominations for the Office of President of the State Board of Education for 2016. Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: I nominate Jack Jacobson, my colleague from Ward 2.

MEMBER LORD: Thank you, Ms. Jolly.

Mr. Jacobson from Ward 2, you have been nominated. Do you accept the nomination?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: I do.

MEMBER LORD: Thank you. Are there any additional nominations?

(No audible response)

MEMBER LORD: Okay. Hearing no
further nominations, I would ask the Executive Director to call the roll on the question of election of the President of the State Board of Education for 2016 in order of nomination. Mr. Executive Director?

MR. HAYWORTH: Sorry. So for this vote, the Members will be asked to say the name of the person that they intend to vote for or if they are abstaining. Mr. Jacobson?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord?

MEMBER LORD: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wilson Phelan?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Jack Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg?

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Anderson?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones? Mr. Jones?

Mr. Weedon?
MEMBER WEEDON: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contreras? Mr. Contreras? Ms. Whittington?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Jacobson.

MR. HAYWORTH: Madam Chair, the vote is unanimous.

MEMBER LORD: Thank you very much.

Congratulations, Mr. Jacobson. I'm happy to turn the gavel back over to you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much, Mary.

MEMBER LORD: And for the record, I didn't actually get the gavel.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: We can rectify that at the end. Here we go. I thank my colleagues so much for your support, and I look forward to working with you for another year.

I now open the floor for nominations for the Vice Presidency. Are there nominations?

Ms. Wilson Phelan?
MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: I nominate

Karen Williams from Ward 7.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Williams from Ward 7 has been nominated. Are there additional nominations?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Do you accept the nomination?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Yes, I do.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Good. Are there any additional nominations?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Hearing none, I will ask the Executive Director to call the roll on the nomination of Ms. Williams from Ward 7 as Vice President.

MR. HAYWORTH: On the question of Ms. Williams as Vice President, please indicate the Member's last name as your vote. Mr. Jacobson?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Williams.
MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord?

MEMBER LORD: Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wilson Phelan?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg?

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Anderson?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones? Mr. Jones?

Mr. Weedon?

MEMBER WEEDON: Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: The unsinkable Karen Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contreras? Mr. Contreras? Ms. Whittington?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Williams.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. President, the vote is unanimous.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much, and congratulations, Karen. I'm looking forward to working with you.
VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS:

Congratulations, Jack.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Now we'll move onto actual business. Next on our agenda is approval of the minutes from the working sessions on December 2nd and December 9th, 2015. Are there corrections or additions to the minutes?

(Off microphone comment)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: I'm sorry, January 6th, 2016. Hearing none, I would entertain a motion to approve the minutes from January 6th, 2016.

MEMBER LORD: So moved.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Lord. Is there a second?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Second.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Second by Ms. Wilson Phelan. All in favor please say aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Any opposed?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: The motion is
approved. Next on our agenda is approval of our 2015 Year in Review report. 2015 was a very busy year for the Board. We welcomed four new staff, our new executive director, a chief student advocate, a policy analyst, and a program associate.

We approved a new waiver to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We worked to approve a new state diploma who's final vote will occur in a few moments.

We put together a task force to reexamine how the District awards credit in high school. We continued pushing for revised health standards to meet the needs of our students.

We closely monitored the results of our new state assessment, the PARK, and we joined our voices with State Boards across the country to influence national education policy with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act through the National Association of State Boards of Education.

In short, we did our job. The State
Board exists to provide education policy leadership in the District. The staff have compiled highlights of our work in a Year in Review report that Members have reviewed.

This report will serve as a foundation for our upcoming performance in oversight and budget hearings before the Council of the District of Columbia. As such, I would entertain a motion to approve the report.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: So moved.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Williams. Is there a second?

MEMBER WEEDON: Second.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Second by Mr. Weedon. Is there any discussion? Then all approved, please say aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Any opposed?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Any abstentions?

MEMBER LORD: I abstain.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. Ms.
Lord will be recorded as abstaining.

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: I also abstain.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: And Ms. Wilson Phelan. As such, the --

MEMBER WATTENBERG: I abstain as well.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: And Ms. Wattenberg abstains. The Year in Review is approved. Thank you.

Good evening, my name is Jack Jacobson and I'm President and Ward 2 Representative of the State Board of Education. On behalf of the Members of the District of Columbia State Board of Education, I want to welcome you, guests, and our viewing public to our Wednesday, January 20th, 2016 public meeting. I also want to welcome our State Superintendent who is in route, Ms. Hanseul Kang.

The State Board holds its regularly scheduled meetings on the third Wednesday of every month here in the Old Council Chambers at 441 4th Street Northwest. The Members of the State Board of Education welcome your
participation and your support in our efforts to
improve education in the Nation's Capital.

Tonight's agenda includes the final
step to provide adult students in the District a
state diploma to recognize the commitment and
dedication that these students have shown.

The Board and our friends at OSSE have
done a great job in their investigation into the
pros and cons of awarding the state diploma in
the District.

I also want to note that the GED
testing service may be recommending a change in
the passing score for its exam. As Members know,
in 2014 the GED testing service released a new,
more challenging exam, the result of which was a
steep decline in the passage rate.

The State Board and Superintendent
will review data from the GED and assess if it
makes sense for the District to adopt the new
score or maintain our current score.

We'll also be hearing from Panel on
Proposed Regulation soon to be published in the
D.C. Register that were developed based on recommendations that the State Board adopted at our December public meeting related to providing additional flexibility in awarding students high school credit.

We will also hear from two panels on the recently released Health Education Standards which are in draft form. Health standards may not be a panacea for all of the problems facing our students, but effective, comprehensive, and skills based health standards are incredibly important for laying a foundation for a healthy life for our students.

From bullying to sexual health, food choices to gun safety, our students deserve the best and most comprehensive information we can provide. The work done by the State Board of Education, OSSE, and dozens and dozens of content experts, teachers, and students over the past 18 months has provided a path toward adopting rich, rigorous health education standards that will be the gold standard for urban school districts.
across the country.

Finally, we'll be hearing from providers of high quality pre-kindergarten programming in the District. The Board has the authority to set academic and degree requirements for teachers in pre-kindergarten programs that receive funding from the District Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Program.

We will hear more about the program tonight and about how the District's commitment to pre-kindergarten education is faring.

We'll now hear introductory comments from the State Superintendent of Education, Ms. Hanseul Kang. Ms. Kang?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Good evening, everyone. I apologize for being a few minutes late. Traffic is pretty bad out there. But I'm glad to be here with all of you today.

I'm really excited about tonight's agenda and very grateful for the partnership between OSSE and the State Board of Education as well as many other stakeholders in the work
around the state diploma, high school credit flexibility, health standards, and the provision around pre-k that we'll be discussing tonight.

On credit flexibility, I wanted to just briefly note that since our working session, we've had a productive discussion with Laura Wilson Phelan to follow up on some additional tweaks to the wording of the regulations before they go out for public comment.

I also wanted to note that I plan to, in the coming days, send a letter to the task force members just providing directly some of the additional rationale around the decisions that we made in the final wording of the regulations, and also just expressing my appreciation again for their work. So just note that we plan to send that letter to the task force members.

The regulation should be published in the D.C. Register on Friday, January 22nd, and will be out then for the 30 day public comment period.

And then I wanted to also briefly just
address the pre-k enhancement and expansion
funding regulation provision that you all will be
voting on. As I mentioned at the working session
when we had a chance to discuss this, OSSE
promulgated emergency and proposed regulations
around the allocation of funding to high quality
pre-k programs in community based organizations
throughout the District.

The specific provision that you all
will be voting on this evening is related to the
minimum academic and degree requirements that are
established by OSSE and approved by the Board for
high quality CBO pre-k classrooms. So again,
this is just related to the CBO classrooms who
are participating in the pre-k enhancement
funding.

We are excited to have here this
evening Dr. Carol Bristol from the Sunshine Early
Learning Center in Southeast to speak
specifically around the importance of the
academic and degree requirements and how they
play out in her center, and appreciate her taking
the time to join us this evening.

And so look forward to any discussion on the topic, but I'm happy to entertain questions at that point in time. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much, Superintendent Kang. The Board welcomes public participation in activities under its authority. At every public meeting, we begin with testimony from public witnesses on education related matters.

If you are a member of the public and would like to speak at a public meeting, please contact our staff at SBOE@DC.gov or by calling 202-741-0888.

Our public witnesses are Eric Martel, retired D.C. public schools high school teacher from Ward 3. Eric, you can come on down and sit at one of the chairs here. And Marilyn Holmes, Executive Director of Total Sunshine, Inc. Ms. Holmes, you're also welcome to step up to the witness table. You'll each have three minutes.

MR. MARTEL: Good evening. My name is
Eric Martel, retired DCPS high school teacher. I will be sending a corrected copy because I notice there are a number of typos.

I am testifying against the following proposed amendments to DCMR Title 5 Chapter 22 Graduation, specifically 2203.7(a), (b), and (c), waiving of the Carnegie Unit in favor of competency based units, excusing students from any course, not just from world languages and math on the basis of a test, testing out, and process of reviewing these two methods by OSSE, taking three years.

The refusal of the task force majority to request that OSSE provide it with evidence that explains both deficient as well as proficient student performance in DCPS and charter schools means that the reasons for promoting competency based units fails to determine the causes of a stagnant student performance and replacing it with effective methods.

The task force did achieve a
compromise on the valid issue before it, allowing students to receive credit for prior knowledge in world languages and math, provided that they pass a state approved exam that meets or exceeds career and college readiness standards.

The decision of the State Superintendent to ignore the world language and math limitation and expand it to all subjects is an affront to members and the trust they placed in the task force process, and invites arbitrary implementation.

Please note that the task force recommendation is for passing a state approved exam that meets or exceeds career and college readiness standards. That's now replaced with attains a minimum score as set by OSSE on a corresponding OSSE approved assessment, which is an arbitrary definition not tied to any standard.

Thurgood Marshall Academy, for example, has what could be a model, and that is credit by exam for foreign language and math only, and it is recorded as having been taken by
a test, and does not carry a grade or is factored into the GPA.

And the other point that I wanted to make is it will take, under item (c) it will take three years before a report is given on whatever processes are being used by the, that have been approved by OSSE. What are the exams, what is the process, and all of that.

All of these things need to be specifically detailed, available to the Board because the Board, according to its website and its rules, has a degree of responsibility for what is being done in the name of graduation standards. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Martel, and we will gladly accept longer testimony and corrected testimony from you. Ms. Holmes?

MS. HOLMES: Hello, Happy New Year. Yes. Thank you all for this opportunity for me to come on out and speak to you once again about our education related matters. I'm with Total
Sunshine, Incorporated. That's the non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that I have chaired and led since 2003.

It's been quite some time that we've been working with young people in the City, and it's always a pleasure. Just here recently we participated in the Martin Luther King parade and peace walk. It was really exciting, there were a lot of young people that came out, and it was wonderful to see that.

I'm currently looking forward to rewarding the four national essay contest winners with their awards for winning the contest, of course. We're going to give them some technological tools to help them further their educational endeavors.

Now I wanted to talk specifically about our school grade exam program. This program has been going on since we've gotten the organization started, and this is our eighth year that we'll be doing our annual rewards ceremony which supports D.C.'s valedictorians and
salutorians with technological tools in their academic endeavors for the future.

It's always quite a tough road to get them supported. Here's a picture of our young people from last, actually 2013. But I'm sure you can see that it's a city-wide program. And all the colors of that caps and gowns, the valedictorians and salutatorians of our city, probably smiling, receiving technological tools. But I'll tell you, it's always a task to get them supported.

This year, I want to start as early as possible. I want to form a committee to help support them. Our eighth annual ceremony is going to be this June, and the clock is ticking, essentially.

I'm hopeful that we can provide the 60, roughly 67 top graduates with laptops for college. I say 67 and it's not an even number. I know we have an even number of schools. But I'll tell you, those salutatorians, they're always fighting so hard. And sometimes we have
one school or two schools that will provide more
than one salutatorian.

And so I'm hopeful that everyone that
can hear me talking about this program will step
on up. I know that the theme from the Martin
Luther King parade and peace walk this year was
change is coming. I'm looking forward to some
changes this year.

I'm hopeful that each of you will
contact us and hopefully if you can point us in
the direction of someone or anyone that you know
that may be willing to support our school grade
incentive program or support these stellar young
people, it would be fantastic.

We're looking for a location this
year. We're looking for everything this year.
And it's a task. So if someone wants to know
more information about our school grade incentive
program, they can log on to TotalSunshine.org.
You can email me directly at
info@totalsunshine.org or you can call the
Sunshine Line at 202-575-0462.
I'm really looking forward to this year's ceremony, once again, to see all these young people citywide, you know, public schools and charter schools, the top graduates are always invited.

And so we're just looking forward to supporting these young people and hopeful that we'll get a great coalition together to make sure that it's as smooth a process as possible and that they enjoy it. That will be great.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms. Holmes. We always appreciate you coming down. Thank you both for coming down this evening.

We're now moving to state diploma final approval. The state diploma will provide adult students in the District of Columbia a new pathway to opportunity.

It is not a replacement for our current high school diploma, and neither GED nor NEDP provide the full breadth of knowledge a graduating senior should have. They are not designed to do so.
What the state diploma will do is recognize the commitment of adult students to complete very challenging programs like the GED and NEDP. Both require significant time and investment.

The GED for example can take more than two years of preparation to pass. Adults involved in these programs often face barriers to completion like single parenthood, a primary language that is not English, inflexible employment, and other barriers.

On November 18th, 2015, the Board voted unanimously to move forward with proposed and final regulations that would allow the State Superintendent to award a state diploma. The regulations were published in the District Register for a 30 day public comment period and no comments were received.

As such, we have before us today a resolution approving the final regulations. But before we move to the resolution, I would like the opportunity for the Superintendent to
SUPERINTENDENT KANG: I think I would just note that I think as the President commented in his opening remarks, I think that all along our motivation, or I'll speak for myself, my motivation and I think OSSE's motivation in trying to move forward on this issue is the compelling testimony and the feedback we've heard over and over again from our adult education community, from both the students and the providers and leaders in that community about the barrier that not having a diploma has posed to many students in the District and wanting to do what we can do to advance this work for those students and to ensure them access to opportunities.

So it's really from that lense of equity that I think we have been motivated, and I think that's been a key factor in many of the Board members' comments and discussion as well.

So I'm excited that we're at this point. I'm hopeful that we can move forward with
PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Superintendent. Next we have a resolution before us that will approve the final regulations for the state diploma. The Executive Director will read the resolution.

MR. HAYWORTH: State Board of Education resolution to approve the state diploma rulemaking. SR-16.1 whereas District of Columbia law requires that the State Board of Education, excuse me, requires State Board of Education approval of high school graduation requirements.

Whereas the current regulatory framework does not provide the District's non-traditional and adult students with multiple pathways to obtain a high school diploma.

Whereas approximately 60,000 District adults, 85 percent of whom are 25 or older, lack a high school diploma or its equivalency.

Whereas the State Superintendent has proposed offering a state diploma to a resident who has successfully passed the General Education
Development test in compliance with Title 5(e) District of Columbia Municipal Regulation Sections 2320 or successfully completed the requirements of the National External Diploma Program on or after January 1st, 2014.

Whereas the state diploma shall be recognized as an equivalent to a high school diploma granted pursuant to the District's graduation requirements.

Whereas the State Superintendent and Members of the State Board of Education have engaged in an extensive public, period of public engagement including receiving testimony from the public and from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education regarding the proposed state diploma at public meetings held on November 19th, 2014, July 15th, 2015, and October 21st, 2015 as well as at working sessions held on July 1st, October 7th, and November 4th, 2015.

Whereas the State Board included in its independent review current research on high school equivalency policies, practices, and
learning outcomes in other states.

Whereas members of the public, employers, and research underscored the need for accountability, transparency, and annual reporting by providers of high school equivalency programs to identify and replicate best practices including such measures as exam passage rates, trends in enrollment and feeder patterns, academic growth, and employment rates six, twelve, and twenty-four months after successful completion of the GED, NEDP, or other approved high school equivalency exam.

Whereas the state diploma provided for passing the GED test or successfully completing the NEDP shall not be included in the District State or school level calculation of the adjusted cohort graduation rate.

Whereas the State Board of Education has reviewed the proposed and final rulemaking establishing, excuse me, proposed rulemaking establishing the state diploma and finds that the state diploma may eliminate barriers and ensure
District residents have additional opportunities to access educational and career pathways to the middle class regardless of past experiences.

And whereas the State Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution advising the State Superintendent to publish proposed and final rulemaking that would implement a state diploma on November 18th, 2015.

Whereas proposed regulations implementing a state diploma were published in the District of Columbia Register on December 11th, 2015 for a 30 day public comment period and no public comments were received.

And now therefore, be it resolved that on January 20th, 2016, the State Board approves the final rulemaking implementing a state diploma for the District of Columbia.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Hayworth. I would now entertain a motion on the resolution.

MEMBER ANDERSON: I move that we vote on the resolution and accept the resolution as
stated.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: The motion has been moved by Ms. Anderson. Is there a second?

MEMBER JOLLY: Second.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Second by Ms. Jolly. Now that it has been properly moved and seconded, do members have brief comments? Ms. Wattenberg?

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Thanks. First of all, I want to say, am I on? Yes. So delighted that recipients of GEDs are now going to get state diplomas. I have been on a great learning curve with regard to this issue.

I visited a number of the charter schools that provide GED prep. I have read, I showed this last time, just this huge document showing the very rigorous standards that GED recipients reach. And I think it's terrific that now they are going to get a state diploma.

As for the NEDP, I have asked many, many times for the Board to get a complete and proper evaluation of this assessment. Now
evaluating an assessment is not a simple matter. You can't just look at the items. First of all, they're not always available.

But what also matters is what are the answers that are regarded as adequate, how good does an answer have to be to get scored, how many answers do you need to get correct to pass, and so on. It's very complicated.

And for those reasons, there are very detailed, serious protocols and standards for judging such assessments. They are produced by the American Educational Research Association, by the American Psychological Association, and so on.

The GED has been evaluated by such standards. The PARK Test has been evaluated by such standards. And you can see it online. The NEDP has not. And I have talked with professional researchers at the Education Department's Office of Adult Ed. They have never seen any independent research on this.

I have talked to people at the
National Assessment Centers who have not seen any reviews on this. I asked at our last working meeting, failing all of this, could we at least get the assessment professionals at OSSE to review the evidence, put their professional credibility, their professional judgement on the line, use those professional standards, and indicate to us that they've reviewed the evidence and that in fact they felt like they could say yes, this assessment does in fact evaluate high school graduation level work.

I finally got a response to that just over an hour ago, and it is not signed by any OSSE assessment professionals. It is simply a statement that says we asked them to look at it and they say it's all fine or something slightly more than that.

I just, I so wanted to vote for this, and I simply can't just based on the fact that we have not been provided the basic evidence on this and we haven't been provided it in a timely way.

So I'm sorry for that. Thank you very
much. I'll just say, part of my, I mean, the reason we have a State Board is for checks and balances. And it's simply impossible for us to do our job if we can't be provided that kind of information.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms. Wattenberg. Ms. Kang, would you like to respond briefly?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Yes. I'll just make a couple of points. I think at some point we may have to agree to disagree, and we may be at that point.

I just wanted to note that I think we have done our best to be responsive to the questions that have been asked. I think although the final response you received may have been just over an hour ago, we have been in continuous communication and continuing to provide additional information including some information that NEDP is not even able to make public because it's related to their proprietary information.

And I've tried to go above and beyond
in providing access to that background information for the Board. And finally, just on the research point I'll note that in speaking to our assessment team at OSSE, part of what emerged was just that there, it tends to be less research on portfolio based assessments as opposed to traditional pen and paper types of assessments, and that may be one reason why we see the difference with the NEDP.

So just wanted to offer those comments. And appreciate the robust discussion that the Board has had on this topic.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: We're going to go to Ms. Lord, now.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: This is very simple. I just want to say yes, we can agree to disagree. I believe this will be the last time that we have a chance to disagree on this. So I look forward to moving forward.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. Ms. Lord?

MEMBER LORD: Thank you, Mr.
President. I just have a couple of quick things more to clarify or get on the record. There was a great deal of discussion about who would qualify to take the GED or NEDP.

And it was originally discussed as adults over the age of 24. Isn't it the case that the reference to the DC Municipal Regs essentially sets that bar for the GED at 24 and above?

So in other words, we're talking about adults, we're not talking about 16 year olds, you know, dropping out of high school and taking this test.

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: There is an age requirement that's incorporated in the regulations. But I believe it's a different age limit for GED versus NEDP. And I'm looking to my staff, and they are nodding.

MEMBER LORD: And then one other, just a question. I know that the NEDP has been used for many decades actually to award a diploma from a DC public schools to those who complete,
successfully complete this.

Does this state diploma change that, or do NEDP passers have the ability to, for example, earn a blue high school diploma or a DCPS diploma or a diploma that says the name of the program?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: I'm actually not sure of the specific impact on the state programs. I think what do though is allow NEDP completers at NELEA to receive a state diploma which wasn't currently the practice or the policy.

MEMBER LORD: And then finally, while I share my colleague's concerns about the availability of data and the comparability, two things have happened recently that have sort of reframed my consideration.

One is as usual an article I'm working on about new ways of grading to get at competencies. And the big question for educators is really is our job to sort talent or select talent, or is it to develop talent?
And the kinds of assessments we use determine whether we're just identifying the best top brains and then sort of shutting everybody else off to the side or whether our job is, which would mean a grading system where there's a lot of, you know, very few passing and a lot sort of struggling to get to the benchmarks versus a talent development model which assesses as the NEDP does what you can do and how you have progressed in being able to do those things.

So that has changed my mind. And then I also realize that, especially with this job market as hurly burly as it is and probably it ever has been, these are barriers that we're removing.

And I think if we stick to our guns and insist on the evaluations, find out who's taking the test, who's not succeeding, who's taking the test, succeeding, and then not doing well in the workplace.

We'll have a much better idea of if this is, in fact, a viable root for people to
advance in their professions, get jobs in the
first place, or qualify for additional education
and training programs.

So that is why I feel confident about
going forward. We've looked into this very
deeply and, you know, I expect that the State
Superintendent's Office will watch this like a
hawk because if employers come back and say hey,
who are you sending us, these are not equivalent
credentials, then we have to walk it back. Thank
you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.
Lord. And I would agree that this body will
continue to look at that data and evidence coming
out of these regulations as well. Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: Yes, I have a question
for Superintendent Kang. So when this passes,
because I'm going to speak it into existence, I'm
curious if you could address for viewers watching
at home, for all of our constituents, people who
have passed this new GED exam and who have
recently completed the NEDP program, what will
they need to do to get their state diploma?

Is there an application process that needs to happen, is it something that will happen automatically where you just mail them their state diploma? Can you explain now what happens next for people who are going to be directly affected by this?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Yes, thank you for the question. If I can, can I invite a member of my staff to come up and briefly answer the question?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Yes. Please come to the table and turn your microphone on. And introduce yourself with your name and title, please.

MR. BOARDMAN-SCHROYER: Hello, everyone. My name is Kilin Boardman-Schroyer. I'm the Deputy Assistant Superintendent for Post-Secondary and Career Education.

In regards to your question, Board Member Jolly, for the GED, the process will be fully automated. We have all of that
information. This will be a new credential that will be available to individuals who have passed the GED.

So we will work with GD testing service and the GD test administrator for Mr. Phil PremDas, who is also here, to identify all of the individuals who have passed and then reach out to them about how they are going to be able to access their new state diploma.

The NEDP process will be a little bit different, and that will be something that we will work in tandem with DCPS on as was eluded to earlier. They have currently, up until now, been getting DCPS diplomas.

So the process there will be a little bit more involved and will have to be coordinated with DCPS.

MEMBER JOLLY: Thank you. So just to be clear, there's no application process for our constituents who will be earning this new credential?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Correct. We
will work to identify and provide to those who complete.

MEMBER JOLLY: Fantastic. Thank you for making that process so streamlined.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Williams?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Thank you, Ms. Jolly. I just wanted to follow up on your question because I wanted to make sure that our constituents know that this is only for GED graduates who have taken the exam after, what is it, January 2014? So this does not apply to anybody who has completed the course before then. That's correct? Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Do Board Members have additional questions? Or comments? Mr. Jones from Ward 5.

MEMBER JONES: Thank you, Mr. President. I want to actually comment about an individual, Mr. PremDas because I still believe, even if this passes tonight, that we haven't done all the real work that we need to do.

I believe the real proof in the
pudding is in the resources that are given to the
organizations that prepare these individuals to
pass the GED and the NEDP.

Quite frankly, on the NEDP, I don't
have a solid, comfortable feeling that it's the
right thing. As far as the GED is concerned,
clearly it's aligned with Common Core. And
there's evidence to show if you put in the
resources and the service delivery, that the
numbers will go up.

There's evidence in the National Guard
Challenge Program. In 2014 where they only had
two individuals to pass, in 2015 they've had I
believe 13 or 14. And that's because of the
material they're getting, the money they invested
in additional resources and identifying
individuals to put the effort in to prepare these
young people.

And I don't see that across the board.
And I think we as a Board must insist that we do
those sort of things. And again, I would like to
commend Mr. PremDas because he made the effort to
work with the National Guard and Youth Challenge program.

Mr. PremDas and his family has a long, long history in education in this city, not only Mr. PremDas being a long time educator, but I believe if I'm wrong, Mr. PremDas, correct me, I believe his grandfather was the first superintendent in this city for colored children in colored schools.

He has been committed, his family has been committed. So I would like to commend him in supporting the National Guard Challenge Program. And the evidence is in the numbers, and I believe the evidence will be in the numbers if we make that commitment to put our resources in preparing these service providers.

Just passing this today doesn't do it for me. I'm a believer in it. I'm a true believer in it. But it's not enough to just vote tonight and put it on the shelf.

And if that's what you're doing, then I think you're doing the wrong thing. I'm
committed, always have been and always will be.

And I'll keep pushing that effort going forward.

Lastly, I believe OSSE or DCPS or whoever the responsible party is, or the Deputy Mayor, must identify some funds and hit the street. They should reach metro and should be on every side of the bus and in the metros letting them know that the GED is new and it's different and it's aligned with Common Core.

Our constituents don't know that. We know it because it's something we do every day. We live it, we breathe it. But the individuals who will benefit the most from this, they're still blind to it. So we still have some heavy lifting to do.

Again, I believe it's the right thing to do. But it's not all we should do.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Madam Superintendent, did you want a moment to respond?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Yes, just very briefly. I just want you to know that I agree that the hard work is always in the
implementation.

I think our adult educators, or adult education providers with our adult charter LEAs and the community based organizations have been doing a great deal to get up to speed on the new GED and better prepare their students and are learning a lot about how best to do so.

I also just wanted to note that OSSE actually has an innovative partnership with the GED testing service where they provide not only fee discounts for DC residents who are taking the GED, but also work with us to provide professional development to providers across the city for exactly the reasons that you mentioned.

And then I also agree on the importance of communication and I think we at OSSE will work closely with adult education providers who are in working in communities already with students to think about how we can continue to promote that message.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. Are there any final comments? If not, I would like
to move to a vote on the resolution.

MEMBER JOLLY: I move the question.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: I said I move the question.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Oh. Then we will call the roll. Mr. Hayworth?

MR. HAYWORTH: The question is on approving Resolution SR-16.1, the State Board of Education Resolution to approve the state diploma rulemaking. Mr. Jacobson?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Aye.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Aye.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord?

MEMBER LORD: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wilson Phelan?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg?

MEMBER WATTENBERG: No.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Anderson?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Yes.
MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones?

MEMBER JONES: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Weedon?

MEMBER WEEDON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contreras? Ms. Whittington?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. President, the motion passes.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much. And thank you to my colleagues for the rigorous and thoughtful discussion on this issue over the past year.

I know I speak for us all when I say that I look forward to working with OSSE on the effective and proper implementation of this rule, and we will be asking you for follow up information in the coming months.

Would we now be able to turn to high school flexibility? Then one moment while I
confer on the next item on our agenda.

I'm going to ask my colleagues if they would be willing to flip the agenda to move to the Health Education Standards next. Are there any objections?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Yes, I object to that. So if we do your whole panel, we instructed the panel for Credit Flexibility to arrive by 6:30. They'll be here in ten minutes, and we've committed to a certain time block for them.

If we do your whole panel, that's over an hour later and I want to be respectful to the people who are giving us their time tonight and make a recommendation that our last item on the agenda be taken up now which is likely a ten minute activity.

(Off microphone comment)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: And that witness is not here because we gave that witness a later timeframe as well. So --

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: I guess we have
to move forward in the way that you just described.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Then we may break this up briefly and do Ms. Anthony's testimony and the Department of Behavioral Health's testimony. If they could give that testimony, if your witnesses are here at the end of that testimony, then I would propose that we would move to your panel and save questions for after your panel.

Is that fair? Do Board Members agree with that? Okay. Then I would invite then Ms. Donna Anthony, Assistant Superintendent for Health and Wellness with the Office of State Superintendent of Education to come forward.

And Dr. Charneta Scott, District Department of Behavioral Health, Charneta, I apologize Dr. Scott, to give your prepared testimony. You should have about five minutes each.

After your testimony, we're going to break and call another panel on Credit
Flexibility. And then we'll ask you to come back
for questions from the Board after that. Thank
you so very much.

And Dr. Scott, do you have a
presentation or are you just going to speak?

DR. SCOTT: A brief presentation.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Okay, wonderful.

When you all are ready? Our Executive Director
is going to come down and try to help you with
the technology issues.

MS. ANTHONY: Sorry about that, I'm
clearly not an IT person.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: I appreciate your
adjusting the schedule.

MS. ANTHONY: No problem. Good
evening, I'm Donna Anthony. I'm the Assistant
Superintendent of Health and Wellness. Thank you
so much for having me tonight. I'm excited to
discuss the draft Health Education Standards that
we shared with LEAs across the District for
review and feedback.

Before I get started, I also wanted to
express OSSE's appreciation to the Health Standards Working Group, in particular the State Board of Education for their input on the Health Education Standards and for advocating for necessary revisions.

This is a quick overview of my presentation. So I'm going to give you some background on where we were and where we're trying to go, our theory of action at OSSE around health and wellness work in general.

I'll look at some District level data and our approach to the whole school, whole community, whole child model that we're trying to implement across all strands of our work.

I'm going to give a brief overview about the drafting process that resulted in the draft that we released a few weeks ago to LEAs. And I'll give an overview of the key revisions that we've made from the 2007 draft.

I'll talk about our timeline for adoption and activities that we're planning to support implementation across the District.
So as background, I'm sure many of you know because you've been so invested in this work, the District of Columbia's Health Education Standards were last approved in December 2007. This is a copy of that version.

Since then, much has changed in the education outcomes and the health outcomes in youth across the District of Columbia. I also wanted to note that the National Health Education Standards were last revised in 2007 as well.

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Could you speak into the microphone?

MS. ANTHONY: Sure, sorry about that. Is this better?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Yes, thank you.

MS. ANTHONY: Great. Our theory of action as we approach this work is that healthy school environments, is that if we can promote healthy school environments, student health knowledge and healthy behaviors will increase, and student health and academic outcomes will flourish. And we feel like the health education
standards touch each strand of this theory of action.

OSSE has a part in each of these components and relies on various data sources, as you know we're data heavy agency across the District, to measure our success in each of these categories.

So for the promotion of healthy schools in general, we have an annual survey that looks at school health profiles. It looks at all of the resources in the building. And we administer that to every single school in the District.

For student health knowledge and healthy behaviors, we look at the health and physical education assessment which you know formally as DC CAS Health. We also look at the Youth Risk Behavior survey which is a CDC developed survey. It's the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

And we look through a variety of sources across the District. Our partners at the
Department of Behavioral Health have tons of data on health outcomes as well as the Department of Health. We also work with several federal agencies and research and community groups to get surveillance data on health and academic outcomes.

Before we dive into the Health Education Standards specifically, I would like to provide some data on where we are in each domain in that theory of action that I just showed you.

Annually, we administer a survey to schools that collects information related to a variety of resources including, for example, what I have listed here.

So the Healthy Schools Act nutrition compliance, the implementation of Health Education Standards, the ones from 2007, access to health and physical education in each of our schools across the District, physical activity including recess, and resource availability which is social workers, nurse availability.

Some of the data that I just wanted to
highlight that we thought about when we developed
the revised standards, the District went from 48
percent to 100 percent compliance with the
nutrition guidelines between 2012 and 2013.

Health education that was based on the
actual previous 2007 standards went from 83
percent to 92 percent from 2010 to 2013. We also
look at the minutes of time that kids are getting
access to health education and physical
education. That's remained fairly constant over
the last five years District wide.

Again, nurse availability is one of
the resources in schools that we feel can drive
health outcomes. Nurses are available in all of
our DCPS schools, but only about 70 percent of
our public charters. This is something we're
working on with the Department of Health and our
LER leaders to change.

So as I mentioned, formerly DC CAS
Health, we do an annual health and physical
education assessment. And so between 2012 and
2014, knowledge increased in the majority of
reporting categories in all tested grades, which
obviously we were excited to see.

However, the averages for the tested
grades were between the 60th and 70th percentile.
And so we're hoping that the new standards will
be more challenging, increase knowledge, and
hopefully over time the assessment scores will
increase.

The largest gains were in the human
body category in 5th graders, nutrition in 8th
graders, and the human growth and development in
high school students.

Unfortunately, there were some
decreases in knowledge around alcohol, tobacco,
and other drugs in 5th graders and high school
students. This decrease was something that we
certainly took into consideration while revising
the standards.

So not just looking at what students
know but also what they're doing, how they're
behaving, and how their health outcomes are
associated is important data for us to be looking
So we use the Youth Risk Behavior survey. It's a national survey administered in school systems across the country. It happens every other year in the District, and I would like to also note that we're one of the only school systems in the country that administers it in both middle school and high school.

So we have some really rich data to climb through. What was really exciting, between 2007 and 2012 is that obesity rates for high school students dropped, school violence decreased, fewer middle school students reported being sexually active, and condom use among high school students remains well above the national average.

We actually just closed out the administration of the 2015 survey and we'll have those results this summer. I wish I had them today, but we'll be sharing those soon.

Some of the data that we did see was also concerning. So bullying remained a
prevalent problem, again something that we
thought about in the revisions. Alcohol,
tobacco, and other drugs, marijuana, synthetic
marijuana, and tobacco use increased across the
District in our youth.

Mental health continues to be an area
of improvement, and I think we all know that and
talk about that all the time. And the data
showed a correlation between health related risks
and school climate which is also something I've
talked to several of you about. A really good
example here is that students who are hungry or
obese are more likely to be bullied or bullies
themselves.

So this is a national model that we've
been working at OSSE to align our work to that is
all of our work around health and wellness. It's
called the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole
Child model.

I also wanted to note because I
thought it was really important for our
discussion tonight that health education is at
the very top of this circle showing its
importance in changing health outcomes in the
District.

OSSE views itself as the white ring
which is coordinating policy, process, and
practice to improve learning and improve health
across the District. And I also just wanted to
make a note and again thank the working group and
the State Board for their collaboration. And you
can see how important and prevalent community is
in the process.

So diving into the actual health
standards revisions that we created, we reviewed
the current standards, the ones that have been
deployed since 2007. We considered input heavily
from the Health Standards working group.

We looked at what other states were
doing. We looked at the National Health
Education standards. We also looked at next
generation science and common core.

We worked with a variety of community
stakeholders, one of them's here tonight, thank
you, to make sure that the folks who are serving youth across the District are helping us think about how we're instructing youth to also be their own drivers for change around their own health.

So here's a list of folks that provided input. The dashed agencies are folks who provided us with written feedback that was incorporated into the draft that's currently being vetted by LEAs. We also shared it with the American Academy of Pediatrics, a charter advocacy group, the American Heart Association, and the Metropolitan Police Department.

So there are several key changes from the 2007 version that I just wanted to note for you all. They're certainly more robust, particularly around sexual health and safety skills. And part of that is because some of the data that I talked about earlier.

So condom use is high, but I think some risky behavior around sexual activity is still of concern in the District. Something else
is around the bullying prevention, and so we tried to drive some of that instruction through the safety skills category.

We also have a greater focus on advocacy and decision making skills, knowing that those are going to be game changers for kids in the District on a variety of different fronts and can translate well into adulthood.

We have more explicit alignment to the National Health Education Standards, and the reason I told you earlier that the National Health Education Standards were last revised in 2007 and that's when we put ours out is they were kind of coming out at the same time and I think that there was an effort to align as much as possible.

But when things are released within months of each other, it's hard to kind of back into a format that's coming out nationally when you've been doing years of work locally.

So now we had this opportunity in looking at what other states have done since 2007
with the National Health Education Standards, we've been able to more explicitly format and align to that.

We also do this annual assessment. And so the categories in the standards need to be reflected in the test itself so that people understand when I'm teaching this I should be seeing growth here from my students.

We removed the early childhood health education standards and actually moved them up into the kindergarten through the grade 2 band. We want, in the earliest years we want greater focus on the early learning standards.

And know that if those get revised at some point down the road, that we'll make sure that the Health Education Standards have some input into any of those revisions.

We shifted grade band over specific grades. We made some recommendations on specific grades, but we wanted to allow for greater flexibility in implementation so each LEA can decide.
A lot of health education teachers cover multiple grades, and so they can decide whether or not they want to do it in 1st grade or 2nd grade.

So the format. The format right now is a draft format. It's not pretty. It will look pretty. We'll make it nice and shiny once things get finalized. But there are some important things that we've done in the formatting.

In the 2007 version, there were 15 categories which is pretty cumbersome for teachers to look at and implement, and also to align to the health assessment. We've consolidated that without minimizing any content down into six categories, and again have changed the health assessment categories to reflect that as well.

So there are two different ways that this is organized, and I'm about to show you an example. But there are specific, there are categories and those are specific health topics
like nutrition and mental health, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

There are also strands, and those are the competencies that we want to build through the standard. So let me show you a quick example.

This is the kindergarten through 2nd grade category. The category is mental and emotional health. And as you can see, there are eight columns. The eight columns are the National Health Education strands.

And so these are the K-2 mental health ones. The ones that are highlighted are what we asked LEAs to field test through the rest of this school year. We asked for feedback on anything, format, content, all of it but are saying can you actually try these in your classroom because we think they’re new, they’re cutting edge. We want to know how it actually plays out in the classroom.

So here's our proposed timeline for adoption. Just a couple weeks ago we released
the draft to LEAs for field test and feedback.

So we have priority standards that are
highlighted in every single category in every
single grade band.

But again, we've asked for feedback,
both written and in person on all of the
standards. And that will occur January through
March, so we've created once a month meetings for
any teacher to come in and give us that feedback.
And we have an email address for them to give it
as well.

On March 18th we're closing the
comment period for feedback. And part of that is
because we'll be, my next goal point is in late
March, we'll be launching the assessment. So we
want to kind of close out the feedback before we
open up the assessment period.

And also, my following bullet point,
in April we want to put a final version in front
of you all for a vote. And so we need a couple
weeks to make any final revisions. And then our
goal is that next year, full implementation
occurs.

So in order for that to happen, we need to do a couple things. Washington state is a really great example on how they've approached their health and physical fitness standards.

They've done some Common Core alignment, and so they'll have the health and physical fitness standard, they'll have a Common Core standard that's aligned which is great because then it can happen in science class or your reading block.

And then they have a grade level expectation and their proposed activity on how you could actually implement that standard in your classroom.

We're creating a book list for teachers to use that support the new standards. We're also vetting curriculum according to the National Health Education Standards. They've created a national tools, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have created a tool to vet curriculum that aligns to those strands. And so
we're going to do that as well on a local level.

And then we'll have professional
development and technical assistance. That's all
I have. Does anyone have questions, or are we
going to hold?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: We're going to
hold on questions.

MS. ANTHONY: Okay.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: And I will ask
Dr. Scott to give her testimony. The next panel
is here and ready when you're finished. Thank
you.

DR. SCOTT: Good evening, State Board
of Education, President Jacobson, Members, and
Staff of the State Board of Education. My name
is Charneta Scott and I am the Project Manager
with the Department of Behavioral Health who has
the responsibility of managing compliance with
the mandates of the Department of Behavioral
Health under the South Capitol Street Memorial
Amendment Act of 2012.

I am pleased to testify before you
today on behalf of Dr. Tanya Royster. One of the
mandates of the South Capitol Street legislation
directed for the Department of Behavioral Health
to conduct an analysis of the current health
education standards to determine whether the
standards are aligned with the actual behavioral
health needs of youth and to provide
recommendations for proposed changes.

I am here to confirm the due diligence
of the Department of Behavioral Health's
collaboration with the Office of the State
Superintendent of Education in reviewing the
current Health Education Standards through a very
thoughtful and comprehensive process of dialogue
and consultation.

Our review team members included the
expertise of individuals from Department of
Behavioral Health's areas of early childhood,
substance use disorders treatment, school mental
health, as well as the OSSE leadership.

The feedback and recommendations from
the Department of Behavioral Health to OSSE
regarding proposed changes to the current Health Education Standards have been incorporated into the new Health Education Standards that OSSE has recently put forth.

The Department of Behavioral Health supports the revisions of the Health Education Standards recently put forth by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

The opportunity of the local education agencies to field test and provide further feedback on the proposed standards will facilitate the finalization of robust standards which will increase the opportunities of students to acquire and crystalize knowledge and skills which promote the adoption, practice, and maintenance of health enhancing behaviors.

Thank you, President Jacobson, for the opportunity to testify, and I conclude my testimony at this time.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you both so much. I'm going to ask you to step back and stick around because we do want to do a round of
questions from Board Members. But with that, we're going to move back to Credit Flexibility Regulations.

DR. SCOTT: Thank you so much.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: I want to thank the staff of the Office of State Superintendent of Education for moving to the regulatory phase of the Board's consideration of High School Credit Flexibility.

For those watching at home, the Board has been examining the possibility of adjustment to the regulations for awarding high school credit.

Ward 1 member, Laura Wilson Phelan, led a remarkable Task Force whose recommendations the Board adopted in December.

Tonight we will be hearing from a panel that will continue the Board's examination of this concept.

I'd like to welcome Alissa Peltzman, Vice President State Policy and Implementation Support.
David Tansey, Math Teacher, Dunbar Senior High School.

Heather Wathington, Chief Executive Officer, Maya Angelou Schools and See Forever Foundation.

And Paul Kihn, former Deputy Superintendent, the School District of Philadelphia, to the witness table.

Ms. Wilson Phelan, would you like to give brief remarks before the panel begins?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: I would, thank you. And thank you all for being here. I really appreciate it. I know many of you have young children and are sacrificing bedtime tonight, so thank you.

I want to start by restating the vision of the Task Force because I think that's something we all agree to, even those who differ at this moment with how the regulations have been put forward by the Office of the State Superintendent.

And that vision is that all District
of Columbia students graduate demonstrating the agency, skills and knowledge to thrive as active citizens in a global economy and democracy.

And we reach the set of recommendations we've reached believing that alternative pathways to the Carnegie Unit would offer more opportunity to reach that vision than our current statutes allow.

As we've seen, the regulations that have been released so far have yet to be published and as the Task Force Chair I need to express concern that they do not reflect all of the recommendations of the Task Force. So I think they reflect much of the spirit of the Task Force.

For example, instead of eliminating the time boundary requirement associated with enrollment in Algebra I completely, it was moved to grade 10.

I do think that is keeping in the spirit of what we were trying to accomplish, while putting in some safeguards to ensure that
it doesn't damage the opportunity of our students
to graduate in four years.

The second and more controversial
change was associated with allowing all students
to pass an assessment at a level determined by
OSSE across any subject and receive credit for
passage of that assessment.

The Task Force reached a very hard-
fought compromise in this area with one side
believing there should be no ability to do this
at all and another believing, as reflected in the
current regulations on the table, that there
should be full freedom to do this.

And I think that we all reached this
consensus element believing that at this moment
in time in D.C.'s history, this is the right way
forward for our students.

That said, the regulations are not yet
published in the Register. We heard from the
state superintendent earlier in today's meeting,
that she will likely put forward a letter to Task
Force members explaining the rationale behind
this decision for our consideration, because we should openly think about all of the elements on the table before we pass judgement.

And so my hope is that this public hearing that we're having today is not going to focus on the regulations as they stand, although of course every board member has his or her own prerogative to use the time as we see fit, but instead truly maximizes the excellent expertise in front of us today.

The individuals who will be testifying represent, when David arrives, the classroom, school, district, and cross state perspectives in competency-based education.

And as the State Board has been newly introduced to this concept, some of us understanding in-depth, some of us understanding less about competency-based education, this is a terrific opportunity to learn, to ask your questions of people who have practiced implementing or have been exposed to those who are implementing across many different contexts.
And in alignment with the Task Force recommendations or the discussion element of our report, we pointed out that thought alignment and training need to be pervasive with any kind of implementation associated with competency-based education.

And while we're excited about some of the innovation already being undertaken in D.C. schools, research indicates that we will see limited benefit from competency-based education that could potentially compromise its further take-up in implementation across the city, without a systemic level of investment in its successful rollout.

Such investments could look like a pilot across diverse schools that creates a competency-based course or series of courses where teachers are given ample planning time to set competencies and assessment systems.

Such a pilot would bring together teachers implementing these courses for learning, for training, and to solicit their input.
Such a pilot would also monitor student progress actively, especially ensuring that our most marginalized students are not falling further behind and if we see those trends, making amends to make sure that that is corrected.

And finally, a pilot would consider the role and timing of standardized exams such as the PARCC assessment, to understand whether that really makes sense when we're rolling out a competency-based system.

I hope that my colleagues will take advantage of this incredible panel as an opportunity to learn and to deepen their understanding of what competency-based education could and potentially should look like in Washington D.C.

I know that I have personally learned quite a bit, both from talking with them directly and of reading the vast breadth of documents available, especially from Achieve. And so I just thank you again and turn the time over to
And given David has told me he will be slightly late, so let's work backwards from the top to the classroom if that makes sense. So Alissa, will you please start?

MS. PELTZMAN: Sure. And thank you for the invitation to speak with you this evening.

Achieve is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, dedicated to working with states to raise academic standards, graduation requirements, improve assessments, and strengthen accountability.

I was asked to determine and address ways that competency-based pathways are effective in preparing students for college and careers.

Implementing competency-based policies and practices requires significant professional learning and capacity building to establish and maintain consistency, quality, and equity to ensure that the promise of the policies are realized for all students.
Without attention paid to the risks to equity, existing disparities in performance among students could be exacerbated. Far worse, levels of performance on how long it takes students to reach these standards could open new achievement gaps.

I'll raise two critical questions for your consideration. How can D.C. design implementation to ensure its pathways are equitable and how will D.C. monitor implementation at the student, school, local and state level?

To the first question. I will suggest five strategies to address this. First, ensure the system design and measures of success are oriented to improving all student performance and closing gaps. D.C. will need to be intentional in its design to meet this goal.

Second, ensure all students have access to all standards. This is one of the most important ways to ensure that D.C.'s graduates will be academically prepared for life after high
school and that a competency-based system will not unintentionally further disadvantage students.

The strategy should include aligned and engaging technical courses. Connecticut leverages its Perkins Grant to design mastery-based learning curriculum learning units in any of Connecticut's career pathways.

The Connecticut State Departments of Education and Labor have partnered to launch the unpaid experiential learning program to provide students the opportunity to master competencies and standards outside of school walls.

Michigan is considering how a competency-based education approach can create more flexibility, including bridging in-school and out-of-school time using badges.

Third, establish a shared definition of mastery. A critical step is building a shared understanding of the level of performance that is needed in evaluating student work and ultimately for students to receive credit for courses or
learning experiences.

Some of the most significant risks to equity emerge when there is a risk in the variation of how teachers define mastery, with a serious risk that some will lower the bar particularly for underperforming students.

It will be critical to use empirical evidence and strong stakeholder engagement to define the performance level and build trust.

Variation in the quality and alignment of performance assessment tasks is also a substantial risk.

Educators and instructional leaders will need clear and shared criteria and a common process for selecting, procuring, curating, or developing high quality instructional materials and tasks.

This will require calibrating judgement at all levels of decision making, including in scoring student work and assessments across the district.

Mitigation strategies could include
teachers using common rubrics and protocols to
define mastery with norming across as many
teachers as possible.

OSSE could convene teams across local
education agencies to calibrate and validate
scoring on samples of student work or assessment
tasks.

OSSE could facilitate groups of
teachers to build a set of exemplar high quality
aligned curriculum embedded tasks. This could
build off the emerging success of cornerstones.

You could also facilitate the
training, certification, and where badging of
educators will play these roles, whereby building
capacity in the process.

If you proceed with a waiver process
I encourage the application and approval to pay
attention to the strategy for defining mastery,
ensuring a transparent and shared understanding
of that definition, as well as training to
reinforce calibration.

New Hampshire is supporting educators
with the New Hampshire Network Strategy, which includes an online platform to support training, communication and exemplars.

They've also provided professional development in research-based instructional learning progressions and performance assessment literacy.

Fourth, determine and monitor appropriate student pacing through standards. A competency approach requires responding to students when they need help, but what support will be provided about expected pace and rate of learning?

Fifth and finally, communicate. And then communicate more and then some more. Implementing competency-based pathways will require a thoughtful and comprehensive communication and stakeholder engagement strategy.

Educators, students, and their families need to understand what this will look like in practice. Without building a strong and
shared foundation for what this looks like there is a great risk that this will be interpreted, implemented, and applied differently.

The Maine Department of Education developed the Center for Best Practices to share case studies, videos, a glossary, and other online resources. Communications and engagement needs to be an ongoing part of implementation.

So how will D.C. monitor implementation? The system needs to be transparent and responsive enough to give students clear signals about the progress, as well as flagging common challenges and bright spots.

Which students are demonstrating proficiency on the standards within the specified time frame? Which students are exceeding expectations? Are more students graduating on time? Are more graduates successfully transitioning to their next steps? How do you know?

D.C. can leverage accountability and
public reporting to report the number of graduates who enter post-secondary without the need for remediation, who matriculate into apprenticeship programs, who qualify and enlist in the armed services.

You need to know whether there are pathways or learning experiences that disproportionately leave students poorly prepared for post-secondary success.

It should be clear whether students are on pace to demonstrating proficiency as well as the rate at which they're demonstrating proficiency. Practically speaking, this will also mean redesigning school and student level report cards.

The Kentucky Department of Education is implementing a District of Innovation Initiative. Participating districts are beholden to the current accountability system and they use annual monitoring reports to guide state decisions and actions.

The state also sends a review team
annually to each district to monitor progress, interview staff and students, and collect qualitative data.

Establishing mechanisms for consistency and quality are important all systems. For example, course titles alone are not sufficient in determining whether a geometry class covers the same content. This is all the more important when transitioning to a competency-based system.

There are a number of strategies that D.C. can leverage. The most common mechanism is to employ an end-of-course assessment. You could couple this with common anchor tasks or performance assessment.

It is vital to gather annual data on student performance on standards in order to validate instructional level determinations of student proficiency or mastery and to establish comparability or moderate results across the district.

Competency-based pathways hold promise
as well as risk for improving equity and
equality towards college and career readiness
for all. D.C. will need to be steadfast in its
commitment to equity by establishing mechanisms
to ensure consistency, quality and transparency.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so
much. And if witnesses could attempt to keep
their comments to five minutes that would be
helpful as I'm sure board members have quite a
few questions for you all. Ms. Washington? Mr.
Kihn?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: The reason for
that order is so that we hear the cross state
level. Now we hear the district level, a school
level, and then a teacher level.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. Mr.
Kihn?

MR. KIHN: Thank you. Good evening
and thank you for the opportunity to speak this
evening. Fortunately I will be echoing a lot of
what my colleague, Ms. Peltzman said, and
unfortunately I'll be using a lot of the same jargon, so hopefully we'll clarify some of that in the question and answer.

But my name is Paul Kihn. Until recently I was the Deputy Superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia. And in the fall of 2015 we opened three new high schools which were competency progression models and we did this for three reasons.

Firstly, we were looking for ways to better serve the large number of students who were not succeeding in our traditional high schools.

Secondly, we were continuously trying to push our understanding of good teaching. And a true competency-based progression model of schooling in which students demonstrate their attainment of discreet skills through multiple performance tasks provides amazing transparency into whether teaching and learning are actually occurring.

And then lastly, these three schools
were really the cornerstone of our innovation agenda.

And in Philadelphia we believed deeply that one essential role of the traditional school district in a system where you have a growing and expanding charter sector, is to pilot innovation, to be the champion of R and D so you can study the results and then scale good ideas quickly across schools.

So our preparation to open these new schools was frankly painstaking. We had to build the now open source competency models and assessment rubrics, which is identifying the specific ways in which you'll evaluate whether or not a student has achieved the competency within each of the standards.

We had to do that from scratch because back then two years ago these were not widely available. And now the one we developed is actually being used as a model for others, as many of the ones that Ms. Peltzman mentioned.

And secondly, we had to develop each
school's flexible schedule. You're talking about
deeply personalized learning and you've got to
have the ability within the schedules to address
each student where they're at.

Thirdly, we had to build new
information technology systems to log and
communicate student progress.

We also had to spend time recruiting
students and families and explaining to them what
these schools were and how they would operate.

And lastly, we had to spend quite a
bit of time dealing with the frictions that occur
when you introduce something so extraordinarily
different into a traditional system. And I mean
the people frictions with the traditional system
as well as the information and other systems are
frictions that occurred.

Now we confronted several challenges
and learned a tremendous amount obviously as we
piloted these schools and as we asked students
and teachers to do things they literally had
never been asked to do before.
Firstly, we learned we needed a very focused plan for hiring the right people with the right mind set and building teacher capacity to do this work.

A lot of the teachers in these schools struggled at first to understand the model, including how to plan performance-based assessments, how to collect multiple forms of evidence, how to manage revision cycles, how to manage their own time in these flexible schedules, and how to do the necessary of truly interdisciplinary planning. They were not used to doing lots of that.

We learned that we needed to hire teachers who were entrepreneurial and really possessed a growth mind set as they built the system and worked with the students in those ways, and also that we needed to engage them a lot earlier in the planning process.

You cannot just hire your staff in the summer or even late in the spring as you would typically do and then expect them to get this up
and running by September.

Secondly, students need a new and different form of coaching and engagement. The school-based teams need ample time to build student's understanding of expectations of the new ways in which they truly own their own progress.

I mean this is in the jargon of education, shifting the cognitive load entirely to students. They have to map their own progress. They're responsible for their own revisions and so on.

You've got to teach them how to access and use the progressions and the rubrics and how to participate actively in the student centered culture that is necessary to support this model.

Thirdly, leaders need to fully understand the key shifts required of this work and should really consider adopting the system level policies and practices at the front end before they get going.

The shifts include, as I mentioned,
scheduling, shifts in instructional design and
delivery, shifts in assessments which are
performance-based in our case. Grades and
reporting look different and promotion and
crediting all look different.

So for example, system leaders need to
solve for students transferring in and out of
these schools because you're talking about a
population that is typically highly mobile and if
you've got these schools that doesn't change.

In conclusion, we found a lot of room
for optimism despite the significant challenges.

Apologies for going 5 seconds over.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so
much. I appreciate it. You can go over on your
Q and A time. Ms. Wathington?

DR. WATHINGTON: Thank you. Thank you
for having me here to, oops. So greetings to the
Chair and to all the members of the State Board
of Education.

My name's Heather Wathington and I'm
the CEO of the Maya Angelou Schools. It's my
pleasure to be here to talk with you about what
the proposed rulemaking would mean for Maya
Angelou specifically.

I served as a member on the High
School Flexibility Task Force in support of high
school credit. Flexibility as such a provision
is critical for schools such as mine that seek to
prepare over age and under credited youth for the
21st century knowledge and skills economy.

As we began as a board and as a school
to look at where we wanted our students to go,
Maya has always had a very valid focus on post-
secondary education. And so graduating students,
even though we're an alternative school, that are
not ready for post-secondary education was a
nonstarter.

And so trying to figure out what are
the ways in which to do that is critical. And
competency-based, as we began doing research
certainly as I came out of my tenure, became the
opportunity to look at how we might do that and
prepare our students far better for post-
secondary than what we are currently doing.

We serve at risk youth. We start at 9th grade and because we start at 9th grade it's important to underscore that many of our students are already off track before they arrive with us, either at the start of their 9th grade year or repeating their 9th grade year.

Last year 51 percent of my 9th graders were repeaters. So they're repeating 9th grade for the second time.

And so currently 57 percent of our students are sort of off track. They're not in their right grade level, what you would expect them to be in if you examine their age and their actual credit accumulation and when they began elementary school.

This means that when we enroll students we have to look at their credits that they've completed, their credits that they're needing to complete their high school education.

But also we must look at math and reading skills since we know that they're behind.
And so those are important pieces of our model.

The story for most students is that we have to do a lot of remediating and a lot of accelerating and we have to do it quickly.

Conventional Carnegie Units constrain us as they force us to facilitate learning in a rigid time-bound system that doesn't necessarily work for students.

So as we are trying to fill in holes where there might be holes and be able to move them on, we kind of can't do that if they're needed to be in the 120 hour seats, seat hour requirement.

We also find that our students have already not been successful within that system at this point. And so we need to, the flexibility to keep the learning consistent and where as needed, build them to competency and make that time vary.

Students have different experiences, unique needs and a competency-based program allows us to personalize the student's
educational journey.

I have one student that was looking at our transcript today. She came to us needing all three of her sciences. She finished everything else but she needed all three of her sciences. So how do you build a schedule for that student, meaningfully, so they can finish? She was already 19 so she's ready, she's motivated. Like I really just want to get done.

But if I'm constrained by that time and then the constraints of their, becomes very difficult to motivate her to finish when she's got three key sciences left, with the goal of making sure she's college-and career-ready when she leaves us.

So we wholeheartedly support the credit flexibility regulations that OSSE and the state superintendent has proposed. An approved waiver would allow us to move our blended learning program that we've really explored in depth this year, to a competency-based program where we can remediate deficits and increase
student proficiency through flexible course
scheduling and extended learning time.

Changing the requirements for Algebra
1 entry from 9th grade to 10th grade is also
significant for us. I can't tell you. Fewer
than 20 percent of our 9th graders are truly
ready for algebra in 9th grade.

So this change allows us to work with
students to teach pre-algebra skills with a
different name solidly, and then students can
begin in algebra when they're actually ready for
it and they'll be less likely to fail it and less
likely to struggle in it.

What is more, there will be no stigma
for starting Algebra 1 whenever they're ready
because our entire academic program will be built
around their readiness, rather than their grade
level.

So as we improve our preparation for
students to make sure that they're college and
career ready, having the time and flexibility to
move at-risk students to be proficient is so
important for what we're trying to do in enabling
our students to demonstrate success.

So I thank you for creating the Task
Force and allowing us to wrestle with the
question of high school credit flexibility and
Maya Angelou looks forward to being part of
sharing our model, implementation steps, and the
best practices if we move forward with the rest
of the district. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so
much, Ms. Wathington. Mr. Tansey, you have five
minutes. Thank you.

MR. TANSEY: Thank you. To State
Board of Education members, my name is David
Tansey. I'm a math teacher at Paul Laurence
Dunbar High School and I was a member of the High
School Credit Flexibility Task Force.

I'm speaking in support of enabling
flexibility and awarding course credit with the
hope that this will help us move towards a less
rigid, more competency-based student centered
school experience in the future.
This will help us know where our students genuinely stand academically and adapt our programs to accommodate their needs.

I joined the Task Force to make sure the interests of my students were being taken into account. I am glad I came. The conversation that our Task Force made has tended to center around our advanced students, those who can test out of a subject early.

I tend to have the opposite problem in my classroom, students who have so many gaps in their knowledge that it is very difficult for me to make the grade level content accessible to them, let alone ensure they master it.

I believe credit flexibility can help us serve this population better. By utilizing competency-based measures to award credit, we can gain actionable information on where our students are and the support they need to master the content and concepts in our courses.

One strategy we have used to ensure all students are achieving at the same level has
been to make the sequence and pacing of our courses more rigid. This is not the answer.

It does not help students whose attendance is poor or who have substantial gaps in their prior knowledge, whatever the cause.

It's especially inappropriate in a city with as many LEAs as we have. What we end up with is transcripts and pass rates that are meaningless and teachers who have lost some of their ability to adapt their class to make them meaningful to disengaged students.

By providing flexibility in how we award credit we can start to define ways to break course content down and indicate which element each student has mastered.

Schools can then use that information to make sure students are served appropriately and that their lessons are in each student's zone of proximal development, being both rigorous and accessible.

There is a risk inherent in this shift. If we make passing a test or any other
measure the equivalent of passing a course we 
risk devaluing the experience that is an engaging 
classroom.

In math this is less of a loss. The 
subject matter is more sequential by nature and 
as such accommodates grouping students by mastery 
level.

But courses built on broader themes 
through interactive class activities might be 
severely affected. You can evaluate an author's 
argument even if you have not mastered 
alliteration. You can explore what is necessary 
to maintain a democracy even if you can't name 
the Founding Fathers.

I hope the powers that be keep this in 
mind as they evaluate the scope of credit 
flexibility so that it serves its purpose without 
detracting unnecessarily from our student's 
education.

Credit flexibility will not solve all 
of our problems but hopefully it will start us on 
the road of ensuring our schools serve our
students where they are and to the best of our ability.

The time for the factory model of schooling is well behind us. Credit flexibility is only the first step away from that model but it is an essential one. Thank you for your time.

I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much. We'll now begin Board discussion, questions. Ms. Wilson Phelan, would you like to start?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: No, thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Okay. Ms. Jolly, from Ward 8?

MEMBER JOLLY: Thank you. I have a question for actually I guess Ms. Peltzman, Mr. Kihn, and Ms. Wathington. So it's a more district level question.

Each of you mentioned, well, Ms. Peltzman and Mr. Kihn, you both mentioned a need for revised student and school level report cards.
And I was wondering if in your experience with implementing competency-based education if that always, sometimes, or never included standards-based grading, and if you can clarify I guess in those experiences, well, first for the rest of the world, what those are or I guess the difference between the two. That's a very jumbled question. I apologize. Should I clarify?

MR. KIHNN: That would be helpful.

MEMBER JOLLY: Okay. So in your experiences implementing competency-based education, has that necessarily met standards-based grading and is that why you're asking or recommending us revised report cards?

MS. PELTZMAN: Why don't you start?

MR. KIHNN: I'll start and you can go with that. So it's a very, very good question. The competency-based high schools that we developed were developed around something that could only be described as standards-based grading but it looks and feels very, very
different from a more traditional approach.

So in the competency-based progression models that we developed you'll take a course like English 1 and you will identify eight competencies that students need to be able to demonstrate within English 1.

And for each of those then you have to establish a bunch of different levels of their skill.

They then have to, through some performance or activity, demonstrate that they can hit the skill. And all of that is aligned in our case to Common Core standards.

So both the competencies as they've been identified and then the levels of skill as we've articulated that they need to demonstrate, all of that is aligned to Common Core. So that's all standards-based grading if you will.

The challenge with the report card is, report cards are time sequenced and time bound. So the idea is you get a grade for a course and a midpoint grade for a course, based on the time
you have spent.

In a competency-based model it doesn't work that way. You may have covered all of the required competencies quite quickly and moved on to other things. And so it's asynchronous, if you will.

And secondly, the actual grading policies just look very different because you can imagine the complexity of doing this competency-based work.

MEMBER JOLLY: Of course now I'm asking because I use standards-based grading in my own classroom and I'm wondering if that's something that you guys have found to be necessary in implementing this across districts and how, if you've found it necessary to be scalable to that degree.

MR. KIHN: Yes.

MS. PELTZMAN: So yes, just quickly on that I would build off of Paul's comments to say you can have a standards-based grading approach and not be in a competency environment.
So but on the flip side, to be in a competency-based environment you're going to need some form of standards-based grading in order for that to hold.

At the student level report card, what you're referring to will certainly come through.

At a school or district level there will be additional indicators you're going to want to be able to show, to be accountable for and transparent to the public, to parents, about the pace and rate of learning at an aggregate level, so what's happening across groups of students sort of by subgroup in terms of pace and rate. So some of the indicators that you'll want to capture would look different than what's on a report card traditionally now.

MEMBER JOLLY: Thank you. And with my last 75 seconds, this question is for Ms. Wathington. As you are implementing this asynchronous kind of approach to 9th grade algebra and the skills that are necessary for students to even begin that, how are you managing
those scheduling challenges? Can you talk a little bit to what looks like or will look like at your schools?

DR. WATHINGTON: So I think currently we start every student in 9th grade algebra. And so the challenge becomes with differentiating instruction in the classroom, right, and teachers working to teach standards that are expected because we are mandated to teach Algebra 1 and students who often are struggling still with 6th and 7th grade math.

So the scheduling is the same, the way it looks anywhere. I think the challenge is in the classroom and the frustration of my math teachers to say, I need to teach 6th and 7th grade mathematics.

That's what they need. They need a good three to four months that we could nail it and then do, move to some other pre-algebraic concepts before they're actually able to even engage in 9th grade algebra.

And so what this allows us to do is
actually be able to, you know, create those
courses where there's also not the discountenance
of needing to teach Algebra 1 concurrently where
the skills aren't able, we're trying to do both
and it's not working as well as it could.
Looking at our math outcomes it's certainly not a
successful strategy.

So being able to do it in the same way
that you just would say this is a pre-skill.
You're not quite ready for Algebra 1. We're
going to teach you those things, the holes, and
see since we test all of our students when they
come in anyway.

So we know what skills they have and
what they don't have. Really working on
remediating those skills so they can feel good
about what they do know and working with them
around what they don't know and then moving them
forward.

MEMBER JOLLY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Lord, our at-
large member.
MEMBER LORD: Thank you very much. And thank you for this incredibly stellar panel from the classroom all the way to the district and state and national level.

I'd like to start by drawing on the Philadelphia experience. We have policy approval authority and were there any particular things that essentially proved to be very big barriers? For example, you have high schools, there are state graduation requirements, there are district graduation requirements.

That may not necessarily fit the mold of four years of math and which one has to be Algebra 1. And so identify some of the sort of the barriers but also some of the light, the daylight that you could run for, in terms of matching a grade point average in a traditional system with a competency-based system.

MR. KIHN: Thank you, it's a great question. In Philadelphia at the level of the district we had absolute freedom to develop the policies that we needed for that system.
We were not at the time trying to expand them beyond the district, for example, to include our college and the charter sector although they themselves individually could have done it.

So because of the state law in Pennsylvania you actually don't have seat time requirements. So you can set and determine how you want to award credits at the level of the local system, so that was very, very helpful.

The kinds of policies that we worked on developing that we think would be helpful of our systems to deploy, would be things like identifying what exactly are the competencies that you are going to require students demonstrate.

Because you can do that at the level of the individual school. You could do that at the level of a bunch of different LEAs, but it's incredibly helpful if they're standardized in some way to facilitate the movement of students back and forth in some rationality within the
system.

MEMBER LORD: Can you give me an example of sort of what an assessment would look like in the competency-based system versus the ones that we’re mostly familiar with?

MR. KIHN: Yes. Again, great, great, great question. In the model that we developed there were no assessments that looked like quizzes or tests or exams. They simply didn’t exist.

So all of the assessments were what we called performance-based assessments. So if you visit one of the schools you’ll see a student delivering a multimedia presentation or they will have produced a solar array that is powering a motor or something of that nature.

And the teachers are all trained to assess whether or not that performance has actually demonstrated that the student indeed does know the skill or set of skills that are intended to be demonstrated.

MEMBER LORD: So in other words, the
teacher would be saying I want my students to be able to communicate well in written form and in multimedia and then would build the skills to, and then the PowerPoint presentation, for example, might have to make sure everything was spelled properly.

So these are embedded performances that the teacher knows to look for? Is that sort of?

MR. KIHN: That's exactly right with the one addition that in the model that we developed students had to demonstrate each of the skills on three different occasions.

So it wasn't enough just to have them demonstrate it once through one multimedia presentation, but they had to show in three different ways so you have these three different angels of approach to the same skill.

MEMBER LORD: And to get to our math teacher's examples, did you find in Philadelphia that this really motivated students because they didn't just ruin their grade point average the
minute they failed early? If they didn't understand something they weren't doomed to be basically a failed student for the rest of the year?

MR. KIHN: So the answer to the question is ultimately yes, but I would be disingenuous if I didn't say the road to get there is very difficult because students have habits that they've developed and that are ingrained that they've developed in a system that preceded this one.

And so it's a real challenge to help students understand this new way of working and learning and how they have the opportunity to do what you're describing. But that's not easy to get them to shift their thinking to do that.

MEMBER LORD: And then I'd like to follow-up on something that was mentioned about different indicators. We, among our other approval authorities, have the state accountability plan.

And we're, at least some of us have
been very deeply engaged in figuring out what additional things we might want to think about. Are there any things that stand out that we should really be taking a look at particularly as we move forward with competency-based education in the District of Columbia?

MS. PELTZMAN: If it would be helpful I'd be happy to share with the Board a sample mock-up of a report card that we created for what that might look like and what the indicators are, along with some models of how, what the assessment system could look like as a companion to that.

And I guess the one thing I would flag now is to think about what you want to report as part of a transition strategy, as well as what you ultimately want to report and have in place at the right time horizon, whether that's three years, five years, seven years, whatever the right horizon is for D.C.

And I think I say that as a way of saying, establishing an evidence-base as part of
the transition and having a learning agenda for
yourselves as you think about scale, whether
you're starting with a few high schools in the
district or broader. What is it that you want to
be able to ask, answer, and learn from to expand
or move on?

MEMBER LORD: My time is up.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.

Lord. Mr. Jones, from Ward 5?

MEMBER JONES: Thank you, Mr.

President. Mr. Tansey, well, first of all, thank
you all for coming and thanks for your effort in
this area.

Question. I have no doubt that the
state can get their act together to make this
happen. However, I got to tell you I'm a little
nervous when it gets down to the LEA level and
how would you envision that working?

I've observed you in your classroom.

And I know you have students from many different
walks of life and many of them are ill prepared
to handle the class work and the course work that
is presented before them.

So that's what makes me nervous about how do we do this and how do we truly measure it without the subjectivity of teachers and, or if there's a panel and if any of the other panelists would like to chime in as well.

But how would you envision this working and then how would you envision it helping at Dunbar?

MR. TANSEY: Thank you. I think that's an excellent question. D.C. is a sort of complex system because we have so many actors. The caution with any kind of system like this is that you cheapen the experience and that you teach to the test even more than you worry about teaching to the test.

And then broader questions have to be asked like, what am I supposed to focus on as a teacher? The PARCC exam in March? Or my kids mastering the competencies that have been assigned or have been, you know, identified?

And we already have that pressure. So
the hope would be if we did think about this in
the broadest sense, we'd be saying how do we not
have those conflict any more than is necessary.

I very much like what I've heard from
my fellow panelists about how there could be a
demonstrated mastery. I think it would also give
us a real hard sort of blunt look at where our
kids are.

You're talking about 6th and 7th
grade. I've got kids counting on their fingers
and toes. And it's really tough. I don't feel
like I'm serving them by talking about quadratic
equations.

And so I think it would start that
sort of honest conversation about where our kids
are and where they need to be. I like the idea
of standards-based graduation requirements
because I think we could have a more nuanced
discussion about which standards are important
and relevant and which aren't.

So that would be a sort of next step
for me to say, how do we decide which
competencies are most important. And my sort of rule of thumb is if I can't tell my kid when they're going to use this in the real world then it shouldn't be a graduation requirement.

 Doesn't mean you can't offer it, it just shouldn't be a requirement. And because my kids, I have to relegitimize the institution of school for a lot of my kids. And some of that's because they've been so far behind for so long that school has largely been meaningless.

 And so that is complex and we're not going to resolve it tonight but I'm glad you asked the question and I hope that what that prompts is further discussion on, what is the broader framework we're looking at here, rather than a single policy proposal.

 MEMBER JONES: Mr. Kihn, you're living it so if you can speak to that.

 MR. KIHN: Yes, I would just add to what my colleagues said that done well, and I cannot emphasize enough how hard this is and how different it looks and feels and how good
teachers have to be and how good students have to be, not in their skills but in their willingness to engage, all of which they're perfectly capable of.

But done well it actually answers the problem that you are describing. Because this is a system that takes kids where they're at.

It takes students exactly based on the knowledge that they have and works with them from there and rewards them for demonstrating skills and demonstrating growth.

And if I had more time I would describe the different ways we approach in Philadelphia, having students that come in, for example, reading at a 3rd and 4th grade level and those that come in at reading at an 8th grade level who are sitting in the same room, which is not an uncommon problem.

But this is a system that allows you to address that differentiation.

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: You can have a minute of my time to answer that. I think that's
really instructive.

MEMBER JONES: Thank you. If the President will allow?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Of course, of course.

MEMBER WILSON PHelan: Can you describe how you, yes.

MR. KIHn: Forgive me. I saw the blinking red light and panicked.

MEMBER WILSON PHelan: That's all right.

MR. KIHn: So what we have done is established for each of the skills that students need to demonstrate, within each of the competencies, within each of the course areas, levels that start 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, that are roughly equivalent to grade levels.

And if you come into a course, let's say you're sitting in your English 1 class in the competency-based model, you will demonstrate the ability to make an argument or use evidence in an argument.
And you might be demonstrating that at a Level 6 as opposed to a level 9 and that's perfectly fine. So that's your first piece of evidence that you're presenting to your teacher and classmates.

Over the course of your time there, you in theory will go up to a 7 or 7.5 or an 8 and you are going to be rewarded for the growth that you show going along that trajectory.

Now you may never, let's say in a different example, you are in 11th grade by age and you're sitting in an English 11 class that is competency-based. You're demonstrating only an 8th grade level, you are going to be given credit in our system if you demonstrate more than 1.2 years of learning over the course of your time there and you'll be given credit towards your graduation requirements for doing that.

So you'll adopt policies that actually address how important it is for students to be learning-based on where they are versus actually just meeting the absolute standard.
MR. TANSEY: Let me just add something quickly to that if I may. I've talked about longitudinal data a lot in my testimony and this is sort of the same argument.

That we need to know where each kid is and we need to be rewarding growth because what we have right now is a punitive system that causes some schools to pass along the kids who have no chance of making it to grade level by the end of the year.

And we end up concentrating all of those kids in a select number of schools that are matter-of-right schools and it's just sort of impossible to have that level of differentiation.

So hopefully by adopting this kind of system you'd get rid of some of that incentive because you'd be rewarded for demonstrating growth rather than simply having kids who aren't at grade level.

MEMBER JONES: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much. Ms. Williams?
VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: I'd like to thank all of our panelists for testifying tonight. And I have a question. I'm just going to throw it out here.

I hear how difficult it is to have the students change their attitude toward education. But being a former teacher myself I understand how difficult it is to have teachers change their attitude, okay, what they're doing.

So I like to hear best practices if when we implement this, not if, but when we implement this policy, how we change the prevailing teaching strategies that are occurring in the classroom to make them more flexible and innovative to meet this new model. Any suggestions?

MR. TANSEY: Well, I can say something I use. I use a sort of pseudo-blended learning model by using Khan Academy as a tool and I break down my class into skills. I call them competency badges. They're like merit badges that the kids could earn. And it includes a
whole lot of sort of prerequisite skills.

And so that helped me target my
lessons better. And I suspect that if we had
that as a sort of strategy to say, how do we have
teachers participate in this sort of
disaggregation of skills so that they can
understand the goal isn't whatever I think 9th
grade pick your course is, the goal is the skill.

And it'll be easier to think about it
in broad terms so I can say what would that skill
look like at the 6th grade level, at the 8th
grade level, any other point.

And I actually think Common Core helps
with that because it has domains and the domains
are sequences like this. So it comes fairly
naturally to the Common Core world.

And that's how I trace my skill levels
back. It's a slope. Have to understand
proportion, have to understand ratio and you keep
going back and figure out where the kid is.

MS. PELTZMAN: So, just to, New
Hampshire's probably the place that most people
look to as doing this the best at this point and leading at a scale of, at this point, eight districts. And that's four years into when they conceptualized and conceived what this would look like.

I cannot underscore enough how much they've invested in the professional learning opportunities for the educators involved.

And they will tell you that there are some educators for whom that this is not the right model and there are other opportunities within districts and schools, within the state.

But the amount of time spent on building assessment literacy, looking at student work, I talked about that as a mitigation strategy to think about how are you devising tasks, how you are making sure if they elicit evidence of the standards.

How are we scoring them to make that determination if we're ready and getting to that point of judgement. My takeaway is start small, invest heavily and completely redesign the
professional learning opportunities that would
accompany this.

MR. KIHN: I think all I can do is
echo what my colleagues have said and just
reiterate that this actually is the central
question. There is no question than the one
you've asked when you think about implementing
these models.

And what we found was we hired a bunch
of teachers for the three schools. Some of whom
were not right and they were never going to be
right. And that's perfectly fine because there
are other schools and other school models and
other ways of teaching and learning.

But you need teachers who are invested
in doing things very different, as I mentioned in
my testimony, who are entrepreneurial in their
mind set, who are very creative and who are
willing to grow and learn and to make mistakes
themselves and pick themselves back up and keep
going.

We found taking them to schools that
actually were using models similar to this were,

it actually really helped in their own

development.

And we found that those that were very good

became coaches of the others, so there definitely

is a model in which you can start with a core

group and then scale out in the best way of

developing teachers.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Just one

more follow up. So when we adopt this program it

will take us, even though we'll have a model, it

will take us a couple or three years to actually

have it up and running? It's not something

that's going to happen in September 2016?

DR. WATHINGTON: I can speak for Maya

as we have tried over the past three years to

move towards competency. So there are different

things that we have begun to put in place.

Like this year we've worked with

students around pacing and sort of the different

report cards and trying to get students to be

more self-directed, to move through the materials
sort of at their own pace with direct
instruction. Making changes in teaching staff as
well. Getting strong content facilitators to
really work with students.

And I can say that I don't think we'd be ready for '16, '17. Even though we've taken
the baby steps to move towards this, by no means would we be prepared to roll out a competency-
based program in '16, '17.

So I would say for Maya, as we've done this, you know, little bit by little bit, trying to put different pieces in, we would need more
time before we're actually ready to say we have a competency-based program.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Vice President Williams. Can we move on, please?
We've got a student panel waiting which is the reason I'm being a little more strict on time.
Ms. Wattenberg, from Ward 3, you have 5 minutes.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Hi. Thanks again.
Like, as Laura said in the beginning we want to focus on what you guys have talked about but I
also want to clarify something, which is there are a lot of questions about this testing out provision which is so different from the Task Force report.

And I just want to make sure that my understanding is correct, which is that reg will not be voted on in February. It will get voted on in March, and that prior to that there will be a working session of the Board where we can raise with you and talk with you, why this got changed and have an opportunity going forward to discuss that, and that there will be an opportunity for people in the public to weigh in on this as well?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: My understanding is we discussed that already at a working session. This will be at the next working session as well because we will also hear from OSSE on the public comments they've received during the public comment period once this is published.

So there will be a bit more dialogue here and opportunity for dialogue.
MEMBER WATTENBERG: So we'll dialogue
on it at our next working meeting and we won't
vote on it until March?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: We'll vote on it
at our first public meeting after the 30 day
comment period which I believe is going to be in
March, yes.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Okay. Fine, thank
you. Now on to you guys. One of the proposals
within the regs that came out of the Task Force
was this idea that the way the waiver will work
is that OSSE would be putting together an
application that would somehow embed within it
this idea of, what are the standards, how are you
going to teach this, how will you know you've
reached your goal, how will we know that your
kids have reached the goal.

And I noticed, I'll start with Alissa
but there may be others who want to comment. You
say I encourage that the application and approval
process pay attention to the strategy for
defining mastery, ensuring a transparent and
shared understanding of that definition as well
as the training to reinforce calibration.

Do you want to say anything more about
that just in terms of practical advice about what
that kind of application would look like? Do
some exist that we could look at?

MS. PELTZMAN: I'd be happy to pull
together, mindful of the time, I'd be happy to
pull together examples of what other states have
done.

I'd mentioned Kentucky's monitoring
process. That made be useful to you as well.
But to think about the evidence you would use,
it's not just the standards. I've heard clearly
from the Board that the Common Core of D.C.'s
College and Career Readiness Standards are the
standards.

The question is how will instructional
leaders and educators make decisions at the local
level about readiness to move on and then how are
those decisions validated and what the evidence
used during that time?
MEMBER WATTENBERG: And that's something that, to use Kentucky as an example, that gets largely built into the application or it gets built into the rubrics that subsequently get developed and then people agree to use those rubrics? That's what I'm trying to get at. How you --

MS. PELTZMAN: I think it's both and it needs to be part of a screening or a determination about serious intent and, you know, whether or not an institution is poised to do this and to execute and understands what they'd be undertaking and then a monitoring once they've done so.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: And Paul, is that right, do you have any comment on that since you also work at the state level or the district level?

MR. KIHN: I agree --

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Okay.

MR. KIHN: -- with what Alissa said. I mean, you basically, you'll need them to show
you what the competency progression is going to be. What skills they're going to be demonstrating, how they're going to ensure that the teachers are using them effectively, what the calibration is like for them in terms of teachers assessments of the performance tasks and so on.

I mean, there's a suite of things you'll want to see obviously before you approve.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Second, and this is a question I think ultimately about all of you is, it seems to me there is this tension between, on the one hand, the idea here is teachers are developing course work, lessons, tasks, that make sense in their classroom presumably developing some performance tasks that they're using in their classroom.

And yet we also want people using common tasks. And I just wanted to get, hear something about how that mixes and matches.

I mean to what extent do, in the different places that you've seen, are teachers using both or largely one? To what extent is
their attention?

    MS. PELTZMAN: I don't know if that's a, let me just quickly say --

    MEMBER WATTENBERG: Okay.

    MS. PELTZMAN: -- again to the transition point, as you look at this becoming, implementing, what evidence are you going to want to see that the decisions that are being made hold to the intent, the spirit and intent of a policy?

    And so part of this means that you need something in common or you need something to hold onto as an anchor for your system isn't as that transition's happening, to have data to compare and moderate what's happening across school levels, if that makes sense.

    MEMBER WATTENBERG: Yes, I'm just wondering, so if there's a set of rubrics that are developed is that -- okay.

    PRESIDENT JACOBSON: I apologize. The weather has started to turn poor as well. It is getting icy and it is below freezing and it's
snowing.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: So Ms. Whittington and Ms. Anderson, do you have questions for the panel?

MEMBER ANDERSON: I have a question.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Anderson, from Ward 4?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Again, I apologize. I'm really not feeling very well. But this has been something I've been thinking about. And I just want to preface to say I'm all for learner-centric and individualized instruction and learning pathways and for teaching that responds to that and that actually permits that type of learning to flourish.

And I can see how, given proper planning and kind of reorientation and training the teachers and other school personnel, this would benefit disengaged and underperforming students how competency-based and performance-based learning and teaching would benefit those
students.

But I'm kind of contrasting that against what we are basically trying to facilitate with this action, this OSSE action, which would allow students to test out, basically out of just a few classes of math.

And I'm trying to, I mean, that seems to be on one hand it's like it's more of an expediency in some cases, but the other hand I think that what you're talking about is pretty much just a kind of an entire reshaping and reorienting, you know, turning the, flipping the script, I guess, of how schools relate to students and how students should relate to their learning.

So can you kind of talk to that to basically to what we're trying to do here and what, how it kind of, is it something that basically just solves a problem or is it something that we can constructively challenge into the bigger type of change?

MR. KIHN: So I will offer a very
brief response based on the thinking we did in Philadelphia. We saw these as entirely different things.

On the one hand you are trying to facilitate a better quality of learning for students and that's the competency-based progression.

So that's all about students who don't know things that actually need to learn them and then demonstrate they know them.

The opt out testing you would implement, at least we thought about implementing it only in the case where you felt like students already knew things, so they didn't have to waste their time basically sitting through a set of material that they already knew. So we saw them as very different.

MEMBER ANDERSON: It's a part of it in a way but it's kind of not the, that's a part of it but not --

MR. KIHN: At least in Philadelphia we didn't think of them as being a part of the same
system or program of work. We saw them as
solving different problems that we had.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Right.

MR. KIHN: But that was a different
place.

MR. TANSEY: I'll speak to this
because it's basically why I joined the Task
Force. I think it's very, very hard for people
who are in leadership to understand what the
school experience is for most kids because most
people who are in leadership did well in the
conventional system.

And so they're trying to serve kids by
duplicating their experience from school.
There's obviously some truth to that but a lot of
it ends up, I think, doing more harm than good
when I have kids in precalculus who don't know a
variable can change.

That's not helping the kid who's our
valedictorian who's now no longer learning
precalculus because I have to merge pre-algebra
with precalculus.
And I think that this is very much the first step. I think just to get ourselves out of the lock step mentality and DCPS at least, and I hopefully I won't get fired for this, is only moving more towards that. That our sense of justice is saying, let's have everyone teach exactly the same thing and it only makes it more meaningless.

And so we need to start talking about how do we have more individualized instruction. A lot of the conversation on our Task Force was talking about advanced kids who could test out of stuff. That's in scale terms that's a tiny problem.

In D.C. we have many, many more kids who are way behind. And I'm praying that this is the first bit of movement that allows us to go, huh, we deconstructed these standards, we tested kids in all this stuff, we adapt and none of our kids are ready for algebra in 9th grade? Maybe we need to rethink this.

So I really do think it's not enough
but I think it's an essential first step to force
the conversation that I think you're asking
about.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.
Anderson. Ms. Whittington or Mr. Weedon, do
either of you have questions? Mr. Weedon?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: I have a
comment.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Pardon?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: I have a
comment.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Whittington
and then Mr. Weedon.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Mr.
Tansey, I noticed you talked about your class and
how you have to move like pre-algebra and
precalculus together. I know you said something
about Khan Academy. I really acknowledge that
that is actually a really good system for
teaching children.

I know when I was in 10th grade we had
some kids who weren't on the same level as us and
we couldn't necessarily add the classes together
so we had picked out certain strategy so I, you
know, I commend you for choosing Khan Academy.

MR. TANSEY: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: I'll let

them finish.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.

Whittington. Mr. Weedon from Ward 1, I'm sorry,

6.

MEMBER WEEDON: Yes, I haven't moved.

I'm still in Ward 6.

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: You're welcome

in Ward 1.

MEMBER WEEDON: Thank you. Just one

quick question and the conversation as we talked
to, especially about math and algebra and, you

know, the problem's clear.

You look at the NEDP, you look at the

PARCC scores, some estimates at Eastern High

School in my Ward, 60, 70 percent of the students

entering 9th grade are not ready for algebra.

But by differentiating, are we getting
students to the same place so they graduate with
the same body of knowledge that we're currently
stating is the standard for the city for
graduation, algebra plus three years beyond?

Or are we risking lowering the
standards that will put our graduates in a more
difficult position competing for the jobs in our
economy?

MR. TANSEY: I'll speak to that. Yes,
but what we are doing is we're making sure that
what kids do graduate with, they know.

Because right now we have basically
worthless transcripts because I'm not going to
fail a kid in precalculus who's worked as hard as
he possibly can, to learn as much as he possibly
can, even if he doesn't know precalculus because
I don't have the tool, I don't have anywhere else
to put him.

And so we end up with these ethical
conflicts where there is no right answer. And
I'd also argue that precalculus isn't actually
needed by everybody. And this is a math guy
saying this.

And so I think we need to have some real serious conversations about what do we need to make sure a kid knows, and let's keep doing everything we have to do until they know it so that they can succeed in our current economy and government.

But I think that by keeping the standard where it is and measuring it as we are, we do that for ourselves, not for the kids.

MEMBER WEEDON: So one quick follow-up on this more at the state level. Does this mean we need to look at different types of diplomas or different types of measures for these students that really reflect what they learned as students?

MR. TANSEY: Yes. I mean I'd said I think we should have standards-based graduation requirements and so you'd have many more things on your list.

But we'd have a much more detailed look at where our kids are and how we need to
intervene to make sure they achieve those standards.

    DR. WATHINGTON: I was going to differ a little bit in that I think that it is possible if we change the time variable that students don't get less, right. My anticipation is that we're able to adjust time.

    My math students aren't always necessarily struggling with English. My science students aren't necessarily struggling with having the same struggles.

    And so being able to differentiate instruction, drill down on the things that are really necessary and being able to have the flexibility of time, extended time, we'd like to sort of move to a year round school where we're actually in school all the time to really get them to the same level, end up in the same place.

    So I would say, you know, speaking for the Maya Angelou Schools, it is not in any way an attempt to produce students who don't have the same skills.
I want my students to compete in the same way that every other student is competing. They just need a little bit more time and a little bit more flexibility to be able to do so.

MR. KIHN: On the question of different diplomas, I think it depends on how you perceive that differentiation at the level of students graduating from the system.

In Philadelphia we were really set against that approach because we felt as though our primary equity agenda wouldn't allow it, because you run into the problems that Ms. Peltzman talked about, which is you suddenly now have different systems of differential systems within your system. And poor students are going to end up likely achieving one diploma which is seen as something that's less.

And so what we wanted was exactly the system described by my colleague from Maya Angelou which is, you've got four years now to catch up on and learn Algebra 1 as opposed to just trying to do it within one year.
You're going to do it in a meaningful way but it's going to be to the same standard that all students have to achieve.

So we opted for the same diploma, the same set of standards, but a different approach that held students to the same rigor but gave them different options to get there.

MEMBER WEEDON: Right. But that would be the same rigor for Algebra 1, not the same rigor for the full content of knowledge, the Algebra 1 plus three additional years of math beyond that.

MR. KIHN: Well, it, the assumption in terms of attaining the diploma is that you still need to pass all of the courses that are required by all students.

If you're adopting the skill-based approach within the competencies, you're simply allowing students an opportunity to progress again at their own level, at their own rate.

And so the assumption is they still have to take all four or three math classes and
they still have to demonstrate all the skills within that.

But they may take two years to do the first one, or they make take a year and a half or they may take three, and then they've got a year left to do the other two. But it's a flexible approach to attaining the same set of standards.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Weedon. I'm going to cede my time to Ms. Jolly and then we'll let Ms. Wilson Phelan close out the questioning of this panel.

MEMBER JOLLY: I just wanted to clear up first before I asked my two questions, any misunderstanding there might be about what differentiation means for teachers.

It doesn't mean watering down of standards or academic objectives. It simply means that if my academic objective for the day is students will be able to, I'm sorry, explain the four causes of World War II, it means that based on the student's needs and learning styles I introduce that new material in different ways
and allow them to explain that new material in
different ways.

That doesn't mean that I've watered it
down just because I allow one student to make a
presentation, another student to write a song and
another student to write a paragraph.

But moving on, my first question is
actually for Superintendent Kang and then it has
a follow-up question.

Unlike some of the other members of
the Task Force that I served on, I do support
using some assessments as a way for students to
earn credit, but I support the use of AP exams
for credit assessments.

I do share, however, the wariness of
my Task Force colleagues about what the proposed
regulations say which is an OSSE approved
assessment.

And I wanted to ask you what that
might mean and what OSSE approved assessments are
currently being considered by your agency.

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Certainly. So
I think our intention with that language was first, as I think we conveyed in the working session, to fully, I think we understand the Task Force's recommendation to stay limited to math and foreign language.

And we understand that while individual Task Force members may have had additional opinions that that was sort of, that was the recommendation of the Task Force.

And our full intention is to limit the areas for the assessment provision to those subjective areas for the time being.

The intention was to follow best practices and draft in regulatory language and to allow the possibility that in future years there might be other kinds of assessments that people feel like are valid, and AP assessments being a potentially good category to discuss especially given that in some cases, students can earn college credit for a particular score on an AP exam. And so it may make sense to look at high school credit as well.
And I think just to echo the point that a few folks have made, I think my understanding, and Laura, you can probably speak to this better, but my understanding is the reason the Task Force looked at the assessment provision was because the Task Force was looking not just at competency-base learning, which I think has been the main focus of today's panel, but also at credit flexibility more generally, so.

MEMBER JOLLY: Thank you. And then my follow-up question then is to Mr. Kihn and Ms. Peltzman.

In your own experience in Philadelphia and then looking a national policy surrounding the competency-based education, is this standard and have you seen it succeed or not, this idea that students can use standardized assessments of some kind to earn credit within your systems?

MS. PELTZMAN: Just to begin, there are states that have had substitute test policies or ways of earning credit that are separate and
apart from a competency-based approach and we'd
be happy to pull together some research for you
of what that exists, you know, what that
landscape looks like.

I'm not sure how to answer, is it
standard. It exists in more than one state. It
does not exist in all states and what it looks
like varies tremendously.

MR. KIHNN: I don't have anything to
add to that.

MEMBER JOLLY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: And Ms. Wilson
Phelan, you have four minutes.

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Okay, great.
The first question I would like to ask Dr.
Wathington and Mr. Tansey, what kind of support
would you like to see from the state and
potentially other stakeholders, in your case, Mr.
Tansey, it would be DCPS. As an independent LEA
I'm not sure where you would look to for support.
But what's the kind of support you
would hope to see as this gets rolled out?
DR. WATHINGTON: So I would say professional learning communities for teachers, right in that professional development piece.

I think as we have started to move towards that realizing what, and learning that teachers need a very, in addition to skill set, but a very different set of tools to be able to use to work with students.

And so it'd be great to be a part of a larger community of schools and programs that are using a competency-based approach so that our teachers can create their own large professional learning communities, and we have some common rubrics and ways in which we are able to talk across LEAs so that would be huge.

MR. TANSEY: I'd say along that same line, I think and a little more granular level in the classroom, because that's where I am, best practices for how you differentiate when you're now teaching fairly substantially different content.

I think something that's always been
missing is a sort of data base of information, of
worksheets and things like that, practice
problems. Because our textbooks are all grade-
based, right.

So if I'm sitting there going, okay,
but I'm teaching this standard now I can't just
click, give me stuff on that standard, right. I
need a whole lot of stuff on that standard
because I've got a good number of kids who are
there.

And some people are starting to
listen. I was actually approached by a digital
platform recently to talk about this. So I think
people are starting to go there. The problem is,
well, not a, well, maybe these people can speak
to it better, not a lot of it exists.

That it's either totally individual or
it's at the sort of curricular level. There
aren't a whole lot of people merging the two to
say how do you make classrooms adaptive.

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Great, thank
you. And for Mr. Kihn and Ms. Peltzman, I'm
curious about what has been practiced, both in
Philadelphia and at across broad states, related
to a standardized test, especially state
administered standardized tests.

Did you have your high school students
take them at the same time that you had to
administer everything else? Did you get a
waiver, et cetera?

MEMBER JOLLY: I'll give you the
anecdote first and let Ms. Peltzman give you the
broader view.

It was a battle we chose not to fight
as we'd launched these three schools. And so the
students are taking them at the same time. It's
distruptive. It doesn't actually make logical
sense to a lot of the students because they maybe
haven't gotten that far yet in their progression.

We do have the benefit in Pennsylvania
of having the ability to have the kids take them
at flexible times, meaning they can take them in
their 9th, 10th or 11th grade years. So we do
have that flexibility which helps.
But we could apply for waivers. We could do battle with behemoth of the state ed agency. We chose not to do those things.

MS. PELTZMAN: The most well-known waiver process is the PACE districts in New Hampshire. And I would encourage folks if that is something of serious interest, to take a look at what that waiver looks like and what was approved by the feds in terms of which students and which grades are taking which assessments.

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Perfect. Thank you. And then just very quickly, is it a more responsible role out to do a standards-based approach first before going into CBE if we were to try to scale this? You know, we're not even at a standards-based approach yet across all schools in the city.

MS. PELTZMAN: Just quickly, I think it depends on the scale of the whole thing and if you're unit of change is a couple of schools or an LEA within, it really depends on the scale.

MR. KIHN: And I will add in over
time, very briefly, that I think you want to take
a phased approach to the competency-based program
in general.

And I think that you don't need to
wait until you've got standards-based everywhere
before you do that. Because I think a true, if
you'd approached the competency-based education
in the best possible way for a system, you're
going to have a three year rollout for any of
your schools.

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Great. I just
want to thank you on behalf of the State Board of
Education for coming tonight and helping us
understand from your perspective the values and
the warnings associated with competency-based
education. I really appreciate your time.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so
much. And because there is a student panel I'm
going to ask them to come up so that they can get
home and do homework, or whatever they need to be
doing.

So we're going to move on to health
standards and I'm going to give a really quick overview. The current health standards, oh, pardon me.

Before we do that we have an administrative measure. So students, start coming up.

MEMBER JONES: Mr. President?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Mr. Jones?

MEMBER JONES: I request a privilege to offer a motion, please.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Make your motion.

MEMBER JONES: Mr. President, I move that the State Board reconsider the vote and allow the Board to vote again by roll call, on the previous resolution, the State Board of Education resolution to approve the State Diploma Rulemaking SR 16-01.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: The motion's been made. Is there a second? There is no discussion on this motion. Is there a second?

MEMBER ANDERSON: I second.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Second by Ms.
Anderson. Please call the roll.

MR. HAYWORTH: So the question is on the motion to reconsider.

Mr. Jacobson?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Aye.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord?

MEMBER LORD: Aye.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wilson Phelan?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg?

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Anderson?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones?

MEMBER JONES: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Weedon?

MEMBER WEEDON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: No.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contreras? Mr.
Contreras? Ms. Whittington?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. President, the motion passes.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Now we have to vote again on the resolution. I'll order a roll call vote at this time.

MR. HAYWORTH: The question is on the approval of the resolution SR 16-01.

Mr. Jacobson?

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Aye.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord?

MEMBER LORD: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wilson Phelan?

MEMBER WILSON PHELAN: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg?

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Abstain.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Anderson?

MEMBER ANDERSON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones?
MEMBER JONES: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Weedon?

MEMBER WEEDON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

MEMBER JOLLY: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contreras? Mr. Contreras? Ms. Whittington?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Yes.

MR. HAYWORTH: Mr. President, the motion passes.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. And I thank my colleagues for the courtesy for Ms. Wattenberg.

The current health standards in the District are lacking in a number of areas. When I joined the Board I began the process to review the standards. By putting together a working group of local and national experts. We were able to provide a unique and in depth foundation upon which OSSE has developed draft standards that are currently in field tests.

I'm very much looking forward to
hearing from our panels. And I want to in particular, thank the Young Women's Project for their leadership on this issue. They've done an incredible amount of work along with other stake holders.

And with that, I will ask you to introduce yourself, and give your testimony. We'll start on your left here. Thank you so much.

MS. KOERNER: Good evening, President Jacobson and other Board Members. My name is Abigail Koerner. I am a junior at Woodrow Wilson High School. And a peer educator at the Young Women's Project.

I've worked on Health Education Standards revision since I started working for YWP. I applaud OSSE, DCPS, and you guys for being inclusive of youth in this process.

Although I'm pleased overall with the current draft of the Health Education Standards, I believe it would be beneficial to pay more attention to the needs of special groups and to
sexual consent, and sexual abuse.

This advisory, I'm enrolled in health class. Though some valuable information is being taught students aren't able to retain it because it is not related to real life. Health is real life and should be taught as such.

Learning the HIV is a scary virus that attacks the immune system is very different from describing the impact it has on a community.

One way to ensure that the real life application is taught is to make sure we are teaching the standards in a hands-on way. Many standards were changed to say demonstrate, instead of describe, which takes away from the possibility for hands-on learning.

Starting all health education at a young age is another critical part of our standards. I have gone to D.C. public schools since kindergarten and I did not receive any health education until middle school.

Even then, we jumped into topics my peers and I did not understand and were not ready
to talk about. Education should not come by surprise and instead starting in kindergarten, kids need to be gradually introduced to health, their bodies, and later sexual education.

As a peer educator I noticed the terrible lack of sexual education in high school students who are already having sex. At 16 years old a person should know that you can't get pregnant from swallowing sperm, and that having a strong pull-out game is not a good way to prevent pregnancy. However these are misunderstandings I personally correct every day at school.

The new health standards allow students to learn about sex and their bodies before unknowingly putting themselves at risk. Drug use, violence, decision making and nutrition should also be introduced to students in health class in ways they understand.

Consent is another important issue for me as a teen and as a peer educator. I've found that students have no idea what consent requires in a sexual encounter. Friends have mentioned
the sex eyes as a means of consent, however a facial expression can never explicitly tell a partner what you are or are not comfortable with.

For this reason, it is imperative for teenagers in high school to receive education about how to ask for consent. And how to voice your boundaries to a potential partner.

I believe that we need a standard that gives you the skills to get consent and communicate what they want from a sexual relationship. The sex eyes, won't cut it.

I'm concerned that so many mental health related standards were removed from the high school section of the Health Education Standards draft. I feel that our mental health standards directly referencing disadvantaged and LGBTQ communities could remarkably change the lives of DCPS students.

We're living in a city where 30 percent of youth under the age of 18 are living in severe poverty. And a society where being lesbian, gay, transgendered, or somehow different
can make school a dangerous place. We can all agree that school should never be a dangerous place for anyone, which is why standards like these should be considered for the DCPS health curriculum.

These standards are really unique because they were written alongside real DCPS students who were able to give input throughout the process. Every time we met, we discussed what was missing from health classes. The crazy things we hear from our peers due to their lack of a health education, and how boring and ineffective these classes are.

The Young Women's Project is a youth based organization with ideas meant to benefit youth. These health standards will change the lives of DCPS students by giving us an opportunity to learn about our health.

It is truly an unfortunate reality that without the Young Women's Project, I'd be a year from my graduation without a basic understanding of anything included in these
standards.

I would also like to add that we need more time to address all these issues. OSSE just released their graduation requirements proposal which have 1 1/2 credits for both PE and Health. It is crucial that health receive one entire credit on its own.

Thank you for your time.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much.

MR. PETERS: Good evening. Hello, President Jacobson and other Board Members. My name is James Peters and I'm a senior at Bell Multicultural High School.

One thing I have been working on since last year is revising the D.C.'s Health Education Standards. This is something that we brought to the Board last year. And you have been very supportive of our inclusion in this work. So thank you.

Today I would like to talk about the statuses of D.C.'s new Health Education Standards
and their implementation in 2016 and 2017 years. Although we are very pleased with the newest draft of the OSSE Health Education Standards, there are a few changes that I would like to discuss.

Every section of the new Health Education Standard is very important for students to learn about. I am concerned that the number of standards in the high school mental health section has been reduced.

Body image is something that affects me personally. We all go through it, but I didn't even know that it affects others until I started my research prior to the development of the new Health Education Standards.

In school we don't talk about how what we see on TV or the models that affect our self-esteem. Self-esteem is a very important concept to learn and analyze in school.

However, the OSSE revised draft of the new health education standards removed the standards that state, that a child in elementary
school should have the ability to demonstrate approaches and skills, and how to respect your own and other people's body.

This concept is needed early on to create the basis of good self-esteem. In fact, self-esteem is so important that poor self-esteem can lead to other problems like suicide.

As a peer advocate, and peer educator, I know that young people have the ability to analyze problems in the city and work to help solve them. The revised draft of the new health standards removed key concepts in the mental health section that would encourage students to analyze some of the city's health systems and be a part of the solution.

For example, the following standard is removed. Analyze the supports and barriers to accessing mental health resources. Youth know what is stopping people from seeking mental health resources.

Another standard that was removed was, demonstrate techniques to help a peer deal with
difficult emotions including anger and stress. Youth need to be used as resources for helping these peers deal with health issues. The new standard will really help youth. It is something that is going to affect their life. It will only affect youth if we have enough time in health classes to learn about it. OSSE just released their graduation requirements proposal, and we still only have a .5 credit requirement for health. With all of the topics that we need to learn, and skills we need to practice, we want to increase the requirement to one whole credit. Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony. And I hope you take all my points into consideration. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much.

MS. MIDEKSA: Hello, President Jacobson and fellow Board Members. My name is Rahel Mideksa. And I'm a junior attending Columbia Heights Education Campus.
I'm here to testify about the current draft of the Health Education Standards, with special emphasis on the mental health issues that immigrant teens face, as well as traumatic experience that many teens in D.C. face.

Although the current draft of the Health Education Standards does address many health challenges that D.C. youth have, they can be more responsive to the needs of special population and trauma inflicted youth.

I'm here to ask why OSSE chose to remove some of the population and trauma-specific standards? The United States is facing a significant challenge in serving the immigrant youth. With over a million entering a year, they're entering public schools in record numbers.

Often the youth face culture shock, poverty, and will have to quickly adapt to a society they have never known. I'm speaking from experience because I was one of those students who felt displaced in my own school.
I came to America at the age of 9 from Ethiopia. I was very young and felt out of place with children who are accustomed to customs unlike mine. I felt reserved and they seemed free. I barely knew how to speak English, so it was a huge barrier for me.

I never truly received a proper education in high school and I always tried to avoid it because it was an uncomfortable subject. I wish that I had learned to embrace my individuality and my diversity as an immigrant so that I could have wasted less time in conforming with what I saw.

This is why I question OSSE's decision to remove the following standard, identify resources dedicated to helping special populations like immigrant youth cope with mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and overstress. With this we guarantee that youth in these groups will know where to go for help. And that their special circumstances are taken seriously.
A particular problem for immigrant youth is that many cannot communicate with their parents because of a creation gap that emerges between generation over time.

As an immigrant student, I didn't know how I could possibly learn in a classroom when I couldn't cope with my surroundings. I was becoming stressed and I wanted to back to my home country.

Many D.C. youth go through traumatic life experiences that disrupts their life and can affect the way they interact with their families, teachers, friends, and communities. Trauma can also come from living in a constant resource scarcity.

For instance, some teens come from a poor neighborhood, and some are sexually and emotionally abused. In the current draft there is one standard that deals with trauma. It reads, "Evaluate effective strategies to cope with fear, stress, anger, and trauma."

But this standard might be hard to
apply if youths can't define traumatic experiences and trauma, and identify causes and indicators of trauma, which was a standard that was removed from this draft.

When one of the standards is taken out it creates a confusion since youth have to evaluate something they might not understand.

In conclusion, I want to thank OSSE for this great draft of Health Education Standards. I would also like to relay what James and Abigail asked, we need more time to learn all this. This is why I urge SBOE and OSSE to add .5 credits to help classes as a graduation requirement.

Thank you for listening to my testimony.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much.

MR. TONGE: Hello, my name is Jhirbron Tonge. I'm 17 years old and I currently attend School Without Walls Senior High School as a senior. I also live in Ward 8 of Washington D.C.
I'm here to talk about the importance of addressing mental illnesses in our health education.

Health class did not prepare me for stress or for my depression. Life as a teen got rough both inside and outside of school. Life got tense and I felt the whole world was collapsing on me. My grades dropped. I became less attentive and less social.

There were times that I would break down completely and then cry for almost the entire day. Luckily my mom noticed how I had changed and eventually we got help from a therapist. I had no clue how to get help on my own. And I was even afraid talk to my friends and family.

When I first told a classmate they thought I was just trying to get attention. I soon realized I was not alone though. YRBS reports that 31 percent of high school females and 19 percent of high school males have felt so sad or helpless, hopeless almost every day for
two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities like I did.

If I was clueless about how to deal with my depression, then there are many other teens that also need the information and skills. Talking about mental illnesses is a very uneasy topic for most people.

For example, for African Americans seeking mental health help by seeing a therapist or someone of that nature gives this false idea that you're crazy or something is wrong with you.

That's why after reviewing the latest update of OSSE's Health Education Standards I was pleased that the following two standards were included. One, analyze the stigma of mental health illnesses in various cultures. And describing the impact that culture and community can have on mental health conditions.

Having a good mental health education can help students avoid becoming overly stressed. And can teach students how not to make bad decisions in order to cope with their stress.
As I have been mentioning, I struggle with depression and I wish that my education would have taught me what I was going through and how to deal with it. I'm glad to see then the current draft of the standards, students will be able to learn to describe the signs and symptoms of depression, as well as identify techniques for managing mental and emotional health challenges like depression, stress, and grief.

Teens lack proper knowledge on mental health. And that's why it is so important that the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the D.C. State Board of Education pass and implement the revised Health Education Standards as soon as possible.

We also need to increase the 0.5 credit for health to a full credit. So that teachers will have the proper amount of time necessary to teach these standards.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you all for
spending your night here. I know that you have a
lot of other places you could be. And it's
incredibly important that you come out here,
because you're not just speaking for yourselves.
You're speaking for your classmates and you're
speaking for youth and students across the city.
And we greatly appreciate your time.

Do Board Members have questions for
the panel?

MEMBER ANDERSON: I don't have a
question but I do appreciate do want to extent
appreciation to you all for speaking so clearly
and cogently on the problems that you're facing.
And the kinds of issues and solutions that you
presented. So thank you for coming out.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Wattenberg
and then Ms. Lord.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Also thank you so
much for speaking so much from your heart and I
learned a lot from this.

I just have one comment which is to
our last speaker, which is I am very sympathetic
with your point about putting these in the health standards. But I'm curious, it strikes me that the school should have been there in a bigger way, apart from the health standards, in terms of counseling services and so on.

And to be there so that students can identify themselves as in need of some counseling. And I'm just curious to all of you really, just very quickly because I want to get you out of here, whether that's a problem in your schools? The lack of, inadequate availability or inadequate knowledge of that being available?

MR. TONGE: There isn't a lack of availability, for me personally, it was the lack of being comfortable talking about it. When it all started around my junior year, I wasn't a very communicative person to begin with. I didn't talk to many people. I guess you could say I was kind of a loner. It was what I was used to as being an only child.

But I wouldn't blame the school and the counselors for not being there for me. It
was just I wasn't comfortable talking to them.

MS. KOERNER: If I could add, I go to Wilson so there's a ton of kids all the time and very few counselors available. So each grade has I think, well starting at sophomore year there's two. Freshman have one. Juniors have two. Seniors have two. So as you can imagine it's kind of a fight to get an appointment with one of those counselors.

So I'm sure for students seeking any type of help from counselors, it's difficult. I've tried to speak with counselors about college and career stuff, and there's really no time for any assistance.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Thanks, anybody else?

MS. MIDEKSA: I wanted to add something. The thing is when you're not comfortable as a teen, you go to a certain kind of people to talk to. And you know different teens appeal to different kind of emotions. So although 50 percent of you know, are responsible
to kind of find an adult. You know we need just
like I have special hands that come and reach,
and to show us that we do have these resources.
We do have these people. Because we do appeal to
different kind of emotion, different kind of
techniques so that we can express our problems.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Thank you very
much.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Jolly from
Ward 8.

MEMBER JOLLY: Very quickly, I wanted
to say first, thank you so much for coming down.
I teach government and I would be thrilled if my
high school students came down and testified in
front of the State Board of Education. Some of
them are watching tonight, so they heard that.

But I just wanted to say I'm so proud
of you guys. Just for coming down and
identifying an issue that is really important to
you. And for testifying.

Second, I wanted to refer to something
that Rahel said. And I just wanted to reassure
you, I specifically noticed something you said
about the standard being changed to evaluating
different methods of dealing with trauma. And
that being a change from defining.

What that is, so the assumption when
standards are written is frequently that you
write them at the highest level with the idea
that teachers in the way that they roll out that
material for you, will do that. So it's not
being taken out so much as it is being elevated.
But obviously for a teacher to evaluate the
effects of a traumatic event, you have to know
what some of those are. You have to have them
teach you what different ways of coping with them
are.

So the idea from a wonky teacher's
standpoint, is that it's implied in there. That
we have to do that for you. It's just making
sure that you're being able to do more than just
define the words like you would on a test. Where
you multiple choice, and that you're able to take
those definitions and use them for real in your
life.

But thank you because that was an actually really important reminder for teachers, that we need to do that. So thanks.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Whittington, five minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: Yes. Hi, you guys. As a high school senior, I totally like understand what you guys are talking about here. But I want to specifically be, I'm sorry, I'm trying to find it. Yes, I want to specifically be -- Abigail, I understand that like as, this is your junior right?

MS. KOERNER: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITTINGTON: I know that like a lot of people go through stress and things like that. And I didn't realize like a lot of public schools and charter schools really don't have health classes for us to understand that.

And you hear about like students in your school, like committing suicide or
depression, or cutting themselves. And that's really important so like I commend you all. Thank you for coming up here and saying that.

I hope that my colleagues take this into consideration. Because I haven't got like health class since elementary school. And I totally, just like stopped smoking and that was kind of it. So I really appreciate that you guys came up here and acknowledged, especially the ones that were missing up here as well. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Lord.

MEMBER LORD: First of all I'd like to echo the thanks of my colleagues. And to congratulate you because engaging and advocating, studying, I think this is what we would call in competency-based education, a demonstration of proficiency and performance. So on that score, I give you all A+s.

I'm trying to get my head around how you as students experience health education. It's one thing to look at the standards, but the
delivery of education is a very different matter. And to your point, Ms. Koerner, you know the whole idea that standards changing to demonstrate from describing implies a much deeper level of understanding.

But if it's not being taught, if you're not receiving the information in a certain way, if you're not having safe spaces to discuss things, then sort of the standards are only as good as the delivery.

So I'd like to just get your ideas on you know, what are some of the good lessons you've had so far? Where would you beef up health education? Maybe in the middle school? Maybe in the high school?

And of the things that you identified in the standards that really are lacking, we had a young man talk about he wants to be equipped to handle gun violence when someone pulls a gun as he's taking out the garbage. And I'm not sure a standard gets at that. So anyway, anybody who wants to answer.
MS. KOERNER: Okay, well I guess I'll start. So I really liked what you said about having a safe space. I really agree with that, that the first part of having a quality health education is having a safe space to do it in.

And I think that starting that education, a really strong and kind of intensive health education at a younger age would start kids with the idea that they're in health class. Like it's okay to talk about sex. It's okay to talk about violence. This is where we can ask questions. This is where we can learn what we need to learn.

And I think starting small lessons about violence in kindergarten, where like if you see someone doing something suspicious what do you do? You go find a trusted adult that you can talk to. And that kid will know for the rest of their life, okay that's suspicious. I need to think what did I learn and how can I apply that? And I think that with every other part of health education that's applicable you know.
And with the idea of demonstrating something, I mean even just learning about safe sex, a condom demonstration's not that hard but I never -- I'm enrolled in health classes advisory. I just took my mid-term today actually, so and if I didn't work for the Young Women's Project I wouldn't know how to put on a condom for the rest of my life. DCPS would not have taught that to me.

So I think it's really important to have a physical demonstration, a physical analysis of how -- we're learning about HIV now. This is a virus, this is what happens to your body, but this is what happens to people in real life. This is what they look like when they're going through it.

MEMBER LORD: Anybody else?

MS. MIDEKSA: And also you mentioned something as the standard's as good as the delivery. So maybe like teachers, you know who would teach it, like I mean there are some old fashioned teachers who you know who kind of have
their own ideas of like sex is bad. That's sad, but maybe like having teachers who are kind of open to new ideas. I like what Abby said, the condom representation.

And then like also like having teachers like making teachers connect with students. Like teachers who'd go out of their way you know to kind of talk about what really goes on in life.

If you can connect school with life then you know students would be more interested in expressing their self.

MR. TONGE: To touch on what you were asking us.

For me, and for last year when I took health, we talked a lot about nutrition, and different ways of exercising to better ourselves health wise. But the issue for my health class was timing.

We only meet twice, maybe three times a week depending on the Fridays. And we focused mostly on nutrition, and then into exercise, and
then yoga. And by the time it got to learning about sex and mental health, we didn't have enough time.

So that's why we, all four of us agreed on extending the health credit requirement to a full year credit.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. Let's go to -- did any Board Members on this side have questions? Ms. Wattenberg you'd like to speak?

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Yes, just one. Both of you have talked about increasing from a half credit to one credit. And of course one of the big complaints about D.C. high school requirements is there's a huge number of them. More than I think in any other state. And so you're content though with just losing, yet another half of an elective in order to get this done?

MR. TONGE: I'm fine with that.

MR. PETERS: Also I feel as though that with the credit, as far as talking about that it's like, it's a lot of different things
that needs to be discussed with the mental health standards. So I feel as though an extra credit is just giving us more time to talk about all the issues that we brought here today, you got to talk about.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. I would love to do multiple rounds unfortunately we've still got another panel to question and a panel waiting after that.

Ms. Williams, Vice-President Williams.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Thank you Mr. President. I'm going to keep this brief. So are you really asking for one half -- would it be better just to give you a whole credit for health or if we initiate health earlier in your educational process? So that you can cover multiple topics over your lifetime in school? Is that what you're -- what are you asking for specifically?

MS. KOERNER: Well, we're kind of asking for just a more continuous health education overall and the full year health
requirement in high school. Because health is just such a critical part of who we are as people. We are all healthy individuals. So we need to learn about it.

But I think the most critical part of what we're asking is that it starts at a younger age. Because even if once we get to high school, the credit is still only one half of a year, then we'll have our whole ten years of education to support what we're learning at that moment.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Anybody else?

(No audible response)

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: So would it have helped you if you had had an instruction or support earlier in your life?

MR. TONGE: I believe so, yes. The first time I ever took or even learned about health was in my high school junior year. So I think it would have benefit if it started out earlier on.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: Thank you.
I will again thank all of you for coming out.
It's been so informative. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: So I think there's a common thread that I'm seeing here in the issues that you all have raised. And that's an issue of stigma and of shame among all of these health issues, body image, depression, sexuality, mental health issues, suicidality. I've dealt with a lot of these issues myself. I've dealt with suicide, thoughts of suicide. I've dealt with addiction and I've dealt with depression.

And my goal here, and I want you all to know, and I want your colleagues, your peers to know, my goal is do whatever we can, as much as we can, so that students in school today don't go through what I had to go through when I was younger. And can make better choices throughout their lifetimes. That's what this is all about.

And you have my commitment to continue to work on these, to make even incremental improvements wherever we can. And to keep
working collaboratively so that we can get these done. Even if it's not everything we want, to get something better in our classrooms so that students can have a better start to their adult lives because they're prepared at the school level. So you have my commitment on that.

I hope you will be our student advisory committee. We're doing a joint meeting with the Public Charter School Board's Student Advisory Committee, and the State Board of Education Student Advisory Committee. I hope you'll invite your peers to come to that.

And I encourage everyone who is watching tonight to support these efforts to get better standards in our schools so we can help you all.

With that, I'm going to dismiss this panel and call up our friends from OSSE and from the Department of Behavior Health again. Thank you so much and get home safely tonight.

And Ms. Anthony and Dr. Scott.

MS. ANTHONY: It's just me at this
point.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Okay, terrific.

Thank you.

Do you have anything to add to your testimony really briefly and then we'll go to Board questions?

MS. ANTHONY: I just wanted to thank the students for coming tonight. I think everything that they said was really important, and the things that we're thinking about at the OSSE as well.

And I think it was really great of them to come tonight and to be the voice for the youth in the District. So I just wanted to acknowledge their efforts.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you. Now, let's turn to Board Member questions on the standards or on the process moving forward.

Mr. Jones.

MEMBER JONES: Good evening. I have a number of lines of questioning, but considering it's snowing and it's late, I'm going to limit it
to one. And that's on the nurse availability.

MS. ANTHONY: Yes.

MEMBER JONES: Now, your comment was what about nurse availability?

MS. ANTHONY: There's nurses in every single DCPS school. Not all of the Charters are covered and this is something that we're working on with the Department of Health.

Currently the Department of Health owns the school nurse contract for the District. And this contract was created before there was the infiltration of Charters. And so we're working on a scope of work to ensure that all schools can be covered. That they can opt-in.

Some schools are purchasing their own nurses at this time, so there are nurses outside of that contract in schools providing support to students. But it's something that we know we need to work on.

MEMBER JONES: Now, the nurse availability under the contract that Department of Health administers with National Medical,
which is Children's Hospital.

MS. ANTHONY: Yes.

MEMBER JONES: Do they provide the nurses for the Charters as well? Is it under the same contract?

MS. ANTHONY: It's all one contract. And currently they're doing a needs assessment to look. Also there are school-based health centers which are essentially clinics that are attached to the high schools in the DCPS high schools. And so those are also sources of health care within school buildings that are somewhat separate entities but also can be leveraged for students within that building.

So they're doing a needs assessment to look at the distribution of school nurses in the school building itself as well as what supports can be received through the school-based health center, which is kind of this clinic model attached to a school.

MEMBER JONES: Okay, is it a problem with the availability of nurses and staff?
MS. ANTHONY: I think it's about getting an updated contract in place to ensure that access can be had where it's needed. And that's something that the health department remains committed to and is working on right now.

MEMBER JONES: Okay, because I'd like to follow up on this because there's something amiss here because National Medical is suggesting that there isn't enough qualified nurses.

But I have data that suggests otherwise. So we've got to make this align and this is a problem in our city. When we let contracts to organizations, and for whatever their reason is, they say they can't find enough qualified nurses. Something is not right. And we need to sort of align this.

So that's, again I have some other questions but in the interest of time -- but we need to work on that because there is enough qualified nurses in this region to cover every school, charter and traditional.

And I mean they have made a lot of
progress. I remember when we didn't have nurses in all our schools, and it's not that far back. So I applaud the progress that's being made. But hopefully you all can work with them and make sure that they identify nurses and deploy them in all our schools. Because they should be there, as there is no reason for them to not do it.

If they have the contract, then they need to perform. If not, then they need to find another provider.

MS. ANTHONY: Yes, I think that the needs assessment will be really helpful for us to look at what is currently happening across the District, and what is needed across the District moving forward?

I think it's, you know this is something that we need to look at with all health-related resources in the building. Not just nurses, but nursing assistants, medical technicians, anyone who can kind of support, as well as social workers and psychologists.

Are students getting access in their
school buildings to the services that they need? And OSSE is committed to facilitating that conversation, knowing that many District agencies are involved in those resources and the allocation of them.

MEMBER JONES: Agreed. I appreciate your thoughts on that. Thank you.

MS. ANTHONY: Thank you so much.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: And I have to echo the thoughts of my colleague. It's not only -- I think the quality of our health care professions in our schools is vastly different if you go to different schools. And we can be working on that with our partners at OSSE and with the administration, and with the Public Charter School Board.

Do Board Members have additional questions? Ms. Lord.

MEMBER LORD: Thank you and thank you very much for staying so late. I had a couple of questions on the presentation. And if I can get to where I wrote them down.
Basically -- a thousand pardons -- so there were a lot of things in here for example that struck me as worthy of developing. So for example, under the current health standards which we now measure, obesity rates and condom use. Obesity rates have dropped, condom use has gone up. It seems like it's in a good direction. That would suggest we might not want to change them.

So could you sort of give an indication of what kind of change we're talking about? The second thing that occurred to me as our students were speaking is we're, OSSE is going to align these with Common Core literacy and math standards. But I'm thinking what about the Next Generation Science Standards? It is hands-on. It does get at that demonstration of mastery. And it seems like an opportunity to seize on.

And then finally, I'd like to know a little bit about plans for the health assessments and whether those results will be made public,
which has been somewhat of a debate. So those
are the three main topics right now.

MS. ANTHONY: Okay, so the first one
was, we're making some progress on health
outcomes in the District and should the standards
be potentially scaled back or remain as is if
we're making good progress there?

We haven't necessarily scaled back on
the fronts where health outcomes are improving.
We may have changed the wording. And so you know
--

(Off the record comments)

MS. ANTHONY: Sure.

Things change over time and so I know
when I was growing up and I was learning about
nutrition, it was good foods and bad foods and
margarine versus butter. And now we know that
it's really not a great thing to teach that there
are bad foods. It's moderation. It's knowing
when you're full and when you should stop eating.
And that stress can be a trigger for snacking. I
certainly know that.
And so I think it's making sure that it's looking at the current research and modifying the language to accommodate what is evidence based.

To your second point, we're certainly looking at the Next Generation Science Standards and feel like there's a really, really strong opportunity for science and health to work hand in hand for our students.

And that's why we felt like there was an opportunity with next generation and the Common Core to start pushing health into other areas. And maximizing on the time that's available in student's schedules.

And the third thing --

MEMBER LORD: The health assessments.

MS. ANTHONY: The health assessment.

So we've been doing DC CAS Health for a long time. As you know CAS went away, and so we're developing a health assessment this year. We've given LEA's the opportunity to develop their own assessment if they're currently doing something.
It needs to be vetted and approved by us.

And so we'll be receiving those proposals next month and vetting those within the OSSE. Both through our assessment team and our health team together in collaboration. So we can be looking at it from two angles. Or you can opt-in to the state test.

And so the state test is going to be looking at the field test standards that we've highlighted, and asked LEAs to try out. Some of them look really similar to the 2007 standards. And some are really cutting edge. And so you know that's what we're trying to find out is you know, could you implement this in your classroom? And could we assess on it?

And so that will happen during the PARCC administration window, late March through late May.

MEMBER LORD: And then I'd also like to follow up, thank you for that. I'd like to follow up on the residence of school nurses, which apparently we have.
But an awful lot of what we heard from the students and others suggests that well first, we may not have, the staffing may not be as, the coverage may not be as rigorous. Because information we had from our previous State Board Policy Analyst and our Ombudsman revealed there actually is a lot of cross-communication about hiring.

But what about the prevalence of social workers and school counselors, school guidance counselors? It seems that social, emotional health is better dealt with at that level, than a nurse or an academic counselor, or even a health teacher.

MS. ANTHONY: Absolutely, I agree. I mean I think the health standards are only lever of change in improving health outcomes. And I think resources in the building are another powerful way to do that. And social workers are certainly, you know the ideal people to be helping on the social, emotional front both inside the classroom.
So doing classroom consultation with teachers as well as you know doing one-on-one therapy, group therapy, and advising school principals, and custodians, and cafeteria workers on the school climate matters.

D.C. actually has more social workers in their schools than some of the area jurisdictions. We're one of the only jurisdictions in this area that meets the national recommendations for social worker and psychologist allocations.

I think the bigger challenge is knowing how to use them well in schools. And so you know there's the angst of how do I walk into a classroom as a social worker not having an education background, and tell this teacher how they should be instructing to recognize trauma? And knowing that behavior is a form of communication.

And so if a student is acting out, let's not isolate them and send additional messages that they are a problem. And instead
acknowledge that they are having a problem. And
that we need to do something about it.

And so you know something that I'm
really committed to doing and thinking a lot
about is how do we leverage the resources that
are already in the building to maximize their
impact on student outcomes?

MEMBER LORD: Just a quick follow-up.

Does OSSE now count or monitor the staffing
levels for school psychologists or school
counselors?

MS. ANTHONY: We do. So the annual
school health profiles that we do, it does survey
the resources in the building. So the nurses was
just one example, but we look at it more broadly.

Schools purchase their own, sometimes
for special education purposes. The Department
of Behavioral Health also deploys social workers
and psychologists to schools throughout the
District.

So it's also, that's part of the needs
assessment, is looking at how are we using
different resources deployed from different agencies and schools? And how does it, especially knowing how many students transition throughout the system, how does it feel similarly between schools? But also can adapt to the populations that are there.

MEMBER LORD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Do other Board Members have questions for Ms. Anthony?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Then I have a couple.

MS. ANTHONY: Okay.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Has OSSE -- the superintendent has committed to working with the State Board to take a real hard look at our graduation requirements. And we're looking forward to doing that. The Board has done a lot of work on that over the past four years and we'd love to bring that to a close. And we're really excited to be working with you on that.

Does OSSE have an official position
yet on increasing the health credit from a half
credit to a full credit, as the students were
asking?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: So as you said I
think we are very committed to working with you
and to look at the requirements comprehensively.
And I think we'd want to look at that in
conjunction with the other types of changes we're
thinking about. We don't have a specific
position on that specific question yet.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Terrific. You
talked just briefly in response to Ms. Lord about
annual school health profiles, and the
information that's there. It sounds like it's
pretty interesting, rich data. Is that something
that would be easy to add to the school report
cards?

MS. ANTHONY: Sorry.

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: So I think the
school health profile data is all available on
our website. I think just generally there's
probably some thinking to do about how we make
information available to the public and to
families and so on about our schools overall.

I don't think it would be super easy
to do overnight. But I think it's something that
we can think about. I think we're already
thinking about sort of how we make information
more easily accessible to families. And we can
include that as part of our thinking.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: I'd really
courage you to look at that. Families now have
to go to multiple websites to find different data
and sometimes it's not always the reading score
that matters to the family. It's having a school
that can support the mental, emotional, and
physical health challenges that their child
faces. So having that all at a one-stop shop I
think would be very beneficial.

Can you tell me, on the field test,
how many LEAs have opted in to the field test?

MS. ANTHONY: So the deadline for
knowing whether or not folks are going to opt-in
to the tests is February 1st. And so we'll have
the final list then. So far we've only heard
from two LEAs that have said that they are going
to opt-in to the OSSE test.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Okay. Is DCPS
one of those two?

MS. ANTHONY: No.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Okay. Please on
February 1st, I'd really like to see that
information.

MS. ANTHONY: Absolutely.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: To make sure that
we're reaching all the LEAs that we can.

MS. ANTHONY: Absolutely.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: My final question
is, my understanding is that on sexual health
issues, families can choose to opt-out of sexual
health standards and classes.

Given what the students said, and
given the changes to the draft, are we
intentionally dumbing-down the standards so that
fewer families will opt-out?

MS. ANTHONY: I appreciate the
question. I looked at the last three years of opt-out data just to find out how large of a problem is opt-out. I have some concerns about students not getting access, but at the same time their parents have that right. And they have that right in 35 other states and so you know it's certainly something that nationally is occurring.

The numbers are really low for opt-out. And so it's not a parent-driven thing. And we have not dummed down the standards by any sense. I think what we wanted to do was make sure that we're talking not just about infectious disease but we're talking about communicable disease, and chronic disease, and infectious disease together.

So that you can learn about all different types of diseases and not just isolate it to one specific disease. Or in some of the other instances, is that the students were talking about one specific population. Knowing that the populations look so different between
LEAs that we want to give LEAs the flexibility to adapt to the populations that they know well and that they're serving.

So it was more of about consolidating some of this stuff, and creating flexibilities for LEAs to adapt their instruction to their population. Not to try to dumb-down by any means, or diminish the importance of sexual education.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Well, I don't think it's just the sexual education. When you are trying to create a bigger bucket to catch more and certainly I understand the individual groups, the immigrant groups, the LGBT groups et cetera, et cetera.

So then how does that get communicated to schools and how do health teachers understand that flexibility and that's where that lesson plan goes?

MS. ANTHONY: Right.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Is it professional development for teachers? Is it the
curriculum? Is it a combination?

MS. ANTHONY: It's the, I mean it's the book lesson, the curriculum list. I think that those are going to be the biggest drivers of successful implementation.

That's giving teachers tools so they are not sitting at home Googling at night, how do I instruct to this standard when I know I should really be talking about HIV? Or I know that inhalants are a problem at my school and I want to kind of focus on that.

So that's why we're trying to create those resources right now. A lot of the books and curriculum can get more specific. But what we want to do is say kids need to know this and know how to advocate or how to make solid decisions or set goals around any sort of disease prevention. And then you know the book list can say and here's how you do it for HIV. And here's how you would do it for heart disease, to get more specific.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: We will be very
much looking forward to receiving additional
information on that.

MS. ANTHONY: Okay.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Do any Board
Members have any final questions?

MEMBER LORD: I have one quick one.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: A quick comment?

MEMBER LORD: One of the pieces of
work we were doing last year and the year before
that was to try to develop a protocol or template
for sort of regular review of academic standards.

And I was just wondering, does the
State Superintendent's Office have anything like
that where you sort of like, okay it's five years
now, what's happening?

And I don't need an answer right now,
but it would be really useful to kind of figure
out what the best practices are for regular
review. And what kinds of things to look at.

MS. ANTHONY: I think that's a great
question. I think something is to look at what
happening nationally. We reached out to three
different entities that have a role in the
National Health Education Standards, and said
hey, you haven't revised these since 2007.
What's going on here? Are you doing a revision?
Because I think that's kind of where
we got caught in 2007 when we developed the last
version of the standards. Is we released
something, and the nation released something, and
we were trying to kind of align but it was all
you know, timing was hard.
And so I think part of it is keeping a
pulse on what's happening nationally. And what's
happening in our states knowing that, you know
health changes over time. And what we need to
focus on. And we learn more and more about how
to teach students about health education. And so
we're going to probably have to make updates.
I think what's going to be really
meaningful is how are we getting continuous
feedback from our teachers along the way.
Knowing that some of these are really cutting
edge, and a little bit controversial. And so
we're going to make some parents nervous, and we
just need to make sure that we're getting that
constant feedback from folks to make sure that
these are as high impact as possible for our
students.

MEMBER LORD: Right, and of course we
all know that chocolate, and peanut butter, and
potato chips are just great for your health now.
Right? But see the thing is, that's the thing.
Content can change but it's the standards are,
should know and be able to do. So I appreciate
it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.
Anthony I appreciate you staying so late this
evening. With that I will release you.

MS. ANTHONY: Thank you so much. I
appreciate everyone's time.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you.

We're now going to move on to our
final witness and a final panel. Dr. Carol
Bristol, Director at Sunshine Early Learning
Center. We appreciate your patience, and come
sit down as I do brief introductions.

Pre-Kindergarten education in the District is vital to future success for students. I'm glad that the mayor and council are committed to Pre-K Education, as the Board is. The funding that OSSE will provide to high quality Pre-K Education will help these businesses give even more to their young students.

Ms. Kang, would you like to introduce the subject in more detail?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: Just very briefly, I note again that the provision that's for discussion this evening is around the academic requirements for those CBO classrooms. Those community-based organization classrooms that are aiming for that high quality designation to qualify for the pre-k enhancement funding.

And so we're so excited to have Dr. Bristol here and thank you so much for coming. And we're excited to hear a little bit more about sort of how you're thinking about your staff and the academic requirements as they apply to your
DR. BRISTOL: Good evening.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much. Go right ahead and testify. You've got five minutes.

DR. BRISTOL: Good evening, Honorable Body, Members of the State Board of Education, early childhood educators, all partnering agencies and friends.

I'm Carol L. Bristol and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as Center Director for Sunshine Early Learning Center, a gold tier community-based organization, a CBO, that has been providing high quality instruction to children from birth to 5 years old in Ward 7 and 8 within the District of Columbia for more than 40 years.

I'm here this evening because I want to lend my testimony and support of the amended academic and degree requirements as put forth in the said regulations by OSSE, which will mandate by 2017 that all classroom teachers who work in
high quality CBO, Pre-K programs attain at a minimum, or at least be working towards attaining a bachelor's degree at the time of their hire.

Likewise I offer my brief testimonial based on what has been my own background and experience in the field of education, to speak to the manner with which it enforced my perspective on this regulation.

As such I present myself as a seasoned educator and program administrator with over 25 years of experience, combined working in district, public, private, magnet, charter school programs. Including what is my own academic pedigree toting a bachelor's degree in Psychology from Howard University, a master's degree in Education from New York University, as well as a second master's degree and doctorate degree in African American Studies from the University of California, Riverside. And I can tend for you that water will only rise to the level of its source.

I believe it is therefore highly
unreasonable and unexceptional for anyone of us
to think that closing the achievement gap for
children in the District of Columbia can be done
without principally ensuring that a bountiful
source of highly qualified and fairly
compensated, lead and assistant teachers are in
fact facilitating the learning in our highest
performing CBO Pre-K classrooms every single day.

Otherwise, what would be the point of
recognizing these agencies as high quality
organizations?

This is not to suggest in any fashion
that I do not recognize currently, there aren't
any number of wonderfully enlightened men and
women working in the field of Early Childhood
Education who have never graced the halls of
academia.

Yet every day they still meaningfully
offer our children an immeasurable amount of
culturally relevant life-long learning and self-
help skills as well as care, affection, and
attention.
Nevertheless, it is my intention to testify for you tonight that it's just not nearly enough to employ Pre-K classroom teachers with only an associate's degree or no degree at all in high quality CBOs as we move forward into the 21st century.

Not when ensuring the equitable long standing, socioeconomic advancement of future generations of children in the District of Columbia has to be our highest priority. And a bachelor's degree is the minimum credential required for almost every other field.

And especially not when in what is this globally competitive world of an ever increasing advanced technology that we all now live in, and must adapt to.

So I close by asking you to vote in support of this regulation. Let's do all that can be done in pairing our children, who we expect to be accomplished life-long learners, with Pre-K classroom teachers who are themselves degreed and accomplished life-long learners.
Thank you for your time.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you Dr. Bristol.

DR. BRISTOL: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Vice-President Williams, would you like to make a brief comments, or kick-off our questioning? This is your area of expertise.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: I really agree with your outlook and being a former Director at Big Mama's Children Center.

DR. BRISTOL: Oh, okay.

VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAMS: The quality of learning that occurred in our building was directly hinged on the ability of the instructors. And while our profession originally was called daycare, where we just baby sat. You know, my owner said, we never sat on a child in our life. But that was her thing if people came in and said that we were, you know you're babysitting my children.

Working there for over ten years I
realized that the quality, as the requirements, for what Early Childhood Education was going to look like in the District of Columbia, and especially when the Common Core for Pre-K was enacted through the Board.

And especially being a NAEYC accredited center, it was incumbent upon myself as a Director of that center to bring in quality teachers. And to not only have a degree, but have the aptitude and the ability to relate to very young people. And to not only address the academic needs but their social, emotional, and problem solving, and critical thinking needs.

So thank you for coming out tonight to testify. And you have my support 100 percent.

DR. BRISTOL: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Ms. Wattenberg.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Hi, this is probably more of a question towards Hanseul, but you probably know as well. I got a number of calls from people who thought that this also affected private schools. But it was my
understanding it does not. Is that correct?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: So this
requirement again is only for community-Based
organizations which are private entities. But
they're community-based organizations who are
specifically applying for the Pre-K enhancement
funding. So it's only for those programs who
choose to apply for that.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: All right, so I
want to just clarify another thing just because
I'm getting contrary information. I want to able
to put it to rest.

The other is that, perhaps this is not
just about the grant, but that rather by doing
this, that this will be the moment at which staff
in these centers -- apart from the ones that are
applying for the extra money, but that staff in
general at centers -- would not have a chance,
people who did not have BAs or AAs, I guess if
they're paraprofessionals, would not have the
opportunity to grandfather in or get further
training. So I just want clarification that this
is really just as minimal as it's being presented to us?

SUPERINTENDENT KANG: That's correct. And it's not even just the centers. It's actually a requirement only for those classrooms that are applying for this designation.

MEMBER WATTENBERG: Okay, thank you very much.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Are there additional Board questions. Mr. Jones and then Ms. Lord.

MEMBER JONES: Thank you, Mr. President.

Now your experience, your organization, you're at the highest tier. Do you have any experience in preparing any of your employees that may have not, may not be degreed to ascend to a degree and attain it, and continue to perform?

DR. BRISTOL: Absolutely, certainly at Sunshine Early Learning Center, Ms. Frances Rollins, who's our CEO, has contracted several
professional development consultants who are working with staff, assistant teachers, lead teachers who are themselves now as a requirement moving toward enrolling in at least an associate's degree program and working toward completing those requirements. And moving towards the bachelor's degree as well.

So we're not looking to push people out the door. We're looking to support them in their own professional development and pursuits. But what is principally my own focus is really to see how eventually this could be something that's extended even to what is infant and toddler instruction.

And I just think that it's a benefit to our kids, again stressing the need for what is life-long learning in a 21st century. Why short change them when we have an opportunity now to set them up and pair them with teachers who can track them for success through you know, kindergarten et cetera into the halls of education.
And if I could just add one quick antidote. I recently earned my doctorate degree. And one of the first questions that came up was, well what are you going to do next? Are you going to lecture here, you going to lecture there? And I did for a while.

And then I decided that having gone through what is my own progression, literally thinking back to what were my experiences all the way back to grade school, I realized that it was important to go back to early education to really support our kids in our community to help them to be able to get there.

And one of the first things I noticed coming back to D.C. where I especially entered Early Childhood Education, was what was this degree requirement that a number of the teachers in my center and in other places were struggling with?

And so I work with teachers as well, during even what is my staff development, once a week or team meetings, to support them in giving
them instructional materials on how to continue
the learning. And to inspire themselves to
continue to be life-long learners. And how they
can translate that into their classroom for their
children and even for our families?

So this is a critical step for us in
this field.

MEMBER JONES: Yes, I agree. Is there
a model anywhere, where organizations have taken
their employees from A to Z? In your testimony
you mentioned where they're valuable because they
instill culture and other things in our young
people. And I agree with you.

And I also think there, I agree with
you there is value in having them attain the
level of education that is necessary to teach our
children. But I also believe in, if we're going
to move to develop a great middle class, it's not
so much for you to fire and move people out.
Your true measure is growing people. And if we
can't do that then I don't see the point.

So I think -- I support it, but I
think there should be a plan to help grow human beings.

DR. BRISTOL: I agree and if I've read the regulation correctly, my understanding is that this has been in the works at least since 2008. So folks who've been in the field at least since that time, have had support certainly to move toward each two or three year requirement of credentialing or recredentialing for their center. Certainly towards those milestones.

And I know in my center certainly even at Southeast Children's Fund, 01 and 2, our locations, our sister organizations, we've had several teachers who've been with the organization for over 20 years. And have gone from either a GED, certainly to an associate's degree, and even a bachelor's degree, and a master's degree.

So I think those are models in our communities where we see that folks are not pushing anyone out the door. If in fact they want to be in the field of Early Childhood
Education. But I think we still have to maintain standards. And those standards still have to have a face of excellence.

MEMBER JONES: I'm not opposed to standards. And perhaps that was the wrong question for you. Because I know this conceptually had been in place since the 60s.

DR. BRISTOL: Okay.

MEMBER JONES: In moving toward that direction. Even prior to Head Start, I know that because my dad ran two Head Start divisions in the State of Missouri. Now, I'm just looking for someone saying that there's a model, and one towards growing human beings. Not just saying we're going to do this.

I know you guys, it's been in place because my brother runs a CBO in this city. So I still didn't see it, although I support it. Don't confuse my concern. There are two concerns. I support it. But we've got to find a model to help grow people as well.

Give them the opportunity and I just
want to know what are we doing as a city to identify them? If human beings decide they're not motivated then that's another issue. But we've got to find a pathway for them. Just as we're finding a pathway for our young people. We need to find a pathway for the adults who have dedicated their lives to young people.

Sometimes it's not their fault that they could not go to institutions of higher learning.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Jones. I think, again, we're going to continue to have these conversations with OSSE and continue to follow up. Ms. Lord.

MEMBER LORD: Well Mr. Jones as usual took some of the words out of my mouth. But I would like to follow up. We just had a very robust discussion about competency-based education. And my colleague, Vice-President Williams talked about the attitude that was necessary. You could have a bachelor's degree but if you hate 3-year-olds, you really don't
want that person in the room.

So in your experience, have you seen a
link between a bachelor's degree and the quality
of the instruction, and the learning environment
for students? That's my first question.

And then given the wide disparities in
achievement, and the need as you put it, to have
cultural competencies and a culturally relevant
curriculum. How does requiring a bachelor's
degree when we have now 60,000 adults without a
high school or GED diploma, going to move us as
fast as we need to go?

And it's just something I'm concerned
about. I also have in my mind the analogy that
you know, how can you expect someone to be a
great football coach and train players, if
they've never seen the game. Let alone played
the game? And so when we talk about college and
career readiness. If you've never been on a
campus before, it's kind of hard to make that
connection between what you're doing with 2-year-
olds now.
But it just, I just feel like we risk creating artificial barriers to my colleague's point, that would inhibit the development of talent, of finding really great teachers, of bringing them up from teacher's aides. So I would just like to tap your experience and see what you've seen out there?

DR. BRISTOL: Well for me, I don't necessarily see finding qualified individuals that hold at least a bachelor's degree, or anyone who's working toward advanced level degrees who's in Early Education, as being mutually exclusive from likewise working with individuals who are currently in the field who may not have gone through the halls of academia as I mentioned.

The point though is to consider leveling the playing field. And if in fact the resources that we're seeking for those specific classrooms that are geared toward Pre-K expansion, and making them equitable with you know public school or charter school classrooms. I think that that would be one of the first
issues though that is important to address.

So there in lies sort of my framework of thinking about it. So I personally as I interview candidates, that's not something at this juncture -- well certainly for Pre-K it's different because of one of the guidelines of the grant. But let's say even for what's infant and toddler, where that requirement doesn't stand, candidates with master's degrees don't necessarily get an interview just simply because they apply for the position.

Obviously there's a lot more given to what you know predisposition they have toward children? What is their background, their experience? And what courses they've taken? So we're not just you know throwing the baby out with the bathwater, you know to say you know if in fact you don't have these requirements in your professional development, then we're not going to look at you for the position.

But this is a discussion about going forward and exactly who's in the classroom with
our children? When in fact there's so much of a
push to ensure, you know our children can compete
and compete globally.

And so I think particularly with CBOs
and in communities that typically have schools
that are underperforming. This is a huge step in
the right direction.

And again, to your point Mr. Jones, it
is not my intent nor anyone from my center, or I
think anyone really in the field, or anyone that
I've dealt with at OSSE, to again, exclude
persons who have not yet you know attained
degrees of you know higher education for whatever
reason.

Obviously, not all of us have that as
an ambition or pursuit, and/or at various times
in our lives it wasn't even necessary. But I
think going forward in this field it's not
unreasonable to have it as a standard and as an
expectation for the 21st century you know Early
Childhood family and/or child.

So I hope that this is a direction
that we can begin to move in without sort of
having to make that comparison of you know,
suggesting that we're pushing folks out of the
door because we're raising the standard, or
maintaining a standard, or establishing one.

MEMBER LORD:  Just a quick follow-up.
Is there much discussion that goes on between the
community-based early childhood education centers
and the local elementary schools to see you know
how well are doing in terms of preparing our
students for that next step into kindergarten?

DR. BRISTOL:  I can't say exactly what
my colleagues are doing. But I know that I
certainly put my feelers out. And I'm definitely
even working very closely with various college
campuses to be a part of what child development,
and human development programs they have.

So early on we have an opportunity to
get into those classrooms and work with
individuals who say that this is the career
passion or desire that they have so that they're
aware of what these, not only these requirements
are, but essentially what the field is.

So they can get a firsthand experience sometimes through internships. I've had any number of people come in for service credits, and you know we availed our center to them for those reasons.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Terrific. Any final questions for this witness?

(No audible response)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Then you're excused with our thanks.

DR. BRISTOL: Thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Thank you so much for waiting so long this evening.

Do Board Members have brief announcements or may we adjourn?

(Off the record comments)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: The vote is next month.

Ms. Lord.

MEMBER LORD: Well, thank you everyone for bearing with me. I just want to announce
that the National Youth Science Camp, a free, all
expenses paid, West Virginia residential camp to
do science and have outdoor adventures with
students from all over the U.S., and the
Caribbean, and Latin American countries is now
accepting applications to graduating seniors from
D.C. high schools, who'll be selected to
represent the District of Columbia at this
prestigious camp.

And I encourage everybody to encourage
every student who might qualify, who has a
passion and talent for science, and math, and
engineering to go to NYSC.org, National Youth
Science Camp.org, because I really want a whole
bunch of applicants to take advantage of this
life-changing opportunity.

And second I want to give a shout out
to Ward 8's own Chair Jolly for not only walking
the walk but literally walking the walk as a
teacher in the bitter cold at the Martin Luther
King Peace Walk and Parade on Sunday, Monday,
excuse me.
And her students were there, so I just want to say that we practice what we preach. We learn and keep on learning.

And I want to congratulate the organizers of that parade. It was a fabulous event. I know we can't do anything about the wind and the weather but it was as always, very energizing. So thank you.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: If there are no other additional announcements, I'd entertain a motion to adjourn.

MEMBER JONES: I move that we adjourn.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Motion by Mr. Jones.

MEMBER PHELAN: Second.

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: Second by Ms. Wilson Phelan.

All in favor, please say aye.

(Multiple ayes)

PRESIDENT JACOBSON: We're adjourned.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 9:12 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Meeting

Before: DC State Board of Education

Date: 01-20-16

Place: Washington, DC

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

[Signature]
Court Reporter