

Capital Reporting Company
Meeting: D.C. State of Education 05-20-2015

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

5:32 p.m.

Held at:

441 Fourth Street, Northwest

Old Council Chambers

Washington, D.C.

Reported by: Christina S. Hotsko, RPR

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S

2 BOARD MEMBERS:

3 Hanseul Kang, Superintendent

4 Jack Jacobson, President

5 Karen Williams, Vice-President

6 Mary Lord, At-Large

7 Laura Wilson Phelan, Ward 1

8 Ruth Wattenberg, Ward 3

9 Kamili Anderson, Ward 4

10 Mark Jones, Ward 5

11 Joe Weedon, Ward 6

12 Tierra Jolly, Ward 8

13 Brian Contreras, Student Representative

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

2 MR. JACOBSON: On half of the members of
3 the District of Columbia State Board of Education,
4 I'd like to welcome you, our guests into your
5 State Board of Education meeting on the third
6 Wednesday of every month.

7 The State Board of Education meeting is
8 now called to order.

9 The roll will now be called to determine
10 who is present. I'll have our attorney advisor
11 call out.

12 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Jack Jacobson.

13 MR. JACOBSON: Present.

14 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Karen Williams. Karen
15 Williams.

16 (No response.)

17 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Mary Lord.

18 MS. LORD: Present.

19 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Laura Wilson Phelan.

20 MS. PHELAN: Present.

21 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Ruth Wattenberg.

22 MS. WATTENBERG: Present.

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1 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Kamili Anderson.

2 (No response.)

3 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Mark Jones.

4 (No response.)

5 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Tierra Jolly

6 MS. JOLLY: Present.

7 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Joe Weedon.

8 MR. WEEDON: Present.

9 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Betel Asfaha.

10 (No response.)

11 MR. JACOBSON: For the record, Karen
12 Williams has arrived.

13 Let's move on to the business portion of
14 our meeting. The agenda is before you on eBoard.
15 I entertain a motion to approve with two
16 amendments. I would entertain a motion that
17 removes Item 4, approval of minutes. We're
18 working on that with staff.

19 And also, Item No. 9, the consideration
20 of a ceremonial resolution for natural science
21 camp participants. Our at-large member, Mary
22 Lord, has been working with those who have been

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1 selected, and they're very excited to start.
2 Unfortunately, they aren't able to make our
3 meeting tonight.

4 So I would entertain a motion to amend
5 the agenda and approve the amended agenda.

6 MS. WATTENBERG: So moved.

7 MR. JACOBSON: Is there a second?

8 MS. PHELAN: And second.

9 MR. JACOBSON: All in favor?

10 (Ayes all around.)

11 MR. JACOBSON: Any objections? The
12 agenda has been approved by vote.

13 Good evening, my name is Jack Jacobson,
14 and I'm president of the D.C. State Board of
15 Education. Thank you all for being here tonight
16 and for watching on television. We have before us
17 tonight two issues that are of importance to the
18 board and our students.

19 First is going to be consideration of an
20 emergency rule to allow the Superintendent of
21 Education to award a diploma to students that have
22 attended Hospitality High.

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1 Through a series of circumstances, the
2 mayor directed the Superintendent of Education to
3 take over the school last year. Unfortunately,
4 D.C. regulations didn't allow for a diploma for
5 those students as the regulations exist.

6 Our vote tonight on an emergency rule
7 will allow those students to graduate on
8 June 12th, I believe it is, with full diplomas,
9 those that have completed the requisite
10 coursework.

11 So we hope to have a vote on that tonight
12 and ensure that these students that have attended
13 our D.C. public schools and have put in the
14 requisite coursework will be made whole.

15 Also, the Office of the Superintendent --
16 I would also like the record to reflect that Mark
17 Jones from Ward 5 is also present -- the former
18 superintendent to be included on our ESEA waiver
19 extension last year in 2014, I believe it was.

20 So we're excited to hear how that's
21 going, and I believe that they will be here to
22 share their success stories with us. We're

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1 looking forward to hearing about that later this
2 evening.

3 With that, I would like to now introduce
4 Superintendent for Education Hanseul Kang, who was
5 out of the committee last time. We're very
6 excited to have you here tonight.

7 MS. KANG: I want to speak briefly just
8 to acknowledge the great deal of interest that I
9 know is present among our community and the board
10 members in looking at our graduation requirements
11 and examining the requirements around graduation,
12 generally, as well as the possibility of a state
13 diploma.

14 I have appreciated the Board's focus over
15 the last couple of months in ensuring the students
16 from Hospitality High are able to graduate and
17 really appreciate that level of focus and interest
18 there.

19 And I also just want to acknowledge that
20 I know there's a great deal in figuring out how we
21 wish to pursue other part of this mission, and I
22 look forward to working closely with the Board and

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1 figuring out how we can move forward in this
2 conversation.

3 I also did want to say how grateful I am
4 that some very busy school leaders were able to
5 join the discussion tonight. I think the more
6 that we can hear directly from practitioners and
7 ensure that our focus on students and parents and
8 family also takes into consideration the
9 practical... So I'm very grateful to have them
10 here.

11 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much,
12 Superintendent Kang.

13 We will now hear from public comments.
14 Who -- any public witness who wishes to speak on
15 education-related matters is invited to do so.
16 Public witnesses are asked to contact Board staff
17 by telephone or e-mail if they are interested in
18 testifying before the Board.

19 I believe Marilyn Holmes from Total
20 Sunshine is not here at the moment. Are there any
21 other public witnesses who would like to speak who
22 did not contact staff ahead of time?

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1 Hearing none, we will move on to our next
2 agenda item, which is a vote on an emergency rule
3 governing the issuance of a state diploma for
4 state-managed schools.

5 It's important that the public
6 understands that if this rule is approved by the
7 state Board, the rule will be officially adopted
8 on May 29, 2015 and become effective on that date.
9 The rule will remain in effect for 120 days and
10 will expire around September 26, 2015.

11 The emergency rule has been -- has it
12 been published in the D.C. Register? Is that
13 correct? Yes.

14 And board members have received a copy of
15 the rule and it is on our online agenda.

16 Is there a motion to approve the
17 emergency rule request?

18 MS. WILLIAMS: So moved.

19 MR. JACOBSON: Is there a second?

20 MS. WATTENBERG: Second.

21 MR. JACOBSON: Is there discussion?

22 Hearing none, the motion has been

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1 properly moved and seconded. Our attorney will
2 call the roll for our vote.

3 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Jack Jacobson.

4 MR. JACOBSON: Aye.

5 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Sharon Williams.

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Aye.

7 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Mary Lord.

8 MS. LORD: Aye.

9 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Laura Wilson Phelan.

10 MS. WILSON PHELAN: Aye.

11 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Ruth Wattenberg.

12 MS. WATTENBERG: Aye.

13 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Kamili Anderson.

14 (No response.)

15 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Mark Jones.

16 MR. JONES: Aye.

17 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Joe Weedon.

18 MR. WEEDON: Aye.

19 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Tierra Jolly.

20 MS. JOLLY: Aye.

21 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: And for the record,

22 Betel Asfaha. She is absent.

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1 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: Brian Contreras.

2 MR. CONTRERAS: Aye.

3 ATTORNEY ADVISOR: It has passed.

4 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much. And
5 thank you, colleagues, for working with the
6 superintendent on this important action so that
7 the students at Hospitality High can be made
8 whole.

9 We will now move to invite our friends
10 from OSSE and the student state superintendent of
11 education to give the board a briefing on the
12 state system of support.

13 Dr. Amy Maisterra will lead our
14 conversation. And board members should have a
15 presentation in front of them and online.

16 And if -- when you sit down, if you could
17 introduce yourself and the guests that you brought
18 with you for the board and for the record, we
19 would appreciate that. Thank you so much.

20 MS. MAISTERRA: Thank you. Good
21 afternoon. It's wonderful to be here this evening
22 to talk with you about this really important work,

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1 and so it's really a pleasure to be invited to
2 share with you all what I see is our early returns
3 in terms of our efforts to date.

4 So my name is Amy Maisterra, and I'm the
5 assistant superintendent for the division of
6 elementary, secondary, and specialized education.
7 And to my left, my pleasure to introduce my deputy
8 who oversees this work in particular, Ms. Sharon
9 Gaskins. And she oversees the accountability,
10 performance and support team.

11 I'm going to say just a few words and
12 then turn it over to Ms. Gaskins, who will really
13 give you the bulk of the information tonight. And
14 then we'll be joined by our wonderful team from
15 Options Public Charter School, who's been engaged
16 with us on this work.

17 So just briefly again, this work has
18 been, I think, some of the most exciting work
19 we've been doing at OSSE over the past year. You
20 mentioned that we had started this work in earnest
21 about a year ago, really mapping out what we felt
22 needed to be in place for schools in a way that

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1 would differentiate support for them and really
2 tailor our efforts as a state education agency to
3 ensure that we're doing the right work for each
4 school.

5 And we know that each school has such a
6 different set of needs and strengths that we spend
7 some time together as a Board thinking about the
8 right design.

9 And so as we've been implementing this
10 model for the first time, we've also been
11 reflecting on our own practices and looking at not
12 just the results in the schools, but also how
13 we're doing our work at the agency.

14 And so tonight you'll hear a bit about
15 that. It's really been a parallel process. We're
16 continuing to learn as we move forward. And so
17 I'm hoping that you'll get a sense, a picture of
18 both what we've accomplished and what we're
19 excited about and also where we might need to go
20 next as we continue to evaluate our own efforts.

21 So with that, it's my pleasure to turn
22 over to you Ms. Gaskins and I'm going to actually

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1 step away and let our team members join you at the
2 podium.

3 MS. GASKINS: I'll move over. And I'll
4 shuffle again. And I'll take a moment to
5 introduce those who have joined me. To my left is
6 Tracee Frazier. She is a coach in one of our SSOS
7 strategies called the Learning Support Network.
8 She'll talk a little bit about her work.

9 The folks to my right, names, Stevenette
10 Sayeh-Reid from Options, who serves as a director
11 there. And Jennifer Dalton, who is also from
12 Options and serves as a director there.

13 And again, we three have been engaged
14 since November in one of our SSOS strategies and
15 will share a little bit about their experiences
16 with you in a bit.

17 So we thought it would make sense to just
18 start with some framing as to what's required of
19 our state-wide system of support. As you likely
20 know, our waiver to the Elementary and Secondary
21 Education Act requires that the district perform a
22 system of recognition, accountability, and support

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1 for all schools to ensure that they -- and I will
2 quote the slide here -- "that the support is
3 designed to improve student achievement and school
4 performance, close achievement gaps and increase
5 the quality of instruction for all students."

6 So that's really the foundation of our
7 SSOS and what's required of us in this work.

8 So with that in mind, we aim to set forth
9 a series of action to really guide our priorities
10 and our activities under our SSOS, and we wanted
11 to share that with you for framing.

12 Our series of action for SSOS is that we
13 believe that if OSSE provides support to schools
14 that are differentiated based on the school
15 system, guided by best practice; and that they
16 build the capacity of educators to drive permits
17 schools to classrooms. And we also believe that
18 we'll be able to raise student achievement and
19 close achievement gaps.

20 So what I'll do is just spend a little
21 bit of time talking about our four strands to the
22 SSOS. You might notice that there are a lot of

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1 slides in this presentation. We're going to keep
2 the conversation at a pretty high level, and we'll
3 have more information to share.

4 But let me start with a conversation just
5 about our LEA support institute. These are more
6 foundational part of our SSOS. They're institutes
7 that are focused on providing all schools and LEAs
8 within the District an opportunity to expect high
9 quality, professional development, and best
10 practice sharing around areas that are
11 particularly in need. We've had three over the
12 course of the school year.

13 The first took place in November and was
14 our response to the need that we've heard from
15 school leaders for a bit of time that very often
16 they encounter the need to connect their students
17 to city agencies or that their students are
18 connected to city agencies, and they, themselves,
19 the school leaders, don't have an opportunity or
20 an access point to better understand that
21 engagement with agencies like the Department of
22 Behavioral Health, Human Services, even the police

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1 department. There's a disconnect. And given that
2 we're the state agency, we thought it would be a
3 good opportunity for institutes to provide
4 connections.

5 So this first institute really focuses on
6 leaders from schools and city agencies that are
7 problem-solving around areas of shared concern,
8 truancy, absenteeism, data sharing, behavioral
9 health. These types of issues that really require
10 city-wide approach.

11 The second institute took place in
12 January and was focused on the transition to
13 the...knowing that it was on its way. We really
14 wanted to make sure educators had all the
15 resources and tools that would be helpful in
16 making that connection.

17 We focused the conversation on
18 communication strategies, hearing from leaders in
19 the field about best practices in aligning
20 instruction to the common core, in addition to
21 engaging parents and families, which you know is
22 pretty important. And use that opportunity to

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1 build capacity citywide around this big transition
2 that we're still making.

3 And finally, the last institute just took
4 place in May and it was kind of a culmination
5 activity. It took place over two days. And the
6 broad focus was sharing best practices, practices
7 that are taking place here in D.C. and nationally
8 around really broad areas of reform, standards
9 aligning curriculum and assessment, supporting
10 special populations of students like special
11 education students, ELLs, English language
12 learners and others and really digging into things
13 like best practice around math instruction and
14 science instruction.

15 So all together, we're really excited
16 because each institute had more participation than
17 the one previous. We've gotten really strong
18 feedback about them being a value added to the
19 field and we've got to push to continue providing
20 these types of resources we consider the work
21 moving forward.

22 The next item of our report discusses

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1 learning support, and we'll hear a little bit more
2 about in a bit. And this is much more targeted in
3 the institutes. Again, per our ESEA waiver, we,
4 OSSE, are required to intervene on schools that
5 have been in the status of priority and focus for
6 a certain number of years.

7 Priority schools are schools that have
8 shown a level of academic challenge across school
9 performance. And after a certain amount of time,
10 if those schools continued to show challenge, OSSE
11 is ready -- it's our work to partner with them to
12 focus on areas of accelerating their improvement.

13 Focus schools are a little bit different.
14 They focus on -- their work is to focus on a
15 subpopulation of students whose performance is
16 lagging behind their peers. And the goal of the
17 support network is to support each school,
18 whatever their particular needs are, and to tailor
19 support around those areas of challenge.

20 We have eight schools in the learning
21 support network right now. They started their
22 work in October with a deep dive root-cause

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1 analysis that really looked at each school's data
2 performance to date with the goal of identifying
3 what's a key lever that can be focused upon over
4 the next -- over the year to really help improve
5 school performance.

6 After that root-cause analysis, we
7 partnered each school with a coach, of which
8 Tracee is one, that works to develop an action
9 plan and to implement the action plan over the
10 course of the year.

11 Our coaches have done really deep work
12 with these schools, visiting two to three times a
13 month, doing things like professional development
14 to leadership teams, professional development to
15 staff, coordinating community partnerships,
16 creating new curricular opportunities for...
17 They've really done a lot within our schools, and
18 we've gotten really good feedback about the work
19 that's underway.

20 The other element that's important about
21 the network is we actually use it as a convening
22 opportunity. So three times over the course of

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1 the year we bring together these network
2 principals to talk about shared areas of
3 challenge, address and dig into problems of
4 practice and problem solve together.

5 And again, I won't say much more because
6 you'll be hearing firsthand in a moment.

7 But one element I do want to add is a
8 line of credit, which is an important part of the
9 learning support network which actually allows
10 schools to put their plan into action. Each of
11 the schools received a \$30,000 line of credit that
12 they could spend on activities that were clearly
13 aligned to their action plan. In many cases, not
14 surprisingly, our schools used on professional
15 development, both locally or seeing good practice
16 and action nationally.

17 Others used it to -- we had one school
18 that focused deeply on exposing kids to college
19 and careers. So their line of credit was used for
20 those activities. And it was really an important
21 way for them to make their plans in a very time
22 sensitive, like an immediate way.

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1 The third element I'll share on is the
2 best-practice Dissemination Grant. We are so very
3 excited about this. It's new. We use this
4 opportunity to make the kind of connections that
5 we know really should exist, we want to see more
6 of, between schools, between sectors. DCPS and
7 our charter schools all focus on accelerating
8 student achievement, focus on disseminating best
9 practices throughout our city.

10 What we had an opportunity to do is
11 provide schools within the district a competitive
12 opportunity where they can apply to partner with
13 other schools to share best practices around
14 professional development, new resources for
15 educators, new curriculum offering for students.
16 Partnering with schools.

17 And these are primarily schools that fit
18 into those priority and focus categories.
19 Deliberately making the tie between schools and
20 their needs around academic performance.

21 And over the next year, they'll be
22 working to, as partners really, implementing

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1 really clear action plans around their
2 dissemination of that work.

3 And even though it is one or two LEA
4 partnership, we are looking forward to seeing
5 those outcomes and outfits share more broadly
6 through our institutes and through other
7 resources.

8 And finally, our support teams. These
9 are more of an internal reform that we're doing
10 within OSSE with the goal of internally better
11 aligning and kind of breaking down silos within
12 our agency while also, ideally, reducing the
13 burden that exists for some LEAs in terms of their
14 reporting and engagement with OSSE.

15 What these support teams...that they're
16 cross-functional teams within OSSE that represent
17 members from our elementary, secondary, and
18 specialized education division, in addition to our
19 office of data and accountability and research.

20 And these teams work together to do
21 things like review school plans, provide feedback
22 to LEAs and do so in a way that is consistent and

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1 with one voice versus potentially disconnected.

2 This year we've -- our first project was
3 having our support team members review what we
4 call our 20 percent set-aside application, which
5 is every LEA with a priority of focus school is
6 required to set aside 20 percent of its Title I
7 allocation to support interventions in priority
8 schools.

9 We think this is a critically important
10 lever to team improvement because there are
11 dedicated funds that are used to accelerate
12 student achievement in these schools.

13 What we're able to do for the first time
14 was to use these LEA support teams to really
15 provide a rigorous review of these plans. They
16 reviewed them for alignment of data. So while the
17 strategies that the LEA are putting forth for
18 these dollars aligned with best practices, will
19 they meet the needs of the population that's
20 struggling? Is it based on best practice?

21 These support teams did that review,
22 ultimately provided feedback to LEAs, and allowed

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1 us to engage with that part of the work more
2 deeply than we had in the past.

3 So our support system in a nutshell. And
4 when we think about how all these pieces move
5 together, we actually -- it's almost as a tiering,
6 like we very often like to see with the model on
7 the school level. We really think that this
8 approach to providing support to schools is tiered
9 in a way that best matches our resources to the
10 needs of the field.

11 So at that foundational level, those
12 institutes that I mentioned, our support teams,
13 they're foundational for all of our work there.
14 Those impacts should reach all LEAs in schools.

15 The next level up, that target level with
16 best practices and nation grants, where we have
17 that matching between different LEAs for shared
18 work.

19 And then finally, at the top of that
20 pyramid, the learning support network, which is
21 that intensive intervention for schools that need
22 a boost of support.

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1 As we've implemented this system, we've
2 also had a clear vision for what the evaluation
3 structure should look like. And here's just a
4 snapshot of the key message looking at our
5 monitoring as we're implementing the different
6 elements.

7 So I thought I'd just pause and share a
8 little bit of what we learned to date. The year
9 certainly isn't over, but we do have some good
10 feedback thus far. Importantly and excitingly, we
11 believe in understanding that our supports are
12 being well received by the field through surveys
13 at our LEA institutes, through surveys and
14 interviews of our learning network sites. We're
15 really seeing that we're meeting a need.

16 Another element that we've learned is
17 that -- or that's been reinforced, I should say,
18 that partnerships are critical. Every element of
19 this system could not be successful without
20 partners at the agency level, partners between and
21 among schools. And we find that the more we're
22 able to tap into that arm of this work, the better

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1 off our outcomes will be.

2 And then finally, and really not
3 surprising, it's clear that it's no one size fits
4 all approach to school improvement. The more that
5 we're able to tailor our supports, provide options
6 to those who need them, the more likely we are to
7 able to meet the need.

8 And so this is a brief overview of what
9 our plans are. And not surprisingly, we want to
10 continue and build upon some of the work that
11 we've seen. We want to continue to be a convenor.
12 We think there's power in that, and that's our
13 appropriate role as a state agency.

14 We want to continue to deepen and broaden
15 those feedback loops. And we're always asking
16 what we're doing making a difference, what we're
17 doing having an impact.

18 And lastly, as I mentioned earlier, that
19 work that we do administrative burden is critical.
20 And so over the next year, we'll be working even
21 more closely with our partners at DCPS, PCSP and
22 others to see how we can increase our

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1 collaboration and alignment all with the goal of
2 providing schools exactly what they need to
3 accelerate student achievement.

4 And as we move forward, we wanted to
5 share a few things that we're going to be
6 developing as part of our system of support.
7 We're going to be providing a guidance and
8 research-based information on the development of
9 school -- for selecting school turnaround leaders.

10 We know that leadership is critical with
11 schools that have been challenged, schools that
12 need to see turnaround. So we're going to be
13 providing more support around that guidance.

14 Additional guidance on school permit
15 planning. And while this third element isn't
16 neatly in the bucket of the SOS, we know that the
17 work that's authorized for a teacher licensure
18 will also have a real impact because the more we
19 see...in the classroom, the better off we'll be.

20 And the last two, adding more layers of
21 recognition to schools that are -- and that reward
22 school status. Those are the schools that have

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1 the top-tier recognition within the system of
2 report. In addition to other schools that are
3 showing innovative practices, working
4 collaboratively with you and others to continue to
5 recognize them and even strengthen that further.

6 And the final element I'll share as far
7 as school improvement plan opportunity, we have --
8 will be the recipient of another cohort of funds
9 with school improvement grants, which are focused
10 on priority schools and supporting their
11 turnaround effort. During the next year, we'll be
12 able to support even more schools with their funds
13 to support their turnaround efforts.

14 So with that, unless there are any
15 questions at this point, I would really love to
16 turn the mic over to our other partners.

17 MR. JACOBSON: I think the Board will
18 save questions till the end.

19 MS. FRAZIER: Good evening,
20 President Jacobson and Ms. Kang, members of the
21 board. Thank you all for allowing us to be here
22 today to share some positive news about our

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1 schools in the District.

2 I'm a coach with the learning support
3 network, and I've had the pleasure of working with
4 three schools in the District. Options has come
5 here today to share some of the fabulous results
6 that have happened as a result of our
7 collaboration together in support with OSSE.

8 So I'm going to take you on a journey
9 from where we began, and we'll end up with where
10 we are now.

11 So when we first met, we talked about
12 what the needs were for the school and came up
13 with an action plan. And that action plan had
14 three layers. We said we were going to focus on
15 differentiating instruction, increasing the rigor,
16 and hopefully, as a result, it would decrease
17 classroom behavioral infractions.

18 A lot of times you hear about our
19 schools -- well, what you hear about our schools
20 are, you know, negativity about what's happening
21 behaviorally in the students and the community.
22 But I will share that when I walked into Options,

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1 I was pleasantly surprised to see that classroom
2 management wasn't a huge issue, but it could
3 definitely have been improved.

4 So we focused our work around building
5 the teachers' best practices and building up their
6 toolbox.

7 So the rationale -- this is where we
8 started. Less than 10 percent of the teachers at
9 the school were on targeted coaching plans. So we
10 knew that our goal was to create coaching plans
11 for every teacher so that there was a focused goal
12 that they needed to work on and the coaches and
13 directors would help them to reach that goal to
14 improve instruction.

15 Also, after we did our research, only
16 55 percent of the teachers differentiating
17 instructions. So in other words, everyone was
18 teaching to the class, regardless of what levels
19 students were on. There wasn't very much
20 differentiation happening. And we know as
21 educators, you know, one size does not fit all.
22 In order to reach all the students in the

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1 classroom, they have to reach them differently and
2 incorporate different techniques. So that was a
3 major area of need.

4 And then lastly, the referral rate.
5 Students getting referred for behavioral
6 infractions was at 31 percent when we first came.
7 And through this work, I'll turn it over to
8 Stevenette and Jennifer to share where we kind of
9 ended up and how we got there. These two have
10 been fabulous to work with. Very committed.
11 There's a lot of commitment within that school as
12 well, and it's great to have the opportunity to
13 share something positive.

14 So thank you.

15 Ladies?

16 MS. SAYEH-REID: Good evening. My name
17 is Stevenette Sayeh-Reid, I'm one of the directors
18 at Options Public Charter School.

19 I'm going to start with the
20 accomplishments and I'm going to pass it over to
21 Jennifer to continue. A hundred percent of
22 teaching staff at Options, first we have coaching

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1 plans. And so our goal was to have 100 percent
2 participation, and we have it now. 83 percent of
3 teachers observed are now incorporating
4 deductions.

5 Student infractions shows reduced by 52
6 percent. So from February to May, it dropped by
7 52 percent, and now we have a 12.7 percent as
8 opposed to 31.7 percent.

9 And from the surveys that we did with the
10 teachers after the PD series, 100 percent of them
11 are now comfortable with differentiation in the
12 classrooms.

13 MS. DALTON: Good afternoon or good
14 evening. I'm Jennifer Dalton and I am an
15 instructional coach at Options.

16 Some of the other areas of data
17 collection that we really wanted to focus on, we
18 wanted to see the impact of the differentiated PD
19 series on students. So we looked at their grades,
20 obviously. And we wanted to see the increase from
21 maybe the meets to exceeds or excels. So we were
22 looking at grades that were now in the A-B

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1 category.

2 So we took this matter to our teachers
3 and we found that in 8th grade humanities -- this
4 is for the entire 8th grade. So we have one
5 teacher that teaches all the 8th grade students.
6 And so this teacher is based on percentage,
7 42 percent for AP averages and by the fourth
8 quarter it was at 52. So we saw a 20 percent
9 growth in students who went from Ds and Cs to the
10 A-B category.

11 For our 9th grade -- and again, this is
12 just the entire 9th grade level. So there's one
13 teacher. So this is a pretty strong data point.
14 We have world history. And that 9th grade -- that
15 teacher, their baseline was 21, and they went up
16 to 56 percent of their students. The fourth
17 quarter now have As and Bs and that, again, shows
18 that 35 percent growth.

19 As well as in biology. The 10th grade
20 class, we had 34 for baseline and 66 for our
21 final. So 32 percent growth.

22 So we really wanted to see across the

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1 board how differentiation was impacting the
2 students. And the teachers even saw a difference
3 in the engagement and the volumes of students
4 because they felt like the lesson was now tailored
5 to their needs.

6 And so we did take a closer look at our
7 Algebra 2 course, and that's for our entire 11th
8 grade class.

9 And so we looked more closely at this
10 class. And we wanted to see the growth from not
11 just As to Bs, but every single grade. And so
12 this teacher had an increase of As 12 percent and
13 a decrease by 13 percent of Fs.

14 So most of the students in the F category
15 somehow, you know, they increased and we're
16 attributing that to the PD series and where we
17 were showing teachers how to differentiate, how to
18 tailor student skills and measure of
19 accomplishment and grow thereby.

20 We also were looking at the infraction
21 points. So as Tracee said earlier, the
22 infractions weren't that great, but we realized

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1 there was a place for growth. And we were
2 focusing on the infractions that directly impacted
3 classroom instruction. So the infractions we were
4 looking at were cutting class, refusal to go to
5 class, failure to complete class work, leaving
6 class without permission, and major disruptions
7 during instruction. And we saw a decrease from
8 our baseline, which was in February, to now in
9 May, so a decrease of 52 percent. So that's
10 almost cut in half.

11 So we again believe that that directly
12 correlates to how teachers are now instructing the
13 classes. And students don't feel like they're
14 just overwhelmed and need to kind of shut down.

15 And just teacher feedback data. So we
16 saw the student perspective and how it impacts
17 students. Now we're trying to see how the
18 teachers respond to it.

19 We had 100 percent feel, as I said
20 earlier, more equipped, comfortable and doing that
21 type of instruction in their classroom post PD
22 series. And we had four actual professional

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1 development series for them.

2 Teacher feedback, all of them

3 wholeheartedly believed this was the best

4 direction to go for our targeted intervention for

5 teachers in their instruction.

6 MS. FRAZIER: So if we talk about how did

7 we get there. So we have the data and I believe

8 you all have these handouts as well. So you can

9 see all of the increase.

10 But how did we get there? So this

11 started with a whole lot of planning. So my

12 visits were every week. What, every Tuesday? We

13 would sit down and we would have a session.

14 Sometimes we would co-plan the PD. We would go

15 through and do walkthroughs and classroom

16 observations to see what the teachers' needs are

17 and how we can best support them.

18 We also did some work, just leadership

19 work, with how do you have a schedule in the day

20 that allows you to be a coach and a support to

21 teachers. Because both these ladies have their

22 whole staff who they support. And if you think

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1 about everything that happens during a school day,
2 it's very hard to get in classroom visits and let
3 alone coaching and supporting and offering
4 feedback and having conversations.

5 So we were very strategic in the support.
6 And it started with having a leadership schedule.
7 How do you frame your day? How do you make the
8 time? Making sure that you have observation,
9 feedback at report time embedded into your day.
10 Making sure that you have culture time embedded
11 into the day.

12 So everything was purposeful and
13 intentional in their planning.

14 So after they would have a PD series on a
15 specific technique, the next week or the next day
16 the coaches would then go into the classrooms and
17 see if the teachers were implementing and then
18 offer feedback.

19 We also monitored feedback conversations
20 and showed them how to have those coaching
21 conversations.

22 A lot of times when visitors come into

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1 classrooms, they're like oh, I saw this, I saw
2 this, you did this, you didn't do this. But the
3 thrust of these conversations were question-based.
4 Well, what was your intended outcome for the
5 students? What do you think would have happened
6 if you did this? What is the impact of this and
7 that?

8 So those conversations and learning those
9 techniques helped them to have more fruitful
10 conversations and allowed the teachers to reflect
11 upon their practice.

12 And they also began to own what they were
13 doing. So, I mean, it increased their
14 self-confidence and also their toolbox as well.

15 Some of the texts we used in that last
16 slide. Giving credit where credit is due and
17 Leverage Leadership is a fabulous leadership text
18 where we got a lot of our leadership work. The
19 coaches learned blended coaching from the blended
20 coaching. And then, of course, allowed the
21 teaching strategies for Teach Like a Champion.

22 Is there anything I left out with how we

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1 got there?

2 MS. SAYEH-REID: No. I think you covered
3 it.

4 MS. FRAZIER: Okay. So the sessions were
5 beneficial. We saw the results. And even in my
6 other schools, I'm excited about the work and
7 where this can go. We're giving that, you know,
8 focused intervention and it's needed. So thank
9 you.

10 MS. MAISTERRA: With that, that concludes
11 our formal presentation.

12 MR. JACOBSON: Board members have had a
13 longer presentation before you that if can look
14 through at our leisure if we haven't already. It
15 contains some really rich data. And we'll make
16 sure that we share that with our viewing public.

17 Maybe we can put that online if that's
18 okay with the superintendent. It's a public
19 document. So thank you.

20 And now I will do one five-minute round
21 for Board members who are interested.

22 MS. PHELAN: Thank you and thank for

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1 being here all of you this evening. I know you're
2 giving up your free time and I know your work is
3 really hard and important.

4 I want to make sure I understood rules
5 first. And I'm sorry, I lost track of who is who.
6 But do you -- the woman on the end, do you work
7 for OSSE?

8 MS. FRAZIER: I work with OSSE
9 through...but we work in conjunction with one
10 another.

11 MS. PHELAN: Okay. Got it. And so then
12 I think my questions are actually oriented toward
13 the Options staff. And I'm not sure -- I know
14 Options went through several challenges in 2014,
15 so you might be brand new to Options. Are you
16 both brand new?

17 MS. DALTON: I am.

18 MS. SAYEH-REID: No.

19 MS. PHELAN: Well, I'm really curious
20 about what the barriers were to what you saw
21 happen in the transformation you were witnessing
22 happening. What were the barriers to that

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1 happening on your own?

2 Why did you need OSSE to come in and
3 provide extra support when we all know
4 differentiated instruction, for example, is the
5 way to go? And where did you see the barriers at
6 a school level and at the teaching level?

7 MS. SAYEH-REID: There were a lot of
8 issues with staff turnover, just morale. And I
9 have seen Options move from where we're dealing
10 with only behaviors every day to where we're
11 actually going through academics in the classroom
12 and teaching what's going on.

13 And so it took a while to get there. And
14 so even though the teachers were in the classrooms
15 teaching and all of that, it still needed more
16 tools, more strategies to get them from now being
17 focused on academics to actually tailoring
18 instructions to meet individual needs.

19 So yes, we were getting there, but we
20 were not there yet. So the help from OSSE really
21 pushed us to where we wanted to be. And that
22 personal one-on-one coaching with Tracee really

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1 made us sit back and reflect on our practices and
2 also reflect on where -- I mean, look ahead to
3 where we wanted to go.

4 So I know differentiation is nothing new.
5 That's something they are supposed to do anyway.
6 And being that our population is mostly special
7 needs students, that's where we were supposed to
8 be, but first we had to get to where we're
9 actually doing academics, pedagogy what's going on
10 in the classroom. Teachers were practicing and
11 then we're fit to move on to individual needs. So
12 that's where OSSE came in.

13 MS. PHELAN: Thank you.

14 MS. DALTON: This being my first year at
15 Options, Ms. Sayeh-Reid has that -- she has the
16 background to be able to answer that portion of
17 questions. But just in the first year after doing
18 the first round of observations, we saw that there
19 was a need for giving teachers support for
20 differentiation. So even though differentiation
21 is -- everybody knows about it, just like
22 universal design, it doesn't mean you've been

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1 trained properly. It doesn't mean that you can't
2 learn more.

3 So we didn't come from the perspective of
4 efficiency. There are some teachers working on
5 differentiation in the classroom before Tracee
6 came, but we wanted to make sure everyone was
7 given the same tools. And they were doing this
8 kind of to level the playing field, that all
9 teachers -- if a kid went from algebra to world
10 history, they were still under the teacher knowing
11 that this is important, this is the way I should
12 be teaching. Not because she went to a PD two
13 years ago and she knows how to do this.

14 MS. PHELAN: Right. And just from OSSE's
15 perspective, maybe again just touching base on the
16 differentiation and also looking at here the
17 latter slides where you have the Dissemination
18 Grant and you have these partner schools, the lead
19 school partners are all charter schools. So I'm
20 curious about that.

21 And I'm very curious about how we're
22 evaluating teachers. Right? So again, from where

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1 we're sitting, which is a policy perspective,
2 right, and we're not in the weeds and grinding it
3 out day to day and doing that hard work, it would
4 be my expectation as a mom who sends their kids to
5 school that my teachers know how to differentiate
6 at a bare minimum because we have such varied
7 grade levels at every grade across our city.

8 And so when you're looking at charters
9 and you're looking at DCPS and you're looking how
10 teachers are evaluated and supported, how do
11 you -- and then, again, like, coupling that with
12 the interesting lead schools all being charters,
13 how do you make sense of how we're both supporting
14 and evaluating teachers and who were bringing in
15 the skill sets that they have.

16 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Gaskins, that is a
17 long question. I'm going to ask to try and keep
18 your answers short.

19 MS. GASKINS: Yes. It's a big question.
20 Let me speak from the perspective of what our SSOS
21 is doing. And I think you're touching on broader
22 system reform, which could be a longer

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1 conversation to involve a bunch of people, some
2 who are not here.

3 In terms of the best practices grant, we
4 aimed to do a few things. The first is provide a
5 competitive grant opportunity to LEAs that feel
6 like they have the desire to really take on a lot
7 of work. It's not only managing their grant.
8 It's, in some cases, managing coaches, managing
9 the professional development community, managing a
10 lot of work. And some schools and LEAs may choose
11 or not choose to engage in that type of work.

12 We made the pairings in some cases
13 between LEAs and priority focus schools. But in
14 other cases they came to us with partnerships that
15 had been created, and we're really excited about
16 that because that means that we can get out of the
17 way, we can support and build up work and then see
18 it flourish. And we'd like to see more of that as
19 years come.

20 In terms of the SSOS...these macro
21 challenges, teacher evaluation, ensure that every
22 teacher has the tools and the toolbox needed.

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1 It's not a one-or two-sentence response. I think
2 the strands of this try to get us closer to every
3 teacher, every educator and every school leader
4 having the resources they need, and we hope to
5 continue doing more as the years, you know, pass.

6 But certainly, it's a very big question
7 for a very big conversation.

8 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Ms. Gaskins.
9 And thank you, Ms. Wilson Phelan.

10 Mr. Weedon from Ward 6.

11 MR. WEEDON: First, I'd like to thank you
12 as a neighbor for the work that you're doing. I
13 live about two blocks from the school and, you
14 know, four or five years ago I could tell horror
15 stories not just before or after school, but
16 during the school day being in the alleys,
17 stealing bikes, and other things.

18 Options came to the community, visited
19 and worked with the neighborhood to help solve
20 some of those problems and I appreciate you doing
21 that over the last few years. And that's largely
22 gone away. So thank you for your work there.

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1 You talked a lot about the impact to
2 approaching learning and the impact it's having on
3 the grades.

4 Have those results that were reflected in
5 test scores yet? And just following up on what
6 Ms. Wilson Phelan was saying about the barriers to
7 implementing some of this differentiated learning,
8 you talked about the need to focus on behavior
9 before and not being able to get to the
10 instruction.

11 But what prevented that, and are there
12 lessons or indicators that we can look at from a
13 policy side so that we can identify and try to
14 focus interventions on earlier in the process so
15 that we can work with schools before they make
16 these deep dives from OSSE to turn school and
17 student performance around?

18 MS. SAYEH-REID: Well, on the policy
19 side, I don't know specifically what can be done.
20 But what I know is the reason the barriers that we
21 had to implementing pedagogy, teaching to the
22 fullest level, all of that was because of student

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1 behavior. We had some really difficult students,
2 students that other schools could not deal with.

3 MR. WEEDON: But you still have those
4 students.

5 MS. SAYEH-REID: Yes, we do.

6 MR. WEEDON: So what changed?

7 MS. SAYEH-REID: The people that are in
8 charge changed. So people making decisions at
9 Options changed. And over the years, when Options
10 was identified as a priority school, there were
11 things that we had to do. And some of those
12 things were concentrate more on teaching as
13 opposed to rely -- I mean, laying heavily on
14 getting rid of behaviors.

15 So those things that we had to do pushed
16 or propelled us into concentrating more on
17 academics as opposed to behavior.

18 And then the people in the past, they
19 were more interested on behaviors, current
20 behaviors before. But as we were identified as
21 being a priority school, we had to concentrate
22 more on academics.

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1 So there was a shift and that shift
2 pushed us into more concentrating on meeting the
3 needs of students academically as well as
4 behaviorally. So the shift was -- we were trying
5 to balance behavior and academics and so we
6 started concentrating more on behavior.

7 I don't know if that answered your
8 question.

9 MR. WEEDON: It does. And in some ways
10 it makes an argument for additional oversight from
11 OSSE and potentially the state board and looking
12 at the power structure relationships among these
13 LEAs and public charter school, as well as OSSE.

14 Could we touch on the other part of my
15 question? Have the test scores verified some of
16 these changes?

17 MS. SAYEH-REID: It's too early to tell
18 because Smith is still testing right now in the
19 building. They're still doing part testing, so we
20 can't speak to that right now.

21 MR. WEEDON: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Lord, our at-large

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1 rep.

2 MS. LORD: Thank you. Thank you very
3 much for being here. I always appreciate when
4 classroom teachers come, particularly from
5 Options, to graduation. I had the privilege of
6 attending a couple of years ago. And the students
7 were sort of celebrated for making two years of
8 progress in one year and for the Option students,
9 as you know, with their various challenges. That
10 was the equivalent to six years.

11 So I know there's something great going
12 on there, and it's good to hear you kind of
13 getting back into the framework.

14 I've got a couple of really, really
15 specific questions on sort of the lessons learned
16 at Options. We heard about leadership and
17 building time into the school day for teachers to
18 meet together, plan together, learn from one
19 another, and also be coached.

20 Is this the best practice that in some
21 way, form or another might we consider as a board
22 to put into policy? Because it seems like if we

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1 have these kinds of transformations, that's
2 exactly what we need to have happening in every
3 struggling school. But it also seems to be that
4 most teachers don't have a single moment in the
5 school day or school week to plan together.

6 So just what are some of your takeaways
7 about the structure of the school day?

8 MS. FRAZIER: In just working with
9 different schools and Options in particular, the
10 whole scheduling and making sure that there's time
11 for that whole cycle of support is a best
12 practice. Whether it should be policy, I don't
13 know. But I think what the policy side is
14 probably the leadership development, like, you
15 know, we rely heavily on leadership development
16 and giving them those skills that they need.
17 Those things will help to propel the school. And
18 finding the time in the schedule is just one of
19 those. And then there are, you know, tons of
20 other best practices and leadership that have to
21 happen.

22 And I think that schools -- because

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1 turnover is so great with school leadership and
2 even with principals, sometimes it is a revolving
3 door. And keeping up with who needs this type of
4 support or who received this type of training and
5 what this person knows and doesn't know, it gets
6 lost in the shuffle.

7 And, you know, I have one school where I
8 believe 80 percent of the staff are new teachers.
9 So, you know, they need a different level of
10 support. So I think when we focus on the
11 professional development and training end of it,
12 we'll start to see some results. And then the
13 ongoing support, the one-on-one visits, so that
14 it's just not a one-stop-shop, here's what we
15 provided, we'll do it. There has to be follow-up
16 and there has to be consistency.

17 MS. LORD: That sort of leads me to my
18 second question, which was how sustainable is
19 this? The development -- actually, I would like
20 to know how much in grants are given out -- were
21 given out. But eventually, the grant money goes
22 away.

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1 And it sounds like best practices is
2 moving from -- this will date me -- but the TV
3 doctors who were, you know, the saviors, Chicago
4 Hope or we have Perry Mason and now it's, you
5 know, Boston legal.

6 Teaching is a team effort, and yet our
7 instructional models, our hiring models, our
8 professional models, are anything but.

9 So what happens when the money goes away?

10 MS. GASKINS: Well, I can take that from
11 the perspective of this work. Part of the reason
12 why we started with an evaluation plan in mind is
13 that we -- because you really want to know what
14 should be maintained, how do we structure this
15 moving forward? Part of that is still in process.

16 I shared some of our lessons learned. We
17 know we have to maintain our convening work at the
18 macro level with the institutes, at the smaller
19 level with four or five Options and others coming
20 together. We have to focus on sustaining that
21 work. The partnerships between and amongst
22 educators, critical to sustain.

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1 So part of it, I think, will be a lesson
2 learned once we're really able to step back across
3 the whole model and walk away with a good
4 understanding of what we think makes the most
5 difference, which investments really are getting
6 us where we need to be with schools like Options
7 and all of our schools and then...down on those.

8 MS. LORD: Before my time runs out, could
9 you just say the dollar amount and names of the
10 schools that received the first 12 grants?

11 MS. GASKINS: So the best practices
12 Dissemination Grant?

13 MS. LORD: Yes.

14 MS. GASKINS: Yes. And this should be in
15 your materials. I do have them. So we have a
16 total of 12 schools. The total -- the average
17 funding amount is about \$300,000. That's a mean,
18 a little more -- if you partnered with more than
19 one school, your grant for the dissemination
20 opportunity was probably bigger. If you partnered
21 with only one school, it was probably smaller.

22 And those projects will continue until

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1 next year.

2 MS. LORD: So through school year 2016?

3 MS. GASKINS: Yes.

4 MS. LORD: Okay. And there's a list of
5 the 12 schools available somewhere?

6 MS. GASKINS: Absolutely. I'm happy to
7 read them off to you. So the lead school partners
8 are Kip College Prep, Washington Yu Ying,
9 Ingenuity Prep, Center City Brightwood, and Two
10 Rivers. Those are the partners. And then they
11 all partnered with...

12 I do want to make sure just for clarity,
13 the Dissemination Grant is distinct from the
14 Learning Support Network, where the schools given
15 \$30,000 in a line of credit, but the funding
16 stayed with this work, in terms of providing
17 coaches directly to schools.

18 So it's a little bit of a -- it's
19 actually a very different model. The funding went
20 to the coaches for the Learning Support Network.
21 For the best practices Dissemination Grant, the
22 funding goes to the partner schools to work

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1 together.

2 MS. LORD: And the Dissemination Grant
3 really focused on teaching instruction and
4 practice.

5 MS. GASKINS: Absolutely. Yes.

6 MS. LORD: Thank you.

7 MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Jones from Ward 5.

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

9 A few questions. First of all to the
10 coach. Is \$30,000 enough to -- because for me,
11 part of this is a cultural change. Because after
12 you leave, do the instructors revert back to what
13 they were doing before? And my concern is, is
14 \$30,000 enough to impact the school, sustain it as
15 Laura suggested, over time?

16 And I guess that's from your perspective
17 and OSSE.

18 MS. FRAZIER: I don't know. I guess it
19 depends. You know, this year the schools were
20 trying to figure out how to spend this. It's
21 like, wow, I get \$30,000 to spend on something
22 that's going to support the kids? And then you

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1 start thinking about resources and we don't have
2 these books or what does the District supply
3 versus what should I purchase. And, you know,
4 you're really thinking critically about how to
5 spend this money.

6 And like Sharon said, a lot of us spent
7 it on professional development. So was \$30,000
8 enough? No. Of course not. In education, if we
9 want to sustain and have ongoing professional
10 development, if we're just talking about that,
11 that's something that has to continue. So it
12 would need to continue every year. And \$30,000 in
13 one year may be enough to do some really good PD
14 within a year. But then they would need to have
15 it again the next year or have some type of system
16 to keep being.

17 And, you know, I guess an argument could
18 be that it becomes a crutch also, and when the
19 money runs out, what happens? And if there's a
20 revolving door, then you're always going to need
21 that money to do PD. But if you have -- you know,
22 we start to have sustainability at schools and

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1 teacher retention and leadership retention, then
2 that money won't be needed. And I don't know how
3 many schools we have that -- where we have veteran
4 principals and veteran teachers. Where is it?

5 MS. GASKINS: And I echo everything
6 Tracee says and even suggest that the biggest
7 investment from the Support Network was not the
8 \$30,000 but the time spent with school leaders in
9 leadership teams and helping them rethink their
10 work. That's what we hope in our theory of action
11 would presume that has the staying power.

12 And so with this coaching relationship,
13 this is where we really know that change happens.
14 The \$30,000 is great. But in all honesty, there
15 are all pots of money. Title I that's providing
16 millions. We have the charter schools, other
17 types of grants.

18 And so I think we should focus instead on
19 the relationships that sustain all of the good
20 work of turnaround and how the \$30,000 hopefully
21 kind of lights the fire, but certainly should keep
22 it lit for the long term.

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1 MR. JONES: Okay. My follow-up questions
2 are in reference to the classroom infractions.

3 I've heard this over and over again. But
4 every time you drill down on this, you find the
5 LEAs that made these improvements had wraparound
6 services or something else involved to bridge
7 these. And 52 percent is a high number in such a
8 short horizon, especially for the top three
9 bullets: Cutting class, failure to complete class
10 work, and leaving class without permission.

11 The other disruption, I can see some of
12 that. But the top three bullets, I'm not saying
13 it's not doable. But I'm a little skeptical, so
14 I'd like to hear you tell me drill down. Tell us
15 a little bit more how that actually happened
16 because those aren't easy tasks to reverse those
17 numbers.

18 MS. DALTON: Sure. After the second
19 semester, the class size also dwindled down. They
20 decided to make the shift from 90-minute periods
21 to 45-minute periods. And because of the short
22 periods, the students were not leaving class. The

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1 90-minute period was way too long for our students
2 to stay engaged for that long. And so by
3 shortening the class, we saw a dramatic cutdown in
4 kids not going to class and walking out.

5 So I believe that one change dramatically
6 impacted those two bullet points.

7 That, and also, we -- second semester
8 teachers -- there were two teachers that were
9 giving a free period where their main investment
10 would be, like, a behavior coach. And these were
11 kids that had really good relationships with
12 students.

13 And so it was kind of their job to look
14 at students who had high infractions doing
15 these -- maybe cutting class or leaving class
16 without permission. They targeted those students
17 and they worked with those students and they tried
18 to find out why were leaving class.

19 And many of them said that the work was
20 too difficult or they felt, like, the work wasn't
21 working out for them or they weren't able to
22 access the work.

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1 So by going that route to find out from
2 students, well, why is there the impetus for
3 leaving class, they were able to then focus on how
4 to keep them in the class and how to get them to
5 go to class. So those are the two reasons.

6 MR. JONES: Thank you very much. My time
7 is up. Thank you, Mr. President.

8 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. Ms. Wattenberg
9 from Ward 3.

10 MS. WATTENBERG: Thanks again you for
11 coming. It's been very interesting. My first set
12 of questions is around teacher retention. And I
13 have questions both for people at Options and for
14 those of you who are working more centrally at
15 OSSE.

16 So first to Options. You talked about
17 how a lot of the teachers had left. Teacher
18 turnover, I guess, is form. And I'm just curious
19 if you can put a number to that. Like in the year
20 before, do you remember how many teachers left?
21 And then in this last year, what do you expect in
22 terms of turnover?

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1 MS. FRAZIER: Well, I have seen a lot of
2 turnover year after year. I've been at Options
3 since 2006. And from the time -- from the first
4 year to present, we have had sometimes 35 percent,
5 50 percent turnover per year. Sometimes during
6 the school year we have people leaving. So it's a
7 huge turnover year after year.

8 We anticipate that -- because Options is
9 closing as of June 30th, we anticipate that more
10 people are going to leave. Perhaps because
11 they're uncertain of what's ahead or they just --
12 they're just burned out. Our students are very
13 challenging.

14 So all those factors play into why
15 teachers leave all the time. It's not always with
16 administration. It's not always with money. It's
17 a combination of reasons why there's a huge
18 turnover. But mostly because the students are
19 very challenging.

20 MS. WATTENBERG: Thank you very much. So
21 turning to the two of you who are involved in OSSE
22 or you have three schools. One of the things that

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1 I rubbed down as part of the elements of
2 development. And I should say I know this
3 conversation...

4 It talks about one of the things you're
5 going to try to do is update teacher licensure
6 regulations in the schools are able to retain
7 great teachers.

8 And I wanted to throw this out: Any time
9 that I have talked to parents or teachers in
10 struggling schools, one of the issues that comes
11 up -- and it's sort of like you said, the turnover
12 is enormous.

13 And in fact, it's one of the -- it's a
14 symptom, it's a signal, it's an alert. And some
15 of the turnover, I know, is teacher licensure
16 regulations. In particular, I think there's rules
17 that a lot of people at the end of two years,
18 something expires.

19 But it's not my impression -- and you
20 guys are on the ground so I want to get your sense
21 of it. It's not my impression that that is the
22 greatest reason that we have a problem with

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1 teacher retention.

2 And I just want to get some ideas on the
3 table about what can be done about that. And let
4 me raise it in a broader sense. So you're doing
5 all this great work, right? And a lot of what
6 you're providing is great professional
7 development.

8 If the turnover is high, you have to
9 start right over again. And we have a lot of
10 schools where there's different kinds of services
11 being provided. There's the urban -- there's a
12 lot of different programs and they're all coming
13 in and they're providing extraordinary help to the
14 teachers. But something else is going on, so you
15 have this turnover and you lose the investment.

16 So my question is: What else can we do
17 through this program, let's say, that might
18 address retention and what do you think that it's
19 not as big a deal as I'm saying?

20 MS. FRAZIER: Well, I think in my
21 experience -- and I've been -- I guess this is my
22 20th year in education, starting from teaching in

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1 New Jersey and also teaching and being a school
2 administrator here in the District.

3 The licensure is not an issue -- you
4 know, I don't see that as a big issue as to why
5 there was turnover. I kind of feel like it's a
6 sign of the times. My mom always said we live in
7 a microwave society, we want things now and quick
8 and fast.

9 And I don't know how many people stay in
10 their professions or their jobs for, you know,
11 maybe longer than five or six years. So I don't
12 have any data on that. But it seems that people
13 are looking and chasing and, you know, we want to
14 get what we want. And so that could be a symptom
15 of what's happening as a sign of the times.

16 But I feel like, also, when you have new
17 teachers coming into the profession, a lot of
18 times it's a bridge. Like teaching has turned
19 into a bridge to take you to whatever that next
20 step is. So that level of investment and
21 commitment to the profession is missing. And you
22 have -- you do have a great number of people who

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1 are educators for life, and you know those people
2 when you meet them. And there aren't a whole lot
3 of them in schools.

4 So I don't know if that answers the
5 question. That's just my perspective from what
6 I've seen across several different districts.

7 I think when you find people who are in
8 it for life, then we need to pour as much as we
9 can into their development and show them that we
10 are invested in their learning and, you know, to
11 keep them in the profession.

12 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. And
13 Ms. Wattenberg, I'm going to allow the
14 superintendent to make a short response as well.

15 MS. KANG: I don't know if you've all
16 seen the report called the irreplaceables, which
17 talks to the issue of teacher retention, in
18 particular of high-performing teachers.

19 And they pointed to a number of basic
20 factors, including how it costs no money and takes
21 very little effort, which included things like the
22 school leader having a conversation with hey, I

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1 want you to stay and your comments at the shocking
2 number of cases that that simple conversation had
3 never happened. And it was one of the reasons
4 teachers cited as why they would leave.

5 The report is...you know, teacher
6 appreciation week was just a few weeks ago. One
7 of things that's on a blog posts by DCPS has taken
8 on an active campaign to reach out to their
9 top-performing teachers to make sure they know
10 that they are recognized, valued and that DCPS
11 wants them to stay.

12 And the lines of communication where a
13 teacher might...what the next steps might be...and
14 they could talk about cohort leadership
15 opportunities or a teacher explaining why they
16 would have concerns and let all them talk about
17 how they might address them.

18 So I think it starts with a simple
19 conversation between the school leader and the
20 teacher.

21 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you.

22 Ms. Anderson.

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1 MS. ANDERSON: And my questions kind of
2 touch on something my colleague Mr. Jones and
3 Ms. Wattenberg were touching on. One addressing
4 the issue of classroom referrals, how -- I guess
5 one of the objectives of the professional
6 development was to certify teachers and to make
7 teachers more aware of ways that they themselves
8 could adjust their practice to reduce the number
9 of infractions, on one hand.

10 My question regarding that is: What
11 kinds of policy -- and I guess you answered that
12 to some extent -- policy and practical kinds of
13 changes were made also to support that so that not
14 only were teachers addressing it, but also
15 policies and changes in the instructional days,
16 the hours and in the classes and the other things
17 you talked about that affected that.

18 But also, regarding impact of -- the
19 fluidity, the movement of teachers back and forth
20 and the question as to whether that is, in fact, a
21 good investment to make in terms of professional
22 development because so many -- every year you're

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1 kind of facing a different cadre of teachers in a
2 way. So teachers are moving in and out of the...

3 But by providing professional
4 development, are you supporting the next schools'
5 teachers in the next place they may go to?

6 But I guess my question is: Would not
7 something to be considered in terms of the
8 approaches to turning around some schools also
9 have to do with, perhaps, focusing more on those
10 policy parts of the whole puzzle that kind of
11 would help to, I guess, alleviate the professional
12 development of teachers with trying to address in
13 the first place, perhaps, maybe something that
14 might help us to build better models of schools
15 and engage teachers in that professions as well,
16 but also within the ways that administrators in
17 schools -- you know, administrators and key
18 principals and all could engage in building better
19 school models and practices that support no matter
20 which teacher comes into the mix.

21 That's almost a five-minute question.
22 But that's one I want to put out there to you.

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1 MS. DALTON: I believe that regardless of
2 the teacher, they're going to impact the student
3 in some way, whether it's at your school or the
4 next school. But we don't want to not give them
5 the tools because we anticipate them leaving.

6 So we want to meet them where they are
7 and give them as much professional development as
8 they need to impact the students and to give the
9 students everything they have in order to see the
10 students grow and succeed.

11 But I do agree with you. There should
12 be, like, at the end of the school year, a
13 decision of how -- direction we want our
14 professional development, whether we have someone
15 coming in. This is ongoing...

16 So I think when you're exposed to this
17 information, it makes you want to run with it.
18 You see the impact you have on the teachers and if
19 you want to continue with it the year after,
20 whether we have somebody in or not.

21 And I would also think that our
22 supervisors would see the impact and expect that

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1 from us. So school have the trickle down, like,
2 okay, you all received this training last year, we
3 expect you to do the same next year. We saw the
4 good you did. We shouldn't have someone in the
5 building to tell you to do it.

6 So I think it's a responsibility that
7 I've been trained and continue to use this.
8 Instead of saying she was here this one year and I
9 don't have to be responsible for it again. So
10 that's up to us for the next year's teachers, if
11 you have, like, two or three new teachers come to
12 our school, we have to expose them to the same
13 information, maybe do a small session. You know,
14 we don't need to do the whole, you know, shebang
15 over again. But something of that nature.

16 So I do agree with you. There needs to
17 be a definite consideration of how you go forward
18 in training your staff for the next year from the
19 leaders.

20 MS. FRAZIER: And I think, too, even on a
21 larger scale, the -- maybe contractually there
22 should be some type of commitment. That when you

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1 come into certain schools or certain areas, that,
2 you know, you are signing, you know, a four-year
3 commitment and -- so that -- because we know that
4 true turnaround and change takes time.

5 So if we add some type of time commitment
6 to it. So that school will have the same leader,
7 you know, at least for the next four years and
8 then a high school, those 9th and 12th graders
9 that cycle through.

10 And then maybe something similar for
11 teachers. I don't know. But it seems like it may
12 have to be on that level.

13 MS. GASKINS: And if I could add one
14 other element. This is our system of support that
15 is required. But there's another element about
16 monitoring the schools that we take very seriously
17 at OSSE. It requires that we ensure that schools
18 are implementing activities that how the
19 likelihood...turnaround, to address the areas of
20 need.

21 Again, as I mentioned earlier, the
22 20 percent set-aside that is really focused on

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1 addressing areas of needs. These are areas that
2 we're strengthening our total capacity on because
3 we also have that role of monitoring and providing
4 feedback about those big macro-level challenges
5 and how we, as a district, are supporting these
6 schools broadly as they're doing the deep work
7 classroom by classroom.

8 So I think it's a -- you asked either or.
9 I think we've got to do both work simultaneously.

10 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Williams.

11 MS. WILLIAMS: Being a former teacher
12 myself, I know my fellow board members understand
13 that these practices have been best practices, and
14 they're schools that are reward schools, they're
15 doing this already.

16 However, if you're teaching in a priority
17 school or a school for large special-ed
18 population, first of all, when you come out of
19 college, you have no idea how to handle it. You
20 hear all the big words and how you're supposed to
21 act in the classroom and what you're supposed to
22 do. But when you get there, it's very difficult

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1 to implement that.

2 And in the past, professional development
3 means going and sitting in a classroom, getting
4 information and you're supposed to take it back
5 and implement it. But you have no coaching, no
6 mentoring, nobody who's evaluating you. So you
7 don't implement.

8 And so the situation just gets worse and
9 worse. And the more you're frustrated, the more
10 years that you're in the classroom without the
11 coach, without the support, without the help. And
12 that's why so many teachers are leaving. That's
13 why we cannot turn our schools around because you
14 didn't have the leadership or the ability to do
15 so.

16 And I just want to thank you all for what
17 you are doing for our schools because I know one
18 day -- many a day I left school crying not wanting
19 to go back. Thank you.

20 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Vice President
21 Williams.

22 Ms. Jolly.

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1 MS. JOLLY: Thank you. Actually, my
2 question, I'm interested in what states schools
3 participated in the process. Specifically if
4 teachers and students were involved in identifying
5 needs. And I ask you because I'm kind of fearful
6 that more PD that deals from the top down might
7 accelerate teacher turnover, especially if it
8 mistargeted professional development ends up being
9 ineffective.

10 MS. GASKINS: So I can share again on
11 that. When we launched the Learning Support
12 Network, at first touch base with the school was a
13 root-cause analysis meeting. In that meeting were
14 the LEA leaders, in addition to members of
15 whatever academic leadership team existed at the
16 school.

17 Many do include instructional coaches,
18 educators, and really included a deep dive look
19 into data and allowed an opportunity -- a lot of
20 it was the school leadership team being
21 self-reflective. Instead of them being told
22 what's going wrong, them instead looking at the

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1 data and saying that this is where we think our
2 areas of challenge are.

3 And from that conversation, knowing that
4 we had a finite number of resources in a finite
5 amount of time, tried to really do our best to
6 match one of those challenges to the resources and
7 the appropriate coach to really focus on an area
8 we felt we could be successful with over the
9 course of the year.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. Mr. Contreras,
12 did you have questions at this point?

13 MR. CONTRERAS: No.

14 MR. JACOBSON: Then I will say that I've
15 got a couple of questions and then we'll do one
16 more two-minute round if you have more questions.
17 I think board members have a couple of additional
18 follow-ups. This has been a really rich
19 discussion and we appreciate you all being here
20 and to get a different perspective both from OSSE
21 and from the school level. It is incredibly
22 helpful and...

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1 So my first question is: The number
2 of -- Ms. Gaskins -- the number of focus on
3 priority schools that we have and then are all of
4 those schools participating in this program.

5 MS. GASKINS: That's a good question. So
6 they are not all involved. And I'll share why.
7 Our waiver...after priority school doesn't
8 exit...for two years. That's the OSSE
9 intervention year. And so schools that are still
10 in that pipeline that are, you know, doing the
11 work -- turn around and doing the work in terms of
12 focus schools to address that subpopulation of
13 students, they get time to course correct on their
14 own before OSSE intervenes and does this kind of
15 deep dive that we're describing here today.

16 MR. JACOBSON: So if a school is in its
17 first or second year to try to get out, are they
18 able -- do they have the option of participating
19 in this support network program?

20 MS. GASKINS: This year we did focus
21 solely on the schools that were required to
22 receive the intervention. That's how we

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1 structured it.

2 MR. JACOBSON: Okay. I might say that an
3 improvement in the future might be to allow those
4 schools that are putting together their plans and
5 implementing plans. If this is a success and it's
6 working, we should allow schools that are
7 interested to enter earlier in their timeline. I
8 think it would be helpful.

9 The next question I have is I think you
10 mentioned something about the support included
11 differentiated instruction, increasing rigor,
12 reducing infractions.

13 I'm really curious about the increasing
14 rigor. I think that we have pretty high standards
15 for the City, and I'm wondering what this
16 increasing rigor means. I think we've gotten
17 pretty rigorous with our standards that the Board
18 has approved along with our OSSE partners.

19 MS. FRAZIER: That's a great question.
20 And we do. We have very rigorous standards. And
21 when we talk about increasing rigor in the
22 classroom, we're really talking about the

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1 questioning and the way at which the standards are
2 being taught. So if there's a math teacher -- you
3 know, as opposed to giving students three or four
4 equations, simple equations to answer, a way to
5 increase rigor would have them -- have to maybe
6 write about why they came about a certain answer.
7 And they'll be asking different higher order
8 questions to cause them to critically think.

9 So a lot of times in classrooms you hear
10 teachers asking what questions, questions that
11 kids could answer just okay, what happened then?
12 What happened next? But you want to ask them to
13 compare things and to make connections. So it's
14 giving them those techniques to increase the rigor
15 of instruction, not necessarily the standards, but
16 increase the rigors of instruction.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. That's very
18 helpful.

19 A couple of colleagues talked about
20 teacher retention and we understand why teacher
21 retention hasn't gone up this year...by the end of
22 the year, given the situation that Options is in.

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1 How has student retention been this
2 school year with the cultural shift, with the
3 increased focus on discipline? I know you said
4 that students are staying in class longer, but has
5 the graduation rate gone up? What are you seeing
6 there on the ground?

7 MS. SAYEH-REID: We've lost a couple of
8 students, a good number of students since -- since
9 all the issues with Options and the money issues
10 and all of that involved a lot of students when
11 we...

12 MR. JACOBSON: You can't do apples to
13 apples, right? You can't compare last year to
14 this year, given all that.

15 MS. SAYEH-REID: (Nods.)

16 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. That's
17 helpful.

18 I think Ms. Wilson Phelan touched on this
19 and I just want to follow up. Why are there no
20 partnerships with higher performing D.C. public
21 schools? Am I missing that?

22 MS. GASKINS: Best practice Dissemination

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1 Grant. Again, because it was a competitive grant,
2 schools and LEAs self-selected. We certainly
3 courted schools to apply, and we really were
4 looking for schools that were in the reward
5 category, rising category, or schools that had
6 beaten -- we call them beating the odd schools
7 that might not necessarily have that reward status
8 or that type status on...that were showing
9 progress in certain subpopulations of students.
10 And the applications that we received and were
11 ultimately awarded were the ones in front of us.

12 Again, I would want to reiterate the work
13 to operate this grant is pretty intense, and it
14 does require a level of capacity and coordination
15 at a school level and it simply -- you know, the
16 applications that were received for those that
17 felt up to the challenge.

18 I would just continue to emphasize that
19 that best practices Dissemination Grant is a
20 critical part -- was a critically important part
21 of the collaboration within...but it's not the
22 only part.

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1 This -- we're lucky to be here with
2 Options around the learning support network. But
3 the balance of seven schools in the network are
4 DCPS schools and so we were convening them as
5 schools and leaderships teams are convening both,
6 you know, DCPS and charter schools, and it's that
7 same level of engagement and rigor and interest
8 that we want to see.

9 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. I'd love for
10 this Board to work with OSSE and DCPS to encourage
11 even more so DCPS schools to become partners with
12 the underperforming schools. I think that's
13 critically important and something that I'd like
14 to work with you all on.

15 We're going to do one question -- up to
16 two-minute question and answer. Ms. Wattenberg,
17 would you like to start?

18 MS. WATTENBERG: Yes. One quick
19 follow-up from before and then I have a different
20 topic. The only thing I want to say on retention,
21 I think it's -- and you all have confirmed this.
22 It's a huge issue. We really need to do a serious

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1 study on it. I know it's very difficult to get
2 these numbers. I don't quite understand why it's
3 so difficult to get these numbers, but it seems we
4 really need to understand how quickly people are
5 turning over at the different schools, what the
6 years of experience are of the different teachers
7 and really try to understand what's going on so
8 that we can get at it, particularly in these
9 schools, but more broadly for the full range of
10 schools.

11 My next question is really -- it's more a
12 comment, but a lot of people can respond on it,
13 which is -- the question was asked earlier about
14 how will you be able to show your scores, how
15 would you be able to show your achievements. And
16 somebody said well, the Park isn't out yet so we
17 won't be able to see it till the fall.

18 So as the chairman of the waiver
19 committee, I want to say something about the Park
20 test, which is relevant, which is one, the way our
21 rules currently are, we score people according to
22 the number of kids who are proficient for the most

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1 part. The details.

2 And if your kids start very, very low, we
3 don't count even them, so it's a plea unless we do
4 that formula and I know it's in the works and I
5 think it's really, really important.

6 And the other thing I want to raise is
7 that the Park is not an adaptive test, making it
8 that much more difficult for schools and kids to
9 be able to reflect what's been taught.

10 And I know everybody is going to be
11 looking at the Park next year, and I just want to
12 throw that in the hopper as something that's
13 really worth looking at. If any wants to spend my
14 next 28 seconds commenting on that, they're
15 welcome to.

16 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. Ms. Anderson?

17 MS. ANDERSON: No.

18 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Lord.

19 MS. LORD: Thank you. Very quickly. I'm
20 a little confused. Options is closing next year.
21 Is the school going to continue in some other
22 form, or are we looking at an investment that will

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1 be scattered with the wind?

2 And my second question is: Previously,
3 Options had essentially competency-based education
4 in the form of students were earning hours towards
5 food certificate workers. Is that still
6 continued? And how does that factor into teaching
7 practice?

8 MS. SAYEH-REID: Options is closing for
9 good June 30th. The current administrators at
10 Options applied for a new charter, and that opens
11 in July of this year. Majority of the teachers
12 presently at Options is most likely to be moving
13 over to...

14 And what was the other question?

15 MS. LORD: Competency-based learning.
16 How do you essentially show what you know into
17 your schooling?

18 MS. SAYEH-REID: The CTE program? Are
19 you talking about the CTE --

20 MS. LORD: Yes.

21 MS. SAYEH-REID: We still have that
22 program. And students in that program, the

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1 cosmetology, the HTC, and the criminal justice now
2 added this school year. The students in the
3 cosmetology are still working towards certificate
4 if they qualify.

5 MS. LORD: And the grades were dependent
6 upon passing licenses and certifications standards
7 on how many hours --

8 MS. SAYEH-REID: They had to take some
9 exams to be able to get the certificate. They had
10 to.

11 MS. LORD: Thank you. And has that been
12 very motivating for your students? Have you found
13 that the academics also get better --

14 MS. SAYEH-REID: It depends on the
15 students' interest. A lot of them, if they're
16 very interested in becoming cosmetologists in the
17 future, then they pay more attention and they take
18 it more seriously.

19 MS. LORD: Thank you.

20 MR. JACOBSON: Vice President Williams,
21 do you have additional questions?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: I just want to follow up

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1 on Mary's question. So the school...will still be
2 a priority school and it will still be going to
3 the same? You will not be working with them?

4 MS. GASKINS: The school will no longer
5 be a priority school. It's a new school.

6 MS. WILLIAMS: So what you've been doing
7 will end on June 30th?

8 MS. GASKINS: So this deep intensive
9 support will not exist. Access to other elements
10 of our SSOS certainly will. And we would want to
11 make sure that they accessed as much as possible
12 as they're transitioning to this next chapter.

13 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you.

14 MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Jones, do you have a
15 question?

16 MR. JONES: No.

17 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Wilson Phelan.

18 MS. PHELAN: From the context of what you
19 shared today, it seems you're saying that one year
20 of support was put into a school that you knew was
21 going to switch over chartership and with that
22 switchover would change status. This is where the

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1 taxpayers scratch their heads and say, are we
2 letting policy get in the way of good practice?
3 That seems crazy to me that we wouldn't continue
4 some kind of intervention and support and think
5 that just one year of support is sufficient.
6 That's crazy.

7 MS. GASKINS: I don't think anybody would
8 disagree with you about what you're --

9 MS. PHELAN: Then why didn't they get
10 into the waiver? Unless a school changes status
11 or something like that? You know what I mean?
12 Like that's the thing we want to hear.

13 MS. GASKINS: I understand. I agree. I
14 think in terms of what is in the waiver and what
15 leverage we do have to deal with this, and our
16 work in partnership with PCSB as we literally
17 figure this out and determine the best path as we
18 go forward. We would want to meet Kingsman's
19 needs wherever they land in the next few months.
20 It will likely not look like coaching. But I
21 would tend to agree that we want continued
22 conversations about how OSSE can be a support to

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1 this LEA as they embark on this new chapter.

2 MS. PHELAN: And then just very quickly,
3 you used the word "line of credit." I'm curious
4 about why you used that terminology in that grant.

5 And for other schools, like DCPS schools,
6 ongoing charters that are still in priority
7 status, do they get a second year?

8 MS. GASKINS: So the first question about
9 why we called it a line of credit, we don't call
10 it a grant because it's -- line of credit is more
11 reflective on what it was. Our third-party
12 consultant, Crofton Johnson, actually were the
13 keepers of the line of credit. And as the action
14 plan activities were planned out, the school could
15 tap into it. So it was literally something that
16 was flexible, nimble, wasn't caught up in either
17 agency, which could be problematic.

18 We really wanted to make it a really
19 quick and accessible resource for school leaders
20 to use in a relatively short amount of time,
21 strategically and timely. So that's why we used
22 the word "line of credit" versus a traditional

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1 grant.

2 MS. PHELAN: And quickly, do other
3 schools get another year of intervention or is
4 this it? One shot.

5 MS. GASKINS: As I'm sure you're familiar
6 with, our requirement to intervene with priority
7 schools is not going away. OSSE is obligated to
8 intervene and provide intensive support to
9 priority schools that don't exit. So we must
10 intervene.

11 Again, the vision and what we'll learn
12 about what worked for this model will inform what
13 year two looks like.

14 MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Weedon.

15 MR. WEEDON: I'd just like to echo the
16 comments around why this can't continue with the
17 new leadership at Options or Kingsman.

18 And also, just state that it's kind of
19 crazy that schools have to fail three years before
20 we share these best practices. And I understand
21 there's concern with the federal requirements and
22 what we can do under ESCA and under federal law.

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1 But couldn't there be a way to use local funds to
2 adapt some of these best practices and make those
3 practices available to the schools earlier so that
4 we're intervening before we harm the children?

5 Our ultimate goal here is collaboration
6 across schools, across the public education
7 sectors, and improving the performance of
8 teaching, improving the performance of students.
9 There's got to be a way that we can use these
10 lessons learned to actually accomplish that, not
11 allowing the children to fail for three years
12 before we move forward.

13 MS. GASKINS: I would tend to agree that
14 we shouldn't sit back at any point and let schools
15 continue down a path that isn't productive or
16 supporting school success.

17 Our SSOS is a portion of what we do. I
18 do believe that the tiered structure, literally
19 accessible to every educator and every LEA in the
20 District does meet some of that.

21 What also happened on an ongoing basis in
22 our nation, PCSB and DCPS about the support that

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1 they are providing the schools. The waiver does
2 clearly articulate it's an LEA responsibility to
3 do that deep dive and OSSE's responsibility to
4 monitor and hold accountable. And when that isn't
5 happening well with the intervenes, it's a shared
6 effort at every step of the way.

7 But I would encourage us to remember it's
8 OSSE and our primary LEAs that are on the hook for
9 supporting school improvement, and we play both
10 hats, both that monitoring and that support from
11 day one.

12 MR. JACOBSON: Ms. Jolly from Ward 8.

13 MS. JOLLY: I certainly applaud the
14 efforts that have been made on behalf
15 of...especially in the gains. It's pretty
16 remarkable gains when you look at the numbers,
17 things happening at Options. And I also
18 understand why you would choose a school like
19 Options, who has experienced so much success with
20 this program.

21 But I'm curious how successful this is in
22 the other schools, particularly when we're talking

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1 about schools that are the bottom 40 schools. I'm
2 personally interested in Kramer, because I see it
3 in both the Learning Support Network and the
4 Dissemination Grant and because I used to teach
5 there.

6 Can you tell us more about what these
7 numbers, these preliminary numbers, look like in
8 schools that perhaps aren't the example?

9 MS. FRAZIER: Yes. Kramer is one of my
10 three schools. So Kramer...in Options. Our goals
11 there -- one of the major goals is classroom
12 management and we also just focused on special ed,
13 because they have a large special needs
14 population.

15 So the support and the professional
16 development was working with those teachers and
17 supporting them.

18 Change hasn't happened as quickly there,
19 to be honest. We actually just had a site visit
20 on Monday and went into the classrooms and looked
21 at different educators and there was a favorable
22 observation, which was good. So there is some

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1 improvement. We don't have all the final data.

2 But I'll give you one example, as far as
3 teachers using high-level questioning. When we
4 first did our rounds, I think it was, like, seven
5 classrooms, we may have gone in, we probably saw
6 it in two.

7 And then in the second time around, out
8 of the seven classrooms that we went in, we saw it
9 in five.

10 So, you know, I see little bits and
11 little sparks of sunshine in different places, but
12 towards the end of the year, which is in a couple
13 of weeks, we will have the final results. And
14 they do look different.

15 Options, out of all of my schools, has
16 shown the greatest turnaround of results very
17 quickly. And, you know, it could be attributed to
18 a number of different things. But Kramer is on
19 the move, just looks a little different.

20 MS. GASKINS: And I would just add across
21 all the schools, I wouldn't say that there's a
22 correlation between DCPS versus charter LEA. We

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1 have some new DCPS schools that have taken some
2 models that leaders are really using it as a
3 driving force to do great work. And so it's
4 certainly not -- we have -- it's really a
5 school-to-school determination.

6 MS. JOLLY: Quick follow-up. What
7 protocol do you have in place for revising your
8 approaches in each of these schools next year?

9 MS. GASKINS: In terms of the actual
10 action plan?

11 MS. JOLLY: So some of the action plans
12 that now haven't seen as much growth as you might
13 prefer, what plans do you have in place for
14 revisions?

15 MS. FRAZIER: So we would bring back --
16 if we have the same leadership, we would take the
17 action plan back to the table, look at the data at
18 the end of the year, and kind of reassess where we
19 need to focus. And, you know, change the plan of
20 attack. If this year it didn't work, then we
21 obviously weren't doing something right and need
22 to revisit it. And we have the freedom to do that

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1 in any kind of way we feel necessary. So there's
2 no restrictions.

3 I can speak to another school I have. I
4 have Garfield Elementary School as well. And it's
5 fabulous working over there. And we're working
6 with curriculum. Something very different than
7 the other schools, it's not behavior, it's not
8 differentiation or anything. It's looking at --
9 they have really a phenomenal teaching staff, and
10 they're a blended learning school. But the
11 students are moving slowly when we talk about Park
12 and the test scores someone mentioned that, you
13 know, a lot of times it's not an indicator of
14 growth.

15 And so we're looking at how to expedite
16 that growth so that it reflects in the test
17 scores. So things are going well in the
18 classroom. And so what we did, they have an
19 extended day, so we created a scope and sequence
20 of instruction based on common core domains.

21 So you're teaching your fourth grade
22 based on fourth grade curriculum, we are teaching

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1 math based on area of need across grade level
2 spans. So students will get picked up if they're
3 missing -- you know, if they've missed some skills
4 and you can also teach up if they have moved on.

5 So, you know, I can't wait to see the end
6 result of how this specified instruction impacts
7 the students. I'm told that it's representing
8 growth. And there's no way not to if you're
9 focusing specifically on those standards and
10 domains.

11 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you very much.

12 I think we'll let you go. I just had one
13 follow-up question, and Ms. Jolly sort of hit on
14 it.

15 But how are the results that you just
16 talked about -- you said different schools are
17 having different results. How are they going to
18 be published and then how is OSSE going to review
19 and calibrate for future years?

20 MS. GASKINS: Yes. That's a great
21 question. We have to conclude the year and look
22 at the elements of our evaluation plan. We've

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1 done a few things. We've surveyed all of the
2 participants in the learning support network.
3 We've done interviews with principals in the
4 learning support network.

5 We'll be looking at the individual
6 activities and metrics at each individual school
7 that...and do a deep dive and assess as to what
8 worked and what didn't.

9 We're looking forward to digging deep on
10 that, even beginning as early as tomorrow, which
11 is our third convening of our learning principals
12 and we'll really start that reflection process and
13 help think about what has been learned and what
14 should come.

15 MR. JACOBSON: Wonderful. And then my
16 last minute for me to say we've dug in a lot on
17 details here and we've certainly gotten a lot of
18 follow-up on our end with our partners at OSSE.

19 But I don't want to lose sight of the
20 bigger picture, which is now our state education
21 agency is providing support to our local education
22 agencies that aren't hitting their marks. That is

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1 a giant step forward. It is imperfect. We're
2 going to work with you all to make it more
3 perfect.

4 But this conversation will continue, and
5 we hope that this state support will continue and
6 improve now that we've got some lessons learned
7 because I think it's incredibly important to
8 ensure that the state agency is supporting our
9 local education agencies.

10 So on that, I'm going to release the
11 witnesses and thank you all so much for spending
12 your evening with us. Very important.

13 MS. GASKINS: Thank you for your time.

14 MS. SAYEH-REID: Thank you.

15 MS. FRAZIER: Thank you.

16 MS. DALTON: Thank you.

17 MR. JACOBSON: And we have just a couple
18 of housekeeping things to take care of before we
19 adjourn this evening. The first thing I'm going
20 to ask is Ms. Anderson was not here for our vote
21 on Hospitality High. If no one has objections,
22 I'd like to be able to have her record her vote.

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1 Ms. Anderson.

2 MS. ANDERSON: I vote aye.

3 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you so much. That
4 will be reflected in the record.

5 The second thing I wanted to say is we
6 are incredibly excited to officially announce that
7 the state board has finally filled the position
8 that the council has created of chief student
9 advocate.

10 Faith Gibson Hubbard of Ward 5, if I
11 remember correctly, started on Monday. She has a
12 lot of work to do. She'll be spending her first
13 month getting plans together, getting her shop
14 together, and she will be presenting before us and
15 officially introducing herself at our June
16 meeting. And we very much look forward to that
17 and look forward to supporting her efforts, along
18 with those of the ombudsman to tackle problems in
19 our public schools across the board.

20 So welcome, Faith. And we're excited for
21 you to get out in the community and roll up your
22 sleeves, which you've already started to do.

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1 The final thing I'm going to say is
2 Ms. Lord, if you wanted to -- we're going to start
3 closing comments. If you want to speak at all
4 about the National Science Academy.

5 MS. LORD: Is this the closing comment
6 period?

7 MR. JACOBSON: This is the closing
8 comment period. If board members have special
9 pieces that they'd like to share in the closing --

10 MS. LORD: Well, thank you for that. And
11 I was going to put in a little motion to make a
12 closing comment anyway, because I have a couple of
13 other shoutouts.

14 As most of you know, I serve as the
15 selection coordinator for the National Youth
16 Science Camp, which is a very prestigious program
17 that pulls top science and math scholars,
18 graduating seniors, from around the company and
19 internationally for almost a month of science
20 education and fun in the outdoors of West
21 Virginia, sponsored by the government of West
22 Virginia. And it's all expenses covered,

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1 including airfare for our participants.

2 And I was hoping we could get our two
3 delegates here this evening. Camilla from School
4 Without Walls and Jacob Martin from Friendship
5 Collegiate Academy have other obligations,
6 including exams and babysitting duties.

7 So I'm hoping that they will be able to
8 join us and say a little bit about what their
9 plans and aspirations are for science. But they
10 are just outstanding.

11 And we have a third delegate selected
12 who, unfortunately, had to bow out because she
13 secured a 12-week paid internship, research
14 internship, at the National Institutes of Health.
15 So we have just this astonishing crew of science
16 and math folks.

17 So we hope to hear from them next month.

18 And my second shoutout, also not
19 surprisingly, in terms of STEM, Superintendent
20 Kang and the OSSE staff. I will unfold my apron.
21 But today, some of you may know We the Pizza and
22 Chef Spike.

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1 What you probably didn't know is that
2 John Burroughs Education Campus and 50 other D.C.
3 public schools, have amazing school gardens. They
4 are growing kale. Let me tell you, when a fourth
5 grader says oh, kale, I love kale, you know
6 something good is happening. And many of our
7 schools have STEM education programs going around
8 these farmer's markets, they sell their produce at
9 these farmer's markets. And they will probably be
10 having some tasting of salads rolling out for the
11 rest of the month, short though that month may be.

12 So I encourage everybody, whether you
13 have a child in school or not, to just check out
14 the school garden. OSSE has a curriculum
15 specialist, school gardens are used to teach not
16 only about science, but also about wellness. And
17 as our mayor and deputy mayor for education
18 noticed today that healthy kids are smart kids.

19 So thank you for that. And just a
20 shoutout to all the graduating seniors, including
21 my colleague Brian Contreras who will be walking
22 across the stage next month before our next public

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1 meeting. I just want to officially acknowledge
2 you and your class of 2015 classmates.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. JACOBSON: Other board member closing
5 statements or committee chairs?

6 Ms. Wilson Phelan.

7 MS. PHELAN: Thank you. Just very
8 quickly, we have kicked off the education working
9 group, and so I just welcome, of course, OSSE's
10 involvement in that and any other board members
11 who want to weigh in, we had our first meeting a
12 couple weeks ago.

13 MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Weedon.

14 MR. WEEDON: I just want to thank the
15 Council of the District for their work, especially
16 the education committee on the FY 16 budget and
17 all my constituents in Ward 6 on behalf of their
18 schools and the broader community. I know there's
19 a lot of concern with the capital budget,
20 especially in my neighborhood. And I look forward
21 to working with the council to develop a good tool
22 that will help us with capital expenditures.

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1 Facilities aren't an end-all. We need
2 great teachers, great leaders, and an involved
3 community. But great facilities are required to
4 have great schools.

5 MR. JACOBSON: Any other comments?

6 Vice President Williams.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: I would like to thank the
8 staff of the State Board of Education for stepping
9 up in the absence of an executive director and
10 helping to hire a new policy analyst and the help
11 for the search for a new executive director. I'm
12 sorry I wasn't here, Faith, when you came on
13 board, but making sure she had a place to sit and
14 a phone to use.

15 I don't think this transition could have
16 been possible without the help of the staff, and I
17 don't think the staff has been thanked enough for
18 their support.

19 We will now, in the search for the
20 executive director -- the position closed
21 yesterday. The rankings are out. So tomorrow, I
22 will start on that process.

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1 In the interim, we've also hired a policy
2 analyst, who will start on June the 15th.

3 I did get a vacation in. I just got back
4 at 5:15 today. So forgive me.

5 MR. JACOBSON: You are very much
6 forgiven.

7 Mr. Contreras.

8 MR. CONTRERAS: Thank you. I'd like to
9 say I have spent the last few days looking at
10 applications for the student advisory council, and
11 there's a lot of good students applying and I'm
12 really excited about the prospects for this
13 organization.

14 I'd also like to say that we are still
15 accepting applications, so I would highly
16 encourage my peers and classmates to look into
17 this opportunity. There's more information
18 available on the state board website, but I think
19 it's a really exciting opportunity for the student
20 community to take an active stance on issues and
21 make a difference. So I would like to plug that.

22 Thank you.

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1 MR. JACOBSON: As always, our student
2 representatives make the best speeches of the
3 night.

4 With that, if there are no more comments,
5 I entertain a motion to adjourn.

6 MS. LORD: So moved.

7 MR. JACOBSON: And second.

8 MR. JACOBSON: All in favor?

9 (Ayes all around.)

10 MR. JACOBSON: We're adjourned.

11 (Whereupon, at 7:29 p.m., the proceedings
12 were adjourned.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

2 I, CHRISTINA S. HOTSKO, the officer before whom
3 the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby
4 certify that the witnesses whose testimony appear in
5 the foregoing proceedings were duly sworn by me; that
6 the testimony of said witnesses was taken by me in
7 stenotypy and thereafter reduced to typewriting under
8 my direction; that said statement is a true record of
9 the proceedings; that I am neither counsel for,
10 related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the
11 action in which this statement was taken; and,
12 further, that I am not a relative or employee of any
13 counsel or attorney employed by the parties hereto,
14 nor financially or otherwise interested in the
15 outcome of this action.



18
19

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina S. Hotsko", written over a horizontal line.

20
21
22

CHRISTINA S. HOTSKO
Notary Public in and for the
District of Columbia

My commission expires:
September 14, 2016

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