

Transcript of State Board of Education

Thursday, November 1, 2018

[START – 3:38:00]

White: Thank you so much. And while you're standing there we'll, umm, move on to the last item for discussion on our agenda today and that is EICS three. The approval of the Innovative, excuse me, EICS four which is the, umm, approval of the Innovative School District's school that has been recommended for inclusion in the ISD for the 2019-2020. Umm, I've got Ms. Allen at the podium and umm, Dr. Hall umm, as, as backup and so I will just turn the discussion over to, to you.

Superintendent Allen: Thank you. So we want to begin today and we know many of you have seen our mission statement which says that our mission statement is "creating innovative conditions within low-performing schools and partnership with communities across North Carolina. Focus on improving equity. And we are really committed to making sure that students have access to high quality education and then the opportunity that all students have an opportunity to, for success and so in doing that we look at high expectations for student achievement and I think that is particularly important today because I want to make sure that you know that we are committed to our approach which is community based, it's student centered and it's results driven with an unwavering commitment to equity and excellence in education. So keeping that in mind, we move on to our process. This process, umm, is really guided by statute. It's a deliberate process and we, today we're going to discuss the phases that we have gone through to bring us up to today's phase which is the selection phase. Statute tells

us how schools are qualified for consideration in the ISD, which means that these schools performance scores in the lowest 5% of all schools in the prior year. Also, it should include rural and urban schools and we cannot engage with more than one school from a single LEA. Additionally, there were other criteria that we applied to narrow down the list. We consider definitely growth because as we stated earlier, when schools are growing, that means there is some movement toward change in the right direction. That means there is a path forward to make sure that students are achieving. And so when looking at that, we removed all schools that were rated as a D in the 2017-18 school year. All schools that rated an F, but they were meeting growth, which again means that there is improvement. And then all schools who have met academic growth in both 2015-2016 and 2016-17 school years and earned a D rating for those same years. Why did we consider that? Because sometimes there is a rough road and so if we saw that in the previous two years that they were meeting growth and something could have happened at the school where they fell below, then we took those schools off of the list as well. After we did that, there were six schools that were remaining on the list. There were four rural schools, Carver Heights Elementary in Wayne County, Gaston Middle in North Hampton County, Hillcrest Elementary in Alamance-Burlington County, Williford Elementary in Nash Rocky Mount Schools; and then there were also urban, two urban schools which is Fairview Elementary in Guilford County and Hall-Woodward Elementary in Forsyth County. As we consider our evaluation, these are the factors that led us through this process. We evaluated students' performance and growth data trends over the past three years. That was one of the most significant factors. Why is that? Because we wanted to consider students'

growth and proficiency at these schools. It is also in statute that we look at the past three years. We reviewed the most recent comprehensive needs assessment. We confer via phone and face-to-face with district superintendents and other district leadership; and I want to note that during this process, we also allow superintendents to tell us who they were bringing into the meeting or invited whomever they wanted to invite to that particular meeting. For example, in W-, in Nash Rocky Mount, Dr. Jeffries invited his Board Chair, so his Board Chair was a part of that discussion. Dr. Benson also invited Dr. Hall to come and talk with his entire Board at a work session. And so those are some of the processes that happen during that time. We also conducted school visits and engaged in discussions with school principals and other school and district administrators. So when most of the visits the superintendents were there engaged in the visit with us or there were other school district personnel that were there as well. And we also consider plans and processes that were currently in place at schools to address performance gaps and barriers to success. We wanted to know what are you doing to address the issue of continued low performance at your particular school. So at this time I want to talk to you about some of the things that we were able to see. Some of the practices in place, umm, both plans that we can see in action that weren't just aspirational but that we can actually see was going on at the schools. So we started with Gaston Middle and what we found out in those discussions and also looking at the school is that because of that school's location, they have a very difficult time attracting teachers. But some of the things that they are doing is TFA, umm, which is Teach For America, looking at retired teachers and out of state teachers. So they have recruiting efforts in place to make sure that they are getting teachers in place for the students.

They also took a close look at professional development opportunities for their teachers over the summer. So all of their teachers participated in the Model Schools Conference to learn what does, what do you need to do to effectively turn around a school, rigor and relevance training over the summer as well as they are doing a continuous deep dive into the Fifteen Fixes for Broken Grades. Why is that? Because they have seen that their grades do not match up with the scores for their tests, and so what was shared with us is that they have seen that some of the curriculum that they were using it was varied across the teachers. And so now it is mandatory; it's non-negotiable. And so they make sure that this curriculum that they are using and then they are doing ongoing deep dives and reviews of their data. So those are just some of the things that we saw. They also have an interim principal who is known for turning around schools, um, and so, um, it was evident that changes were being made in this school and this school is also um, amongst the six schools has the highest scores of the scores that will be presented in this presentation. We move on to Hillcrest Elementary, Dr. Benson. They have hired a new superintendent, which is Dr. Benson, and a new turnaround principal with a proven record of success. They have recruited new teachers to make sure that the teachers that they have at their schools are highly qualified teachers. They have also used their title funds for a full-time nurse, social work, behavior support teacher interventionist. They have a new EC team where they are looking at the social, emotional and behavior support and guidance for students. They have MTSSs implemented for the first time this year. And they also are supported by an administrative team and academic coach. They, they have weekly grade-level teacher team meetings to analyze student outcomes. They had a six-week process over the

summer that they detailed to us which actually amended their schedule allowing for individual intervention enrichment time for all grade levels, additional time allocated for science and small group instruction. They also have an extended day for all third and fifth graders where they have certified, highly qualified teachers providing tutoring to close the achievement gap. So those are some of the things that we saw at Hillcrest Elementary. At Williford Elementary, there is a whole child approach. They have reconfigured the school to focus on earlier literacy, um, absent, chronic absenteeism and familial supports. They have hired a new assistant p - teacher, new assistant principal, sorry, full-time literacy coach and two early learning interventionists. Their team is focused on culture building and they also did work with their mission statement. They, their school district comes in and then conducts three to four internal reviews throughout the school year. They have site-based instructional rounds each nine weeks and daily administrative walk throughs. They have also developed a schoolwide instructional monitoring tool. They have a school-based health clinic provided by Opportunities Industrial Center, mental health services partnership with downies partnership and they also have an after-school program where they have partnered with the boys and girls club to provide 40 of their neediest students when where they have an individual development plan. And so it was evident that these things were in place, they were actionable, we were able to see, um, many of the things that they described. Move on to Hall-Woodward where we met with Superintendent Beverly Emory. The school is now under the umbrella of the district's instructional superintendent. She focuses on school transfer, um, transformation. This school was previously not under that. It is one of their inscribed 340 schools. They have modified their schedule to

include an intervention block and pull outs for comprehensive support. They have adopted various strategies, one of them is Getting Better Faster Model and the New Teacher Project. They also have implemented tutoring by teachers and the only teachers that can tutor are teachers with high EVAAS scores. They have hired two instructional coaches. Teacher development is based on a tiered system and they have various community partnerships such as United Way. We move on to Fairview Elementary School where we met with Dr. Contreras and her team. At this school, they have changed school leadership. There is a new principal and a new assistant principal. They have contracted with a third-party school turnaround institute. They have new curriculum to improve adherence to meeting the standards. They have made necessary changes to equip the school with the most effective teachers possible. They now have a math and literacy coach, renewed community partnerships. They have partnered with the local recreation center for an afterschool program for all of the Fairview students. They have had a monthly data analysis group that occurs on a monthly basis, and they utilize the Wallace Foundation Urban School Leadership. So again, at this school we were able to see many implementations that they had made based on strategies and all of the different, um, strategies that I just talked to you about. Carver Heights Elementary School. So we met with Dr. Dunsmore and his team. It was communicated to us that the behavior has improved. This year they have had no suspensions. They have also put a program into place to address the behaviors in the school. The principal noted that she is more visible in the classrooms this year. They have an Apple grant that allows for more technology within the school. They also have a school improvement grant. While parent participation and engagement is low, they have made

great strides. The principal said it is better than it has been, um, before and that there is increased parent and community involvement. They have a great list of community partners that they have engaged with this year. So now as we look at a side-by-side comparison, we look at all of the schools and again as I said before, a big part of the evaluation is really looking at the performance over three years. And so as you see this chart, you will see that the lowest score is Carver Heights Elementary. And we also looked at, of course, during the visits talking to administration, um, we, we have noticed a downward trend in the data at this particular school. And so at this time, I am going to turn it over to Dr. Hall to talk about our narrowing process. Thank you.

Dr. Hall: Thank you Superintendent Allen. Again, good afternoon members of the Board; appreciate the opportunity to be with you here today and talk a little bit more about this process. As you know, this is our second year of going through this uh, legislative requirement here at the state on how we implement the Innovative School District. And when we reflect on last year and we look at the statute, we know that it is pretty, you know, clear in statute itself about how do we get to the schools that are considered basically qualifying schools for the ISD. If you look in the top left hand corner, you will see where that statute is referenced and this year, based on the statutorial [sic] requirements, we had 14 schools that qualified for the Innovative School District. So we start with that process and we say okay, here is the list of schools that we have to work with. We want to look at how do we narrow down to a group of schools where we engage our time, engage our energy and our efforts in trying to understand what are some of the barriers that schools might be facing. With that you heard Superintendent Allen mention earlier we looked at the schools that had a D for last school year in hopes

that maybe okay, if this is a school that is at least at a point where it is not an F and it's, it's got some good potential for moving forward then we recognize that. We also looked at the fact that if it was a school that was an F but meeting growth, again, give them acknowledgment in the hopes that what is happening with that meeting growth is that we are going to see some of those gaps start to close over time. And then looking over those three years, if we look at the two years before the school year that qualifies the school for the ISD meeting in 17-18, if the school qualified, we look at the two years before that to see did those schools if they had a D and if they had a basically a if they were meeting growth in those two years, not going to a situation where we just identify one year of performance as the only qualifier when we engage in these conversations. And I also want to point out, because we have heard this come up a little bit, last year you may recall that when I stood before the Board, I recognized that we had some schools that were getting a School Improvement Grant. That SIG grant was important to point out at that point in time because we were only at, at that point we were only identifying schools that had only had one year in their SIG grant process, which means they had just finished up their planning year. So early on, we removed those schools from consideration since it was in the planning process. It is not in statute that those schools have to be exempted but we wanted to at least recognize that through that selection process that schools had just completed their first year of planning. And so moving through this, and if you look at when we get down to the six schools that are under consideration, which are the same six schools that Superintendent Allen shared with you, we looked at the legislative requirements, we looked at the most recent three years. We conferred with the local districts which often times we started with the

superintendents and met with the individuals on their team that they wanted us to engage with and then we continued to narrow. So if you start up here and you think about these 14 schools, you get down to the six and then you start to use the data and information that we have avail- available to then decide where do we go and where do we start to think about where we can engage interventions and opportunities to help hopefully partner with the district to turn a school around. After we get down to that point, and we narrow the list, we did recognize that there was one school that really stood out in this situation. And that was a school that we were going to go through all the steps of truly engaging and all requirements within the statute. Which gets at how do we engage and confer and, with the local school board? How do we also take the steps that are required to engage with the county commissioners? Conducting a hearing for parents and their local community to gather that input. And then ultimately, how does all that come together to inform a final recommendation back to the State Board about any school that we need to consider as part of the strategy as outlined in statute. So that's where we stand today based on Superintendent Allen's recommendation, is that Carver Heights Elementary really reflects what we see as meeting all those requirements and from the conversations that we have had and the engagement that we have had is identified as that school. And so some of that again, I want to point out, it's the legislator criteria. It's the trend data. But it is also in some of the self-reported barriers that are conveyed to us during these engagements and during these conversations. You have heard me say for the last 18 months that community engagement and local discussions are critical in this work. We know that, and it means that there is a lot of hard conversations that sometimes we have to engage in. And the

passion that a community has and we have seen this passion in the local community – it's real. People love their schools. They want to see schools do great things. And we recognize that and we want to you know, again honor that. But we also have to come to a point where we say when we see that only 18.4% of our students are proficient in reading and math, we've got to step in and decide where do we go from here? What steps do we need to consider? And if we have a school that really goes through all this process and we get to this point and we see some of the actions that districts are taking to turn schools around, again, as Superintendent Allen mentioned, not aspirational goals or aspirational things that need to be done, but really and truly where do the beginning of the school year start in being able to lay the ground work to turn a school around? And those are the kind of things that we have to look at and the things we have to consider before standing before this Board for any recommendation. And so we did. We had those conversations again with the local school board. We had engagement with the county commissioners and I want to recognize all of them because they ask great questions. It was a healthy conversation and I think again, it helps to inform things that we need to come back and think about as we, again, move into next steps in this work. And also the, the public hearing. You know, we had a great turnout. And I have to again, I want to reiterate that there was a lot of passion. We had a lot of educators in that room. We had community leaders. We had other groups that really came in and conveyed some of their both concerns you know, and things that they wanted to see at the school but also some concerns they had in general about the ISD. Again, we don't shy away from those conversations, but we do have to listen and we also got to take into consideration what are the situations right now in a school and

where do we move forward based on what is required in statute. And so that's where we are and again, I know there is a lot of individuals in this room that have been a part of those conversations and I want to recognize them. I also want to thank you know, Dr. Dunsmore. You know, it takes time and it takes energy to really pull together things, well let me rephrase that, it takes a lot of energy to get to the point of having a short runway with the time that we have to be able to pull a community meeting together and do the things that we are required. We held that meeting on October 8th. It was on a Monday. We met our requirements for public notice, but we also know it was a quick turnaround time. And I want to recognize the fact that that meeting was held on that day because we do believe in partnership with the district. That was a date also that was shared with us by Dr. Dunsmore as a day that he would be available to be engaged in that community meeting. So we intentionally scheduled it that day because we were made aware that he was not going to be available for that Tuesday through Friday following. So those are some of the things that when we talk about engagement partnership, we try to be responsive, recognizing that we have a small window of time, but we also try to listen to what our partners tell us and how do we best meet their needs for what they can do and what they can engage in. And I also want to recognize the district because that meeting would not have been able to happen if it was not for their engagement and helping us get the message out and opening up their doors and facility and their team to help setup that space. So I do recognize and appreciate the collaboration that we have had with the district in that process. A few of the things that I will point out – this really gets down to why Carver Heights Elementary School. The data indicates the downward trend in the data that Superintendent Allen shared with

you just a few moments ago. We do look at the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and we look at those findings and what does that help to tell us about some of the potential barriers or opportunities that a school may have. We look at the feedback and engagement with the district and school leadership. And I will say, you know, out of an effort to really ensure strong partnership with districts, we do try to recognize that in those areas of you know, conversation in those discussions, there are things that we come to understand. And we know that there are some barriers that the district has conveyed to us that we have tried to really appreciate and recognize. And while those are real barriers sometimes we might hear that barriers are more governance related. Sometimes we might hear that barriers are, you know, perceptions you might say it is because of lack of support or lack of resources. You hear all these different things but this is why we have to come back to what the data tells us and understand that while those barriers are communicated to us, we need to take that into context and understand okay, if there's barriers that are preventing a school from moving forward, we can't stand on the sideline and say we hope that something better happens. We can't stand by and say okay what do the aspirations tell us that people want to do for schools but more importantly say what are we doing here and now to ensure the success of students in the school. And that's an unyielding commitment that we have in the ISD and here at the department I know we are trying to do all we can to help support our schools. And so with that, those are the things that really help to lead and inform this conversation and about why we stand before you today and informs the recommendation that I know Superintendent Allen has shared. Other things that we have seen you know, we talk about resources. When we hear resource challenges, we

recognize that resources are a real issue. We all want to see teachers get what they need to ensure great instruction in the classroom. We want to support our educators. Again, I think the thing regardless of the opinions around this room, is that we all believe in the same thing for kids. We want to see kids do well. We want to see kids get to the next point. We want to see gaps close and we want to support our educators in that process. But we also have to look at the fact that you know in this case, we do have a school that has a school improvement grant. It's been two years. The most recent data does show that 7 out of the 8 goals were not met at the end of last year. We also recognize that when we talk about resources. We have to understand that we have a small window of time, 5 years, to use resources in a way when we have one of these grants, to really make some transformational work happen. And from the report from federal programs was that there was \$185,000 that was not spent last year in the school that was available based on their budget in that SIG grant to invest back in their teachers and invest back in those resources. Again, these are all things that inform why we stand before you today and why Superintendent Allen has to make the recommendation that she does to this Board based on the information that we have. So with that, I'm going to ask Superintendent Allen to continue the conversation. But I think it is important that we frame this context in what is it that happens at the statutory level. What is it that gets us down to the six schools that are under consideration? And then through those engagements and the time that we have available, understand the opportunities and the barriers that exist in each one of those schools. I commend this Board. I commend this department. I commend Superintendent Allen and I commend the local district. I know that there has been steps taken here even in the last few days that are

trying to help support the students in that school. But we also have to look at, we have some statutory requirements that are based on last year's data and what did we see here at the beginning of this year and where do we go from this point forward? And so with that, obviously I'll stick around for questions afterwards, but I want to ask Superintendent Allen on to conclude our conversation.

Allen: Thank you Dr. Hall. So all schools under consideration received a notice via e-mail on October 15th. Dr. Hall and I also made a phone call to each local superintendent to inform them of the intended recommendation. Some Superintendents we were able to reach, others we had to leave a message. And then we also mailed a letter of recommendation notice, um, to each school district. And so everyone received notice um, as required by us in the statute. So the recommendation that I'm coming to you today is for transfer of Carver Heights Elementary School into the Innovative School District. We also have the 2019 timeline for you to review. You've seen this timeline before, but we are at the phase of evaluation. There are other processes within this timeline, um in talking about where we go from today after um, the Board decides. Um, but one of the things is the operator. And so we know often times we have heard, um, different operators that can be considered but I want to make sure that everyone understands that the statute states that it can be an entity. Um, and there are innovative ways in who we decide will be the best operator for that community for that school for those students. Um, and so there are different ways that we can look at that and I think you also heard some of the recommendations earlier, in our earlier reports. So at this time, that concludes the presentation. And I'll turn it back over to Chairman Davis with questions.

Davis: Ms. White, not me.

Allen: Oh sorry, sorry Ms. White. I turn it back over to you for questions.

White: Thank you Ms. Allen and Dr. Hall for um, for your clear presentation on what you've been doing with your work on this project, um, over the past couple of months. Um, I have some, some comments that I would like to make but I would like to offer the opportunity to my um, fellow colleagues to ask questions um, about the information that has been presented today and, and get any clarification that you might need. So, Mr. Keenan.

Mr. Keenan: Umm, as a Chair, um, of course you know that that school is in my district and I have had a chance to go talk with the superintendent and some of the staff the other day and try to understand their concerns a little more and of course I understand. First of all, I like to commend Mr. Hall and his staff for what they are doing. I understand it, it's hard work, it's real hard work. Um, I'll be honest with you I'm, I [inaudible around 4:04:24] decide what to do but I think that because the new information that has come before me as to possibly some changes that they are trying to deal with, I make a motion that we delay, uh again, this has no opinion as to what's going to happen as far as my opinion whether, getting into Mr. Hall's position of recommendation, I just think it would be very important that we delay for a vote in December and allow the community to have more time to understand this because I can tell you that I have gotten calls I've been there. The community needs a little more clarification. I understand exactly what's going on and what to expect. That is a very reasonable request. I would think that uh, it would help heal a lot of things and make things go smoothly regardless of

how we vote in December. So that's what I'd like to entertain that motion just for that purpose.

White: While I don't like that motion, we do have a motion on the floor um, so, Mr. Chair.

Chair: Yea it would be appropriate to consider that motion when we come to voting on this matter later, later on our agenda so um, you'll have an opportunity to make that motion at that time. So, back to discussion.

White: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Other, other, Dr. Oxendine.

Dr. Oxendine: You know, I am sitting here listening to this fine presentation and I just, I'm going to take some of my thirty seconds or less of my comments to just thank both of you. The work that Dr. Hall continues to do is just amazing. And it's almost, I haven't read a textbook on ISD, but I think that you could write it. And to you, Dr. Allen, a remarkable job. You've hit the ground running. I, I just don't have a hat on and I will never have one large enough to take off to you. But I, what I want to highlight is listening to all the things, all the efforts and initiatives. And hard work that the schools out of, well, the other schools on the list the energy they put into improving the education of kids is just astounding. And I hope that we catalogue those strategies somewhere and get them out to our other low-performing schools across the state. More targeted toward the Carver Heights School though, what was the rationale for not expending that, about \$182,000? Of that SIG? Did they have any reasoning, reason for that? I mean was it a management issue or school improvement plans did not capture strategies or, I just, I'm baffled by that.

Allen: So the conversations that we had with um, the principal as she shared, um, about the school improvement grant and we um, ask that question um, there seemed to be um, maybe some confusion. I'm not really sure the communication is as best that she described um. She did state that there was a school improvement, um, coordinator there at the school as well. So other than that, there was no reason for not –

Oxendine: No reasoning?

Allen: No.

Oxendine: No justification? Thank you.

White: Yes sir, Mr. Ford.

Ford: Madame Chair, um, I-I want to echo the same sentiments as uh, my colleague Dr. Oxendine. Thank you so much uh, for this presentation. This was really in depth, really robust. I'm grateful to have this amount of information in front of us, uh before making a decision. It is clear that you all uh, put a whole lot of effort into it and were engaged in a whole lot of discussions and made some um, uh valuable, um inferences based on data. Um, and I know it is difficult, right? There is no easy way to talk about this or, uh it's, it's a difficult topic and so you know, I be candid, so I'm going to ask some difficult questions as well. Um, I have about three and so you can answer them um after I ask them uh, but . . . First and foremost, um, do you, can you explain to me um, if there is thus far in your two years now? Of the ISD, is that correct, or...?

Allen: So we are actually in the first year –

Ford: First year.

Allen: - Our school is in the first year, yes -

Ford: Got you. Got you.

Allen: Last year was the first recommendation by us.

Ford: Thank you so much for clarifying.

Allen: mmhmm.

Ford: In the way of the evidence and of the data, what sort of evidence have you seen so far that um, the school that is in the ISD is making progress toward goals, right? So it, the intervention is in fact working? The second question is um, with regard to the conversations that you had, the qualitative data that you all gathered – that um, I think you discussed it as we were going through the slides and I didn't see it up there – is that data captured anywhere? The interviews and observations is it coded and or available for review? Uh, because I felt like some of that was really, really helpful as an addendum to some of the, you know quantitative pieces you had up there. Is that captured anywhere for review? I'm sorry, I told you after [laughter] – um and then the second, rather the third question is um, the, the part that I-I will confess gives me the most pause umm, is you know, in your mission statement um, it states the phrase in partnership with communities. I am not a community organizer. I admire them uh, I think their skillset is valuable but if there is one thing that I have learned from them, it is this notion of informed consent. That whatever intervention, whatever idea you have there is, it has to be front loaded with an active listening process and that that relationship building is vitally important, right? And I know that we are confined by certain restrictions and timelines but um, the lead time, right? And in the conversation

and in their being one touchpoint pride to this recommendation coming before the Board is, is something that gives me pause and so I-I guess the question I'm asking is um, is there a way for there, in the spirit of that mission statement, for there to be more touchpoints? More robust listening and engagement so that there can be an authentic informed consent process because I think if there is not there will be a very difficult foundation to build upon. And so I, I'll pause. I know that's a lot.

Allen: Okay. Let's go back to your fir- Can you repeat your first question?

Ford: I believe that I can uh,

Allen: Okay. I-

Ford: The first question was –

Allen: Evidence.

Ford: The evidence, yes ma'am.

Allen: The evidence, yes. So I'm also going to um, allow Dr. Hall to talk about some of that as well, um because he was um, very involved. He was the ISD Superintendent at the time in the opening of um, our first schools. Um, what I will say is that this year, our students were in school for two weeks and the hurricane hit. And so, they were out of school for an additional four weeks. And they returned for one day and then another hurricane hit. And so they were out again and then returned. So it's, um, really starting up again. So but what I would say based on um, going to the school and talking to teachers who are excited, who are ready to make a difference, who are working extended hours to make sure that students get what they need, adjusting calendars,

adjusting time, um parent engagement. Um, on yesterday there were a lot of parents at the school um, with the students. So those are some of the qualitative, um items that we have seen and noticed observation based on um, the short time of course, that the school has been in place. Um, but I do want Dr. Hall to talk a little bit more about that.

Hall: I do think Superintendent Allen hit on a lot of the key points right here out of the gate. You talk about the first year obviously we are going to have some, you know progress monitoring data that we can come back and share. But at this point in time, like other schools in Robeson County, we had some interruptions this year, no excuses but just the reality of the impact of the storm and getting the school doors back open. Um, I will tell you again to add on to some of the qualitative components, and I think Dr. Oxendine might be able to reiterate some of this in her observations locally but I think the community buy in engagement has been a big part of that. Has it, you know, did it start out perfect when you are trying to help a community understand what this means and what are the implications for something like this? Again, they are hard conversations at the beginning but I do think some of that engagement, when we talk about some of the partnerships and, and you know when I think about the storm how a local pastor reached out to us to say hey, let your students know and families know that we are going to have opportunities to feed the families while the school is closed. So I think those are some of those qualitative developments that we talk about how do you create the right conditions for success. And over time, we would expect that the data would start to show that and the academic achievement of our students. So I think to your question Mr. Ford – I think we have to come back with the data.

[inaudible]

Hall: If you don't mind I'll answer some of the second one, too. Um, I think to your point one of the things that we do not do and when you talk about coding, often times you talk about qualitative research from the standpoint of how do you capture the full narrative whether that's the recorded conversation and then being able to take that and transfer it into you know a very detailed transcript and then code that based on themes? We don't go to that point because to me, that really starts to create a very, um, it can create a very interesting environment when you are standing there with a recorder and going through every single one of these types of interviews. We try to approach this really from a partnership standpoint and have authentic discussions and understand what are some of these barriers? What are the things you see as opportunities? But I do know also that one of the things that Superintendent Allen has done is she has summaries of these conversations – and things that we have done to look at what are these different barriers as conveyed today?

Allen: Your last –

Ford: I have a question about the uh, community engagement process.

Allen: So I think we stated earlier that we, we do realize there is a short turn around. Um, and so we are operating within that timeline um, but even during that time, after having the public meeting we continue to engage, we have had community members to reach out to us shortly after a lot of individuals do not like to speak in a public meeting. And so we had a lot of individuals to come to us afterwards – either leaving their numbers, or saying can I reach out to you later and we have had individuals to reach out to us. We have also reached out to the community and talked to different entities within the community as well, to share that information to make sure that they fully understand,

especially if we hear okay, we don't have a full understanding. What does this really look like? This is what we are hearing, but what is it really? And so we have been able to shed light on some of those as to what exactly the ISD is. So, while we do recognize that we would love to have more time to engage with the community, um, based on the timeline we have, that is where we are – I think that is why we saw in the recommendations earlier an extension of that timeline. So that we do have an opportunity to have more community engagement because we do want this to be community based. Umm, and we will continue to engage with communities as this process um goes, depending on how the vote is. That is our foundation.

White: Dr. Oxendine.

Oxendine: Because Dr. Hall mentioned my name I'll chime in for just a few minutes, umm, because Robeson County is the first, the first county, the first LEA to, to become part of Southside Asheville School, a tiny elementary school. Amy and I went to that, we visited the school back in the summer for a couple three hours or so. And I'm, I live within ten miles of the school. But you know, the um, the wonder of the ISD is the community piece. It is a solid, and it's, and it, it will need to be and I'm sure that Dr. Hall and his staff will make sure this continues to be the case. It will need to be a ground game in order to be successful. And when I talk about ground game, I'm talking about meeting with the city mayor, the town mayor, meeting with the student counsel, meeting with your um, your local um, school board, meeting with the local s, uh, superintendent. Dr. Hall is a member of the, Dr. Wooten who is the superintendent of Robeson County. He is a member of her advisory committee. So it is an intense ground game, the ISD. Of course it eventually must be about student achievement. But it

begins in the community and I'm, I'm going to tell ya, [inaudible around 4:16:58] North Carolina is happy to have you at this school. It is absolutely thrilled. Um, I recall in our meeting with – what is his name, Dr. Majors? He was talking about the fact that the community decided some parents decided they wanted school uni-, student uniforms. And the operator found money in the budget to make it possible for the students to have- they've never had a uniform policy in the school. So those kids now have I think two or three or four uniforms. They are so delighted, it's the little things like, it is a ground game, folks. And you've got a staff here that they're, they're pretty expert at this.

Allen: Thank you.

White: Uh, Mr. Buxton.

Buxton: Um, I appreciate the data you clearly laid out some very compelling data about the difficult challenges at Carver Heights. And I don't think there is any question from the data, from the trend data from some of the fiscal, I mean a lot of the issue is as you well know has been raised and raised about process more than about the degree of, the degree of need that the school has for support. And as we are charged, Ms. White Chair, with understanding which school is most in need of the level of support that the ISD would provide in this notion of being inside with an operator, I'm just trying to get a sense of the process that we go and the consistency of the evaluation, the recency of the comprehensive needs assessment. I'm a little concerned and I think I'm, I'm piggybacking on Mr. Ford – the list you gave was very helpful. I was taking a lot of notes. Sometimes a superintendent can tell you all the things that he or she are do, is doing. That's a problem. There are so many things going on that you have no focus

or no priorities. I'm a little concerned that the argument for some of these schools is that they got a ton of spaghetti they are throwing on the wall. That may not be the case. But, if you could just help me and my colleagues understand the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, look at the data, federal monitoring input other areas of the department that maybe read each others work how, how we are I think you used the word codifying and applying the same filters to get an, rather, rather than I think the concern we have to weigh is are you giving us one school? But yet there's lots of questions about other schools and we are just not seeing as full a picture as you are providing in the one. I- I'm not suggesting you are, I just, I need some comfort that in fact we have got detail on all of these places.

Hall: So I think one of the things that, if, if I can respond to him of course Superintendent Allen can add, is that September is when we get the accountability data. It comes forward. There is no doubt that time constraints do factor into that and we have to narrow quite quickly to look at the schools that we see as really being in a situation of almost, you know, significant, I mean really significant need. I mean I put back up the data and when we look at, you know, the outcomes, and we look at where schools are trending and not only their school performance score but also in their grade level proficiency, that's really where we have to almost start. And so when you think about a CNA – that means getting a team together to go out to that school in a very short window of time because we don't know until September which schools are going to be eligible, organizing a team, really working with the superintendents as well who we have to engage with them and their team to go into the school and schedule those. So we have to narrow quickly, and I bring that up because you know, one of the examples you

might see is, and I want to make sure I get the right one, is in Gaston Middle, for example. Gaston Middle, if you look across there, it's definitely one of the higher performing schools. Now I had a CNA that is a little bit older than some of the others. But we use that CNA, our conversations with the superintendent, Ms. Allen doing a site visit; we look at that situation and say okay if we are going to really narrow it down here, and really look at- if you remember I've said this for, now my second year, we are going to go slow to go right. This is not about building a large portfolio. This is not about trying to build this massive, you know ISD of a lot of schools. It's about making sure we pick the right schools based on what the data tells us and I think when we look at grade level proficiency and we look at what a school performance score tell us about a situation, that really helps to really zero in where we are going to invest our time and energy with the window that we have available to engage and complete the requirements in statute to get to the point of coming back before the board and feeling confident about that recommendation. But when you look at the data, I think to answer the question Mr. Buxton, we start there with that three years of trend. And then going through this process is how we start to narrow. Because the first step after we have that data is engaging with that superintendent, engaging with our principal, and having those conversations about what is it that again is currently happening in the school as opposed to what is aspirational and things of that nature. And I will tell you in this second, I am pretty confident on this part. I've been confident on a lot of parts, all the parts, but I will tell you this, is that one of the things that we have to heavily depend on are some of the barriers that are conveyed to us by the district leadership. And in this case, there were some barriers that were conveyed that definitely stood out far, far more

so than the other five schools on the list. And some of those barriers, again I'll go back to what I said earlier, some of those barriers were conveyed to us as potentially being foreseen as governance barriers. Some of those barriers, depending on who you were talking to, were conveyed to us as lack of support barriers. It's probably one of the situations where we saw very clearly a lack of alignment between district leadership and school-level leadership on a plan going forward. And so in this particular case as we recommend this school, and we look at the data that was presented, and some of the missed opportunities in my opinion, about how this school could have really benefitted in using some of these additional resources that were available, that's where this school really stands out. And so that narrowing process, it starts with the data, the statutory requirements. We narrow it down, and from there we look at okay, where are we going to engage and go through these additional steps as required by statute to make sure that we can stand here and convey to you what is happening. I will also share that the other five schools that are on the list, the letter that they received as far as the recommendation still indicated that they were going to continue to be monitored and watched throughout this year to see if they are implementing that plan. So that, to your point, if it is something where we are getting a lot of just you know, things that sound nice, but potentially are not being implemented well, we can come back to this Board and have any additional conversations around that.

Allen: I'd like to add that it wasn't just a list either, I mean, when we had these conversations we looked at what is actually being implemented now, not something that they say we would like to do this. I'll give you an example umm, with Dr. Contreras – we met with her team at the district office. And she told us all of these wonderful things. We did

not know if they were actually being implemented and so we, she said go to the school. I want you to go to the school and see. And so we set up that visit. Of course she wasn't there. And everything she told us, we were able to see at that particular school. We were actually scheduled to present to her board, um, later on in that week. And as a result of us narrowing down after we saw everything that was in place at that school, we were, we asked to be taken off of that board's agenda because we knew that that school was moving in the direction that it needed to.

White: Mr. Chastain.

Mr. Chastain: Thank you for that helpful background. Uh, this is a question for Ms. Allen or Dr. Hall, either one. Um, Keenans mentioned a 30-day uh, delay. How does that affect you in this process because I know timelines in this entire process has been difficult. There's an ISO selection. There's all kinds of things that are going on, so you're both in the trenches. You know the details. Inform us, could you kind of explain that, please?

Allen: Yes, so, as you said in the timeline there are different steps that have to take place after this one is um, with the ISO and often times of course ISOs do want to know before they go to this long process as to whether or not um, this is going to be actual and approved by the board. So yes, that's, that's one thing that we have to consider as well. In addition to that, the school district also has um, to make decisions and they have until February to do that. And part of that involves also a public meeting to make sure that all the input is coming from the community as to what it is that they would like to do as well. So, um, time is of the essence um, and so that's just where we are. Would you like to add to that, Dr. Hall?

Hall: And I think just based on past experience going through it the first year, the timeframe is definitely, it's aggressive. I mean there is no doubt about that when you look at the statutory components that we have to complete. But I also think you know, it is important. It is important to us to have as much authentic engagement as we can continue to have with local community and have these discussions. By statute, while we do look at this as trying to take place in November, we do have until December 15 in statute for this, for the Board to make a final decision. But, if we delay a decision we have to think about okay, what additional information do we need to consider? If there's things that, you know, we need to look at. If it's additional community feedback. Again, we're committed to doing this right. And I don't want that to get lost in any of this discussion. Because this is not about a race to try to do certain things. This is about trying to make sure we create the right conditions for long term success. And so I think to, not that I'm taking away because it will create additional burdens when it comes to doing the other components within the timeline, but we also respect the Board from the standpoint of knowing that we need to take this at a pace that is going to help us get as much information and make the best decision where the Board feels comfortable in the recommendation and the approval of any recommendations being made.

White: Ms. Willoughby.

Willoughby: I just have a couple of things, um, and I agree with everyone else. I appreciate your, your work here, uh when I went back uh, Eric you'll remember because I was on the team when you were interviewed and hired for this position and when, I always go back to my notes because when we talk about ISD, I want to remember that and that the

creation of it and the concerns that I had, um. And, and the big concern was community partnerships and you were well suited to come in from CIS to understand that and, and I'm sure Dr. Allen is as well, um, but that's difficult. And it's very difficult in a short timeframe and as I recall last year, it seems like we heard from you for a long time when you were in Robeson County. You spent a lot of time down there. I remember Dr. Oxendine was maybe going to sell you a house or rent you a room or something [laughter]

Oxendine: I still would. That's still on the table.

Willoughby: Because you spent so much time and energy in Robeson County and it took a lot of dollars. There were many, many dollars spent to set up everything with the ISD last year and be ready to go and the process just had seemed more deliberate. I looked at the timeline on this and it's pretty quick to try to come in and, and build that kind of community support um, so I-I'm going to support Reggie's notion to take a little bit longer to see if you can work some magic down, down in Goldsboro where I have some pretty solid roots myself. But I also um, I'm wondering just because I'm curious about this – there were five schools on the list originally? Six schools on the –

Hall: Yes ma'am.

Willoughby: - list originally. You took five of them off the list and left one. What if you had gone in and seen that, that same work went on at all six schools and you had taken them o-, would you have taken them all off the list?

Hall: I think we have to make this very much about what we consider to be a needs-based conversation. And where do we have, you know, enough evidence to suggest that we

are seeing the active steps in place since the beginning of the school year. So that it's not responding to the ISD potentially coming and identifying the school, but what are the steps that were done before the ISD comes to the table for a discussion like that. And I think that's a critical component here. And I think that goes back to some of the evidence that you know, Superintendent Allen was talking about is what were some of those steps that we saw already in place with the district responding to what they saw as the needs for their school. But I think whether it was one school, whether it was three schools, whether it was four schools – we know that we have a requirement in statute to be at two schools by a certain time period, and then we have another part of that statute that says we have three more that we have to identify or at least be at all five by the end of the time period. And so there are –

Willoughby: And see so I-I know the statute that's why I'm asking, I mean, you know, you had six schools originally and then that's a lot of schools to take off the list from the original list. So I just was you know we, you need to have another school is, is true, right? So we need it to be successful and there are a lot of schools in this state who would, who need help and would welcome additional help and I recognize that's the pure motive here. But I just, I'm concerned that if you go in at this point, you know, I've read the resolution. I've seen the comments. You don't have community support there, and that was a critical, there were four critical factors I remember talking about in that interview process and that was number one.

Hall: And it may be helpful for me to remind the Board that even last year at this point in time in the process, what you heard about my engagement and continued engagement in Robeson happened after this Board made its decision to transfer the school. You may

recall that Robeson County Public Schools as well as the county commission adopted a joint resolution, and that resolution was pulled after additional engagement with county commission and others.

Willoughby: Right.

Hall: And I think that –

Willoughby: And I'd love to see this one pulled.

Hall: And, and I think we want to respect, again we want to respect any resolution that comes forward and we want to make sure we listen to what those concerns are. So I don't want you to think that any of this is falling on deaf ears because it's not. But I think at the same time, as we look at the statute, we look at the process, we look at everything we have been doing up to this point, and to you know, Superintendent Allen's comments, even following up from the last public hearing did continue to engage with local community. I think to you know, Dr. Oxendine's point, this is really a ground, ground level grass roots discussion that needs to be had. It doesn't mean that everybody is going to completely agree with the strategy. I can't tell you that they will. But if you look back at even some of the recommendations that we have shared to today's earlier conversation with Cecilia regarding recommendations, part of changing the name a few years ago from the ASD to the ISD was about how do we create innovative opportunities and how do we think differently as we learn. We are committed to that learning. We are committing to try to be responsive and looking at what are the strategies that we can consider beyond what we know now as we continue to go forward. But I think where we sit with the existing timeline and the statutory

requirements, that's where we are at today and standing before you with this recommendation and any opportunities that you have you know, for us to consider. We want to take those into consideration as well as those from the local community. But uh, we also want you to have great confidence that with the timeframe and with the information that we have, I know Superintendent Allen feels very confident about the recommendation that has been made today.

White: Chair Davis.

Davis: Uh, I understand that the school was within the last three years went through a grade reconfiguration. How did that factor into your recommendation?

Allen: So it, the last two years it has been the same. Um, reconfiguration was 2015-16 where it was a K-5. At the time-

[voices saying 'no']

Allen: It's a K-4. K-4. And then 15-16 um, K-5. But we looked at the students who were -

[voice saying 'no']

Allen: - at the school

[voice saying 'it's not K-5']

Allen: It's 3-5 now.

Davis: Right.

Allen: Okay? So we looked at the, it was K-

[inaudible voices]

Allen: Okay. So we looked at the students who were currently at the school during the reconfiguration. There were 205 students at that time. That would have moved into the 3-5. Of those 205 students, 146 of those students remain the same. So it's the same 70% of the students body remain the same. And so these are the same students that move into the 3-5-

[voices saying 'that's not true']

Allen: that were actually at the school. Then they also added additional students. So we had that information that was pulled from our team here um, based on the numbers of the configuration. So the students who moved into 3-5, 70% of those students were in the school the year before.

[voices saying 'that's not true']

Davis: Okay so your analysis was to consider the students that were present in the school in both configurations.

Allen: yes.

Davis: And, um, let's just make sure that they data we are using is consistent with the data that the district has. And then second, um, the uh, the CNA I understand was performed soon after the school went back in session after Florence? Is that correct? Like a couple days after or something?

Allen: Yes, I b-, I believe, I don't have, let me see the date of the CNA. Hold on. The dates of the assessment was October the 2nd through the 3rd.

Davis: Okay, and when did the school come back into session? After Florence?

[someone speaking out]

Davis: The question is directed to Ms. Allen. Go ahead.

Allen: So, we were informed that school resumed two days before that.

Davis: Okay, so how did that factor into your recommendation?

Allen: So the CNA actually was and, of course, there may be someone that is better equipped to actually talk about that particular process because it's not done by our department, by the ISD, um but, do we want to ask them to talk about the process? Okay.

Hall: So there was a team of individuals here at the agency uh, that actually are trained on how to use the CNA process and so they follow that process for each school that they do this engagement with. And so while that we do recognize that again, we started as two days after school was reconvened, I think there is great integrity in the process and how it's followed and how it is used to not just capture a snapshot out of what is happening in that moment, but through its en-, through their engagement as a team with school personnel, school leadership, there's an option to get that information that goes well beyond what just happened during those two days of school reconvening.

Davis: So was that tool used consistently across the six schools? The CNA tool.

Hall: So the CNA tool itself was used consistently across all six schools in a timeline-

Davis: The same period of time?

Hall: No sir. Not in the same period of time. We look at the most current CNA that is available, and again as we narrow, this is where we look at where are we going to get the most current CNA that we needed. And I think that goes back to the conversation above

where we say as we are narrowing, we have a CNA for each of the schools. Some were a little bit older, and some of that goes back to the fact that those schools that were higher performing and were probably not likely based on the information that we had and the engagement that we had to come back as a recommendation to this Board at that time.

Davis: Okay. And since a CNA is an important part of the analysis, I think it would be important- the Board probably needs visibility into those CNAs in addition to the data that's, that's in your slides.

Dr. Susan Silver: Good afternoon, Chairman Davis, Superintendent and Board Members. My name is Dr. Susan Silver. I lead the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process for our agency. Um, we look at six areas that assess the comprehensive nature of the school. So we look at teaching and learning, support for student achievement, leadership capacity, professional capacity, planning and operational effectiveness, and family and community engagement. When we were asked to look at these schools that were available and candidates for this year's range, we looked at when their most recent CNA was. So for two of those, they had just occurred the semester before. And if you have an opportunity to look at our Comprehensive Needs Assessment process, it is not advised to do it a couple of months later. It's kind of a very intensive process for the schools to go through. For four of the schools, their's was actually conducted the week before Carver Heights because that was the date we had outlined. We had to make some adjustments with Carver Heights because of the storm. In collaboration with district leadership, we communicated with them and that's the date the tho-, that was decided upon, in order for us to meet some deadlines that you all had as well. So the

same process is used consistently. I heard a question about that. We have a very process-driven consistent rubric that we use. We use the same criteria for each one. We look at that rubric and we engage stakeholders. So we meet with three focus groups: that's a teacher focus group, a student focus group, and a parent focus group, all of which are selected by the school principal. So we go in, we visit classrooms, we talk to those folks, we talk with the principal, and then we produce a report that Dr. Hall has. That's what they were referencing. They get a rating on each one of those criteria. And then we provide the evidence to support why we gave them that rating. So that's just an outline of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process; be happy to give you more information about that. It is my passion. [laughter] I love that work. Um, and we have been doing that process for actually ten years here in the agency. So it is also a very proven process and research based. So that's just a little snapshot. And I can answer any questions specific to that process if you have any.

Davis: Okay, that's helpful.

Silver: Yep!

Davis: Again, I think it would be helpful to the Board to be able to see those CNAs. It would give us a better understanding of these six schools. So then another part of the criteria was the downward trend in data. Is the data that you use to reach that conclusion the data that's in the PowerPoint or is there other data that you used to reach that conclusion?

Hall: So we used primarily, we look at a lot of that data that is available in the PowerPoint. We look at those key trends, some of which is outlined in statute with the school

performance score. And then we look at the grade level proficiency because that helps us to understand what percentage of the students in the school are reading or doing math at grade level. To us, again when we talk about growth, we look at that because we know we cannot close gaps which is why ultimately when you look at those six schools, you're looking at schools that were an F and not meeting growth when we got to that point in time. And again, I think 18.4% grade level proficiency, just to give you some comparison, it was the same percentage of proficiency that we had last year at Southside Asheboro.

Davis: Could you go back one slide then -

Hall: Yes sir.

Davis: To the side-by-side comparison? Then if that is the case, what, I mean, none of these schools are where we need them to be. But the two schools that are the closest are Carver and Williford. And they are not far apart, at least using these metrics. So what was it that caused you to land on Carver as the recommendation instead of Williford?

Hall: So, when we looked at Williford Elementary, one of the first schools that we visited, that was a situation where the superintendent, the principal, and the school board chair was in attendance. And actually we were at the school through that entire conversation, to see their plan that was already in place, not, again, aspirational. But looking at what they have done, they expanded pre-K classrooms at the school, they brought in external partners that were working on addressing the medical, the medical needs of students, the health needs of students. The after-school program as a partner with the boys and girls club. There were very specific components about what they had done to change,

really the plan for that school significantly from last year. They, you know, it's no secret if you go back and look, last year they were pre-K through 5. They planned at the end of last school year and into the summer and relaunched that school as a pre-K through 2 with very specific strategies around how to address what I would say aligns perfectly with our whole child initiative and engaging these community partners to address other needs.

Davis: Okay, so that's helpful. It was specific plans that were already in place at that specific school. Okay, so um, slightly different but along the same path – did you consider in your recommendation the Wayne County district's recent progress in turning around schools, other schools in their district or was that not a consideration?

Hall: We know that that was conveyed to us during the conversations and of course we don't ignore that. But I think at the same time it is important to note that they've had a plan for the past two years with significant funding attached and during those two years, the trend was going down when additional resources and things were being invested so, while I have no doubt they have great capacity in turning around other schools, this school significantly stood out when we look at it in comparison to the other schools, in my opinion on this list, that does not have that same degree of resources available for supporting the turnaround.

Davis: I understand. Okay. Um, Superintendent Johnson do you have any comments or advice for us on this recommendation?

Superintendent Johnson: Yes this clearly is a difficult decision that this Board is grappling with. And I echo what Dr. Hall said – we have to make sure we get this right. So if, if there

are Board members that feel they need more time to investigate this, then take more time but please, do investigate. And I know uh, we have had one Board member who has shared that he has met with the superintendent. Um, I know that there were more than one Board member, uh, group of Board members that met privately with the superintendent earlier this week. Please, you know, if the superintendent is not going to present to the State Board, each of you should take the time to talk to the superintendent to get this information that you need. Uh, speaking of the superintendent, Wayne County has a strong superintendent. He's a good superintendent. He's actually a leader in the restart models. He is a leader with other superintendents as they maximize the flexibilities uh, that can be used through this restart model. Uh, and, and he should be commended for that um, and he definitely has shown evidence that he is able to use that to turn around other schools in his district. My concern's not with the superintendent. My concern, as I believe Dr. Hall has been alluding to, are that there are other self-reported barriers that may exist in this district, uh that may have impacted why we are not seeing the same turnaround and the data at this school that we would have seen at the other schools in Wayne County. So, again when you are making this decision, uh please take the time, get all the information you need. If it is going to be postponed until December, come back ready to make a decision based on the data uh, based on what was shared with us today, uh that there is available funding that could have been implemented, uh to help these teachers and students that was not uh, and so take that with a, with a grain of salt as you, as you look, please do your due diligence to really investigate and, and look at the potential path that this school might need to take a different path than the one it is on right now.

Davis: Superintendent you're uh, you're supportive of this recommendation at this point for the Board to consider.

Johnson: Yes. Yes, thank you. I support a different path for this school. I know community members are worried that this might feel like it is done quickly. I-I can assure you Dr. Hall and I have already discussed for the next legislative session how we need to go and request changes to this process. Um, a lot of the community engagement should be done more on the upfront part as opposed to the selection then. We don't have that yet. But I also want to address uh, communities uh, community members' concerns of, who if it is not Wayne County Public Schools running this, who might come and run it? Uh, I want to remind everyone that we have talked about this a little bit here at this Board. Uh, this doesn't have to be, uh uh, a traditional charter operator that comes in. This has to be an entity right now. We are actually going to seek legislation that changes that to actually make it even broader. Not an entity, it could just be a principal, a principal who comes in with a really strong plan to turn this school around, can take this school and turn it around. That important piece that we already have as an entity if it is a community organization, if it is a business, if it is a group that comes together, uh we, I talked to someone about this when uh, the Alamance-Burlington school was on the list. They said we have all these groups that want to come together and we want, we want better for the school and we are doing it now. Had that one been the one you selected, we could have looked at actually that being the entity that then runs the school. Uh, we don't have to launch into those concerns yet. Right now, this is about a different path because it does seem that there are issues that are facing this school and the data is showing that, that we are not getting the change we need for teachers and students at

this particular school, even when we might have some restarts in Wayne County that are.

Davis: Thank you. I had the opportunity to meet with Superintendent Dunsmore and he is in the audience today along with his Board Chair, and um, what I saw was a passionate, hardworking, committed superintendent like the other 114 in our state, um, who are dealing with overwhelming challenges and who has made great progress in uh, in turning some schools around but not this particular school. And uh, I think the biggest challenge in this whole approach is the transfer out nature. I mean, schools are, they're more than just assets in a local education agency. They're part of the fabric of our community. And, and this notion of transferring out just, as a local board member, it's, I have difficulty with that. But, but it is the state law as of November 1st and we are sworn to comply with the state law and so we must. But uh, I think we do need to strive to find what's the right solution here and I'm not sure we are there yet.

White: Dr. Oxendine did you-

Oxendine: Well it's just dismaying that we are having, we are splitting hairs over failure. If a stranger were to walk in this room today knowing nothing about the ISD model in North Carolina and the statute around that model, and look at this PowerPoint frame and see all these Fs, Ds and Fs, and wonder well why are, why is this Board splitting hairs over failure? If we had the resources and if the statute allowed it, we should, we should be taking all of these schools should be in a different-

[agreement]

Oxendine: But that's not the case. The law doesn't allow that. The law, we know the law, we know the parameters of the law and we are obligated, required to select one school to vote on one school to remove it, to move into this model. I you know, it's just I want to talk about the students for one minute and I know that my colleague across from me, Ms. White, wants to bring this topic to closure.

Hall: It can be more than one, though.

Oxendine: Think about the child. Think about the children in these schools. The F is just um, the theory around the story of achievement or the lack thereof. Kids in these schools are struggling not just, not just at Carver but all, each one of them. And for us to belabor this discussion, and I know, I know the merit of the discussion. I know we need to collaborate and we need to talk about it. But at some point folks, we have got to say we can do better for students at these schools. That's why I'm on the State Board of Education.

Male: Ms. White? Ms. White, just one last thing. I, just to be clear because I think we're all wrestling with this, there could be children at another one of these schools more in need. So I don't think we are talking about whether we are helping children or not. We are trying to figure out which school's children are best going to be served by this

—

Oxendine: Absolutely and I am very much aware of that.

Male: I think that's what we are all trying to wrestle with. And I'm just uh, maybe we will have this discussion later, quick convince Carver Heights needs some work. I would have loved data that laid out all of the investments we are seeing at the schools. The

disaggregated data, the trend data that we have as, because we are going to end up being the Board for this school ultimately so, so but, but we are having a verbal conversation where we are having to scribble notes. It's more to me a documentation question about how we do this. That's, that's the question because I want to be convinced that the Carver Heights kids are the best one choice versus any other kids on this list for this specific strategy. That's what I'm wrestling with. I'm done.

White: Thank you to all of my colleagues for um, a terrific example in civil discourse where um [laughter], perhaps, I will say Bill Cobey was the master of that, that um, no matter where you stood on a particular um, um, item for discussion, um, he always was the one that added calmness and clarity. And so, I thank him because what you have heard today is perhaps um, some discontent about the law itself, um that perhaps that, um while they don't agree with the law and what it um, calls the State Board to do, we still must do it. And our statutory requirement is that um, that decision must be made in due time and um, I want to, Dr. Oxendine you hit it a little bit about um, about students. Because the first 40 minutes of this conversation was about, about data. Um, it was about the school, it was about leadership, it was about teachers, um, I want to talk to you about the students. And at um, 18%, 19%, even we'll just take those two schools – that's one, that's one in five that's proficient. One in five. Okay and now let's take that data and let's replicate that over three years. And let's just say there were a hundred students, okay? And so 80 out of those 100 were not proficient. They weren't proficient in third grade, they weren't proficient in fourth grade, they weren't proficient in fifth grade. And so we have three years of data. So now I would suggest to you that we not only have one low-performing school, we have two. Because those third, fourth

and fifth graders are now sixth, seventh and eighth graders. So there is an urgency. We must make a decision. Some very special friends, and I won't call them by name, placed a book at my desk this morning. It's Dare To Lead. And the sub-content on the title page says 'brave work, tough conversations, and whole heart.' And what I will tell you is that this is brave work. This has been a tough conversation. But the pain that comes with making a school change will be immediate. Rip the band-aid off. But the community work and the collaboration happens after that initial ough happens. Let me tell you what Southside Ashpole is. It is still a school. It is still a public school. It is a school that is flushed with technology and many, many teaching resources. It is a school that has a passionate, caring leader specifically chosen to turn around and impact the students and families in that community. That school is a chance to be innovative and creative in both instruction and operations. To maximize student outcomes where the LEA has been previously unsuccessful. That is what our data suggests today. So whether or not we agree with the law or not, we must choose a school whether it is today or whether it's December 15. Last year, that team faced insurmountable odds in trying to get the first school that this State Board ever identified as a new school to get an Innovative School District up and running. It was a difficult process. I can suggest to you that this school's process will also be difficult. But folks, it will be necessary and there's no more necessary data then to tell you that 80% of the students at that school for three consecutive years were not on grade level. A difficult decision – yes. A decision that is required – yes. A one year, a one month delay may help us in soothing that initial ouch, but in December, we have to choose a school. By December, we have

to choose a school. Thank you for your time. Mr. Chair, that concludes my very long committee agenda.

Chair: Well I think you just did your best Bill Cobey imitation there. [laughter] That's, thank you for summarizing that. We are long past our agenda but we are even more long overdue for a break. So let's take a 15 minute break and return at 2:05 p.m.

[SILENCE]

[END – 4:56:07]

(5:47:44 – 6:02:50)

[START - 5:47:44]

Female: Ms. Willoughby?

Willoughby: Yes.

Female: Mr. Keenan?

Keenan: Yes.

Female: Ms. Camnitz?

Camnitz: Yes.

Female: Dr. Oxendine?

Dr. Oxendine: Yes.

Female: Mr. Buxton?

Buxton: Yes.

Female: Vice-Chair Duncan?

Duncan: Yes.

Female: Chairman Davis?

Davis: Yes.

Chair: Okay the motion carries. That brings us to our last action item which is EICS four and I'll ask for a motion to approve EICS four.

Ms. White: Mr. Chair, I'm in approval of um, EICS four, the approval of the Innovative School District recommended school for 2019-2020 to be Carver Heights Elementary School in Wayne County, North Carolina.

Chair: There is a motion by Ms. White. Is there a second?

Dr. Oxendine: I second.

Chair: Second by Dr. Oxendine. Is there any discussion?

Keenan: I have a substantive motion.

Chair: Mr. Kenan.

Kenan: Uh Mr. Chair I would like to have a motion that we delay the vote of the uh, that's on the agenda today to allow the community a little more time to spend with Mr. Hall and I think that would be very beneficial for the community and also for the ISD and um, be ready to vote on December the 1st and understand that there will be a vote on the December term.

Chair: Okay the motion is to delay action on this item until our December 1st meeting. Is there a second? Excuse me?

Female: Do we have to vote on the first motion first and then, we don't do that?

Chair: There's two motions.

Female: Okay. Substitute motion. Okay.

Chair: Okay my understanding is we vote on the substitute motion first.

Female: Okay, okay.

Chair: So the mo-, the substitute motion is to delay action on this item until our December 1st meeting. Is there a second?

Buxton: Second.

Chair: Second by Mr. Buxton.

Buxton: Or we can discuss [inaudible]

Chair: Excuse me?

Buxton: I'm in support of that motion, I'm, but not just for the community engagement. I'm looking for a little bit more detail to be presented to us about the different schools.

Chair: Okay we will now discuss the substitute motion so-

Buxton: Thank you

Chair: So that's your point Mr. Buxton? Is you're looking for more than just community engagement. Any other discussion on the substitute motion? Ms. Willoughby.

Willoughby: Just a correction on the date. We are not voting on December 1st-

Chair: What's the date of our next meeting?

[inaudible voices]

Female: So your December meeting will be on-

Female 2: The sixth.

Female: The sixth, yes.

Chair: Okay so Mr. Kenan I assume your motion is December 6th.

Kenan: That's correct.

Chair: Good. Thank you for that clarification. Any other discussion?

Duncan: Can I take-

Chair: Mr. Duncan.

Duncan: Can I take a crack at recasting that motion just call it a substitute motion to Mr. Kenan's motion? Which is that we would delay the vote until December-

[many voices saying 6th]

Duncan: -um, and in the meantime we would be uh, that gives additional time for meetings with the community in addition for additional data points and information be provided the Board, some of which was discussed today but not yet been read by the Board so that the Board can review those additional materials in preparation for the vote.

Chair: Mr. Kenan – do you accept that?

Kenan: I sure do.

[laughter]

Kenan: Yes.

Chair: Alright. Any other discussion on the substitute motion? Ms. White?

White: I just wanted to explain my no vote on that discussion um, on the amendment um, and it's it's um, really an explanation that um, as Chair of this particular committee, I have followed along with this journey um, with the, with the staff um, as they have gone through the vetting process for the schools that have been identified and so, I realize that I have had more time to um, converse with and digest that material and perhaps I'm more comfortable with the decision than maybe other folks who weren't um, part of the committee vote called. And so, um while I have that comfort level I am, um, and I am confident with the decision um that has been made and has been recommended. I want my Board members also to, fellow Board members to also be comfortable with that decision. So I'm voting no, but I do understand why you feel like you need more information. I completely support the recommendation. I do not feel that three more additional weeks of time is going to br-, bring us to a different conclusion and I'm anxious to move forward because going back to the band-aid analogy, it's going to hurt whether we do it today or whether we do it, in on December the 6th. And if we do it today, community collaboration begins today and I don't see this as a negative. Perhaps I have the rose-colored glasses. I think this is an incredible opportunity to bring amazing opportunities to students, 80% of the students who need help. So I would like to begin that work today. That's why I will be voting no.

Chair: Thank you, Ms. White. Mr. Chasteen.

Chasteen: I think the substitute motion has uh, a lot of merit and there's definitely reason behind it, but uh, looking at all the evidence Dr. Hall, Ms. Allen, um Ms. White who have all been a lot closer to it than many of us and they're in the details um, I really trust their understanding and the great information they presented today. So even though I understand the substitute motion, Mr. Kenan I'm going to-

Kenan: [inaudible]

Chasteen: Okay.

Chair: In other discussion? Dr. Oxendine.

Oxendine: I suppose that my, my um point I'm going to vote no also but I want to know exactly, I want to be clear as to what else we need and um, what it will take for us to be sure that we, are we looking for black and white answers? Are we looking for- what definitives are we looking for over the next three weeks? I think that needs to be spelled out very clearly or we will be where we are today, not really having clear guidance. Are we looking for additional evidence of community meetings? Meetings with parent groups? Uh, additional achievement data? Rationale as to why the school system did not spend all the, hasn't spent all the SIG dollars? Exactly what are we after here?

Chair[?]: You make a great point Dr. Oxendine, as usual. Um, assuming the motion, the substitute motion passes, what I've asked my colleagues to do is get to Dr. Allen and Dr. Hall the clear answer to Dr Oxendine's questions so that on December 6th we have the information we need. We've reviewed it and we are ready to vote. Because we do have to make a decision on the 6th. Is that fair?

Buxton: Yes sir. We've got 50 pages of stuff last night that we just need time to read and digest, I guess.

Chair: Ms. Camnitz.

Camnitz: In terms of the delay, I also have a fear, I'm I'm, I'm uncomfortable with it because I have a fear that the energy is going to continue around fighting the vote in December instead of building the sense of community that we hope might be able to develop over the next few weeks, and I think that that is a risk that we take by delaying.

Chair: Mr. McKinney.

McKinney: I was, so, my wife went to Carver Heights. Um, she is a prior graduate at Goldsboro High School. Um, and Hillcrest Elementary was also on that list and I'm a, I'm a member of the shire in Alamance-Burlington. And so, I just wanted to speak on what, when the list originally came out for, for Hillcrest and Hillcrest was on it, um, we noticed just an unbelievable galvanization of our community. Um, because I think we had all realized that we are saying at some level we did not meet the needs of these students. Um, and I watched our community and I watched Elon University and I watched [inaudible] Alamance and I watched ABSS and I watched business leaders and I watched United Way invest in the Leader In Me program in this school. And I watched a, a community rally around a school that, that we had dropped the ball on. Uh and I just wanted to, to let that be known that I think that, that the community has to be a part of this. It has to, it has to believe in the process and it has to believe in, in the intentions of what this program can do. And I agree whole-heartedly like, when you look at those numbers, it, it shakes you to your core that we have 80% of the

students not passing this test. But I had to let my voice be heard that if the community doesn't see this as something that is moving the whole community forward and particularly Carver Heights School then I think we lose the true essence of the nature of what we are trying to do. And that's to serve the needs of our students. And uh, so I just wanted to let that be known. I have seen it in my community what, almost like a community ISO can do with the intent of really trying to serve the needs of our students in a multitude of creative and innovative ways. Um, so I do believe it is possible um, but I just want to let that be known. So thank you.

Chair: Thank you. Mr. Kenan.

Kenan: Just a quick response, um, I guess Jill[?] you alluded to the fact that you were, you see it getting worse. I see it getting better. In a good way, I think it's time we are provided the information that others want. Plus, again it's hard to build a community when you're [inaudible] on the phone. When you go there and know some of the folks that live in Wayne County, I know a lot of folks there. You have different organizations [inaudible] opposing it. But time can give chance for people to communicate and I feel that this can be a good thing, not a bad thing. I think, I think the December 6th date would be a lot different feel than this feel right now. That's my opinion. I'm going with the folks that live in that area.

Chair: Mr. McDevitt.

McDevitt: Uh yes, I agree with what uh, what Reggie just said that uh, hopefully uh, my hope is that that wound does, whatever that is does heal, a band-aid, it heals during the month a little bit so it doesn't hurt as much and perhaps build a trust. Trust is a very fragile

thing but specifically, uh, when I read just very quickly on some things, there is not agreement on law, and there is not agreement on facts. And, and we can at least ask the department and the, the folks at the local level. I mean we had, we had people we weren't agreeing on grade levels and number of students and those kinds of things being presented to us today, so, at least we can have a little time so that there is agreement on law. There are some pieces in here that say that that uh, that we have to have one, we don't have to have it this year, we can we can only have one. I'd like to know what the law says. And I think we've got uh, that's part of what we can do is agree on law and agree on facts and then, and then uh, back to what JB said, as much as we can peel back layers of the data, I think it's, it's better. I don't think the 30 days will cost us a year, so I hope that it will gain some trust. And if it doesn't, it, that tells me something, too. People don't come to the table with uh, in the right spirit. That will tell me something.

Chair: Mr. Ford.

Ford: Yea I also think there is broad-based agreement on a couple of things. One of them is that uh, the urgency of need. I don't care where you are at on this debate. We can see something has to be done here. There is a desperate need that needs to be responded to. The other thing is that it is the law, right? However we feel about a situation uh, a school has to be chosen. Um, it's the unanswered questions that I think would give myself comfort um, and some of those data pieces which do inform a level of nuance uh that could help grease the skids and the other thing is, you know, again eluding back to our constant narrative here. I'm not from Wayne County. I've had you know, family, family members, uh who have lived out there in the Air Force, etc. But I'm not

from that community. Um, but I am from communities of color. And there are histories there of government policy being heaped upon folks without much consent. And they have been deleterious in their effect. And you have to bring that to the floor when we make these decisions. It sounds easier but I do think the way that change happens is from the ground up. It is not from the top down.

Chair: Dr. Oxendine.

Scott: Um, okay, I can't vote, but [laughter] I would like to say that I really have appreciated hearing all that has been said. And I really feel that for the sake of healing and trying to work together, and pulling all things together and thank you so much for all that you have done. I think that it would be better served for us if we do get more data, data whatever it is, d-a-t-a [laughter] and we get to, and we, and get to read it, look over it, and discuss it. And I think that the decision, whatever it is, could be made with a little more tolerance of one another. As it is now, I agree with whom it was, whomever it was that said that tensions aren't good, feelings are not good at this point. And I don't think two, three, three weeks or four weeks or whatever will sink it. So, like I said I can't vote, but that's just my little two cents.

Chair: Thank you. Any other comments or discussion? Alright we will proceed to the vote. Dr. Townsend-Smith? This is a vote on the substitute motion first. Yes, thank you.

Female: State Treasurer Folwell?

Folwell: [inaudible]

Female: Mr. Ford?

Ford: Yes.

Female: Mr. Chastain?

Chastain: No.

Female: Ms. White?

White: No.

Female: Mr. McDevitt?

McDevitt: Yes.

Female: Ms. Willoughby?

Willoughby: Yes.

Female: Mr. Kenan?

Kenan: Yes.

Female: Ms. Camnitz?

Camnitz: No.

Female: Dr. Oxendine?

Oxendine: No.

Female: Mr. Buxton?

Buxton: Yes.

Female: Vice-Chair Duncan?

Duncan: Yes.

Female: Chair Davis?

Davis: Yes.

[inaudible]

Female: So I have seven yes and five nos.

Chair: So the motion passes. Okay, so then that takes the place of the original motion. Okay so,
we have work to do between now and December 6th.

[6:02:47]