

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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PUBLIC MEETING

+ + + + +

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 17, 2016

+ + + + +

The State Board of Education met in the Old Council Chambers, located at 441 4th Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20001 at 5:30 p.m., Jack Jacobson, President, presiding.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

JACK JACOBSON, President
D. KAMILI ANDERSON, Ward 4 Representative
BRIAN CONTRERAS, Student Representative
TIERRA JOLLY, Ward 8 Representative

MARK JONES, Ward 5 Representative

MARY LORD, At-Large Representative

RUTH WATTENBERG, Ward 3 Representative

JOE WEEDON, Ward 6 Representative

DESTINEE WHITTINGTON, Student Representative

LAURA WILSON-PHELAN, Ward 1 Representative

JOHN-PAUL HAYWORTH, Executive Director

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

2 (5:33 p.m.)

3 PRES. JACOBSON: Good afternoon. The
4 time is now 5:33 p.m., on February 17, 2016, and
5 this Public Meeting of the District of Columbia,
6 State Board of Education is now called to order.

7 The roll will now be called to
8 determine the presence of a quorum.

9 Mr. Hayworth.

10 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jacobson?

11 PRES. JACOBSON: Present.

12 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

13 Ms. Williams?

14 (No response.)

15 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord? Ms.

16 Lord?

17 (No response.)

18 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wilson-

19 Phelan?

20 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Present.

21 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg?

22 MS. WATTENBERG: Present.

1 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Anderson?

2 MS. ANDERSON: Present.

3 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones? Mr.

4 Jones?

5 (No response.)

6 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Weedon?

7 MR. WEEDON: Present.

8 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

9 MS. JOLLY: Here.

10 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contreras?

11 MR. CONTRERAS: Present.

12 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Whittington?

13 Ms. Whittington?

14 (No response.)

15 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. President,

16 you have a quorum.

17 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you. A quorum

18 has been determined, and the State Board will now

19 proceed with the business portion of our meeting.

20 Members, we have a draft agenda before

21 us. Are there any corrections or additions?

22 (No response.)

1 PRES. JACOBSON: Hearing none, I would
2 entertain a motion to approve the agenda.

3 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: So moved.

4 PRES. JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Wilson-
5 Phelan.

6 Is there a second?

7 MR. WEEDON: Second.

8 PRES. JACOBSON: Second by Mr. Weedon.

9 The motion being properly moved and
10 seconded, I'll ask for the ayes and nays. All in
11 favor, please say "aye."

12 (Chorus of ayes.)

13 PRES. JACOBSON: Any opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 PRES. JACOBSON: The motion is
16 approved.

17 Next on our agenda is approval of the
18 minutes from the February 3, 2016, working
19 session.

20 Are there corrections or additions to
21 the minutes?

22 (No response.)

1 PRES. JACOBSON: Hearing none, I would
2 entertain a motion to approve the minutes.

3 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: So moved.

4 PRES. JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Wilson-
5 Phelan.

6 Is there a second?

7 MS. JOLLY: Second.

8 PRES. JACOBSON: Second by Ms. Jolly.

9 The motion being properly moved and
10 seconded, I will ask for the yeas and nays. All
11 approved say, "aye."

12 (Chorus of ayes.)

13 PRES. JACOBSON: Any opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 PRES. JACOBSON: The motion is
16 approved.

17 Good evening. My name is Jack
18 Jacobson, and I'm president and Ward 2
19 representative of the State Board of Education.
20 On behalf of the members of the District of
21 Columbia, State Board of Education, I want to
22 welcome you, guests, and our viewing public to

1 our Wednesday, February 17, 2016, Public Meeting.

2 The State Board holds its regularly
3 scheduled meetings on the third Wednesday of
4 every month here in the Old Council Chambers at
5 441 Fourth Street, Northwest. The members of the
6 State Board of Education welcome your
7 participation to support our efforts, to improve
8 education in the nation's capital.

9 I want to state for the record that
10 our superintendent, Ms. Hanseul Kang, and our
11 vice president, Ms. Karen Williams, from Ward 7,
12 are absent this evening as they're attending the
13 Deputy Mayor for Education's Cross-Sector Task
14 Force Meeting.

15 Tonight's agenda includes a vote on
16 regulations governing grant program at the Office
17 of the State Superintendent of Education to
18 enhance and expand high quality pre-kindergarten
19 programs. We will also hear from My School DC
20 about the 2016/17 school year lottery process.

21 I note that the Deputy Mayor for
22 Education's Office has been working hard to

1 ensure this year's process goes smoothly, and I'm
2 looking forward to hearing more.

3 I also want to note that the State
4 Board has been holding roundtable discussions on
5 the proposed health education standards that OSSE
6 presented to the Board at our last public
7 meeting. Last week, the State Board of
8 Education's Student Advisory Committee and the
9 Public Charter School Board Student Advisory
10 Committee, led by our student representative,
11 Brian Contreras, held a meeting solely for
12 students to discuss these standards.

13 The discussion was so lively and
14 insightful that staff is working to schedule a
15 second student-focused roundtable in the near
16 future.

17 I hosted a second roundtable at the
18 Watha T. Daniel Shaw Library focused on standards
19 relating to bullying and violence. Finally, our
20 Ward 8 colleague, Tierra Jolly, will be hosting a
21 roundtable this Saturday from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.,
22 at the William O. Lockridge Bellevue Library at

1 115 Atlantic Street, Southwest, where the
2 discussion will focus on nutrition and sexual
3 health.

4 I want to thank in particular Donna
5 Anthony and her staff at OSSE for holding LEA and
6 teacher-focused discussions on the health
7 education standards. It's important that the
8 public discussion on these standards be robust,
9 and I'm glad to see so many opportunities for
10 comment and engagement.

11 We're now going to move to public
12 comment and public witnesses. The State Board
13 welcomes public participation and activities
14 under our authority. At every public meeting, we
15 begin with testimony from public witnesses on
16 education-related matters.

17 If you are a member of the public and
18 would like to speak at a future public meeting,
19 please contact staff at SB -- SBOE@DC.gov, or by
20 calling 202-741-0888. You must sign up 48 hours
21 in advance of our meetings.

22 Our first public witnesses include --

1 I don't think I've seen Liz Davis from the, the
2 president of the Washington Teachers' Union.

3 Then as I say your name, please come down and
4 we'll fill up all four chairs.

5 Alex Donahue, Deputy Director for
6 Policy and Research, 21st Century School Fund.

7 And, I don't think Corinne Douglas is here, a
8 member of the public. Laura Fuchs, a member of
9 the public. Come on down to the table, Laura.

10 Thank you so much. Mary Levy, an education,
11 finance, and policy analyst. And, finally, Sarah
12 Livingston, a member of the public.

13 Is Sarah here?

14 (No response.)

15 PRES. JACOBSON: Erich Martel.

16 Cathy Reilly, please come on down.

17 Cathy is executive director, Senior High Alliance
18 of Parents, Principals, and Educators, SHAPPE.

19 Is Joe Riener here?

20 (No response.)

21 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you. We're
22 going to hope that someone else trickles in or

1 you'll just have your own panel next.

2 (Laughter.)

3 PRES. JACOBSON: So, Mr. Donahue,
4 we'll start with you. You'll have three minutes
5 and we'll just go down the line. Thank you so
6 much.

7 MR. DONAHUE: Thank you. Members of
8 the State Board and State Superintendent Kang, my
9 name is Alex Donahue. I'm the deputy director
10 for Policy and Research for the 21st Century
11 School Fund, nonprofit here in D.C. And, I thank
12 you for this opportunity to comment on the
13 proposed amendments to the graduation
14 requirements.

15 I'm here as a community member and a
16 parent who wants the same thing that you do, a
17 system of public education in D.C. that helps
18 children and adults become well equipped to
19 pursue their dreams and make the most of their
20 potential.

21 It's why I worked for close to a
22 decade in D.C. public schools as a teacher, a

1 high school principal, deputy to the assistant
2 superintendent for high schools, and the founding
3 director of College Readiness.

4 I commend you for taking on this
5 difficult task of finding ways to enable more and
6 better learning to take place. It's not a simple
7 matter. Nevertheless, if we do it right, it will
8 pay dividends for our students.

9 And, I believe that we need to offer
10 a wider range of learning options in order to
11 achieve the commonly held goal of graduating all
12 students ready to be successful in college
13 careers and life as a member of a community, but
14 we must exercise due diligence required to ensure
15 that our chosen ship is up to making the voyage
16 and will not cause unintended damage.

17 As the former point person for D.C.
18 public schools on the D.C. graduation
19 requirements, during the revisions made in 2006,
20 2007, and 2009, and as the person who coordinated
21 DCPS' implementation of the graduation
22 requirements for a number of years, I can say

1 that as written, the proposed rule of January 22
2 is not ready.

3 It does not state clearly the problem
4 that it's intended to address. It does not
5 define competency-based learning or provide any
6 description of the "flexible opportunities" that
7 are expected to provide a solution.

8 In improperly mixes competency-based
9 learning with the granting of credit by exam with
10 no differentiation between testing out of a
11 course level and testing out of a graduation
12 requirement. It does not support effective
13 monitoring and evaluation of the newly authorized
14 programs by either OSSE or the public.

15 It would unacceptably discriminate
16 against older high school students, and it
17 expands the seat time requirement for some
18 courses without adequate lead time for
19 implementation, but perhaps, most importantly, it
20 does not make use of best practices in
21 competency-based learning that other
22 jurisdictions around the nation have developed.

1 I want to see this done right. I want
2 my eight-year-old son to have more options and a
3 richer experience going through high school than
4 I had.

5 I ask the State Board to ensure that
6 it is done right, and I offer my support and
7 assistance to OSSE and the State Board to make
8 this happen. The proposed rule needs to be
9 revised and republished.

10 Thank you for your consideration.

11 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you so much.

12 Ms. Fuchs.

13 MS. FUCHS: Good evening. So, I'm
14 Laura Fuchs, and I'm a Ward 5 resident, a D.C.
15 public schools' social studies' teacher for nine
16 years, an executive board member of the Ward 7
17 education council, an active member of the Ward 5
18 education council, the chair of the Washington
19 Teachers' Union, committee on political
20 education, and I was also an active member on the
21 Credit Flexibility Task Force.

22 I am coming out very much against the

1 proposed regulations, especially the change in
2 the task force recommendation to have state-
3 approved exams lead to credit in courses beyond
4 math and foreign language without the student
5 taking the course first.

6 If approved, the State Board of
7 Education will be creating what I believe amounts
8 to a blank check for OSSE to award credit using
9 any method they see fit with or without much
10 public input. While there can be lots of
11 promises made as to what they will and won't do,
12 this regulation does not ensure any of it.

13 Without more money, time, and
14 expertise to create, I'll just go with better
15 systems that are highly tailored to D.C.
16 standards, what is most likely to happen for
17 social sciences, English, and science courses is
18 that after a self-imposed three-year period, if
19 they follow it, we will see the possible approval
20 of the College Board's advanced placement exams.

21 I've taught AP U.S. government for the
22 past five years at HD Wilson Senior High.

1 Throughout my tenure, I've had seven students
2 score high enough to receive a passing score or
3 better out of approximately 150 students.
4 According to the AP exam results, my students and
5 I have failed to learn about the government.

6 One month ago, my AP U.S. government
7 students met with Justice Elena Kagan for a 30-
8 minute private sit-down after having seen oral
9 arguments earlier that day. Before that, they
10 prepared for this meeting by hearing lectures
11 about the Supreme Court, doing textural analysis
12 on the U.S. Constitution and legal briefs for the
13 case, having a conversation with a lawyer, who's
14 argued over 30 cases in front of the Supreme
15 Court and in class discussions.

16 In April, they'll argue their own
17 cases in front of a Federal Appeals Court Judges
18 on a constitutional issue and participate in a
19 legislative council session through the D.C.
20 Youth and Government Program.

21 These same students are going to take
22 an AP exam on this topic in May. Most of them

1 will not do well enough to pass. Do you want to
2 be the Board to tell these students that the
3 student who passed the exam without attending the
4 class actually knows more than they do about the
5 U.S. government?

6 I do not discount the importance of
7 being able to do well on exams, but they are one
8 measure of understanding. And, when it comes to
9 most subject areas, they're not the best measure.
10 They're simply a relatively easy measure to
11 calculate.

12 By moving towards awarding credit for
13 students who are good at taking tests, we're
14 actually penalizing those same students by
15 telling them, "This is a method of mastering the
16 material they took the test on."

17 One of my passing scores from that
18 seven came from a student who rarely attended
19 class since it was first period and he was always
20 late, but clearly read the book, the textbook in
21 his own time. The student was a very logical
22 thinker and a good reader.

1 He was rewarded for his cleverness
2 with college credit. Unfortunately, he was not
3 able to follow through, and so I'm very much
4 against what's happening here.

5 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you so much,
6 Ms. Fuchs.

7 Ms. Levy.

8 MS. LEVY: Good evening. I'm Mary
9 Levy. By trade, I am a lawyer, and with that hat
10 on I will endorse Mr. Donahue's comments about
11 regulations and the way they should be put
12 together due diligence.

13 By occupation, I've studied the D.C.
14 public schools for 35 years, done reporting
15 analysis and data. My own children are DCPS
16 graduates.

17 I support the goals of credit
18 flexibility, and I think that competency-based
19 learning is a fine concept, but I'm somewhat
20 dubious about how well it will be implemented.
21 And, I would simply urge you to pay very close
22 attention to that.

1 D.C. has a long history of taking fine
2 initiatives and implementing them in a haphazard,
3 slipshod sort of way, and we don't want that to
4 happen with this. What I oppose is allowing
5 students to receive credit solely on the basis of
6 a test for subjects other than math and foreign
7 language.

8 I don't even know what problem this is
9 supposed to be solving. I think that most
10 students wouldn't be able to pass the test, but,
11 I think, Ms. Fuchs has a very good point about
12 that not being a sole way of doing it.

13 Now, all apart from using multiple
14 measures for granting credit, I think, that the
15 proposed regulation really just sort of dismisses
16 reading, making sure that students have actually
17 read works of literature, works of history, being
18 able to write papers, and to receive feedback,
19 learning how to write well.

20 The message I get from it is that the
21 D.C. education authorities don't think very much
22 of the instruction we offer. They don't think

1 much of the teachers. They don't think much of
2 the curriculum. That's unfortunate.

3 And, I think that at this point, you
4 should not be delegating authority simply to do
5 this to an executive agency over which you have
6 no control. I think that when and if OSSE comes
7 up with a test, it needs to be studied by
8 experts, it needs to be discussed by educators
9 and the public, and only then should this Board
10 vote to give this kind of authority to OSSE.

11 Thank you.

12 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you so much,
13 Ms. Levy.

14 Ms. Reilly, you'll have three minutes.

15 MS. REILLY: Thank you. My name is
16 Cathy Reilly. I'm the executive director of the
17 Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals, and
18 Educators, as well as the parent of former DCPS
19 students, and a resident of Ward 4.

20 As the State Board of Education, you
21 have ultimate authority with your vote over the
22 quality of our public education. You vote on the

1 standards and you vote on the graduation
2 requirements.

3 They are prescribed, the graduation
4 requirements, so that they'll be consistent
5 across different administrations and different
6 local education agencies. In this area, policy
7 is not broad leaving for lots of multiple
8 interpretations.

9 The provision before you for a waiver
10 from the Carnegie Unit in order to pursue a
11 competency-based curriculum, it needs some
12 further work, but there's not a lot of research
13 on this, but there is a case that exploring a way
14 to allow students more time without failing and
15 having to retake a course to gain mastery in a
16 content area, and it has merit and we should
17 pursue it.

18 In terms of less time to achieve
19 competency, I think we need some safeguards in
20 case it's too lean an approach that could lead to
21 inadvertently shortchanging students, but we are
22 actually supporting moving forward with the

1 competency base.

2 The provision that will enable
3 students to pass an assessment OSSE approves and
4 receive credit without taking a course, however,
5 I believe is dangerous. It could be easily
6 interpreted in different budget times as courses
7 are expendable.

8 It leaves open the possibility that
9 high school could be reduced to passing 24
10 assessments without taking courses. I don't
11 think that's the intent, but the way it's
12 written, it could lead to that.

13 Policies outlast administrations and
14 personnel. It could be interpreted to mean
15 students can learn online and just take the
16 assessment. I feel this was very cautiously
17 advanced in math and world languages almost as a
18 placement test to enable students to move on in
19 these highly sequential areas.

20 The way it's currently written, it
21 undermines the whole idea that there's always
22 more to learn. It kind of makes a lie of our

1 vision of striving to meet every high school
2 student where they are intellectually and provide
3 enrichment and challenge.

4 You know, the students have compulsory
5 education, but in the District, we don't actually
6 have the right, the legal right to an education,
7 so there's unintended ramifications in this
8 policy in its current wording.

9 So, I feel you essentially determine
10 the definition of what education is for our
11 public school students in the District of
12 Columbia. It's a heavy inappropriate
13 responsibility for our elected Board.

14 It's really important now because of
15 the pressure of to raise graduation rates. This
16 policy isn't right yet. It doesn't yet represent
17 us, but I believe you can get it there.

18 Now, I attached -- you know, there is
19 a petition. A lot of people couldn't be here
20 tonight, so I attached some of the views and
21 remarks that came in with the petition. It's
22 kind of supporting this view that it's moving,

1 you know, about the test basing. So -- and you
2 can go online. I left you that.

3 So, thank you very much.

4 PRES. JACOBSON: I want to thank all
5 of you on behalf of the Board for coming out and
6 testifying this evening. We've got another few
7 witnesses that are going to testify.

8 All of this testimony will be provided
9 to OSSE, and I'd encourage you to send it
10 yourself, including the petition. I think the
11 public comment period on this closes February 22,
12 and any member of the public watching may, may
13 provide comments to
14 OSSEcomments.proposedregulations@DC.gov. I
15 encourage you to do so.

16 With that, you have our thanks, and
17 we'll call the next panel of witnesses.

18 MS. WATTENBERG: Jeff, I'm sorry. Can
19 we ask some questions?

20 PRES. JACOBSON: There's not --
21 there's not time in our agenda and nor did we
22 approve a question and answer with public

1 witnesses. Public witnesses provide testimony to
2 us though.

3 MS. WATTENBERG: Will we be able to
4 question them at the next meeting then because --
5 I mean, I'm hearing things like it increases the
6 number of hours that are required and some very
7 key issues that I had not known about myself
8 before.

9 PRES. JACOBSON: We'll work with the
10 Board and with witnesses to followup on these
11 questions.

12 MS. WATTENBERG: And, will we be able
13 to get them so that we can talk to them?

14 PRES. JACOBSON: We'll work with the
15 Chair of Credit Flexibility Task Force, Ms. Laura
16 Wilson-Phelan, on followup with these witnesses
17 and ensuring that all Board member questions are
18 answered and opened in a transparent manner.

19 Thank you all so much.

20 I'll now invite our next panel of
21 witnesses. Mr. Joe Riener, former DCPS school
22 teacher. I don't think I've seen Ms. Liz Davis

1 with the teachers' union. Corinne Douglas is not
2 here yet I don't believe. Sarah Livingston and
3 Mr. Erich Martel.

4 I'd invite you to come down. You'll
5 each have three minutes.

6 And, Mr. Riener, you may begin when
7 you're ready.

8 MR. RIENER: In my 17 years of
9 teaching AP in grade level English in D.C., I
10 thought a great deal about the process of
11 educating young people in high school. I've
12 written a book in two volumes about this topic.
13 I'm here to tell you two things about my
14 experience in the classroom.

15 Number one, it does not have to be a
16 waste of time for students to be in a class.
17 Number two, any test can't really measure what a
18 student knows of a subject in humanities.

19 It is quite possible to engage
20 actively and meaningfully with high school
21 students about real issues. Genuine education
22 can happen in a high school classroom. That's

1 what happened in my class. That's the premise of
2 my two volumes.

3 Young people are vulnerable, curious,
4 eager to know about themselves and the world
5 around them. We educators ought not to disregard
6 this precious time in their lives.

7 This is an opportunity to teach them,
8 not put them in front of a computer and take a
9 test or do a project in lieu of a classroom
10 experience over months. In a well-taught course,
11 they would engage with the literature or history
12 or government or art familiar to the educated
13 person we call a teacher.

14 They ought then to discuss what
15 they're learning with their fellow students.
16 Students need practice encountering new ideas and
17 articulating their own either verbally or in
18 their written work.

19 They need to encounter over the course
20 of a semester or a year with what citizenship
21 means, what love may require of them, what work
22 is worth doing, what kindness involves, why

1 someone would willingly starve to write a poem or
2 paint a picture. This is the time in the life of
3 young people when they can begin to consider how
4 other people who came before them contended with
5 humanity's problems.

6 As a teacher, I sought for my students
7 to read Romeo and Juliet, and then cry at the
8 end, or read about the agony that is Haiti or
9 police brutality in America or understand the
10 interminable mendacity of those in authority. In
11 these studies, they might find for themselves a
12 lifetime of work and devotion.

13 Tests can't measure this process of
14 real understanding of the world or themselves.
15 Only a class stretching over a semester or a year
16 can engage young people in this manner, and
17 that's why I oppose this regulation before the
18 committee. Thank you.

19 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you so much,
20 Mr. Riener.

21 Mr. Martel, you have three minutes.

22 MR. MARTEL: I am testifying in

1 support of the original credit flexibility test
2 was recommendation to allow an exam waiver for
3 math and world language courses so as to allow
4 students who have passed world language levels
5 one and two and algebra and even geometry to
6 enroll in the next higher level.

7 The state's superintendent's action to
8 expand the exam waiver to any subject, which
9 means all subjects, is not supported by evidence
10 of need. It should be rejected as a matter of
11 principle.

12 The Board adopted a single set of math
13 and foreign language standards, and if it allows
14 each LEA to develop its own exam, it will be
15 creating a multiplicity of de facto standards. A
16 practical and legitimate model is Thurgood
17 Marshall Academy's Credit by Exam Policy limited
18 to foreign languages and math.

19 Passing scores are a coded CE on
20 transcripts and count towards graduation
21 requirements, but not GPAs. Without these
22 necessary provisions, colleges won't know how

1 credit was earned and researchers won't be able
2 to compare testing out versus earned classroom
3 grades.

4 In 42 years of teaching U.S. history,
5 world history, and U.S. government to D.C. high
6 school students ranging from non-readers to those
7 with college level knowledge, very few could have
8 tested out of these courses on a genuine test
9 because their knowledge is almost always narrowly
10 focused.

11 Their fellow students benefitted from
12 their comments and questions as did I. Whatever
13 the subject, it is unlikely that a student has
14 studied and understood the full range of subject
15 standards that the Board has set, and naturally,
16 the curriculum and real content that is implied
17 or actually written out in the curriculum
18 standards.

19 The state's superintendent's proposals
20 ignores the well-documented fact that under
21 pressure to improve graduation rates, LEA
22 management will cheat or ignore cheating, like

1 the 2008 to '10 wrong-to-right erasure scandal,
2 or when hidden behind euphemisms like credit
3 recovery or concealed and default computer
4 settings as the Washington Post reported last
5 week in the policies of the D.C. public schools
6 where all of the midpoint values are inflated by
7 a half point.

8 I don't believe that they don't know
9 how to add and divide. And, an F is -- the
10 midpoint of an F was found to be 59, or the
11 Friendship Charter transcripts that have been on
12 the D.C. -- on the State Board website for four
13 years, which show three students who graduated
14 without completing world, all their world history
15 requirements, and one of them, or two of them
16 didn't complete U.S. history.

17 What has the State Board, what has the
18 state superintendent done about that? This is
19 what will happen. This is what -- why all of the
20 LEAs are so eager to have the flexibility to, to
21 Bell standards, and then to develop tests, and
22 then they will correct them.

1 Any test that developed should be
2 administered by a single agency within the D.C.,
3 within the D.C. State, OSSE, and not each LEA
4 having its own, its own tests, its own exam
5 waiver.

6 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you for your
7 testimony this evening, Mr. Martel.

8 Thank you also, Mr. Riener.

9 For anyone who didn't get that, we
10 will be providing your testimony to OSSE, but I
11 encourage you or anyone who's watching this who
12 has comments on this regulation to email comments
13 to OSSEcomments.proposedregulations@DC.gov by
14 February 22. You might also provide them to the
15 State Board at SBOE@DC.gov. And, we will be
16 reviewing all of those comments as well.

17 I know Ms. Wilson-Phelan, who's
18 chaired this committee, has been diligent about
19 making sure that she hears from everyone on this
20 issue.

21 With that, I thank you for spending
22 time with us this evening. You're welcome to

1 stay for the rest of the meeting. Thank you.

2 And, just to be clear, Liz Davis,
3 Sarah Livingston, Corinne Douglas -- okay. With
4 that, our public comment portion of the meeting
5 is closed.

6 We're now moving to Pre-Kindergarten
7 Enhancement and Expansion Funding regulations'
8 final approval. In 2008, the council passed the
9 Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Act. The Act
10 contained three strategies to ensure that all
11 families in the District have access to high
12 quality pre-k education programs.

13 First, to expand high quality pre-k to
14 all three and four-year-olds. Second, to improve
15 the quality of all existing programs that serve
16 three and four-year-olds across charter schools,
17 public schools, and community-based
18 organizations, also known as CBOs, and to ensure
19 that well-trained, well-compensated, and highly
20 effective pre-k teachers are asserting in every
21 pre-k classroom in the District.

22 In fall 2015, OSSE promulgated

1 emergency and proposed regulations regarding the,
2 regarding the allocation of funding to high
3 quality CBO pre-k programs throughout the
4 District. In order to be designated as a high
5 quality pre-k program and to be eligible to
6 receive the pre-k enhancement and expansion
7 funding, CBOs must meet and maintain high quality
8 standards set forth in the Pre-K Act and in the
9 new regulations.

10 One of the requirements for being
11 deemed a high quality CBO pre-k program under the
12 Pre-K Act is that teachers meet a minimum
13 academic and degree requirements established by
14 OSSE and approved by the State Board of
15 Education.

16 The resolution before us will approve
17 the final regulations for these minimum academic
18 and degree requirements for the CBOs that receive
19 funding under the Pre-K Act program. The
20 executive director will read the resolution into
21 the record.

22 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: State Board of

1 Education resolution SR-16-2. Whereas, in 2008,
2 the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Amendment Act
3 effective July 18, 2008, D.C. Law 17-202, D.C.
4 Official Code 38-271, Pre-K Act was passed to
5 ensure that families in the District of Columbia
6 have access to high quality pre-k education
7 programs by setting forth a funding structure for
8 community-based organizations that meet the high
9 quality standards enumerated in the Act.

10 Whereas, the Office of the State
11 Superintendent of Education administers the Pre-K
12 Enhancement and Expansion Program, which
13 distributes funds to CBOs designated as high
14 quality pre-k programs.

15 Whereas, in order to be designated as
16 a high quality pre-k program and eligible to
17 receive the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion
18 Funding, CBOs must meet and maintain high quality
19 standards set forth in the Pre-K Act and in
20 regulations regarding the allocation of funding
21 to high quality CBO pre-k programs throughout the
22 District, including a requirement that teachers

1 in high quality CBO pre-k programs meet minimum
2 academic and degree requirements established by
3 OSSE.

4 Whereas, Section 201 of the Pre-K Act
5 requires State Board of Education approval of the
6 academic and degree requirements as established
7 by OSSE for teachers and assistant teachers in a
8 CBO designated as providing high quality pre-k
9 services.

10 Whereas, national research has shown
11 that children who receive high quality early
12 education have stronger math, language, social
13 skills -- and social skills upon entrance to
14 elementary school, and as they advance, require
15 less special education, progress further in
16 school, have few interactions with the justice
17 system, and have higher earnings as adults.

18 Whereas, on October 2, 2015, OSSE
19 published emergency and proposed regulations
20 regarding the allocation of funding to high
21 quality CBO pre-k programs throughout the
22 District in the D.C. Register.

1 Whereas, the proposed regulations were
2 circulated throughout the District for a 30-day
3 comment public -- excuse me -- public comment
4 period and OSSE received one comment regarding
5 the academic and degree requirements for teachers
6 requesting OSSE clarify whether the minimum
7 educational requirements include degrees or
8 concentration in early childhood special
9 education and OSSE made revisions in response.

10 Whereas, the State Superintendent and
11 members of the State Board of Education have
12 engaged in a period of public engagement,
13 including receiving testimony from the public and
14 from OSSE regarding the proposed academic
15 requirements for teachers and assistant teachers
16 in high quality CBO pre-k programs at public
17 meetings held on January 6, 2016, January 20,
18 2016, and February 3, 2016.

19 Whereas, the State Board of Education
20 has reviewed the elements of the final rulemaking
21 implementing the academic and degree requirements
22 for teachers and assistant teachers in high

1 quality CBO pre-k programs and finds that these
2 requirements will ensure that well-trained, well-
3 compensated, and highly effective pre-k teachers
4 are serving every high quality pre-k classroom in
5 CBOs across the city.

6 And, now, therefore, be resolved that
7 on February 17, 2016, the State Board approves
8 the final rulemaking implementing the academic
9 and degree requirements for teachers and
10 assistant teachers in CBOs designated as high
11 quality pre-k programs pursuant to the Pre-K
12 Enhancement and Expansion Amendment Act.

13 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr.
14 Hayworth.

15 I would now entertain a motion to
16 approve the resolution.

17 MS. JOLLY: So moved.

18 PRES. JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Jolly.

19 Is there a second?

20 MR. WEEDON: Second.

21 PRES. JACOBSON: Seconded by Mr.
22 Weedon.

1 Now that the motion has been properly
2 moved and seconded, do members have comments?
3 You would have up to five minutes.

4 Ms. Lord, our At-large member.

5 MS. LORD: Thank you. Well, first in
6 my due diligent role as resident journalist, I'd
7 like to point out a couple of small typos and
8 errors. Assistance teachers in the fourth
9 whereas should be "Assistant teachers," not
10 "Assistance teacher."

11 In the third to last paragraph,
12 technically, these were working sessions and
13 public meetings, not public meetings, January 6,
14 January 20, and February 3.

15 And, in the penultimate paragraph, I
16 think, we should insert, "Will help to ensure
17 well-trained, well-compensated, and highly
18 effective pre-k teachers" because there is no
19 evidence that requiring teachers to have a
20 college degree ensures that they will be better
21 qualified or better paid.

22 And, finally, I would like to suggest

1 that we add a whereas that the results of the, or
2 the effect of this proposal are reported back
3 annually as we have done with other rules and
4 regulations so that we know that the, the
5 proposed rule had the intended effect of raising
6 quality, just getting a readout.

7 PRES. JACOBSON: Do you have specific
8 language for your motion?

9 MS. LORD: It would say something
10 following the -- right before the "now be it
11 resolved," "Whereas the State Board of Education
12 expects OSSE to report annually on the effects of
13 the program," or something like that, or "Report
14 on the quality and the effects of the proposal."

15 PRES. JACOBSON: Our executive
16 director will read the language to be clear, and
17 then we will ask the mover and the second if
18 these are considered friendly amendments.

19 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: So, I believe,
20 the new "Whereas," should read, "Whereas, the
21 State Board expects OSSE to report annually on
22 the quality and impact of the program."

1 MS. LORD: The quality and impact of
2 the program.

3 PRES. JACOBSON: Is that amenable to
4 the mover and to the second as a friendly
5 amendment?

6 MS. LORD: Yes.

7 MS. JOLLY: Yes.

8 PRES. JACOBSON: Wonderful. Accepted
9 as friendly. All of the comments and corrections
10 will be accepted as friendly, and staff retains
11 the right to make additional technical
12 corrections to all of our resolutions.

13 MS. JOLLY: Correction. Mr. Weedon
14 was actually the seconder. I thought I beat him
15 to it.

16 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr.
17 Weedon.

18 MS. ANDERSON: Can I offer an
19 amendment to Mary's amendment?

20 PRES. JACOBSON: Ms. Anderson from
21 Ward 4.

22 MS. ANDERSON: Because I would say

1 that instead of saying, "Will help to ensure," I
2 believe that more appropriately would be that,
3 "We believe that these requirements serve to
4 support efforts that well-trained, well-
5 compensated, and highly effective pre-k teachers
6 are served at every high quality pre-k classroom
7 in CBO across the city."

8 Because I don't believe -- again, I
9 don't believe that we can certainly say that,
10 that we could say with any certainty that they
11 will ensure, I don't believe we can say that they
12 will help to ensure necessarily, but I do believe
13 that they -- in our direct specificity, I think
14 we can say that they support our efforts to
15 ensure that these things might happen.

16 So, instead of we believe that --

17 MS. LORD: So, instead of "Will help
18 to ensure," "Will support our efforts to ensure."
19 "Will support efforts to ensure."

20 MS. ANDERSON: Our efforts, yes.

21 MS. LORD: I accept that amendment.

22 PRES. JACOBSON: That motion has

1 already been approved, so this would be an
2 additional amendment to the motion on the table.

3 MS. JOLLY: I accept.

4 PRES. JACOBSON: Mr. Weedon?

5 MR. WEEDON: Could you read what it
6 would now read, please?

7 PRES. JACOBSON: Mr. Hayworth.

8 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Sure. So, in
9 the penultimate paragraph, it would read,
10 "Whereas, as the State Board of Education has
11 reviewed the elements of the final rulemaking
12 implementing the academic and degree requirements
13 for teachers and assistant teachers in high
14 quality CBO pre-k programs and finds that these
15 requirements will support efforts to ensure that
16 well-trained, well-compensated, and highly
17 effective pre-k teachers are serving every high
18 quality pre-k classroom in CBOs across the city."

19 MR. WEEDON: I'd accept that.

20 PRES. JACOBSON: Then your amendment,
21 Ms. Anderson, is accepted as friendly.

22 Is there any additional comment on the

1 resolution?

2 (No response.)

3 PRES. JACOBSON: If not, I'd like to
4 call the question.

5 Would -- Mr. Hayworth, would you
6 please read the roll?

7 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jacobson.

8 PRES. JACOBSON: Aye.

9 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Williams?

10 Ms. Williams?

11 (No response.)

12 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Lord?

13 MS. LORD: Yes.

14 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wilson-

15 Phelan?

16 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Yes.

17 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Wattenberg?

18 MS. WATTENBERG: Aye.

19 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Anderson?

20 MS. ANDERSON: Aye.

21 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Jones?

22 MR. JONES: Aye.

1 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Weedon?

2 MR. WEEDON: Aye.

3 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Jolly?

4 MS. JOLLY: Aye.

5 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. Contreras?

6 MR. CONTRERAS: Aye.

7 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Ms. Whittington?

8 MR. WHITTINGTON: Aye.

9 EXEC. DIR. HAYWORTH: Mr. President,
10 the vote is -- excuse me, eight, two. Eight with
11 one absence and two approvals by the student
12 representatives.

13 PRES. JACOBSON: The motion as amended
14 -- the resolution as amended is approved.

15 My School DC presentation. We are
16 pleased to be joined tonight by Aaron Parrot,
17 managing, data manager of My School DC, will
18 provide us information about My School DC, and
19 the upcoming deadlines for grades pre-k three to
20 eight.

21 Mr. Parrot, if you would make your way
22 to the witness table. Your presentation is on

1 the screen.

2 This year marks the third year in the
3 My School DC common lottery process. The lottery
4 provides a single application for a large
5 majority of the District's public and public
6 charter schools having a unified system where
7 parents and guardians can learn about District
8 schools and find the one that best fits the needs
9 of their student.

10 Mr. Parrot, you'll have five minutes,
11 and then we'll have questions from members on the
12 lottery process and your presentation. You may
13 begin when you're ready.

14 MR. PARROT: Sure. Thank you very
15 much for having us and allowing us to present.
16 First off, I thought I'd just run down what
17 exactly My School DC is.

18 It's our lottery application, it's an
19 online application, and it's used for people that
20 are interested in attending a new school, so
21 participating public charter schools, pre-k three
22 to twelfth grade, any DCPS out-of-boundary

1 school, any pre-k three or pre-k four program at
2 any DCPS school, and that includes your in-
3 boundary school, which is important for residents
4 of D.C. to know, and then also any DCPS selective
5 citywide high school.

6 So, if you're happy where you're
7 currently at, then there's no reason for you to
8 come to My School DC, but if you're interested in
9 a different school or if the school you're
10 attending may not serve all grades, then you
11 would be coming to My School DC to explore other
12 options.

13 We are currently in the middle of the
14 lottery application collection period. It ended
15 for high school back on February 1, and then it
16 will end for pre-k three through eighth grade on
17 March 1, so if you're watching this or hearing
18 this, anytime today or in the near future, and
19 you're interested in submitting an application,
20 you should do that as soon as possible.

21 We'll release results of the lottery
22 on April 1, and then students will have about a

1 month to enroll in any school that they're
2 matched with through the lottery. I will bring
3 this up a couple of times tonight since it's very
4 important that people are aware of the date of
5 the deadline, but pre-k three through eighth
6 grade is March 1.

7 Applying before March 1, where can you
8 go? It is -- you can -- it's online, so you can
9 go to our website and complete an application
10 there. You can call our hotline number and you
11 can submit an application over the phone.

12 They're available Monday through
13 Friday, 9:00 to 5:00. You can also go in person
14 for application assistance to scheduled office
15 hours, and you can find those on our calendar of
16 events featured on our website.

17 And, we don't want people to wait to
18 the last day, so we encourage people to turn it
19 in as soon as they're -- as soon as they know
20 their selections.

21 The application is very easy to
22 complete. You need to know information about

1 your child, the name, their current school, their
2 grade, basic family information, the guardian's
3 name and address, and then the schools that
4 you're interested in.

5 You can pick up to 12, but you don't
6 have to list 12, and you want to put them in the
7 order you prefer. So, list your first choice
8 first, your second choice second, your third
9 choice third, and so on.

10 If you're applying for multiple
11 children, you want to put all of those siblings
12 in the same account, so you don't want to create
13 different accounts for all of your children.

14 The ninth through twelfth grade
15 deadline has past. We're currently in the post-
16 lottery period, which means we still collect
17 applications, but at this point, it's a first-
18 come, first-served basis.

19 To submit an application for high
20 school, again, you can go online, complete it
21 there, you can call our hotline, we can help you
22 over the phone, or you can go in person to any of

1 our scheduled office hours.

2 And, just to reiterate, now if you're
3 applying for high school, you'll receive those
4 results on April 1, but you'll be added to the
5 wait list in the order that you had applied.

6 The application is very easy to
7 complete for high school as well. It's basically
8 the same information, name, current school and
9 grade for your child, the name and address for
10 the guardian, your school selections in the order
11 you prefer them.

12 With the one exception of the
13 selective high schools, those have additional
14 requirements, such as grades, report cards,
15 recommender emails, and in some cases, essays.
16 And, you can get a full list of those additional
17 requirements per -- for each school on our
18 website.

19 Our materials are also multilingual,
20 so things that are available in English and
21 Spanish, our entire application, our entire
22 website, and our school directories, which I have

1 some with me today if anyone is interested in
2 taking one, and then we also translate many other
3 items into English, Spanish, Amharic, Chinese,
4 Vietnamese, and French. That includes portions
5 of our website, school videos, application, user
6 guides, fact sheets, language pages on the
7 MySchoolDC.org.

8 We also have bilingual staff and a
9 telephonic interpretation service, so anyone,
10 even outside of these six languages, can call us
11 for assistance over the phone. So, if you know
12 someone who is interested in applying, but may
13 need that additional language assistance, please
14 have them call us.

15 All lottery results are released on
16 April 1. And, you can go to the website, log in
17 to your account, view your results there. You
18 can call our hotline and one of us can tell you
19 or help you with the results over the phone. I
20 will warn you that on the April 1 release of the
21 results, the hotline is very busy, so you may
22 need to call the next day or, again, check it out

1 online.

2 We also send results home by U.S.
3 mail. Those will come a few days after the April
4 1 release. And, if you are matched with a
5 school, you have until May 2 to enroll.

6 Resources for finding schools. We
7 have a school finder on our website, which allows
8 you to put in an address. You can find your in-
9 boundary school and you can filter by grade and
10 specialized program, and you can also learn about
11 the transportation options that are available
12 both how long it would take you to drive or how
13 long it would take you to use public and the
14 distance.

15 You can also look at our calendar of
16 events. We encourage people to check out open
17 houses for schools, go and visit them, and you
18 can also learn about our My School DC events and
19 office hours there.

20 And, we are later in the application
21 period, so we only have a few library events
22 left, and those are in Mount Pleasant and

1 Petworth, but we do hold them all over the city.

2 And, then resources to understanding
3 the lottery. I know you -- I might be going very
4 fast. I was trying to get through this in five
5 minutes, but please let me know if you have any
6 questions.

7 We have a video online, and this is
8 translated into Spanish and subtitled into the
9 other four languages, but gives you a really
10 great overview of what the lottery is. It's
11 three minutes. I encourage you all to check it
12 out.

13 And, if you're interested in a much
14 more detailed explanation of the matching
15 algorithm, we also have a much extended video,
16 and this runs about ten minutes. It kind of goes
17 through the whole process of how it works.

18 You can also check out the My School
19 DC website. It is very extensive. We have a
20 very robust frequently asked questions' page, key
21 terms, information on how to apply, a lot of
22 information about schools, and a lot of just

1 resources that are contained within the website,
2 but also link out depending on what you're
3 interested in.

4 I should note that there are 13 days
5 remaining when I created this PowerPoint. You'll
6 see in our countdown clock there it says 19.

7 If you do have questions, please do
8 call our hotline. They're really great and
9 they're very knowledgeable and they deal with a
10 lot of the common issues every day and really
11 work through that with you. And, then email us
12 at info.myschooldc.dc.gov is another great way to
13 get help or information.

14 One last time, the My School DC time
15 line, we're coming up on March 1, so you want to
16 turn in that application for pre-k three through
17 eighth grade as soon as you can. And, then if
18 you are applying to high school, you do want to
19 put that in as soon as you can as well, March 1.

20 All right. And, this is just a list
21 of the My School DC team in case you have more
22 specific questions. For any person in the

1 public, I would certainly suggest you to contact
2 the hotline as you will get immediate assistance
3 through there.

4 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you so much for
5 your testimony today, Mr. Parrot.

6 MR. PARROT: You're welcome.

7 PRES. JACOBSON: Do Board members have
8 questions?

9 Mr. Weedon, then Ms. Wilson-Phelan.

10 MR. WEEDON: So, first, thank you for
11 being here tonight and thank you for the work
12 that My School DC does to make the process
13 simpler for our constituents across the city to
14 apply and understand the process.

15 There's one question about the website
16 that I wanted to ask about. When you talk about
17 find your in-boundary school, in the District, we
18 have a geographic right, as well as a feeder
19 pattern right. So, does the system allow you to
20 enter your current school to see where you would
21 feed? I did not see that.

22 MR. PARROT: Not on the website, but

1 it -- there's no feature on the website that
2 allows you to put in your current school, but in
3 the actual application when we ask for your
4 current school, when you get to the school
5 selection page, it will show you both your feeder
6 and geographic rights.

7 MR. WEEDON: So, I would say that's
8 great, thank you, but as a parent who's going
9 through this process, I have a fifth grader who
10 will be applying, knowing that in advance when
11 you're beginning the process of searching and
12 having that feature added to the basic site,
13 would be a valuable tool for parents so that you
14 know where you live or the school you attend
15 gives you a right to a certain DCSP school.

16 And, on that, last February, the Mayor
17 did a change to the boundaries that were adopted
18 by the Deputy Mayor the previous year. Mayor
19 Bowser moved to allow Kelly Miller students into
20 the Eastern community.

21 Currently, if you enter your -- and
22 Kelly Miller students that -- graduates of Kelly

1 Miller have a right to both HD Woodson and
2 Eastern. If you enter a geographic address
3 within Keller Miller, you only get the right to
4 HD Woodson.

5 And, I'm wondering if that's an issue
6 with the software or whether that's something
7 that was in the Mayor's proposal? Throughout the
8 rest of the city, you have a right based on your
9 geography of the middle school to your
10 destination high school, so that's a quirk, I'm
11 not sure if that's the system --

12 MR. PARROT: Are you referring to the
13 school finder or the application itself?

14 MR. WEEDON: The school finder.

15 MR. PARROT: Okay. And, you're saying
16 that when you entered in an address within the
17 Kelly Miller --

18 MR. WEEDON: You are only provided the
19 option saying that HD Woodson is your
20 neighborhood school.

21 MR. PARROT: Yes. I believe that's
22 because the school finder is based on solely

1 geographic right, but I can look further into
2 that, yes.

3 MR. WEEDON: So, if you can look into
4 that. And, then the last question, how many
5 seats are available for sixth grade across the
6 District?

7 MR. PARROT: Currently?

8 MR. WEEDON: Currently.

9 MR. PARROT: I wouldn't be able to
10 tell you.

11 MR. WEEDON: Could you get the, get
12 the Board that information?

13 MR. PARROT: The problem is that we
14 don't run the lottery until March, so we haven't
15 actually collected the seats yet.

16 MR. WEEDON: But we know how many
17 seats are being offered, correct? How many
18 middle school seats are being offered across the
19 city DCPS or public charter?

20 MR. PARROT: Not yet. We don't
21 actually collect them until the middle of March.

22 MR. WEEDON: So, we're allowing

1 students to apply for schools and we -- so as a
2 parent, I'm looking -- you say order -- list your
3 selections in the order you prefer. Now, there's
4 a calculated risk there if I'm applying to the
5 school that as 5 open seats, I should put that
6 higher on my list than if I'm applying to a
7 school that has 50 open seats.

8 You're playing the odds a little bit,
9 and this is a lottery, and we're all clear that
10 this is a lottery, so parents need to know how
11 many seats are available and how many open seats
12 are in each school across the city before this
13 process.

14 MR. PARROT: Two things. One, we do
15 list an aggregate by grade level the number of
16 seats that were available the past two years, so
17 that is out there. And, like I said, we don't
18 have it for this year yet.

19 MR. WEEDON: Aggregate, but not at
20 individual schools.

21 MR. PARROT: And, one comment that you
22 made there in filling out the application, and I

1 would certainly suggest you to review the video,
2 it isn't -- the number of seats that are
3 available at a school, shouldn't affect the order
4 that you prefer your schools on the application
5 itself.

6 MR. WEEDON: But it will because as a
7 parent, I'm playing the lottery, it is a chance,
8 so if I'm applying for 5 open seats with 500
9 other students in the city, my odds are very
10 small, if there are 50 open seats, my odds go up,
11 so that should be a factor that gets taken into
12 account as I determine my preferences.

13 MR. PARROT: The -- the odds do not
14 change depending on where you rank the school, so
15 you don't get a better chance of getting in if
16 you rank it first or fifth. It just tells us the
17 order that we should try and match you. The
18 rankings themselves are not weighted.

19 MR. WEEDON: Right, but within that
20 order that does play -- play a factor in our
21 application process. Regardless, I would request
22 that My School DC provides the Board with a full

1 list of how many seats are available by grade and
2 by school both DCPS and public charter. That's
3 information that should be public.

4 I've asked for it for the last two
5 years quite frankly and not able to obtain that.
6 But that's information that should be public and
7 accessible to the, to everyone.

8 MR. PARROT: Sure. And, I'm sure
9 everyone is aware that My School DC is controlled
10 by the Common Lottery Board, and so I'm welcomed
11 to connect you directly to them to appeal for
12 that information, but that is one reason why we
13 don't currently release it.

14 PRES. JACOBSON: The staff will work
15 with members and with council if we must to try
16 and obtain this appropriate information that
17 should be public and should be made available to
18 education elected officials.

19 Thank you, Mr. Weedon.

20 Ms. Wilson-Phelan, and then Ms.
21 Wattenberg.

22 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: I'm not sure if

1 you can answer this, but thank you for being
2 here.

3 MR. PARROT: Sure.

4 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: I'm really curious
5 about the processes that My School uses to try to
6 ensure that parents who might not have access to
7 technology or time frankly to navigate the
8 complexity of school choice, enroll in that, and
9 have the opportunity to actually enter the
10 lottery while at the same time ensuring that we
11 are not intentionally enhancing student mobility
12 across the city where mobility is a challenge and
13 a potential source of not only logistical
14 challenges and financial challenges for schools,
15 but also quality of education that students
16 receive.

17 MR. PARROT: Sure. I'll address the
18 first part of that question first. We run an
19 extensive parent engagement campaign across the
20 city. We have two years of data that we look at
21 and compare to public school enrollment and we
22 really don't see anything in there that is

1 troublesome that makes us think that we aren't
2 reaching everyone.

3 Remember, our message is a little
4 difficult because we don't want 100 percent of
5 the District to fill out an application.

6 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Right.

7 MR. PARROT: If you're happy where
8 you're at, you stay where you're at, so it's
9 really a measurement of whether people are aware
10 of the process.

11 And, we are finding that, I think, in
12 this third year that we've kind of, I think,
13 we'll know more once we see the total number of
14 applications that come in, but that people are
15 aware of it, and then choosing whether to use it
16 or not.

17 The other reason that we have such an
18 extensive almost three months' long application
19 period is to give people plenty of time to first
20 hear about it, then do research, then submit
21 their application, and in most cases, go back in
22 and change their application because they've, you

1 know, thought about it some more. And, you're
2 not penalized if you submit on the first day or
3 the last day. You're treated exactly the same.

4 And, as far as more in-depth
5 information about the actual engagement or
6 campaign or outreach tactics that we use are in -
7 - Bocquet, our parent engagement manager, is a
8 perfect person to ask about that and she heads
9 that up, and I'm welcome to put you in contact
10 with her.

11 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Yes, I know her
12 already. Thank you though.

13 MR. PARROT: Yes.

14 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: So, do you have
15 statistics off the top of your head about
16 percentage of families across the city who use My
17 School versus default to their neighborhood
18 school by Ward, for example?

19 MR. PARROT: Not off the top of my
20 head.

21 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Okay.

22 MR. PARROT: That's a pretty extensive

1 question.

2 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Right. Well, you
3 had said that you -- the statistics don't
4 indicate that there's a discrepancy between
5 student -- family members who might be of upper
6 class and parents who might not be of upper
7 class, so I thought maybe you'd have that
8 information.

9 MR. PARROT: Sorry, let me clarify.
10 When we look at public school enrollment by Ward
11 and we see how many students are coming from Ward
12 2, Ward 2, Ward 4, Ward 7, Ward 8, we're seeing
13 the same amount of participation in My School DC.
14 Does that make sense? Percentage-wise.

15 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: No. Can you say
16 that one more time?

17 MR. PARROT: Sure. So, if -- I don't
18 have these numbers directly in front of me, but
19 if we think -- I do -- they might actually be up
20 on our website. If you find that 19 percent of
21 the public school enrollment is in Ward 7, we're
22 finding somewhere between 17 and 20 percent are

1 applying through My School DC.

2 Does that make sense? Of all of our
3 applicants, 17 to 20 are coming from Ward 7,
4 which mirrors the same amount of participation in
5 the public school system.

6 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Okay. Got it.
7 Thank you.

8 MR. PARROT: Yes, okay. Sure.

9 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.
10 Wilson-Phelan.

11 Ms. Wattenberg, then Ms. Anderson.

12 MS. WATTENBERG: Two quick questions.
13 One, going back to your -- is this on?

14 PARTICIPANT: Yes.

15 MS. WATTENBERG: Going back to your
16 response to Mr. Weedon. So, I'm confused. Are
17 you saying that if I put a school first on my
18 application or if I put it tenth, my chance of
19 getting into that school is the same?

20 MR. PARROT: Yes, except we try and
21 match you to your first choice first. If you get
22 in there, if you get a match there, we don't try

1 and match you anywhere else, so in that sense,
2 you have less of a chance of getting into that
3 lower-ranked school, but you have the same chance
4 if you rank it first as someone else who ranks it
5 twelfth because we look only at your random
6 lottery number.

7 So, if someone who ranks it twelfth
8 did not get into their first through eleventh
9 choice --

10 MS. WATTENBERG: So, if I'm -- if I'm
11 number one, I get whatever I ask for. If I'm
12 number two --

13 MR. PARROT: Not necessarily. Again,
14 we have a ten-minute video on, online. It is
15 quite informative. It is visual, which, I think,
16 is helpful in this context, and I would encourage
17 you to look it up. And, I'm happy to talk with
18 you in, extendedly about the algorithm and how it
19 works.

20 MS. WATTENBERG: The only thing I'll
21 say, and I'm not nearly as involved in this as
22 other people are, but I do hear that people game

1 it, and if it's not the case to ask people to --
2 I wish we had a very clear simple answer to that.
3 That's all.

4 But here's my -- if you want to
5 respond, you can, but I can also go forward.

6 MR. PARROT: Just to the comment of
7 gaming. I'm not aware of any such gaming that
8 does exist. In fact, the algorithm itself is --

9 MS. WATTENBERG: I mean, parents do it
10 in the sense that they've tried to think about,
11 "Wow, I really want to get into this one, but it
12 has -- but this one has fewer seats," so they,
13 they sort of put their application together with
14 regard to where the seats are --

15 MR. PARROT: Yes.

16 MS. WATTENBERG: -- or where the,
17 where the seats aren't thinking they'll be more
18 competitive, which then jams up and creates
19 longer lines for --

20 MR. PARROT: I would say if you have
21 a person who's applying to schools and they are
22 not putting those schools in the order that they

1 actually prefer them because of some third
2 factor, they're only doing a disservice to
3 themselves. There is not a better way or another
4 advantage to getting that seat.

5 MS. WATTENBERG: All right. My second
6 question is with regard to pre-k three and four,
7 so they don't have the same geographical
8 connection that other seats have. Can you
9 explain how that works?

10 In other words, in the k-12 system,
11 your neighborhood school you have a priority for,
12 but in pre-k three and four, I think, that's a
13 little different. Is that not the case?

14 MR. PARROT: For pre-k three and pre-k
15 four, they are not compulsory grades in D.C., so
16 you have to apply in order to attend. They're --
17 and it's not guaranteed that you get a seat
18 there, except for a few DCPS schools now offer
19 guaranteed pre-k if you apply in the lottery.

20 So, as long as you submit an
21 application of that school, and the full list of
22 schools is on our website, you'll get a seat

1 there. Those that --

2 MS. WATTENBERG: At your local, at
3 your school?

4 MR. PARROT: Yes. There are, I think,
5 ten or more that now offer that for this next
6 school year. There were six, I think, this past
7 school year that offered that, so it's not every
8 school.

9 For those schools that don't offer
10 that or if you're applying after the lottery, if
11 you reside in the geographic boundary of the
12 school, you do receive an in-boundary preference,
13 which means you get in before anyone who does not
14 have that preference, anyone who's outside of
15 that boundary, but, again, it doesn't guarantee
16 you a place at that school.

17 MS. WATTENBERG: I understand. Thank
18 you. Thank you, very much.

19 MR. PARROT: You're welcome.

20 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.
21 Wattenberg.

22 Ms. Anderson from Ward 4, and then Mr.

1 Jones from Ward 5.

2 MS. ANDERSON: Thank you for the
3 presentation. I was asked by a couple of folks
4 to inquire about an issue where if a child,
5 particularly the pre-k, for children whose birth
6 dates fall toward the end of the year and they're
7 not able to enroll at the beginning of the school
8 year, the year.

9 Is there a possibility of a midyear
10 involvement for those people so that their
11 children can get into the system? So if they're
12 a three-year-old, they can -- and they won't be
13 three until a certain time that they can -- I
14 mean, they do become three after that deadline,
15 would they be able to enroll let's say midyear?

16 MR. PARROT: I think -- I'm not sure
17 about the midyear part, but, I think, what you're
18 referring to is our September 30 age cutoff, --

19 MS. ANDERSON: Yes. Yes.

20 MR. PARROT: -- which is standard for
21 My School DC. So, every school that participates
22 in My School DC for pre-k three, pre-k four, and

1 kindergarten, you have to be either three, four,
2 or five by September 30 in order to apply to that
3 grade.

4 There are a few schools that don't
5 participate in My School DC that I do believe
6 have a later cutoff, but you'd need to followup
7 with them individually.

8 And, one of the main reason that we
9 have that age cutoff is that when a student
10 enrolls in one school at an earlier age, and then
11 tries to, maybe moves across the city and tries
12 to enroll in a new school, they're prevented from
13 continuing of that, that grade, you know, going
14 into the next grade level up, and so having to
15 repeat that year.

16 And, so my creating a standard grade
17 with all participating schools, it creates a much
18 easier process and easier system for families to
19 navigate to. But, the family is welcome to reach
20 out to the hotline and they can walk them through
21 their options. I know that there are a number of
22 pre-k options that are available outside of My

1 School DC that may be available for those with a
2 later birth date.

3 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms.
4 Anderson.

5 Mr. Jones, and then Ms. Lord.

6 MR. JONES: Thank you, Mr. President.

7 I want to followup the line of
8 questions from my, two of my other colleagues,
9 the Ward 6 and Ward 1. First of all, the Ward 1
10 colleague's questions in reference to, your
11 remarks and reference to each Ward, you said
12 there was the same percentage.

13 And, I want to give you an opportunity
14 to sort of repeat it because I'm a little bit not
15 sure of what, what you're getting at. So, before
16 I ask you what I assume you're saying, if you can
17 repeat it again in reference to the percentage of
18 applicants in each Ward.

19 MR. PARROT: Yes.

20 MR. JONES: And, if you said they'd
21 mirror from Ward 1 through 8?

22 MR. PARROT: Yes. So, we're not

1 seeing that participation is higher in one Ward
2 than another than where it already is higher for
3 public school enrollment. Does that make sense?

4 I think, it's helpful if I kind of
5 couch this question in the context that My School
6 DC is not trying to get every student in the
7 District to apply, right? So, we don't have a
8 really good way of measuring whether everyone
9 knows about My School DC, right, because the best
10 way to know if you know about My School DC is to
11 fill out an application, and therein lies this
12 kind of problem that we have.

13 So, what we do look at is that of
14 those that are participating in My School DC, do
15 we see that there are more people applying from
16 one area of the city than another than we would
17 expect there to be, and we don't.

18 What we see is that when you look at
19 the public school enrollment percent, percents by
20 Ward, so the percent that participate in public
21 school in Ward 3, the percent that participate in
22 public school in Ward 4, we're seeing those same

1 percentages also participate in My School DC.

2 MR. JONES: Okay. All right. Because
3 I've got limited time, but --

4 MR. PARROT: Sure.

5 MR. JONES: -- I'd like to followup
6 later.

7 MR. PARROT: I'm happy to talk to you
8 afterwards.

9 MR. JONES: Okay. The other question
10 is, now, I understand how lotteries work and the
11 models mathematically. And, your response of not
12 knowing how many slots are available doesn't add
13 up because when you develop a model for lottery,
14 when you're a player, you don't know what the
15 model is, but on the person that's creating the
16 model that dispenses, and this case, we'll say,
17 the prize, which is a seat in the school, the
18 model is supposed to be exact, which means for
19 every model, you should know the level of prizes
20 throughout that model.

21 So, for example, if you've got a book
22 of scratch tickets that a lottery dispenses,

1 within that book of 300, they have tiers of
2 prizes. They do the same thing with, when they
3 do fixed incomes' securities on Wall Street.

4 There is no difference, which means
5 how do you allocate a prize if you don't know
6 your tiers the exact prizes? That just doesn't
7 make mathematical sense. So, you have to get
8 back to this Board and explain that.

9 I mean, if there's only five seats,
10 you should know there's only five seats and you
11 should know exactly where those seats are. I may
12 not know as a parent applying, no parent may
13 know, and that's fine.

14 That's essential and that's basic in
15 lotteries, but on the side of the lottery where
16 you create a model, you should know exactly what
17 every tier is in that model and where it's
18 assigned, thus, you don't have a prize.

19 MR. PARROT: Sure. There's a couple
20 of things there.

21 MR. JONES: So, there should be a
22 mathematical structure and that I do know because

1 I develop them, so I'm saying, your response just
2 doesn't make a lot of sense. And, maybe you just
3 don't know the -- and I'm not attacking you, I'm
4 just saying, it just doesn't make a lot of sense.

5 MR. PARROT: No, I'm happy to answer
6 that question. There's a couple of things there
7 that maybe it would help to clarify. When I say,
8 "I don't know the seats yet," I mean that we do
9 get the seats in March, we get them by grade and
10 by school, and at that point is when we run the
11 lottery.

12 One reason that we don't collect them
13 until then is because a lot of schools look at
14 their re-enrollment, so they need to know how
15 many students are coming back next year. And,
16 that informs how many seats that they're going to
17 make available in the lottery.

18 To address the point about it being a
19 lottery and the mathematical model, maybe it's
20 important to clarify that it's actually an
21 algorithm that we use, which is a set of
22 instructions, right?

1 MR. JONES: That's different.

2 MR. PARROT: Right. And, the term
3 "lottery" we use because it's very accessible,
4 and we also do use a random number and assign it
5 to each student. That helps facilitate that
6 algorithm.

7 And, again, the video is very helpful
8 in explaining that. I'm also very available to
9 talk about that in depth, but it is a very
10 straightforward process as far as running the
11 lottery.

12 We just don't currently have all of
13 that information in one place yet because, again,
14 we don't actually know how many applicants there
15 are. The lottery application period is still
16 open.

17 MR. JONES: But you don't have to.
18 And, again, you use the term, "Random."

19 I know my time is up, and I apologize,
20 Mr. President.

21 But even if you use a random number or
22 the concept of it being random, there has to be a

1 universe. So, what is your universe to determine
2 that you're using the model of something being
3 random so that, that doesn't put me at any
4 disadvantage more than any other parent?

5 MR. PARROT: Yes. I mean, and for
6 someone who maybe really wants to dive into the,
7 the weeds of the matching process and the
8 algorithm, on top of the video, I can point you
9 in direction to, it's called, "The Match Stable
10 Algorithm," and they use it for finding kidney
11 donors and for a number of other aspects. It was
12 developed by a Nobel Prize winner, Alvin Roth.

13 There's a lot of information that
14 explains how this process actually works and how
15 it's not only being used in D.C., but other
16 school districts as well. I'm happy to --

17 MR. JONES: I understand, but I'm
18 saying --

19 MR. PARROT: -- connect you with that.

20 MR. JONES: -- your explanation
21 doesn't, doesn't fit that process. I'm familiar
22 with that.

1 MR. PARROT: Okay.

2 MR. JONES: But your explanation
3 doesn't, doesn't fit, so, yes, I would like to,
4 to know because it's important that we can share
5 the information to the parents in an honest
6 transparent manner.

7 MR. PARROT: Completely agree.

8 MR. JONES: And, that's very important
9 because there are individuals out there that
10 believe that the system doesn't work for some
11 families, and, I think, it's important that we
12 all know how it works.

13 We don't have to know how randomizers
14 work or the algorithm or how it's structured, but
15 we should be able to explain it in plain English
16 to the families that have to participate and
17 desire to participate.

18 I think you know it, but I just think
19 it's not being explained in the manner that
20 individuals, just plain individuals that don't
21 deal in this stuff every day would know it. And,
22 so -- but that just concerns me because it should

1 be a specific number for each slot or prize, but
2 I'd like to talk to you further about, about the
3 model.

4 MR. PARROT: Sure.

5 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Jones.

6 Ms. Lord, our At-large member.

7 MS. LORD: Thank you very much. And,
8 thank you, I've had the benefit of several
9 community meetings with My School DC. So, I just
10 want to get a couple of points of information to
11 give this some context and perspective.

12 What percentage of DC publically
13 educated students currently attend an out-of-
14 boundary seat, a seat other than the one that
15 they would be assigned to?

16 MR. PARROT: That's not information I
17 currently have off the top of my head. And,
18 actually, I'd probably direct you to OSSE. They
19 would have a much more specific answer to give
20 you and they handle enrollment, so they would be
21 the, the best source.

22 MS. LORD: Okay. Well -- well, how

1 about for the high schools? Roughly how many
2 applications were filled out?

3 MR. PARROT: The past two years are
4 available on our website. The current year,
5 we're still in the process of finalizing.

6 MS. LORD: Would you say it was more
7 than half of the students?

8 MR. PARROT: Again, I don't know the
9 total number of high school applicants. I can
10 tell you that in the rounds of, the first round
11 of the lottery last year, it was somewhere around
12 3,500 applications for ninth through twelfth
13 grade.

14 MS. LORD: Now, help me figure out
15 what sort of improved from last year? Last year
16 there were record numbers on wait lists, 7,000
17 for charter schools, 8,000 for DCPS. There was
18 some wait list shuffling, some uncertainty moving
19 into the beginning of the year.

20 Has this year's process done anything
21 to reduce the wait lists or are we -- and are we
22 still going to see sort of crowding at certain

1 grades? Pre-k three, pre-k four seemed to be a
2 huge intake point because those are lottery only.
3 Similarly, the transition into middle schools,
4 and, again, into high schools.

5 MR. PARROT: I'm not sure that I fully
6 understand your question, but I'll try and
7 explain what My School DC's role in all of that
8 is. We collect the applications and provide the
9 results to schools and schools manage those wait
10 lists.

11 Because of the design of the matching
12 process, we don't wait list students at schools
13 they ranked lower than where they were matched,
14 so in that sense, we're creating a much clearer
15 wait list, and you know that those students that
16 are on that wait list prefer that school compared
17 to where they are currently at or possibly where
18 they were matched, right, and so we're getting a
19 clearer sense of what wait lists are around the
20 city.

21 Last year, we did that for round one
22 and round two, and then in the post-lottery

1 period where applicants are submitting
2 applications one at a time, there's no more
3 lottery. You're just added to a wait list. We
4 didn't have that insight into where that post-
5 lottery application may have compared to a school
6 selection that they had put in the first round in
7 the lottery.

8 This year going forward, we will, so
9 we'll actually be able to refine those wait lists
10 and keep only students on those wait lists that
11 are actually interested in that school still, and
12 those that got matched to a school that they
13 prefer more, they'll be removed from all wait
14 lists below that.

15 So, that'll certainly be helpful to
16 schools when they have seats open and want to
17 extend an offer of a seat out to a student, and
18 it'll be helpful for parents that are on the wait
19 list to know that there aren't other people on
20 the wait list that may no longer be interested in
21 that school. But that's the extent of My School
22 DC's role in wait lists.

1 MS. LORD: So, we're probably still
2 going to see some element of uncertainty because
3 there are parents who may have, you know, they
4 may have changed their mind about which school
5 they really prefer or whatever or there could be
6 siblings in different schools, things like that.

7 MR. PARROT: I mean, just like in
8 years' past, I think, you're going to see parents
9 that apply to schools and that they're interested
10 in and go on the wait list and if an offer is
11 sent out and they decide that they're, that they
12 want to take it, they'll take it, and if they
13 decide they don't, then they'll stay where
14 they're currently at. Beyond that, I don't know
15 if I can speculate more.

16 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms. Lord.

17 Ms. Jolly, did you have any questions
18 at this time?

19 (No response.)

20 PRES. JACOBSON: Mr. Contreras?

21 (No response.)

22 PRES. JACOBSON: Ms. Whittington?

1 (No response.)

2 PRES. JACOBSON: I have a couple of
3 questions, and then, I think, Mr. Weedon had
4 another question or two.

5 I appreciate that you provide the
6 website in multiple languages. I think that's
7 incredibly important. Does the hotline also
8 accommodate multiple languages? I think you said
9 it did.

10 MR. PARROT: Yes. Two of our three
11 hotline staff are bilingual, and then we have a
12 telephonic interpretation service. Actually, on
13 deadline days and results' days, it's not just
14 our hotline.

15 I'm on the phone, other -- My School
16 DC staff are on the phone, and so if anyone calls
17 in needing assistance in any language, our
18 hotline manager can give you the full list of
19 languages that we've accessed on that service,
20 but we're able to assist them through that.

21 PRES. JACOBSON: Terrific. Now, I
22 said this last year at lottery time, I think, I

1 said it the year before, I'm probably going to
2 have to say it again next year. There's the
3 great common lottery at My School DC, but to get
4 to any of the information about a school, the
5 real information, you have to go to Learn DC,
6 which is a totally separate website that is still
7 managed by the Mayor basically.

8 That's not convenient for families.
9 It's just not. A lot of money is going into
10 maintaining two separate websites. That should
11 actually have the same information on it, and I
12 hope that we can work together to make sure that
13 we're not wasting taxpayer dollars maintaining
14 two separate websites that when an integrated
15 site that can provide the common lottery and all
16 of the information and data about the schools
17 that parents need when they're making their
18 choices should accommodate it. So, I'm just
19 saying that for the record.

20 I also have a question. Under lottery
21 preferences -- I'm looking at Garrison
22 Elementary. It's one of the schools in my Ward.

1 Some of the students there are from Ms. Wilson-
2 Phelan's Ward and from Mr. Weedon's Ward.

3 On the lottery preferences, they're
4 listed in alphabetical order, in-boundary, in-
5 boundary with sibling accepted, in-boundary with
6 sibling enrolled, proximity, sibling accepted,
7 and sibling enrolled. Why are they alphabetical
8 order and not actual preference order?

9 MR. PARROT: They vary greatly by
10 school and each school determines the order of
11 those preferences. Even within DCPS, they can be
12 different from a dual language school to a school
13 without a dual language program.

14 So, because we put that website up in
15 the fall and schools may need more time to assess
16 where they want their preferences to be or what
17 order, we don't put it -- we don't put it in
18 order of the actual application of the preference
19 because we don't run the lottery until March.

20 PRES. JACOBSON: Okay. Well, if
21 different schools have different preferences,
22 then it's even more important that those

1 preferences be very clear on the website.

2 MR. PARROT: Sure. I --

3 PRES. JACOBSON: Do you disagree?

4 MR. PARROT: I don't disagree. I
5 think it is a fair --

6 PRES. JACOBSON: Okay. Then -- I'm
7 running out of time, so I'm going to move on.
8 When I click on My Learn DC school profile for
9 Garrison Elementary and I'm taken to the separate
10 website that has all of the data on it that I
11 need to make a selection for my child, when I
12 roll down to student achievement, it's just text.

13 Everything else has really nice
14 graphics, but the scores for Park aren't on
15 there. In fact, Park isn't even in the middle.
16 It says, "Next Gen or the DC CAS."

17 So, I can click on DC CAS, and there's
18 some really great graphics, but when I'm on Next
19 Gen, which is actually Park, I have to then click
20 yet another link to see a graphic about the Park
21 scores for that school. So, can you explain that
22 to me why that's the best way to do it?

1 MR. PARROT: Learn DC is run out of
2 OSSE, which I actually --

3 PRES. JACOBSON: You guys don't work
4 with OSSE.

5 MR. PARROT: -- don't currently work
6 on that project. So, if there's an issue or a
7 question about the My School DC website or any of
8 the school profiles that are listed there, I can
9 certainly answer that.

10 PRES. JACOBSON: Got to talk to
11 different staff that are paid differently and
12 separately.

13 MR. PARROT: I mean, it's a totally
14 separate building with -- yes.

15 PRES. JACOBSON: Okay. I think you've
16 proven my point. Thank you.

17 We'll go back to Mr. Weedon from Ward
18 6 to ask -- if we could keep it to three-minute
19 rounds this time, we'd appreciate it. Thank you.

20 MR. WEEDON: I'll try to keep it
21 quick.

22 First, I want to make sure that

1 everyone is aware, and thank you for being here.
2 My School DC does a tremendous job of creating a
3 clear and transparent lottery, but we operate
4 under a fallacy that we have choice. Many
5 parents don't.

6 They enter a lottery and there are
7 winners and losers because they don't feel that
8 their neighborhood school or the school they're
9 in-boundary for is adequate, so there are winners
10 and losers, and that's a travesty and we need to
11 improve the public education in all of our
12 schools ensuring that everyone has a true choice.

13 I'm going to push a little bit more on
14 the, the statement you made, "There's no
15 advantage to parents to gain the system." I
16 would argue vehemently that that is not true.

17 Say there are five empty seats at
18 Stuart-Hobson Middle School, Two Rivers Middle
19 School, Washington Basis, five seats at each of
20 those, 50 seats at Eliot-Hine Middle School, 100
21 people are applying for all of these seats. I
22 100 percent agree that the algorithm will give me

1 the same chance as any other parent in being
2 matched, but where I rank those schools does play
3 a role if I want to get into them.

4 If I choose Eliot-Hine first, I'm
5 almost guaranteed a seat, I'm going to get in.
6 That may be my top choice. I may be trying to
7 hedge my bets a little bit. I may be waiting to
8 see what other parents do, where they get in.
9 It's not as cut and dry for a parent as it is for
10 a computer program.

11 I care about social dynamics. Who
12 else is in? Are my children's friends going? I
13 care about commute. Am I going to be able to
14 figure out the bus and the transportation?

15 There are a myriad of other issues
16 that need to be taken into consideration from the
17 parent perspective. So, yes, the science -- I
18 actually think the science behind the matching is
19 good, but when we're operating in the system
20 where we have the policy of choice, we need to
21 have the information.

22 And, in the broader picture, as the

1 public charter school Board is opening new
2 schools, we need to know how many seats are
3 available and is there a demand for additional
4 "high quality seats?" Within DCPS as we're
5 looking to staff schools, we need to know how
6 many students are in-boundary who are planning to
7 enroll so that we can adequately staff schools
8 and ensure that all kids get the education that
9 they need.

10 It's not really a question there, but
11 I am going to continue to push for this open
12 transparent data. We need it. The point about
13 priorities for enrollment, within DCPS, they're
14 set, so those could at least be ranked.

15 If public charters change it, that's
16 great, that can be done, but we need that
17 information as to parents and as parents to make
18 informed choices for our children's education.

19 PRES. JACOBSON: Ms. Wilson-Phelan.
20 We're just going to go down the line.

21 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Yes, just really
22 quickly.

1 You're 100 percent sure that the DCPS
2 school itself is allowed to set the, the order of
3 preference in terms of -- you had said it's set
4 by school.

5 MR. PARROT: Yes, sorry. Maybe I
6 should have been clearer with that. The LEA, the
7 DCPS central sets that order, yes.

8 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Okay, that's what
9 I thought.

10 MR. PARROT: Thank you for clarifying.

11 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Yes. Yes. And,
12 I also want to make sure like the tenor sounds
13 really accusatory across our entire Board and I
14 know that that's not how we really feel about My
15 School, so I just want to raise that in terms of
16 checking ourselves. And, you know, I know you're
17 here representing your agency, so I don't want
18 you to feel personally attacked.

19 The other thing I wanted to point out
20 about what Joe just mentioned that hadn't
21 actually occurred to me before, and I'm not sure
22 if it fully came across clearly. I think what I

1 heard him say is parents are making choices based
2 on the likelihood of getting in, right?

3 So, if they know -- even if the
4 likelihood is the same regardless of what they
5 rank or put, if they, for example, want to band
6 together and all attend a school that's less
7 enrolled, they -- it's a hard -- they have a hard
8 time knowing whether they should do that because
9 maybe the school that they feel like their kids
10 will have a better education at has more seats
11 and they're not sure.

12 Do you know what I mean? That's what
13 he's saying. Help me to like clarify what you're
14 saying, but I hadn't thought about that before.

15 I think that's really an important
16 consideration as we're thinking about our middle
17 and high schools in DCPS that are under-
18 subscribed, and this pipeline of parents in our
19 elementary schools who are thinking at grades two
20 and three what the feeder pattern looks like
21 because if they know these seats are available
22 and they're almost guaranteed to get in, they

1 might make that choice to collectively rank it
2 first instead of ranking another school first,
3 which would potentially split that coalition. Do
4 you know what I mean?

5 MR. PARROT: The social aspect of
6 parents grouping their choices together so that
7 they can move as one cohort is not something I
8 that I can personally speak about or comment on.

9 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: No, but what I'm
10 -- I'm saying that's the reason he's saying the
11 seat availability should be released sooner.

12 MR. PARROT: Yes.

13 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: You see what I'm
14 saying?

15 MR. PARROT: I do see that, and I can
16 respect that as a reason. I do want to point out
17 that there was one other comment that was made in
18 there again, and I think, it's been made a couple
19 of times tonight, that the barring the, you know,
20 social aspect of wanting to stay together in a
21 group with parents, but looking at the individual
22 and the number of seats that are available, you

1 should not put a school higher on your list that
2 has a larger amount of potential seats available
3 or that you think will have more seats available
4 as like a, "safety school," or a backup school,
5 that doesn't exist in this algorithm matching
6 process. It is --

7 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: I totally get
8 that.

9 MR. PARROT: I want to be very clear
10 that it is very important that you list the
11 schools in the order you prefer them. Now, if
12 there's an additional aspect that there is to
13 consider with the, the parents, that does
14 probably change the list because your preference
15 is different, right.

16 It's not based solely on the school
17 for your child, but the school for your child and
18 your child's friends. That's something -- that's
19 something different.

20 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: Yes. I'm sure
21 there's nothing you can do about it now, but as
22 you all are debriefing, it'd be really

1 interesting to include that in your
2 conversations.

3 MR. PARROT: Yes. Yes.

4 PRES. JACOBSON: And, thank you, Ms.
5 Wilson-Phelan. Your comments are appreciated
6 regarding the tenor tone.

7 I think you're hearing a lot of the
8 frustration that we hear from our constituents,
9 and I think what we're trying to do is figure out
10 ways and suggest ways that we can make
11 improvements that would benefit all.

12 I know you're working on some of these
13 behind the scenes, but these are, these are some
14 ideas that we've heard that may help improve the
15 process.

16 Ms. Jolly or Mr. Contreras?

17 (No response.)

18 PRES. JACOBSON: Mr. Jones?

19 (No response.)

20 PRES. JACOBSON: Ms. Lord, any
21 additional questions?

22 (No response.)

1 PRES. JACOBSON: Ms. Anderson?

2 (No response.)

3 PRES. JACOBSON: Ms. Wattenberg?

4 (No response.)

5 PRES. JACOBSON: Ms. Whittington?

6 (No response.)

7 PRES. JACOBSON: No. With that, we do
8 appreciate you coming and spending your night
9 with us tonight. I know you could be other
10 places. We are going to followup with our staff
11 on the questions for Mr. Weedon to go to the
12 Common Lottery Board.

13 And, we appreciate everything that you
14 do. It's an imperfect system, but it's getting
15 better and it's much better than it was
16 previously, so thank you for your help. Keep
17 working on it.

18 MR. PARROT: Thank you.

19 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr.
20 Parrot.

21 I have one quick announcement. As
22 we're done with our official business, is we have

1 a class from the University of Maryland who's
2 here with us this evening. I want to thank you
3 all for coming out and spending your time with
4 us. I hope you learned a little bit about public
5 discourse and transparency. So, thank you so
6 very much.

7 Do Board members have very brief
8 announcements on special events or anything in
9 their Wards?

10 Ms. Wilson-Phelan?

11 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: I just want to
12 invite the public to comment on the regulations
13 that are on the table and have been proposed by
14 OSSE. We've definitely heard from some
15 stakeholders.

16 I'm really interested in hearing from
17 a diverse group of stakeholders across the city,
18 especially including those in education, parents
19 who might have kids currently enrolled in high
20 school in DCPS, or other schools across the city
21 about what they think about it.

22 And, I just want to make that

1 statement really clear that we're really
2 interested in hearing feedback from multiple
3 stakeholders that represent our entire city.

4 PRES. JACOBSON: Mr. Contreras?

5 MR. CONTRERAS: Thank you. This got
6 brought up briefly earlier, but I'd like to
7 reiterate that there's going to be a second
8 meeting for students have the opportunity to
9 provide input on the upcoming health standards.

10 At the last one, we had a lot of
11 really important discourse about a lot of issues
12 that have a very direct impact on students'
13 lives. So, I would encourage the DC student
14 community to look out for that and we should be
15 deciding a date soon. Thank you.

16 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr.
17 Contreras.

18 Mr. Weedon.

19 MR. WEEDON: Thank you. I'd like to
20 ask everyone in the city and beyond to vote for
21 Eastern High School senior -- or sophomore,
22 Akillah, who's been selected as the finalist for

1 the Doodle 4 Google contest.

2 You have until February 22 to vote.
3 Vote at Google.com/Doodle4Google. Her submission
4 is in the grades 10 to 12 group. Let's get an
5 Eastern student on the Google cover page.

6 PRES. JACOBSON: What an honor.

7 Any other brief announcement?

8 Ms. Lord.

9 MS. LORD: So, the good news is the
10 National Youth Science Camp deadline was extended
11 to March 2, so I encourage all graduating high
12 school seniors in the class of '16 who have a
13 passion and talent for science, mathematics,
14 technology and engineering, and who are leaders
15 in the community to apply for this life-changing
16 experience, www.2016.nysc.org, 2016.nysc.org.

17 There are also a number of scholarship
18 opportunities, but you do have to apply if you
19 want to get the money. Most notably the John A.
20 Wilson scholarship run by the H Street
21 Development Corporation. So, thank you very
22 much.

1 PRES. JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms. Lord.
2 Then with no further business before
3 the Board, I would entertain a motion that we
4 adjourn.

5 ADJOURNMENT

6 MS. WILSON-PHELAN: So moved.

7 PRES. JACOBSON: Moved by Ms. Wilson-
8 Phelan.

9 MS. LORD: Second.

10 PRES. JACOBSON: Second by Ms. Lord.

11 All in favor?

12 (Chorus of ayes.)

13 PRES. JACOBSON: We stand adjourn.

14 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
15 went off the record at 7:09 p.m.)

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This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Meeting

Before: DC State Board of Education

Date: 02-17-16

Place: Washington, DC

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