



Colorado State Board of Education

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
BEFORE THE
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMISSION
DENVER, COLORADO
February 19, 2015, Part 1

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT on February 19, 2015,
the above-entitled meeting was conducted at the Colorado
Department of Education, before the following Board
Members:

Marcia Neal (R), Chairman
Angelika Schroeder (D), Vice Chairman
Steven Durham (R)
Valentina (Val) Flores (D)
Jane Goff (D)
Pam Mazanec (R)
Debora Scheffel (R)



1 MADAM CHAIR: The State Board will come back
2 to order. Staff, please call the roll.

3 MS. BURDSALL: Steve Durham.

4 MR. DURHAM: Here.

5 MS. BURDSALL: Dr. Flores.

6 MS. FLORES: Here.

7 MS. BURDSALL: Jane Goff.

8 MS. GOFF: Here.

9 MS. BURDSALL: Pam Mazanec.

10 MS. MAZANEC: Here.

11 MS. BURDSALL: Marcia Neal.

12 MS. NEAL: Here.

13 MS. BURDSALL: Dr. Scheffel.

14 MS. SCHEFFEL: Here.

15 MS. BURDSALL: Dr. Schroeder.

16 MS. SCHROEDER: Here.

17 MADAM CHAIR: And before we start I need to
18 notice, for the people in the audience, that item number 7,
19 which has to do with the consequences for failing to
20 achieve a 95 percent participation rate. Since that was
21 handled yesterday that will be cancelled. We will not take
22 that up on the agenda.

23 And then, Commissioner, would you lead us?

24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Right. Madam Chair and
25 Members of the Board, now we have our legislative update.



1 I'll ask Jennifer Mello to come up and -- oh, and take it
2 away.

3 MS. MELLO: And talk.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Sorry.

5 MS. MELLO: Good morning, everyone.

6 ALL: Good morning.

7 MS. MELLO: It's nice to see you all.

8 So in terms of just a kind of general report
9 on where we are in the legislative session, we are, you
10 know, getting close to the halfway point. Can you not hear
11 me?

12 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah.

13 MS. MELLO: I'm getting signals that I
14 should --

15 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Next to your mouth.

16 MS. MELLO: -- stick it right in my face.

17 Whoa. Okay. Anyway, I'm just going to let that one lie.

18 And it's been, actually, rather slow on the
19 education front, would be the observation I would make. I
20 mean, there are a variety of kind of bills on singular
21 topics, bills that, you know, don't address overall
22 systematic things that have been heard. Some of them have
23 passed, you know, and are working their way through the
24 process. Some of them are dying quickly in their first
25 committee.



1 But the 1202 Commission, as you all know,
2 presented their results about three or four weeks ago, and
3 I think that there's been a lot of behind-the-scenes work
4 happening in both chambers and in both parties, to think
5 about how to incorporate those recommendations into
6 legislation. Nothing has been introduced yet. I think
7 that particular piece of legislation -- and it may be more
8 than one; there may be different bills -- but will really
9 dominate our conversations in the second half of the
10 legislative session. It's just -- because those aren't out
11 yet it's been a little bit slow.

12 Initially, some of what I call the kitchen
13 sink bills -- so there's a variety of bills out there that
14 address lots of different topics, right. So they address
15 PARCC and Common Core and accountability and 191. You
16 know, they cross a lot of our big topics. A big batch of
17 those had been scheduled to be heard in the House Education
18 Committee this coming Monday. Those are not going to be
19 heard in the House Education Committee this coming Monday.
20 They have been pushed off into later in the session.

21 So, again, that is, I think, indicative of
22 the work that's happening behind the scenes right now, to
23 try to figure out is there a grand compromise or are there
24 different versions of a grand compromise that people are
25 going to put out there in the form of legislation. And my



1 interpretation is that they want those bills to be out
2 there and discussed at the same time as some of these
3 other, quote/unquote, "kitchen sink bills" are going to be
4 discussed, even though those bills were all introduced very
5 early in the session.

6 So that is my kind of overall observation
7 just about where things are and what's happening over
8 there.

9 The other thing that I think will dominate
10 the second half of the legislative session when it comes to
11 K-12 will be the School Finance Act, of course, and, you
12 know, the conversation about how much of the negative
13 factor will be bought down and how much of it is one-time
14 money versus recurring money, and all of those kinds of
15 dynamics.

16 So today, for the agenda that we
17 distributed, we wanted to talk about two particular bills.
18 The first that I'm going to talk about is Senate Bill 173.
19 This is by Senator Chris Holbert, a Republican in the
20 Senate, and Representative Dan Pabon, a Democrat in the
21 House. The title is "Concerning Expanding Protections for
22 Student Data Privacy." So this is a bipartisan data
23 privacy bill. There were a couple of other pieces of
24 legislation introduced on data privacy that were not
25 bipartisan, and both of those have died already in the



1 process. So at the moment this is the only piece of
2 legislation that's still living that addresses this
3 particular topic, and again, it's being done in a
4 bipartisan fashion.

5 Having spoken with Mr. Durham and Ms. Goff,
6 it is their recommendation -- my recommendation to you all,
7 as a Board -- they're your leg. contacts -- that you all
8 take a position of support on this piece of legislation,
9 and let me explain a little bit more why that is.

10 Last year, many of you will remember, there
11 was legislation that the State Board supported that
12 strengthened the statutory provisions around how the
13 Department of Education deals with data privacy. I think
14 it was a good piece of legislation. It was something we
15 were proud of, something we were proud to work together
16 with the legislature on.

17 What that bill did not address was any
18 requirements on school districts. It also did not address
19 any vendor issues. That's what this bill is coming around
20 to, right. So taking some legislation that was passed in
21 California last year, as a point of departure -- and this
22 is not the exact same as the California law. I will tell
23 you most people think it's much better than the California
24 law. This bill adds a number of kind of requirements to
25 vendors who are working with school districts, whoever



1 they're working with in the state. It's not just the
2 school districts and the Department that has an obligation
3 to preserve privacy, and, of course, we do, it is also
4 vendors who have certain requirements on them about what
5 they can and cannot do.

6 This bill is going to be changed, and what
7 it's going to do is add some of the language we put in
8 statute last year around how the Department deals with
9 student data. It's going to replicate those requirements
10 for school districts. So it will be even stronger when it
11 comes out of its first -- or when it goes -- well, I can't
12 predict exactly what will happen. But I think the
13 sponsors' intent are to go into its first committee,
14 present what's called a strike-below amendment, which is
15 kind of like starting over from scratch, because sometimes
16 when you're making a lot of changes to a bill it gets
17 really hard to follow. And so it's easier to say, okay,
18 we're putting that aside. We're going to start from
19 scratch. We'll maintain all of the vendor protections you
20 see in the introduced version of the bill and then add
21 requirements to school districts that, at this point in
22 time, the school districts are supporting.

23 So, you know, we talked about this a little
24 bit with the leg. contacts, because knowing that the bill
25 is going to change doesn't really make sense for us to take



1 a support position today. And I think the reason why we
2 think it does is, as a statement that just the vendor piece
3 alone is a huge improvement over our existing policy. It's
4 very consistent with the legislative priorities that you
5 all have adopted for this particular legislative session.
6 And we always reserve the right. It goes without saying
7 that if a bill changes dramatically, in a way we don't
8 like, we can come back and change our position, and
9 obviously this is one we would be, if you all do decide to
10 support the bill today, something we would be very involved
11 in. And so if it were to change in a problematic direction
12 we would know that right away and we could revisit that
13 discussion.

14 Questions about that particular bill?

15 MADAM CHAIR: Questions, Board? Angelika.

16 MS. SCHROEDER: So the title is data
17 security, not data privacy. They're not necessarily one in
18 the same. And so my question is, I mean, I don't know that
19 you can even change titles anymore but is it about data
20 privacy and data security, or security? I'm just thinking
21 that that distinction, I find, is helpful when you're
22 discussing the concerns because there are two different
23 sets of concerns out there. Hacking is one concern, and
24 that's about the security. Collecting information that we



1 don't want to collected is more about privacy. So that's
2 just a question.

3 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair?

4 MADAM CHAIR: Jennifer.

5 MS. MELLO: Vice Chair Schroeder, so you
6 actually -- once a bill is introduced the title is one of
7 the few things you can't change about a bill, but my
8 observation from talking with the proponents of the bill is
9 that they actually mean that term. I hear what you're
10 saying. You're right, but I think they mean it as security
11 and privacy. I don't think they're intending to limit the
12 provisions of the bill just to kind of a narrowly defined
13 set of data security issues.

14 MS. SCHROEDER: I'd just like them to be
15 aware.

16 MS. MELLO: Absolutely.

17 MS. SCHROEDER: So that maybe put that in
18 the body.

19 MADAM CHAIR: Any other questions, Board?

20 (Pause)

21 MADAM CHAIR: If not, do we have a motion?

22 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I move to support the
23 Senate Bill 173.

24 MS. GOFF: Second.



1 MADAM CHAIR: Motion to move and second by
2 Jane. Any --

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Any objection?

4 MADAM CHAIR: Any objection? That's what
5 I'm saying. Any objection?

6 (Pause)

7 MADAM CHAIR: If not, it stands approved.
8 Jennifer.

9 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, thank you.

10 So the second bill for consideration for
11 action today is House Bill 1201. This is also a bipartisan
12 bill. In the House it's sponsored by Representative Bob
13 Rankin, who is a Republican, a member of the Joint Budget
14 Committee, and John Buckner, who is a Democrat, Chair of
15 the House Education Committee, and it has a Democratic
16 sponsor in the Senator, Senator Nancy Todd.

17 This bill -- and Representative Rankin, in
18 full disclosure, had contacted CDE staff about this over
19 the interim and said, "I have this idea but I could use a
20 little help fleshing it out." And so we have been, at a
21 staff level, engaged in kind of the technical assistance
22 part of this bill, just helping to make sure that, given
23 his idea that if this were to be enacted it's something we
24 could actually implement. That, of course, does not, in
25 any way, presuppose a position the Board should or



1 shouldn't take. I just want you to know that that has been
2 a piece of how this particular bill has been developed.

3 What the bill does is --

4 MADAM CHAIR: Excuse me, Jennifer, and I
5 probably missed it. Did you give us the number?

6 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, it's House Bill
7 1201.

8 MADAM CHAIR: 1201. Thank you.

9 MS. MELLO: May I continue?

10 MADAM CHAIR: Go ahead.

11 MS. MELLO: Thank you. So the bill creates
12 a grant program that would go to BOCES. The goal of this
13 grant program is so that BOCES can work with their member
14 school districts who are rural school districts -- the bill
15 is specific to rural areas -- to help them get some greater
16 efficiencies of scale in what Representative Rankin calls,
17 you know, kind of back operations, right. So this is the
18 stuff that's not about curriculum. It's not directly about
19 teaching kids. This is about, you know, bookkeeping and
20 payroll and all the things you absolutely have to do in
21 order to run schools and districts.

22 Representative Rankin has a number of rural
23 school districts in his area, and I think he -- the way he
24 is looking at this is I want to help these folks deal with
25 the fact that resources are probably never going to recover



1 to the level that everybody, in school district world,
2 would wish they would. So how can we create some
3 efficiencies so that we can continue to do a great job
4 educating our kids?

5 It is fair to say there is nothing stopping
6 BOCES from working with school districts to do this now.
7 They absolutely could do this under current statute. But
8 this bill is providing an incentive to do that by typing
9 some funding to a grant program.

10 As introduced, the bill has a \$10 million
11 allocation for the grant program. That is a fairly
12 substantial number in the context of the state legislature.
13 And I think as the bill moves forward I would imagine there
14 will be some negotiations around that number. I don't know
15 if it stays that big. I also don't know if it becomes part
16 of the school finance conversation. So there will
17 absolutely be talk about the money and how much money and
18 where the money is going to come from. But I think the
19 core of the bill, again, is something that is very
20 consistent with your legislative priorities in helping
21 rural school districts, small rural school districts in
22 particular, navigate this new environment they're in, where
23 they have, you know, less funding in a way, more
24 requirements. And so if we can help them structure their



1 business operations in a way that allows them to better
2 manage that, that's a good thing.

3 MADAM CHAIR: Questions? Board? If not, I
4 would just comment that -- oh, I do have a question. Deb.

5 MS. SCHEFFEL: So I'm not clear on what the
6 money would be for. So right now the districts can work
7 together through the BOCES. They can pool resources. I
8 mean, so what is the money for?

9 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair?

10 MADAM CHAIR: Go ahead.

11 MS. MELLO: They are allowed to use it in a
12 variety of ways, and there is some anticipation in the bill
13 that it wouldn't just be the grant money that goes towards
14 these kind of consolidation efforts, that school districts
15 would bring some of their own money to the table. And if
16 you -- I'm sorry. I'm flipping through the bill here to
17 try to find you a specific example.

18 I mean, I think that the thought is that if
19 you put some money on the table -- and there's a whole
20 grant process, and you all would need to adopt rules for
21 that. This would be run through the Department. So some
22 of the specificity isn't in the bill, but it's talking
23 about information management, data analysis, accounting
24 services, human resource, transportation, food services,
25 facility operations, security services, training for non-



1 instructional staff. I think the vision is the dollars get
2 used to kind of fund some of those up-front costs. Maybe
3 it's to hire the person to do the joint payroll, and
4 initially those costs are borne by the cost of this grant.

5 The grant is only -- and I should have said
6 this before; I apologize -- is only three years. This is a
7 three-year program. It cannot extend beyond three years.
8 It's not an ongoing program. So again, the expectation is
9 that if you can demonstrate the savings that districts
10 achieve by working together that it's in their interest to
11 pick this up and go forward.

12 MS. SCHEFFEL: So I'd love to hear from the
13 legislative liaisons, I guess. On the face of it, I don't
14 know that it's in the best interest of the district to
15 centralize a program that encourages them to work together.
16 I mean, I don't know. I'd prefer that those arrangements
17 be bottom-up, and when you have money as an incentive for
18 folks to consolidate I think that can drive things in a way
19 that may not be anticipated by the bill itself. But I'd
20 like to hear from the liaisons.

21 MADAM CHAIR: Jane.

22 MS. GOFF: Well, sorry. I keep going back
23 to what several districts that are members of BOCES have
24 been coordinating and cooperating on and it's not
25 necessarily -- it shouldn't be construed as putting all



1 kinds of central headquarters, for example, for a
2 particular function. It's an efficiency planning
3 mechanisms that if there are resources. I know, in
4 particular, there has always been some stress on personnel,
5 certain people who are qualified and experts at various
6 parts, use data entry as one example, where they could
7 centralize in the sense of bring their resources together
8 and their expertise, people who are able to coordinate the
9 work.

10 So I'm not sure if that's where we're going
11 with that. It's not, literally, a centralized location.
12 It's centralized planning.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's just that when you
14 have a plan that has stipulations it drives certain actions
15 that otherwise may not have been driven from the bottom up,
16 from the grass roots. That's all. But I wonder if we
17 could hear from Steve.

18 MADAM CHAIR: You didn't ask. Steve.

19 MR. DURHAM: I think it more facilitates
20 than drives the action. Participation is voluntary, as I
21 recall, in the bill. So I think it will -- it has a chance
22 to yield a good result. I don't think it puts undue
23 pressure on the districts. It may provide some resources
24 for them. So I don't think there's a negative consequence



1 from the bill and I think the districts maintain
2 significant flexibility.

3 MADAM CHAIR: Jane.

4 MS. GOFF: Yeah. One thing that I was
5 pondering, and maybe, Jennifer, you can help with a little
6 clarification on that. The money -- the funds are -- the
7 intent is to allocate funds from a state fund. Is that
8 correct? So this is called a grant but it is money that
9 has been allocated for that purpose only, so that we're not
10 necessarily talking about taking -- relying on our famous
11 not-so-much-liked phrase that pops up in bills, "gifts,
12 grants, and donations." This is an actual monetary
13 contribution, or allocation to the program.

14 MADAM CHAIR: Jennifer.

15 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, you're correct that
16 the bill does not rely on gifts, grants, and donations. It
17 includes a specific allocation of resources. At this point
18 it's coming out of the State Education Fund.

19 MADAM CHAIR: I'm having trouble with my
20 wheelchair, and the Secretary is going to fix it for me.

21 MS. FLORES: Madam Chair, may I ask a
22 question?

23 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.



1 MS. FLORES: Would it for issues such as
2 testing and all that goes along with that, where local LCDs
3 don't have people within their district to help with this?

4 MADAM CHAIR: Jennifer.

5 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, Dr. Flores, no.
6 This bill is actually very intentionally and specifically
7 not getting in any kind of curriculum or instructional
8 issues.

9 MS. FLORES: No, no. I didn't mean that. I
10 meant if they needed somebody who was going to look at data
11 and help them with data.

12 MADAM CHAIR: Oh, sorry. Thank you.

13 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair?

14 MADAM CHAIR: Jennifer.

15 MS. MELLO: Dr. Flores, I think data
16 analysis could, in theory, be part of this, sure, and kind
17 of -- you know, if a number of neighboring small, rural
18 districts thought, yeah, it would be great to have one data
19 analyst to help all of us look at our stuff. I think that
20 could be a part of it. That's a level of detail I would
21 anticipate you all would address in the rulemaking process.
22 It's not specified in the legislation.

23 MS. FLORES: Thank you.

24 MADAM CHAIR: Yes. Angelika.



1 MS. SCHROEDER: I have two questions, if I
2 can remember them both. Remind us how the grants are
3 allocated. Are they applied for, based on some costs that
4 are identified, or are they just allocated based on number
5 of kids or number of BOCES? Is that in the legislation?

6 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair?

7 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

8 MS. MELLO: Dr. Schroeder, it is addressed
9 in the legislation and is an application process. So the
10 legislation outlines some kind of general criteria that,
11 again, you all, I think, would anticipate making more
12 specific through your rulemaking process. Having spoken
13 with Representative Rankin I can tell you that he feels
14 quite strongly that it shouldn't be something that is just
15 kind of allocated out so that everybody gets an equal
16 piece. He really wants to use this as a way to test this
17 idea and whether it works or not. And so he wants that to
18 be done in a substantive, real way.

19 MS. SCHROEDER: Kind of like seed money.
20 Then my next question is, what is the impact, if any, on
21 CDE? Do we have responsibilities other -- I mean, do we
22 decide who gets the grant, for example?

23 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, Dr. Schroeder, yes.
24 The Department would administer the grant program, and
25 because of that we have -- there's a fiscal note on the



1 bill that we have submitted. There is some impact on us.
2 The way the legislation is set up I think the intention is
3 that whatever costs we would have to administer the grant
4 program -- which are not gigantic, for the record. I don't
5 have the fiscal note in front of me but we're not talking
6 about, you know, \$10 million worth of administrative costs,
7 clearly -- can be -- is part of that particular allocation,
8 right. So whatever the total amount that's included in the
9 bill, a small component of that is identified to offset
10 whatever costs the Department incurs in administering the
11 program.

12 MS. SCHROEDER: And then do we approve of
13 the grants, based on recommendations from staff?

14 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, Dr. Schroeder, I
15 apologize because my computer just died. So I believe it
16 would work typically the way a grant program works, which
17 is where staff takes the applications and then makes a
18 recommendation to you all as the formal authority for the
19 Department. I'm just going to turn around and look at
20 Elliott Asp.

21 MADAM CHAIR: You're looking the wrong
22 direction.

23 MS. MELLO: And he is confirming that I am
24 interpreting that correctly, even though I don't have the
25 bill in front of me anymore.



1 MS. SCHROEDER: Yeah, I apologize. I did
2 not read it for the detail. I got the big picture. Thank
3 you.

4 MADAM CHAIR: Okay. I would just say that
5 while I admire the bill and Representative Rankin, who is
6 fairly new to the legislature and may not be aware of the
7 extent that we already use the BOCES boards. So I am in
8 favor of it in general, but everybody needs to know, and I
9 see Dale McCall is in the audience, we have very strong
10 BOCES boards and they do exactly what this bill talks
11 about. So I'm not sure how, you know, how much it would
12 add to it, whether it would add things that we are not
13 already doing. I don't know. I have no objection to it,
14 and certainly if we want to support it I would be in favor
15 of that. But I just did want to point out that we have
16 very active BOCES boards and certainly understand that most
17 of the BOCES boards are in my district so other people may
18 not be as aware of them. So that's just -- I would be in
19 favor -- I mean, I am in favor of supporting it. As you
20 say, you can always come back if it doesn't work out or
21 something. I would be in favor of that.

22 Do I have a motion?

23 MS. GOFF: Yes. I move to support House
24 Bill 1201.

25 MADAM CHAIR: Second?



1 MS. SCHROEDER: I second.

2 MADAM CHAIR: Any objection? If not, it
3 stands approved.

4 Thank you. Is that -- do we have anything -
5 - what? Do you have a problem? Are you okay?

6 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, that concludes my
7 report, unless there are any questions from any of the
8 Board Members.

9 MADAM CHAIR: Are you having a good time
10 over there this year?

11 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, I am having a great
12 time at the Capitol. Thank you for asking.

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yesterday we had a
14 little bump in the road with the approval of some rules
15 relative to the allocation of trophies, and you may have
16 heard about the bump in the road. But my understanding is
17 Representative Priola (ph), who sponsored the bill, that
18 leads to the award of trophies, offered at the time to
19 cover the gifts, grants, and donations for the trophies.
20 So when you're over there would you get his check? It
21 should be about \$1,500, and tell him that I'll be by to see
22 him as well.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: We can get better
24 trophies if you can get more.



1 MS. MELLO: Madam Chair, Mr. Commissioner,
2 Mr. Durham, I'm happy to deliver that message.

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.

4 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you, Ms.
5 Mello.

6 MS. MELLO: Thank you.

7 MADAM CHAIR: Commissioner, I noticed that
8 you did have some remarks before we move on.

9 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Before we end our
10 legislative report I wanted to make the Board aware of some
11 issues that we've been talking about, and specifically with
12 Mr. Durham and some of the rest of you, around data privacy
13 and in Pearson. Next month, at the March meeting, we're
14 going to have a study session, I believe for -- I think
15 it's about an hour and a half or so. We're trying to get a
16 room across -- at room at the Capitol that can hold a large
17 enough audience. We're kind of trusting you if you could
18 do that.

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I'm trying. I now know
20 what the process is.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Okay. Good. We're
22 counting on you.

23 But anyway, it's specifically concerning
24 assessments and related data collection. And CDE staff,
25 along with representatives from Pearson will be there to



1 provide, quite frankly, a brief presentation and to address
2 questions. To help in the process, we've asked that -- and
3 we're going to open up a link on the Board site to
4 advertise it -- if people have questions that they want
5 answered it would help us to get us those questions
6 preferably by March the 2nd -- that's a Monday -- although
7 we'll keep taking questions, obviously. But if we can get
8 questions in, trying to keep -- acknowledging that we don't
9 have all day for the study session -- if we can get your
10 written questions we'll get information out. That will
11 help us a lot. Again, if we can get through the questions
12 we'll have even more time to address anything from the
13 audience. But this will help us keep the flow going as
14 best we can, if that's okay with you, Board Members.

15 MADAM CHAIR: And what is the date?

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: will be Thursday, March
17 the 12th. Is that correct? And I think it will be in the
18 morning. Right?

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's just because of
21 the amount of interest from the public, and what people
22 have talked to us, this room just won't be large enough.
23 So, all right. I just wanted to -- thank you.

24 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner.



1 The next item on the agenda is a study
2 session concerning graduation guidelines. Commissioner?

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you very much,
4 Madam Chair.

5 Back in March of -- March. Okay. It seems
6 like forever -- May of 2013, the Board adopted the
7 Graduation Guidelines, and recently you've seen a lot of
8 press on this whole issue. That's obviously. But after
9 you adopted the guidelines one of the things you asked us
10 to do was go out and get feedback across the state, because
11 some of the items that were set, you wanted more
12 information on and more feedback.

13 So between that time, once you adopted
14 those, you've asked again. So we collected all this
15 information. We've had a group and a variety of people go
16 across the state, gather information, and present back to
17 you today -- today is only for your information, and I want
18 to be clear about that -- to just get your input. And if
19 you don't like something, tell us, okay? We'll change it.
20 Because we're going to bring it back to you in March,
21 hopefully for action. If not, it can go to April,
22 whenever.

23 But what we're trying to do is, because to
24 help make sure we tell the field what really are the
25 graduation guidelines, and they stand the way they are now



1 unless you modify them, we really would like your feedback
2 today, or even next week. So this is to get your input and
3 we've allowed an hour and a half today for the
4 presentation, just to kind of walk you through a bunch of
5 the stuff that has been happening, the input that has been
6 gained. And I think -- I don't know if we have anybody
7 here to speak. Did we have a couple of people? I thought
8 so. Okay.

9 With that I'll turn that over to Rebecca
10 Holmes.

11 MS. HOLMES: Good morning, Madam Chair.

12 MR. DURHAM: I just ask a preliminary
13 question? Local boards have control of graduation
14 requirements. Is that generally correct?

15 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair?

16 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

17 MS. HOLMES: The legislation that was passed
18 in 2008 indicates that these are graduation guidelines
19 which local districts must meet or exceed. And so
20 essentially the way that was handled in 2013, and in
21 subsequent conversations with this body, is that what
22 you'll be asked to -- what you were asked to consider in
23 2013, and you're being asked to re-evaluate at this point,
24 is a floor that districts use in then making local



1 decisions and choices to set their diploma policies above
2 that floor.

3 MR. DURHAM: And then --

4 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

5 MR. DURHAM: -- so -- and the legislature
6 didn't enumerate those requirements. We set them?

7 MADAM CHAIR: Meet or exceed.

8 MR. DURHAM: Is that -- I mean, we --

9 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair?

10 MR. DURHAM: -- we set the floor. Is that
11 correct? I mean, we here, you, the Department, somebody
12 does?

13 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair?

14 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

15 MS. HOLMES: You'll see some statutory
16 references in our presentation today that indicate some
17 statutory references to where that floor must be set, that
18 it must be aligned to higher ed remediation policy and
19 aligned to the postsecondary and workforce readiness
20 definition in the state. But no, they did not enumerate
21 the specifics of that floor.

22 MR. DURHAM: But once we enumerate them,
23 Madam Chair, once we enumerate them then they do become a
24 standard. Correct?



1 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair? They then have
2 been interpreted as a standard that districts must meet or
3 exceed in setting their own diploma policies.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Mr. Durham, could I
5 comment to you?

6 MR. DURHAM: Yeah, please.

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I asked one day how
8 many people had been in the classroom, and while many of
9 you indicated you had hadn't been there for a long time.
10 But this is generally what the state has done. If you
11 leave it totally up to the local districts and that's it,
12 most local districts just use grade point average, GPA,
13 which can be inflated, it can be nothing, you know, and
14 that was the intent of the legislation at the time, that we
15 need to have, you know, real standards. We're graduate --
16 and I know this -- we graduate kids every year that are not
17 well educated. One of the ways we meet this, which I
18 have always liked, is meet or exceed. If we set standards,
19 that means that if the districts don't like those standards
20 they can come up with their own.

21 So I just think in raising the bar it's a
22 really good opportunity for us to do that, because we have
23 not had a very high bar for our graduation requirements. I
24 probably shouldn't have editorialized. Go ahead, Rebecca.



1 MR. DURHAM: May I add one more comment
2 then?

3 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Oh, yes.

4 MR. DURHAM: I think the only comment I
5 would have is that, I mean, it's back to what I think we
6 ought to have truth in advertising. These are not
7 guidelines. These are requirements and should be so
8 labeled.

9 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Meet or exceed
10 requirements.

11 MR. DURHAM: Right. They're not optional.

12 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Right. Right.

13 MR. DURHAM: So calling them guidelines is
14 inaccurate. And I think we ought to have a policy of
15 labeling things what they are. If they're requirements,
16 they're requirements.

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair?

18 MADAM CHAIR: Mr. Commissioner.

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I couldn't agree with
20 you more, okay? But, all right, the legislature made the
21 statutory reference, which --

22 MADAM CHAIR: You talk to your legislator.

23 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I couldn't agree with
24 you more. It confuses it. But they made the statutory
25 reference that you shall, and that's the issue, you know,



1 because guidelines mean guidelines. They're meaning
2 requirements. But I'm bound by that legislation. It
3 should be changed, and, quite frankly, we ought to make a
4 recommendation to do that.

5 But there was some talk that shall may
6 turned into may, and then it's that option of the district.
7 But they have stuck with -- they -- we -- districts shall
8 meet or exceed these guidelines. I just wanted to explain
9 that. It's awkward.

10 MADAM CHAIR: And thank you, Steve. I
11 didn't -- because we run into these things, this sort of
12 thing all the time. It is legislation and until we change
13 the legislation we have no alternative.

14 MR. DURHAM: But, you know, on some of this
15 stuff I have to bring to the Board, I'm bringing up that
16 this is a good point. It happens to us a lot. There's
17 some misleading nomenclature that's out there, and I think
18 we all need to be aware of it. As it comes across, we need
19 to try to make recommendations to change.

20 MADAM CHAIR: Yeah.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah, I think it's
22 great for the clarity for the public just because even
23 though the legislative language may be obtuse, we need to
24 clarify because these actually are where the rubber hits
25 the road, where local districts are concerned, and I think



1 of the word "interim" in the READ Act. It's an odd word
2 when it's really an outcome assessment. So, I mean, I
3 think clarity in labeling and language is so important for
4 districts so that they understand and prepare it so that
5 they know how to --

6 MADAM CHAIR: Right.

7 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- think about the
8 process.

9 MADAM CHAIR: Okay.

10 MR. DURHAM: Thank you.

11 MADAM CHAIR: Now I'm going to let Rebecca -
12 -

13 MS. HOLMES: Thank you.

14 MADAM CHAIR: Would you move ahead please?

15 MS. HOLMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good
16 morning. I will add that we spent several months after the
17 adoption of the policy in 2013 having this exact
18 conversation with districts, who also would prefer that the
19 statutory language be more specific.

20 I'm joined this morning by Dr. Elliott Asp,
21 a Special Assistant to the Commissioner, and Misti Ruthven,
22 who you all know, is Director of Postsecondary Readiness.
23 They will be sharing in portions of this presentation as
24 they've been supporting this work over the last 18 months,
25 since the adoption of the menu in May of 2013. We have a



1 significant amount of content, as you saw in your binders
2 today, to try to cover, and in about 30 minutes or 40
3 minutes we're hoping to transition to a panel of four
4 educators from the state who have been deeply involved in
5 this work and are here to share some of their perspectives
6 with you today.

7 To back up and provide context, back to
8 about 18 months ago, this body did adopt the Menu of
9 College and Career Demonstrations to assist our state in a
10 first-time definition of a high school diploma. During
11 that discussion and approval, this body certainly directed
12 Department staff to begin a two-year discussion on the menu
13 itself, as well ensuring that there had been robust public
14 input and that feedback was received from a variety of
15 stakeholders, including educators, industry, higher ed, and
16 workforce representatives.

17 Over the past 18 months, Department staff
18 has met with nearly every superintendent in the state, and
19 you'll see some pictures of that process, as well as
20 convene seven workgroups by topic area with over 300
21 volunteers across the state to work on this policy.

22 We want to acknowledge that when you go back
23 and listen to the record of your hearing in May of 2013,
24 when you all met to discuss and approve the guidelines,
25 Members of this Board, at that time, mentioned no fewer



1 than eight times that the Department should incorporate
2 additional voices into the process and provide updates to
3 the Board with recommendations of additions and
4 clarifications to the menu, and to continue to look for
5 additional competency-based measures for districts and
6 local boards as they reflect their learning priorities for
7 students.

8 Some of the comments that were made at that
9 session that I think have guided our work, from you all,
10 included that this was our first signal of student
11 accountability, that it was the signal of a major shift
12 toward competency-based outcomes and systems but that more
13 work remained to be done to understand exactly where the
14 bar for districts' graduation policies should be set.

15 I think one frame on this conversation that
16 has become clear to us is that it is useful, I think, to
17 think about the menu you all set not as a immediately
18 student-facing but as a menu that is district-facing that
19 districts then use to set and re-evaluate their own diploma
20 policies.

21 If you look briefly at our agenda for this
22 morning, which, again, is fairly tight, we want to start
23 with some additional background and history about
24 Colorado's Graduation Guidelines; outlining the purpose of
25 how and why our state began this conversation in 2007; talk



1 a bit about the timeline that you all approved and the
2 rationale for why this does not go into effect until 2021's
3 graduating class; share a bit about resources provided to
4 districts, local boards, communities, and educators; our
5 feedback from stakeholder meetings to share with you; the
6 formation and ongoing work of the workgroups, specifically
7 the assessment workgroup, which was intentionally set to
8 convene as the last workgroup and take in the work from the
9 other groups; and essentially just share with you kind of a
10 pause in the process and where we are.

11 So I want to be specific that there's no
12 intention to ask for any action today to revisit the menu.
13 We just thought that given the gravity of this policy that
14 it is the first time there have been these minimums that
15 students really must meet or exceed, that we would pause in
16 the process and share with you the focus of the state
17 conversation to this point.

18 As the Commissioner noted, the field is very
19 eager to have what they would feel is a more final menu,
20 and we do intend to come forward later this spring to ask
21 you all to vote on recommendations to the menu. But we
22 wanted to pause while that final workgroup is still working
23 and get your feedback to take back to them, so that we're
24 having more of an iterative process and a conversation
25 versus bringing something forward to you all that would



1 have felt like a surprise if you hadn't had an update on
2 the two years of work in between.

3 So with that we'll transition to some of the
4 background here. You will recall that in 2007, when the
5 Graduation Guidelines were first written into statute,
6 Colorado was the 50th state to establish, at the state
7 level, some level of expectation for a high school diploma
8 and define the meaning of a high school diploma. All 49
9 other states do have some level of state requirement but
10 every district must include a meet and/or exceed in their
11 district policy, and at this point the only requirements in
12 the state of Colorado the districts must include is a
13 course of a semester-length in civics. So this is first-
14 time work for the state and was in 2007.

15 The initial law adopted heavily focused on
16 labor and workforce needs in our state and expressed the
17 confusion for labor and workforce in higher ed, with the
18 fact that a high school diploma from one district might
19 mean something very different from a high school diploma
20 from another district. That said, I think it's always been
21 the intention of this law to find a way to set that floor
22 while still honoring our statewide commitment to local
23 control and offering local districts as much flexibility as
24 possible.



1 The original Council did convene in 2007.
2 Their work deeply informed CAP4K, and when that was passed
3 in 2008, Graduation Guidelines was rewritten into CAP4K,
4 and at that point the workgroup processed paused in order
5 to let the other pieces of CAP4K begin their
6 implementation. That group was reconvened in 2012 and led
7 to the menu adoption in May of 2013, with direction to the
8 Department to, as I mentioned, establish an iterative
9 process for updates.

10 We have managed this iterative process in a
11 number of ways. The first is clarifying for districts the
12 timeline that you all set. When you adopted this policy in
13 May of 2013, you were clear that it would go into effect
14 for the graduating class of 2021. You can imagine there
15 are some folks who have a sense of urgency and feel like
16 that's a long time. In conversations with districts, they
17 felt it very important to remember that that's this year's
18 sixth-graders, and that while there is certainly a desire
19 in the state to have a high bar for all students
20 immediately, that it would be a troubling practice from the
21 perspective of districts to change a graduation requirement
22 on a student who is already in high school. And you all
23 considered that testimony in May of 2013, and that was the
24 rationale for what seems like a fairly long timeline, but
25 would really allow districts to spend a year reconsidering



1 the positive and negative consequences of their historic
2 diploma policies, having a robust conversation in their
3 community about what they want their diploma to include and
4 mean, and another year to sort of put that work into place
5 while those students are in seventh grade, and then a year
6 for communication new bar to students and parents in their
7 eighth-grade year, so that when that class of students
8 began high school their new graduation requirements, to the
9 extent a district chose to update to align with the menu,
10 were very clear for all families in the state.

11 This timeline also allowed time to have
12 conversation about the menu with an agreement that by May
13 of 2015 you all would reconsider some of the pieces of the
14 menu that needed additional clarification or were based on
15 new assessments or new targets.

16 And, additionally, it has allowed CDE to
17 begin providing district-level implementation supports. We
18 have two pieces of implementation support that I'll share
19 with you today, one that has been published as of December
20 and one that is forthcoming in the summer.

21 You also looked, two years ago, at the
22 purpose for this work, and we have some new data from
23 Georgetown that we want to share with you. Georgetown
24 University, for the past five years, has been releasing
25 state projections of job growth, and we think this is



1 critical when you heard, from Adam Spifty (ph) yesterday in
2 public comment, and Ms. Gatto (ph) remembered that in their
3 district they talked very deeply about the fact that the
4 day after graduation is the most important day in a
5 student's life, and that our system has the responsibility
6 of producing students who will spent a lot more time in the
7 world outside of school than they will in our K-12 system.

8 And so they've grounded this work in the
9 data that is shared here, where you see some projections
10 about the world of work and the world of career and life
11 that our students will go into. It ranks Colorado against
12 other states and shares that by 2020 Colorado will be 48th
13 out of 50 states in available jobs for high school
14 graduates or dropouts or graduates who essentially have no
15 training beyond their high school diploma.

16 We are ranked third out of 50 states in the
17 proportion of jobs in 2020 that will require a bachelor's
18 degree. But I also want to make sure we spend time on the
19 third bullet on this slide which says this policy is not
20 about all students getting a bachelor's degree. It's about
21 students being prepared for a world of work where the
22 highest growth of jobs are. And you see that those high-
23 growth projections are really around jobs that will have
24 additional training of some kind, possibly a two-year
25 diploma or a certification program beyond high school.



1 And grounding in this data in all of our
2 conversations with districts has been quite helpful to have
3 a data-based reminder of the way that the world of work has
4 changed and what the demands our students really will be.

5 So with that I will take you to the menu
6 that you all -- the currently approved menu that you all
7 considered in May of 2013. As you can see, at that time we
8 did not know where CMAS or PARCC scores would necessarily
9 land. The baseline that the menu was built off of was ACT
10 and SAT data, and that goes to the statutory reference
11 around remediation rates, and we'll have someone from the
12 Department of Higher Ed on our panel if you have further
13 questions on the remediation cut scores.

14 Colorado law also required that the menu be
15 aligned, as I've mentioned, with higher ed students' need
16 for remediation, to show that they are remediation free and
17 that they show work-ready skills regardless of the pathway
18 that they choose, whether that's college, career, or
19 military service.

20 The menu's other goal was to provide
21 flexible pathways for district-based decisions to allow
22 more or less time to complete a high school diploma as well
23 as flexibility in a move away from seat time, or how
24 students sort of demonstrate what they know.



1 The, again, menu is best considered as a
2 menu that's district facing because a district might be
3 able to choose. Of these ten pathways, they might have
4 seven that comprise the options that they provide to their
5 districts. In addition, they may add columns beyond what
6 the State Board has approved and say, you know, our
7 particular district certainly still wants to have
8 requirements of PE or requirements in the arts. But this
9 menu, as you all consider it, is really the district-facing
10 set of minimums.

11 We will be coming back to this menu later in
12 the presentation.

13 I mentioned that we have worked, over the
14 last 18 months, to hear from districts what kind of
15 resources would be most helpful to them. The thing they
16 most want is an implementation toolkit, and that is
17 forthcoming this spring. Obviously, it would have been
18 premature to give deep implementation guidance before some
19 of those TBD portions of the menu were complete.

20 In the meantime, what we were able to
21 provide them with, that they asked for, was a toolkit to
22 work on their engagement policy. This was developed using
23 some resources from CASB and other districts who had
24 already deeply reconsidered their graduation policies, and
25 the intention was to provide a toolkit that aimed at both



1 superintendents and local boards in navigating
2 conversations with their committee about what their diploma
3 policy currently was encouraging or prioritizing and how
4 they might want to reconsider that. In addition to CASB
5 and districts, we worked deeply with CAES to inform the
6 content.

7 MS. SCHEFFEL: Should we be interrupting or
8 let this group continue?

9 MADAM CHAIR: Do you have a problem?

10 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair, I'm happy to take
11 questions now or can set aside time for Q&A at the end as
12 well.

13 MS. SCHEFFEL: Okay. I just have a question
14 as I'm, again, kind of reconsidering this issue of
15 guidelines. I just was looking back at my notes from when
16 we passed this menu of options in 2013 -- is that right? --
17 and I specifically have language written into my notes and
18 recall that the guidance from the Commissioner and the
19 discussion we had was around this issue of guidelines.

20 These are merely guidelines. They are
21 intended to help students know where they stand, help
22 parents know where they stand with respect to
23 competitiveness with -- on the ASVAB, for example, which is
24 a military assessment. So, I mean, it was the idea of
25 guidelines. And now I can't help but go back to that



1 language and think, we actually set requirements at that
2 point with this menu of options and the specific cut scores
3 on this table, and now our job is to consider whether or
4 not those cut scores are correct and whether or not that
5 menu of ten things is the right menu to render kids fit for
6 the workforce in 2020. Am I correct? Commissioner, is
7 that what we're considering, whether or not the menu is
8 correct and the cut scores are correct? In my notes it's
9 very much -- these are guidelines, mostly for the kids and
10 the parents, so that they know where they stand, in terms
11 of competitive edge. Now I'm realizing that the word "or"
12 was taken out and it's "must," or whatever the specific
13 word --

14 MADAM CHAIR: Commissioner?

15 MS. SCHEFFEL: -- shall versus --

16 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Right. At the time,
17 when we brought the --

18 MS. SCHEFFEL: -- could or should or --

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- when we brought this
20 to you the law hasn't changed. The Board -- this is one
21 thing you do get to do. It's very clear. As that stands,
22 set the Graduation Guidelines. Even though it says
23 guidelines, it is, in effect, requirements. I would say
24 that, and then as Mr. Durham pointed out, he's absolutely
25 correct. In a perfect world, the legislature should have



1 said this is requirements. The way the legislation is set
2 up, and it was set up clear back then when we discussed
3 this, you shall meet or exceed these guidelines.

4 So, in effect, Dr. Scheffel, you're correct.
5 These -- what was passed at that Board meeting was set.
6 They are the requirements, even though we called them
7 guidelines, by law.

8 MS. SCHEFFEL: What language in the statute
9 would have suggested, in our discussion, that these were
10 merely guidelines?

11 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: It's the way it reads
12 in the statute.

13 MS. SCHEFFEL: So the word "guidelines"
14 suggests one thing and the word "shall" suggests a
15 requirements. Is that correct? Was there any other
16 language in the statute that mitigated the word "shall"?

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No.

18 MS. SCHEFFEL: So it was just confusion
19 based on the title of the bill?

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Rebecca.

21 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair?

22 MADAM CHAIR: May I make a -- well, I was
23 going to make a suggestion, and I apologize, Deb. You
24 caught me kind of by surprise.



1 In general, our rules -- you know, we ask
2 clarifying questions while the report is going on and then
3 bring up philosophical questions after we finish. And so I
4 --

5 MS. SCHEFFEL: It's just sort of shocking to
6 see those cut scores --

7 MADAM CHAIR: No, I understand. I --

8 MS. SCHEFFEL: -- that they're requirements
9 --

10 MADAM CHAIR: -- and I agree, yeah.

11 MS. SCHEFFEL: -- unless we change them.

12 MADAM CHAIR: But I just don't want to
13 interrupt them too much, and then we can finish afterwards.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Madam Chair, could I
15 say that it is difficult, I think, to just hold --

16 MADAM CHAIR: What?

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- all of our
18 questions. I mean, when they're --

19 MADAM CHAIR: Well, that's what we have
20 generally done. Now if you want to ask --

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I'm not arguing that
22 that's what we've -- but it would be helpful, I think, if
23 we could ask when it comes up.

24 MADAM CHAIR: You can ask a clarifying
25 questions at any time, but when they finish and we're



1 talking the philosophical questions is when we probably
2 should be bringing those kind of things up, if that's okay
3 with the Board.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yeah, and can I --

5 MADAM CHAIR: Sure.

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- I agree and will
7 respect that. My only thought is these presentations are
8 so long that we usually only have five or ten minutes at
9 the end to ask questions.

10 MADAM CHAIR: You lose them. I understand
11 that.

12 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So I guess I would ask
13 that the presentations might -- you know, we might consider
14 that when we only have an hour to talk about it and the
15 presentation is 50 minutes. But thank you.

16 MADAM CHAIR: Rebecca.

17 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair, (inaudible) can
18 also site the statutory reference in 22-2-106(a.5) that
19 talks about the Board's purview to set minimum competency
20 demonstrations, if that's a helpful reference at this time.

21 MADAM CHAIR: Okay. Well, let's just move
22 ahead then and we'll finish up.

23 MS. HOLMES: Okay. So we did go ahead, as
24 I've said, and put out tools and resources to help
25 districts begin this process. We wanted to share with you



1 a way to capture the process of 300 volunteers and every
2 superintendent in the state. In two years of work, that's
3 a tough process to encapsulate in a presentation like this.
4 We have chosen a handful of what I think are representative
5 quotations in order to help capture that conversation.

6 There have been voices of conceptual
7 support. There are two quotations offered here that were,
8 I think, representative of the kind of public support, both
9 local, in Colorado, and national, from many websites, that
10 praise you all for adopting what you adopted. You can see
11 the *Denver Post* quote from just that very week in May of
12 2013, talking about the meaning of a high school diploma.
13 You can see, a few months later, a reference from
14 *Competency Works*, a national organization that has helped
15 states who have set competency-based policies, and their
16 president saying that this was "a forward thinking policy
17 with a number of possible implications," going as far as to
18 say to other states "for those of you thinking about state
19 policy it's worth taking a look" as the Colorado policy
20 "pushes forward while still leaving room for local control
21 . . . you will find that Colorado established a policy that
22 allows districts to advance aggressively toward a
23 competency-based system, but also allows others to continue
24 to be time-based and credit-based in their structures."



1 And then, of course, certainly none of us do
2 our work primarily for the media, so perhaps our more
3 direct constituents, a representative comment here from
4 Gunnison school board member and former superintendent,
5 Bill Powell, that references his interpretation of the
6 Graduation Guidelines as a "creative reconceptualization of
7 both classroom-level and school-level planning," thinking
8 deeply about the teaching-learning partnership and allowing
9 several learning pathways.

10 That's not to say that the entire last 18
11 months have only had positive conversations. There are
12 some very significant concerns that have come up about this
13 policy. The first is about, I think, the complexity of the
14 authentic adoption of a competency-based system. There are
15 a number of states that have moved in the direction of
16 competency-based, and I'll talk a bit more about what that
17 means. We've also shared with you, in your packets, a
18 brief article from iNACOL that summarizes competency-based
19 systems and talks about the policy implications of them.

20 But there is a significant shift if you move
21 away from the Carnegie Unit and seat time, which high
22 school, in particular, has been based on for many decades,
23 to move towards students really exiting the system based on
24 a demonstration of what they can do. This complexity is, I
25 think, well summarized in this quotation from a school



1 board member from Telluride, where she says, "I think
2 standards-based diploma is a bigger deal than people
3 realize. You can't make it so by a declaration. There is
4 really more to it if we want to go to that direction and do
5 right by our students. Without planning and resources I
6 expect either an ineffective system or a harmful system
7 that leaves a lot of students behind. Raising the bar in
8 and of itself does not improve outcomes. We need to plan
9 better to implement a standards-based diploma by fully
10 implementing a standards-based system and find the
11 resources to do so in an effective manner."

12 There was resource shared with you all in
13 May of 2013 that looked at other states who have raised
14 their diploma requirements, and in every case there was
15 fear that if you raise the diploma requirement the high
16 school graduation rate goes down. In every case, in the
17 other states, what you've seen is that when you raise the
18 diploma requirement the graduation rate, over time, goes
19 up, but it doesn't do so without thought about the
20 complexity of the system and the necessary supports to help
21 students understand the new ways that they would be asked
22 to demonstrate their readiness for exit.

23 The other significant concern you see here
24 is one of cost and the important issue of access and
25 equity. We have shared a comment here that I think is



1 representative of many concerns, from Superintendent Bret
2 Miles, who I believe is also in the room today, about the
3 need to think about the equity inside this system. And his
4 final comment there, "If a student has fewer chances to
5 meet a cut score in a category, they have less chances of
6 graduating," and so how do we provide enough multiple
7 pathways that every district can craft a policy that gives
8 students opportunities to demonstrate what they know and
9 that they are ready for the day after high school.

10 We also have had our own internal department
11 learning agenda over the last 18 months. When Colorado
12 adopted this policy in May of 2013, one of the reasons it
13 made so many national education headlines is that we became
14 one of about eight or ten states who have really made a
15 policy decision relevant to competency-based systems. At
16 that time, as you know, we had only one district in our
17 state, Adams 50, that had already implemented a competency-
18 based system. Luckily for us, they've been at that work
19 for about five years, and we were able to invest a
20 significant amount of time learning from their lessons,
21 their struggles, their system changes, so that we can share
22 that work with other districts in our state. With 10,000
23 students, they are the largest district in the country that
24 is 100 percent implementing a competency-based policy.



1 We have also looked at New Hampshire and a number of other
2 states, Maine, in particular, who have adopted statewide
3 graduation policies that are about competency rather than
4 seat time, to inform our ongoing work, to understand how
5 policy supports this move. And we've spent a lot of time
6 with a number of Colorado districts, traveling to Lindsay,
7 California, a small district outside of Fresno, which has
8 also implemented a wholesale competency-based policy, and
9 we've had a number of districts use their own time and
10 resources to go visit that district as well as Adams 50 to
11 understand different ways of moving forward as a district
12 that wants to -- as it's just an option -- fully implement
13 a based-based system under the new Graduation Guidelines
14 policy.

15 And in the two areas we've learned the
16 greatest amount there are about timelines and district
17 supports. Most of the districts and states have said it's
18 five to six years to authentically make this move, so that
19 would support the timeline that you all adopted in May of
20 2013.

21 And two areas where we have some good steps
22 forward but more to do are the ways that accountability
23 systems and school finance systems also have to move to
24 truly support a competency-based policy. In particular,
25 the fact that Colorado does fund beyond four years of high



1 school and can fund to the age of 21, and credit schools
2 for a fifth, sixth, or seventh year in a graduation rate
3 puts us ahead of other states in terms of some of our
4 policy barriers, but that doesn't mean that all of our
5 school finance or school accountability policy is ready yet
6 for a competency-based system.

7 With that, we wanted to give you a bit of a
8 picture of where we are on the current elements of the
9 menu. Very few of the current elements of the menu are new
10 work to the state. Actually, every element of the menu you
11 can find a district already working on or you can find a
12 number of districts having already put the groundwork in
13 place. And so I've asked Misty to just very quickly walk
14 you through a current picture of the elements of the menu
15 and their current and historical implementation in the
16 state.

17 MS. RUTHVEN: Thank you, Rebecca.

18 So, in transition, let's discuss the data
19 and information that we do have available, as Rebecca had
20 mentioned. We want to be sure and outline the current data
21 landscape for districts. So we will share specific maps
22 with you today. You have all of this in detail, so we will
23 go over this quickly. You have ACT statewide data,
24 graduation rates, remediation rates, higher education
25 matriculation rates, concurrent enrollment participation,



1 advanced placement or AP participation, participation in
2 career and technical education, and then we'll briefly
3 discuss the career readiness pathways.

4 So as we look at the ACT data, we cannot
5 reinforce enough that this is just one reference point on
6 the menu. It should not be assumed that students won't
7 graduate based upon other measures in the menu as well,
8 such as taking a concurrent enrollment course, ASVAB
9 military exam, completing a Capstone project, and all of
10 these pieces Dr. Asp will go into greater detail into
11 today.

12 I'd like to make sure and reference the by-
13 region ACT data that you do have in your packet. So this
14 goes into greater detail as far as the number and
15 percentage of students across our state that are meeting
16 the current ACT benchmarks of 18 and 19, which are aligned
17 with the state's higher education remediation rates.

18 One other piece to point out on the ACT data
19 is that these are current juniors only, so many of these
20 students may take or retake the ACT again during their
21 senior year, and they may likely receive an 18 or a 19 in
22 English and math on their subsequent retakes of ACT.

23 Additionally, please note that our outcome
24 data associated with ACT has not changed significantly over
25 the past --



1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Misty, just a real
2 quick clarifying question.

3 MS. RUTHVEN: Sure.

4 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I don't know Region 1
5 through 15. Is there a map that I should be looking at?
6 Did I miss that?

7 MS. RUTHVEN: Madam Chair.

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: In order to get a sense
9 for what these regions are, was there a map that I missed
10 that tells me which are rural, which are suburban/urban?

11 MS. RUTHVEN: Madam Chair.

12 MADAM CHAIR: Sure.

13 MS. RUTHVEN: No. Because we have never
14 shared that regional data publicly before, there's an
15 attempt there to sort of anonymize that data. It's roughly
16 BOCES regions with the addition of the districts that do
17 not belong to a BOCES into the region that would be their
18 closest region. If you're looking at specific -- if you're
19 looking for specific regional data, the ACT data map is the
20 better way to get at that.

21 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Is that online?

22 MS. RUTHVEN: It is online, and you can also
23 look at the N size of districts within those regions and
24 sort out which regions have urban centers.



1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: So it's a big secret.
2 I get it.

3 MS. RUTHVEN: If you're looking for, also --
4 I mean, the ACT data of any district is public, and so if
5 you're looking for a particular district --

6 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: No, I'm not. I'm just
7 trying to get a sense for around the state whether --

8 MS. RUTHVEN: Yeah.

9 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- I can tie resources
10 to the scores, or some other variable that can be really
11 important to some of these districts, and I can't quite do
12 that --

13 MS. RUTHVEN: That's a great question.

14 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: -- without that sense.

15 MS. RUTHVEN: We were interested in the
16 outcome that when we categorized this in the way that we
17 did, roughly BOCES region but not entirely, the rough
18 number of students hitting that 18 or 19 remained in a
19 fairly tight range, between about 52 and 60 percent.

20 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you.

21 MADAM CHAIR: Go ahead.

22 MS. RUTHVEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 Moving on to graduation rates, this is a
24 snapshot of the 2012 graduating class. The darker color is
25 a lower graduation rate. The lighter color a higher



1 graduation rate. The purpose is to give you some context
2 in alignment with remediation as well, which will be on the
3 next slide.

4 In your packet you also have -- these are
5 just purely random samples of districts and schools, high
6 schools across our state that have agreed to share their
7 graduation requirements on a school-level basis. You'll
8 likely notice that all districts, even some schools, have
9 different scales for the number of credits and the minimum
10 number of credits by content areas. This variability will
11 continue as the statutory authority is to meet or exceed
12 and establish a floor and not a ceiling, and districts will
13 determine how they will align with this.

14 As Rebecca mentioned earlier, we also will
15 continue to have policies -- the districts will continue to
16 have differing policies regarding number of credits, seat
17 time, and the amount of time a student must stay to earn a
18 high school diploma. So these are all local level areas of
19 decision and flexibility regarding graduation.

20 Moving on to remediation, so just a
21 reminder, remediation is the need to take high school level
22 courses in college because students are not prepared to
23 take a college-level, credit-bearing course. For higher
24 ed, institutions in Colorado, the students' remedial needs
25 are only assessed in math and English. This map reflects



1 students needing remediation in either math, English, or
2 both. The blanks are districts that have fewer than 10
3 students attending an institution of higher education. And
4 then the orange looks at districts that have higher than 50
5 percent remediation rates, the green is 25 to 50 percent
6 remediation rates, and the blue is the 25 or fewer, 25
7 percent or fewer students who have remedial needs. And
8 this is aligned with the graduation rate map. This is the
9 same cohort of students that then would matriculate
10 immediately after high school to college.

11 This gives you just a brief snapshot of our
12 higher ed matriculation. Historically, in Colorado, it has
13 stayed fairly flat. This represents about 90 percent and
14 does not encompass all students that go on to higher
15 education. We know that the data that the Department of --
16 or partners of the Department of Higher Education are
17 collecting are based on institutional data within Colorado,
18 and then they do have access to what's called the National
19 Student Clearinghouse. However, out-of-state schools are
20 not required to report to that system.

21 So moving on to some current programs in our
22 state. This is a snapshot of concurrent enrollment. As
23 we've shared with this Board previously, more than 25,000
24 students across our state, or 1 in 5 Colorado juniors and
25 seniors take a concurrent enrollment course, and the vast



1 majority, or 85 percent, of districts are participating.
2 Advanced placement, we do have limited data regarding
3 advanced placement. This is reflective of the districts
4 that have students taking tests and not specific course-
5 level participation.

6 Moving on to career and technical education.
7 As you may know, Colorado is unique in that career and
8 technical education programs are administered by our
9 community college partners. In many other states, these
10 programs are administered by the K-12 system. CTE, in
11 current enrollment, provide an opportunity for us to
12 partner with the community college system to align our
13 pathways, which Rebecca will talk more about in detail.

14 I'd like to just give you a few quick facts
15 about CTE, or current technical education. This is
16 representative of more than 125,000 students across our
17 state. Thirty-seven percent of all high students are
18 currently enrolled in at least one current technical
19 education course across our state, 95 percent of students
20 taking three or more CTE courses while in high school.
21 Most of them meet English as well as math competencies.
22 But the other discussion is that 90 percent of students
23 receiving a certificate get a job within a few months of
24 high school graduation. So 90 percent of CTE students are
25 getting jobs.



1 There are currently more than 700
2 certificates available through community colleges and area
3 vocational schools across our state, with which our
4 districts are partnering.

5 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Did you say 3,700, or
6 1,300, or --

7 MS. RUTHVEN: Madam Chair?

8 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

9 MS. RUTHVEN: Seven hundred.

10 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Seven hundred. Thank
11 you.

12 MS. RUTHVEN: So more than 700. The exact
13 number is 748.

14 So, in summary, program participation by
15 school districts shows that there is significant
16 participation in many programs that are represented on the
17 Career and College Readiness Demonstration Menu. From the
18 maps there is significant participation in concurrent
19 enrollment, approximately 85 percent. Fifty-six percent of
20 districts are participating in advanced placement, and 87
21 percent in career and technical education. I'll hand it
22 back to Rebecca to discuss multiple pathways, which we
23 reference throughout today's presentation.

24 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you, Misty. Rebecca.

25 MS. HOLMES: Sure. Thank you, Madam Chair.



1 I'll pause here. We want to just name one
2 of the inherent challenges in this menu, and that has to do
3 with the fact that our definition at the state level of
4 postsecondary and workforce readiness is essentially about
5 college readiness and career readiness, and it has always
6 been, I think, a stated value of this Board, when
7 evaluating this work, that this is about students being
8 ready for college or career or the military, depending on
9 their choice.

10 I think the question around how many
11 certificates is actually a nice lead-in to one of the
12 challenges in this work, where we've been trying to learn
13 from other states. There is certainly a challenge but I
14 think comparably it is relatively easy to set bars for
15 whether or not a student is college ready, because we have
16 institutions of higher ed who tell us where that bar is and
17 whether that is a 14 to 19 or a 25 on a particular
18 assessment.

19 Getting that same bar right for career
20 readiness is much more challenging. There are 700 possible
21 certificate programs in the state, over 700, and as a
22 district leader or a former high school principal myself,
23 you look at the idea that this is particularly challenging
24 to sort out. To whose bar is a student career ready? We
25 don't want that challenge, and I think it would not meet



1 our statutory obligations to not have that challenge around
2 career readiness not give us something in the menu. But it
3 is challenging to determine how do we know if a student is
4 ready for a career? What career? At what level?

5 When you look, for example -- we lost our
6 clicker.

7 (Pause.)

8 MS. HOLMES: There we go.

9 When you look, for example, at the work on
10 career pathways, which is shown here in the Career Cluster
11 Model, trying to sort this out, as a K-12 leader, to
12 determine how do I align the rigor of my high school
13 coursework, the participation of CTE, with any one, much
14 less all of these career clusters, that is challenging.
15 And one of the complaints that we've heard about the
16 current menu, from the field, is that most of the items on
17 the menu leaned toward career readiness and that our
18 districts felt it was incumbent on us to put forward a
19 recommendation to you all around some element of career
20 readiness. We've done that through looking at other states
21 who have policies in their graduation policies, or in their
22 accountability frameworks, that value career readiness as
23 strongly as college readiness, and Elliott will share with
24 you the one particular assessment that the assessment



1 workgroup is considering most strongly as an addition to
2 that menu.

3 That said, the originally adopted menu did
4 include industry certificates, and I want to point out what
5 Misty said, that students who complete industry
6 certificates before high school graduation are decidedly
7 more employable than their peers. However, there is a
8 challenge in that when you look in our Career and Technical
9 Education Map and you see those high levels of
10 participation, that is participation in one CTE course.
11 That's very different. That's sort of a dabbling in CTE,
12 which while valuable is very different than lining up the
13 number of CTE courses leading toward the same career to
14 graduate with a certificate. So there's still a great
15 amount of work to be done there to understand where the bar
16 is and what incentives you would put in place to help a
17 student choose that path.

18 I've referenced the workgroup that we've had
19 in place since the adoption of the policy in 2013. We had
20 six workgroups that took on different topics related to the
21 menu, and those workgroups essentially had two charges.
22 Their first charge was to consider implementation guidance
23 for their particular piece. So there was a group on ICAP,
24 for example, the Individual Career and Academic Plan that
25 is mandated in law for all 9th- through 12th-grade



1 students. They spent a considerable amount of time saying
2 you can't actually move to a competency-based graduation
3 policy without strong individual planning for students.
4 What recommendations did they make to us and to the field
5 around strong ICAP implementation, and we were able to
6 relaunch the ICAP process in a very large event in December
7 of 2014, with their guidance.

8 Similarly, the industry certificate group,
9 as an example, looked at places where districts have had
10 significant progress in helping students move toward
11 industry certificates. They are working on capturing the
12 best practices of those districts, and that will all be in
13 the implementation toolkit that's coming out. So that was
14 their first charge, to look at best practices in our state
15 and others of work at schools and districts that were
16 already doing this work well.

17 The second charge was to table their most
18 vexing recommendations and pass those to the assessment
19 workgroup. Given that it is, in statute, that the menu has
20 to have some level of concordance between the pieces of the
21 menu, we knew that there would be topics that would come up
22 that were better considered by one group than separately
23 considered by separate groups. So the six groups did
24 consider a number of those and then sent those to the



1 assessment workgroup and that has helped shape the
2 assessment workgroup's work.

3 The assessment workgroup kicked off last,
4 intentionally, to have that be facilitated. And so that's
5 why today we're going to focus the remainder of our time
6 heavily on the current work of that assessment workgroup,
7 because in many ways it is a culmination of the other
8 workgroups that have taken place.

9 I do want to point out that we had a special
10 populations workgroup that was intended to think about the
11 implications of the menu for English language learners,
12 students with IEPs, and gifted and talented students. For
13 resources we tried to call that one group. They
14 immediately, in their first meeting, understood what we
15 probably should have understood, that those are three
16 separate groups. They split into three separate subgroups,
17 based on their special population of students, and have put
18 together a particular set of guidance that will come out in
19 the implementation toolkit.

20 That group has made those recommendations
21 and you will see that those recommendations will come
22 forward the next time that we bring this work to you.

23 The workgroup membership, as you can see,
24 was over 330 volunteers from across the state. Each
25 workgroup was chaired, also, by a volunteer, and in some



1 cases a subject matter expert from the Department, and in
2 other cases a subject matter expert from a district or
3 another institution. And you can see the breakdown here of
4 K-12, rural, higher ed, et cetera, in terms of
5 participation.

6 With that, as I've mentioned, the assessment
7 workgroup was last, and that is the group where we asked
8 them to pause where they are in their work right now and
9 bring this work forward to you all to have a bit of a
10 conversation, not only with us but essentially via us with
11 them, so that we can get to a place, by the end of this
12 spring, that we can put forward that implementation toolkit
13 and give districts even stronger guidance than they've had
14 so far. So because Elliott Asp has chaired the assessment
15 workgroup, I'm going to hand things off to him at this
16 point, and then we'll move to our panel of members.

17 MR. ASP: Madam Chair?

18 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

19 MR. ASP: It's been my pleasure to work with
20 the assessment workgroup and I appreciate the opportunity
21 to share the thinking of that group with you this morning.

22 I'd like to focus our attention back on the
23 original menu and the charge of the assessment workgroup
24 itself. I want to remind you that we're not asking for a
25 formal recommendation from you or a vote today. What we



1 want to do is to provide you information on the direction
2 the group is going so that you understand the nature of the
3 discussions that have gone on inside that group, and also
4 the feedback that we've received from a number of
5 stakeholders across the state regarding this work. Folks
6 have not been shy about weighing in on this process, and
7 that's been good.

8 Let me remind you just a minute the charge
9 of this workgroup was really aligned with the directive
10 from you folks, in May of 2013. So we've charged them with
11 allowing time for additional conversation about career- and
12 college-ready demonstrations, what additional things we
13 need to be aware of, to explore additional competency-based
14 demonstrations, and ensure that the menu is aligned and
15 iterative. And what I mean by that is that the cut points
16 in these various measures are aligned with one another in a
17 very deliberate way.

18 Now, more specifically, this group is
19 focused on examining what aspects of the current menu need
20 to be revised, if any, exploring content areas and
21 additional measures, especially given their recent
22 discussions around assessment in high school and how that
23 may play out in the legislature during this particular
24 session. And then they've also been incorporating feedback
25 from stakeholders and other workgroups regarding the



1 feasibility and utility of the current menu and its
2 implementation.

3 As we've had these discussions a number of
4 issues have arisen, or questions have arisen that we've
5 been talking about. I'll just give you a flavor for a
6 couple of those. One interesting discussion point was is
7 the bar postsecondary and workforce readiness or
8 postsecondary and workforce success as demonstrated in high
9 school; how can we provide flexibility to meet the needs of
10 the vast array of districts we have across Colorado that
11 are varied in their capacity; how can local assessments be
12 included and added to the menu. Frankly, the question came
13 up -- and we'll talk more about it in a moment -- should
14 students be required to demonstrate postsecondary and
15 workforce readiness in all four content areas, and do the
16 cut points across measures need to be altered for alignment
17 purposes.

18 One of the first things we did was go back
19 and take a look at the statutory minimums that Rebecca and
20 Misty have already referred to and that you've asked some
21 questions about earlier, and we've put the major ones up
22 there on that slide. The first one is to ensure that state
23 graduation guidelines are aligned with the description of
24 postsecondary and workforce readiness -- I'll come to that
25 in just a second -- including, but not limited to, minimum



1 required English language competencies, which were adopted
2 by the State Board and the Colorado Commission on Higher
3 Ed. And then the second piece there is that the Commission
4 shall establish, and the governing boards shall implement a
5 policy pursuant to identifying matriculated students who
6 need basic skills, courses in English and mathematics.

7 So when we read those pieces, what we see
8 there is the basic requirement is in English and
9 mathematics, in terms of demonstrating postsecondary and
10 workforce readiness. And one of the first discussions we
11 had -- and I'll come back to that in just a second -- is
12 whether or not, as in the current menu, we should include
13 all four content areas, or is that going beyond the scope
14 of what the legislation intended. And so there's been some
15 discussion about that, and I'm not trying to take a stand
16 on either side, but to give you a flavor of what folks have
17 brought to the table.

18 MADAM CHAIR: That's all right. I will
19 later.

20 MR. ASP: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thought
21 you might weigh in on this.

22 The other piece that's more open-ended than
23 that was the alignment with the state's definition of
24 postsecondary and workforce readiness, which is the
25 knowledge and skills and behaviors essential for high



1 school graduates to be prepared to enter college and the
2 workforce and compete in the global economy.

3 So let's take a look at a draft discussion
4 memo that's come out of -- menu, excuse me -- that's come
5 out of our discussions in the assessment workgroup. This
6 is in no way a final document. The group hasn't signed off
7 on this as some consensus, but it does reflect the
8 discussions that they've had. And we wanted to bring this
9 to you to get your feedback and input into this process so
10 that we can make sure we define the boundaries around where
11 we need to be when we bring a recommendation back to you
12 later this spring.

13 The first piece you're going to see that's
14 different -- and we'll highlight the differences in a major
15 way a little bit later for you in some slides -- is that
16 this particular draft menu narrows the subject areas where
17 students need to be postsecondary and workforce ready to
18 English and math. The rationale for that, coming out of
19 the assessment workgroup, was the need to be aligned with
20 the higher education remedial policy, which focused on
21 mathematics and English.

22 Now when we looked at the first line there -
23 - it's easier to see in your packet -- the ACT has not been
24 changed. The ACT benchmarks are established by the
25 Colorado Department of Higher Education and the students



1 that meet these benchmarks can take credit-bearing courses
2 without the need for remediation at any institution of
3 higher ed, public institution of higher ed in Colorado.

4 The second indicator there, Advanced
5 Placement, created a lot of discussion around this issue of
6 postsecondary readiness versus postsecondary success. In
7 the original menu, the current menu that's in place right
8 now, the cut point on AP was 3, and 3 in a lot of
9 institutions allows a student to get credit for a course
10 they took in high school. Say they don't take that course
11 again; they get credit for that.

12 The discussion in the group was that almost
13 demonstrates success at postsecondary education in high
14 school rather than indicating readiness. And so there was
15 a discussion back and forth about whether or not 3 should
16 be the indicator or whether 2 should be, and seeing that
17 having all kids in Colorado even take an AP course would be
18 a major step forward and to be somewhat successful on the
19 final exam is one that might indicate readiness. Again,
20 not thinking standard but so you understand the discussions
21 that have gone on in this room for about six months or so.

22 The next piece that has been added there is
23 the ASVAB, or the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude
24 Battery, that Dr. Scheffel, I think, mentioned earlier.
25 This 50 indicates the cut point that the developers of the



1 assessment, the users of the assessment, set for students
2 to be able to enter into career training in the Armed
3 Services. This is higher than the entrance to get into the
4 Armed Services. This would allow students to move into
5 very sophisticated career training.

6 Now there are some differences between the
7 type of career and the scores on the ASVAB but in working
8 with the developers of the assessment, 50 seems to be a
9 reasonable place.

10 The next piece there you see is the
11 Concurrent Enrollment indicator. This one raised a lot of
12 interesting discussion as well, and that has to do with how
13 local districts establish criteria for whether or not
14 students can take those concurrent enrollment courses and
15 have their tuition paid for by the district. That's a
16 local decision now. Some districts require that a student
17 get a B in the course. If not, they don't meet that bar
18 that the family would have to pay the tuition back. Some
19 will set it as a C. There are a few districts in the state
20 that have set a lower bar. So part of the idea of saying a
21 passing grade there was to reflect some local control
22 pieces there. There are folks on the other side of that
23 issue that say this needs to be a statewide bar and that we
24 need to establish a specific grade.



1 The next criteria there is District
2 Capstone. We've had, as Rebecca mentioned, a capstone
3 workgroup taking a look at that piece, and they're
4 compiling a report and they're developing tools for
5 districts and schools to assist with the idea of a capstone
6 implementation. What this really means -- and we're going
7 to hear from one of our panel members in a few minutes
8 about how that's been implemented in her district -- but
9 basically we're talking about an overarching project that a
10 student might do toward the end of their high school career
11 to demonstrate their competency in postsecondary and
12 workforce readiness. Again, you've set up some statewide
13 guidelines for those that are being developed and being
14 shared with districts.

15 The next category is Industry Certificates.
16 You heard about the vast number of those that exist in this
17 state. We're still working on guidance for districts to
18 decide which of those certificates and how they might be
19 used to really signal postsecondary and workforce readiness
20 on a more comparable basis across the state.

21 IB raised another interesting issue for us
22 and it relates back to the AP discussion, or the AP issue
23 that I talked about earlier. In our original menu that
24 exists now, there was a specific score on IB exams that was
25 listed. We've had districts who have robust IB programs



1 come forward and say those exams aren't graded until, in
2 some cases, until a student has actually graduated, and so
3 it would be much too late for a student to use that as a
4 pathway and then find out, as they're moving toward
5 graduation, in the final days of their senior year, to find
6 out they didn't meet that criteria. So part of our
7 discussion is, how could we look at IB in a different way,
8 and that's where part of the idea of a successful
9 completion of a certain part of the program.

10 Another indicator that is added there is the
11 PARCC assessment. This is a very interesting one for us,
12 for a lot of reasons. PARCC has developed a set of
13 performance-level descriptions on their assessments, one of
14 which would indicate college and career readiness in math
15 and in English language arts, the test was taken at the
16 11th grade, if they scored at a 4 out of a 5-point scale on
17 PARCC. However, that 4 hasn't been verified in an
18 empirical way in the same way that we have seen with ACT
19 where a certain score indicates a high probability of being
20 successful on a course in college or with our Commission on
21 Higher Ed a score indicates that a student is ready, at
22 least for postsecondary collegiate work.

23 There are discussions inside of PARCC about,
24 conceptually, how will we determine that particular score
25 and define it. Are we going to do it in terms of a high



1 likelihood of getting a passing grade in a college course
2 or is it more aligned with the idea of not needing
3 remediation? So that's still up for consideration, and our
4 guess, in doing this work, is that as this flows out,
5 particularly as we learn more about some of these
6 assessments that are new, there will be some changes
7 required to some of these cut points as we move ahead.

8 And finally, the SAT scores are set
9 basically in the same way. They correspond to the ACT
10 remediation level scores from the Department of Higher Ed.

11 Well, let me move on and just point out some
12 pieces that have been added to the menu, at least suggested
13 additions by the workgroup. Most of these are pretty
14 straightforward. The first one was to include the
15 Accuplacer, since that's one that a number of community
16 colleges as well as high schools and districts currently
17 utilize, to place students, either in collegiate courses or
18 to track their progress in K-12. And so it made sense,
19 from a number of people in the group, to add that. That's
20 the same thing with ACT Compass. It's similar to the
21 Accuplacer. Again, districts and schools use it for
22 placement currently.

23 Rebecca alluded to the next indicator
24 earlier here, and that's ACT Work Keys, which has a
25 National Career Readiness Certificate. The Work Keys



1 program has been greatly enhanced over the last several
2 years. Students can earn certificates that allow them to
3 move into career training programs. A number of states are
4 using Work Keys as a way of identifying or credentialing
5 kids to be ready to enter career programs. So it's a piece
6 that generated a lot of interest in the group.

7 One that's particularly interesting to us
8 was the use of -- we coined a term "collaboratively
9 developed assessments," and that was to try to make the
10 point that we wanted to find some ways, at least in our
11 discussions, that we could bring local assessments to bear
12 in this process, that districts could develop their own.
13 In some sense, they're already in the menu in the form of a
14 capstone project that a district could develop.

15 But we're not talking about local
16 assessments like the test I might give in my seventh-grade
17 science class, even at the end of a unit or end of the
18 week. We're talking about a common assessment we might use
19 across districts that was developed by, say, teachers in a
20 particular district or a group of teachers from across the
21 state, that's vetted, in a way, by the state, that says
22 this is an indicator and we have an opportunity to set
23 appropriate cut scores on that assessment, and so on. But
24 we've had a lot of interest I people saying, "We'd like to
25 bring that to bear."



1 There is another correction here that's
2 interesting around this local or collaboratively developed
3 assessment piece, and that would also allow us to think
4 carefully about engaging in some accountability pilots
5 where we could build a system that has some state testing
6 but also has some local testing in it, and bring those two
7 efforts together. Some of that conversation came up
8 yesterday in the discussion of our waiver.

9 And my final slide here is just to take you
10 down and review proposed updates coming out of the
11 discussion draft menu, so we can summarize that for you.
12 Obviously, you saw that the discussion menu focused only on
13 English and math, but then as you can see from the slide,
14 Accuplacer was added to the menu with the cut scores being
15 ones that were referred to us by the Department of Higher
16 Ed. ACT Compass was new, as well as ACT Work Keys, as well
17 as the collaboratively developed performance assessments.
18 And you can see also that we went back and added the change
19 in the Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and
20 PARCC pieces that were there earlier.

21 Now just a reminder again, we wanted to put
22 this out there to hear your feedback about the discussions
23 the group was having, to inform their work, and again, not
24 asking for any kind of recommendation from you today.



1 This group has two more meetings, as Rebecca
2 said, prior to the April meeting, and we've got some folks
3 who have either been part of the group with us today or
4 have advised us along the way in this journey, and I'd like
5 to invite them to join us here, and we'll introduce them to
6 you in just a minute.

7 So if we could have the panel join us and
8 I'm going to move down here.

9 (Pause.)

10 MR. ASP: We're excited to have these folks
11 join us this morning.

12 MS. SCHEFFEL: Excuse me.

13 MADAM CHAIR: Yes, Deb.

14 MS. SCHEFFEL: I'm just noticing the time.
15 We have about 25 minutes left in the last presentation.
16 Will we have additional time in additional meetings to
17 really talk through this presentation?

18 MADAM CHAIR: Yes. Yeah. We have a request
19 to take a bathroom break, but then we can. Okay?

20 MS. SCHEFFEL: Okay. But we won't be able
21 to today, so when will we be able?

22 MADAM CHAIR: Oh, well, I thought -- we will
23 have time for discussion today. If we don't have enough
24 time we can set some more for March.



1 MS. SCHEFFEL: And we're going to need a lot
2 of time.

3 MADAM CHAIR: Yeah. Okay.

4 MS. SCHEFFEL: Thank you.

5 MADAM CHAIR: Yes. Who am I calling on?

6 MR. ASP: Let me just introduce. On the far
7 left over here is Scott Stump. Scott is the Chief
8 Operating Officer for Vivayic -- if I said it correctly,
9 Scott. I apologize. I probably didn't. Scott was on the
10 2012 council as well as he has been the vice provost of our
11 community college system and the state director of career
12 and technical education, and he also brings a school board
13 perspective to this because he's on the school board of
14 Prairie School District up in northeastern Colorado.

15 Next to him is Holly Sample. She's
16 principal of University Schools in Greeley. This is a
17 charter school in Greeley that you may recall the
18 University High School that was a magnet school of UNC
19 quite a while ago. This has now been incorporated into the
20 charter school that Holly is the principal of.

21 Next to Holly is Jennifer Sobanet, the chief
22 operating officer of the Department of Higher Education.
23 And we've been working closely with those folks, our
24 partners across the street.



1 And finally to my left here is Dr. Floyd
2 Cobb. He is the executive director of curriculum and
3 instruction in the Cherry Creek School District. And each
4 of these panelists have just a few minutes to provide some
5 comments from their perspective, and we'll start with
6 Scott.

7 MADAM CHAIR: All right. Thank you. Mr.
8 Stump, go ahead.

9 MR. STUMP: Madam Chair --

10 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

11 MR. STUMP: -- Members of the Board,
12 Commissioner Hammond, as a member of the 2012 kind of
13 guidelines council that worked on these I can just give you
14 the perspective of what the thinking was of that group
15 coming to the table here in May of 2013, to say this is
16 what we recommend. And so from my perspective there were
17 really three things that were a part of it, and do know,
18 full confession, I did have a son graduate from high school
19 in that May of '13 at the same time that we were putting
20 together these guidelines, and I've had another one since
21 graduate this past year. So very important topics to me.
22 And, as he said, coming from a rural district, I'm trying
23 to bring that perspective to the table as well.

24 But there were three pieces that I would say
25 came up with part of the discussion that are still salient



1 now, that should still, in my opinion, guide the future
2 discussion. One, what's the value of a diploma? And now
3 having moved from the community college system, public
4 employment, to private employment with a company called
5 Vivayic -- we'll get the name right; there we go --

6 MR. ASP: Thank you.

7 MR. STUMP: -- but you did a nice job as you
8 went along -- and working with companies like John Deere
9 and Monsanto and American Farm Bureau and other entities,
10 there is a question out there of what is the value of a
11 high school diploma. And if it's not consistent across the
12 state, how do employers know? And that was originally the
13 very beginning of our conversation, as a council, to say
14 how do we say that there's a currency and a value to this
15 diploma unless we can say exactly what that is.

16 The second piece, then, is this notion of
17 rural school districts, and as a board member I do pay
18 attention to our students going through. We only have 12
19 to 16 graduates a year. In fact, our classes are capped at
20 16. So how do we, in that small environment, with a
21 student that is potentially at a 36 on their ACT, to one
22 who is under that 17 or 18 mark, how do we create something
23 that one diploma fits all of those students? Well, the key
24 is you can't create one diploma that fits all of those
25 students. You have to set a mark of what has the student



1 attained getting here. It is more what does the school
2 verify that the student is ready for as they move forward,
3 and that's the value that we place.

4 And so on that notion of small schools we
5 said they need multiple ways. One score is not enough to
6 define that parameter for all students, and, in fact,
7 students show up smart in lots and lots of different ways.
8 And working with current technical education we have
9 students that are aptitude off the chart, in mechanical as
10 well as health or other related careers that you saw on the
11 cluster map. They need lots of ways to show those. And
12 from what I heard on the comments it doesn't appear that
13 we've come up with enough ways yet in that menu of
14 opportunities to give them options, but that was the goal,
15 was to provide plenty of options in multiple ways to show
16 they're smart.

17 The third piece, then, was making sure that
18 the target is not baccalaureate entrance. And again and
19 again, it was my responsibility, as the CT representative,
20 to say you know what, there are all kinds of certificate
21 and associate degree options out there that individuals
22 can, with some postsecondary training but less than a
23 baccalaureate degree, end up providing a wonderful family-
24 sustaining wage and being a contributing member of their
25 community.



1 And so, you know, currently the ACT score is
2 not set for full baccalaureate entrance into college
3 algebra. It's set for entrance into math for liberal arts,
4 which is intended to be that lower mark. But, you know,
5 again, that may need to be looked at because for industry
6 certificates that mark is a little bit less on the math,
7 and goes closer to the Accuplacer score that, Elliott, I
8 was so glad to see was in there, 61, which is entrance into
9 clinical calculations for health professionals.

10 Yeah, so really those three things: what
11 will give the diploma value, what will allow all districts
12 to have lots of options for all students to show that they
13 have attained a measure that warrants the diploma, and
14 making sure that we don't set the target that all students
15 are headed to baccalaureate degrees, because I don't think
16 that's what's right for the state of Colorado.

17 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you, Scott.

18 MR. ASP: I'd like to turn to Jennifer.

19 MADAM CHAIR: Yes.

20 MS. SOBANET: Thank you.

21 MADAM CHAIR: Go ahead, Jennifer.

22 MS. SOBANET: Thank you, Madam Chair,
23 Members of the Board, Commissioner Hammond. I really
24 appreciate you giving us the opportunity to come and talk



1 to you today about the work that we've been involved in
2 with you and with the staff at CDE throughout this process.

3 First, just to give you a little bit about
4 myself, I'm currently the COO of the Department of Higher
5 Ed. I've spent the past decade working at universities and
6 colleges across the state. Prior to that I was actually in
7 the private sector, working primarily in finance and
8 management consulting.

9 I want to hit two main points today. The
10 first one is just to give you a flavor for the partnership
11 that we have between our K-12 system and our Department of
12 Higher Ed and all of our institutions of higher ed across
13 the state, and then secondly I want to talk to you
14 specifically about the remedial and admissions policies
15 that the Commission is responsible for and how those align
16 with the grad guidelines that you all are responsible for.

17 So first of all I just wanted to give you a
18 flavor for our partnership, and it's been a very robust,
19 very cordial, and really great partnership that we've had
20 with CDE. I have to thank Commissioner Hammond for the
21 really, truly the amazing staff that we get to work with
22 over here, and the way that we can really debate through
23 the issues and through really iterative process. And you
24 saw that process described by Rebecca and Elliott earlier
25 today.



1 And we have -- what we have as, I think, our
2 two agencies is a mutual goal. It's to ensure a seamless
3 P-20 pipeline for Colorado in which K-12 students leave
4 high school prepared to be successful in college and
5 careers. A big part of this relationship that we have
6 together was seen certainly in the work you all had done,
7 where the State Board of Ed and our Colorado Commission of
8 Higher Education, we were legislatively directed to work
9 together in developing the PWR description, which we
10 jointly adopted with you all, on June 30th, 2009. And then
11 on August 15th, 2013, we together -- you all and the
12 Commission -- adopted the PWR Endorsement Criteria.

13 So there's an example of how we've worked
14 together with our boards, and then also how we've worked
15 together with our friends here at CDE. We have worked
16 together on the P-20 workgroups that you saw explained
17 earlier today. We've had not just staff from the
18 Department of Higher Ed who are involved in those
19 workgroups but also our faculty and our administrators from
20 our various institutions of higher ed have been involved in
21 those workgroups.

22 And so I just want to recognize Dr. Rhonda
23 Epper, who is in the audience with us, who has helped with
24 these from the Department of Higher Ed, as well as Dr. Ian
25 Macgillivray and Carl Einhaus, who have been on these



1 subgroups, in particular the assessment workgroup, Dr.
2 Macgillivray has been on, and then the PWR and the ICAP
3 workgroups, we've been a part of. And so I just want you
4 to understand that there's been a constant back and forth
5 between these two departments on this work.

6 Secondly, I wanted to talk specifically
7 about our partnership to explain the link between the State
8 Board of Ed's grad guidelines and the CCHE admissions and
9 remedial policies. So the State Board of Ed grad
10 guidelines are legislatively required to be aligned with
11 the Commission's admissions and remedial policies, to
12 ensure that students who are admitted into institutions of
13 higher ed are ready for college coursework. The new
14 admissions policy, which was most recently updated,
15 actually through our Commission in our December meeting,
16 begins as early as fall 2016, and states that students
17 admitted to four-year institutions must be college ready,
18 as defined by the Commission's remedial education policy.
19 So those two work hand in hand with the grad guidelines.

20 Now given the reality that not all of the
21 admitted students are college ready, the Commission policy
22 allows institutions to admit students who score below the
23 cut scores but requires that their remedial needs are met
24 before they are allowed to enroll in college-level math and
25 English. The remedial policy has cut scores only for



1 English and math, as Rebecca had mentioned earlier, because
2 students have to be proficient in these two content areas
3 to succeed in other college coursework.

4 The CCHE remedial policy has existed since
5 2003, for ACT and SAT, and its purposes are to ensure that
6 students admitted into institutions of higher ed are
7 prepared to succeed in college-level English and math, to
8 ensure consistency in how institutions identify students
9 with remedial needs, to provide options for students,
10 depending on their level. Some might need just some
11 supplemental academic instructions. Others might need
12 full-on basic skills remediation.

13 The scores for both ACT, which you saw on
14 the slides, 18 in English and 19 in math, and SAT, which is
15 the 430 in English and 460 in math, are the same on all
16 menu options for graduation guidelines and are in alignment
17 with Colorado's remediation policy.

18 CDHE, the Department, works closely with our
19 institutions of higher ed to set those figures, and we look
20 at national research as well as our institutional research
21 to determine what those should be.

22 And then I just wanted to end with CCHE's
23 remedial policy is a living document, just like I'm sure
24 all of the work that you all do is a living document, and



1 we do have an iterative process that allows us to be able
2 to adjust as things change.

3 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you.

4 MR. ASP: Madam Chair, we'll go to Holly
5 Sample.

6 MADAM CHAIR: Holly.

7 MR. ASP: She is joining us from Greeley
8 today.

9 MS. SAMPLE: Madam Chair and Board, thank
10 you for the opportunity to be here, as well as Commissioner
11 Hammond. I am happy to share with you some information
12 about University School's graduation requirements. I've
13 been asked particularly to focus on one of our requirements
14 which is the senior project, as an illustration or example
15 of perhaps the capstone item that is on the menu.

16 But to put that in context I'll first let
17 you know that I have been at University Schools for the
18 last nine years as the high school principal. We are a K-
19 12 school that, as Elliott mentioned, was once the
20 laboratory school at UNC, and became a public charter
21 school in 2000.

22 Our graduation requirements include a pretty
23 rigorous credit requirement that was aligned to the
24 previous CCHE higher education admission recommended
25 sequence of courses, and that's 29 credits in math,



1 science, social studies, world languages, a variety of
2 things.

3 In addition to those credit requirements, we
4 require that all students who graduate from our school
5 complete 50 hours of community service, perform three job
6 shadows, participate in a 50-hour internship, and complete
7 a senior project, capstone project. The senior project has
8 been a part of our requirements for over 20 years, and it
9 continues to evolve as we improve, I think, our
10 implementation of the project. But some of the examples
11 this year of projects that our students have approved and
12 are currently engaged in preparing are things like a girls'
13 engineering camp; writing books or anthologies; developing
14 websites; creating gardens such as a butterfly habitat
15 garden with the second grade; building trails through a
16 wetlands area near our school, which involves the
17 permitting process, a collaborative process of, you know,
18 coming up with the funds; developing fish habitats in local
19 gravel ponds; artistic performances; and a variety of other
20 things.

21 Students choose an area to study and that
22 combines different disciplines in order to explore new
23 avenues in a productive manner, and then at the same time
24 make a contribution to the community. Every student has to
25 address a challenging issue that will stretch his or her



1 intellectual and personal growth and become a significant
2 learning stretch. And then it should also be relevant to
3 the community at large and/or give insight to a field that
4 he or she may want to pursue as a career.

5 We require students to obtain a mentor
6 outside the school to support and help them through this
7 process. They document their fieldwork and then they
8 present their project to a board that includes community
9 members as well as teachers, for validation at the end of
10 the process.

11 I know that some people in terms of this
12 being an easy out, perhaps, you know, with the cut scores,
13 and that's not the case at our school at all. In fact,
14 it's very difficult and students really do have to stretch.
15 There is a variety of complexity in the projects but all of
16 the students demonstrate, in addition to some academic
17 competencies, some professional competencies in things like
18 collaborating, designing projects and implementing them,
19 being able to manage their time, as well as learning from
20 failure, perhaps, because experience is a powerful teacher
21 but you don't always get the lesson that you're expecting.

22 Finally, I'd just like to use this
23 opportunity to share my perspective, as a member from the
24 field, about a few of the items before you. The
25 Commissioner mentioned nomenclature, and I'm a little



1 concerned about the idea of seat time or competency.
2 Thinking of it this way can be a bit of a false dichotomy,
3 because competency can and should be demonstrated through
4 coursework as well as projects and assessments.

5 So, you know, there's a growing body of
6 research that indicates that persistent effort in
7 schooling, which is often called academic grit, leads to
8 higher levels of economic success in adulthood, and this
9 actually does point back to the importance of the GPA and
10 the old college index scores that many of us are familiar
11 with. Carnegie Units and competency measures combined are
12 what I feel are the best way for graduation requirements,
13 to ensure that students are college and career ready, but
14 also gives us an opportunity to ensure that our standards
15 are all met if there are not particular standards reflected
16 in those assessments that are on the menu.

17 And so I would just like to encourage you to
18 think along those lines, and thank you very much for your
19 time.

20 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you.

21 MR. ASP: Madam Chair, the last speaker is
22 Dr. Floyd Cobb from Cherry Creek.

23 MADAM CHAIR: Mr. Cobb. Dr. Cob.

24 MR. COBB: Madam Chair, Members of the
25 Board, and Commissioner Hammond, thank you all very much



1 for allowing me to speak to you today. What I plan to talk
2 to you about a little bit is about the process that we've
3 gone through as an assessment workgroup. I certainly want
4 to commend Dr. Elliott Asp in the work that he has done in
5 bringing together, I think, a very eclectic group of
6 educators who are very committed to making sure that all of
7 us -- that the work that we do as a part of this group is a
8 goal for increasing the outcomes of the students that we
9 serve.

10 I think, as we've talked about this as a
11 group, one of the things that's come up a lot is really
12 strong opinions on both sides, and I think that's been
13 good. And I think a lot of it has hinged around the
14 conversations specifically related to our seat time-based
15 system currently and shifting to one that is a competency-
16 based system.

17 As a K-12 educator, as someone who works in
18 what I consider to be a high-performing school district, as
19 we've engaged in these conversations about what it might
20 take in order to start to make these shifts, we do realize
21 that it's going to require a different type of work in
22 order to make that happen. And so as we've looked at the
23 initial proposal that included English, math, social
24 studies, and science, what we were able to do was actually
25 use some of our data to engage in some predictive analytics



1 to see what that might look like actually in our system
2 right now.

3 And what you begin to start to look at is
4 you can very easily point to some of the data points that
5 are associated with the ACT exam, or how high our students
6 are scoring on those particular measures. And what it has
7 created is a lot of conversation, I would say, in our
8 system, about what it would take in order to get our
9 students to those points of 18 and 19 in English and math,
10 or even as we look at some of the other points that have
11 been there on the system.

12 So as we have started to engage in these
13 conversations, one of the things that we've really kind of
14 thought about is our system right now, particularly in
15 Cherry Creek, we feel, is very well designed for a seat
16 time-based system. We are proud of the graduation rates
17 that we produce every single year, and we continue to get
18 better at those graduation rates.

19 However, as we start to think about what
20 that means in transitioning to competency, that shift will
21 have to happen immediately, because the students are in our
22 system currently. That class of 2021 is here now. And so
23 there's been a lot of thought and a lot of thinking in
24 terms of what might we need to do different, obviously, for



1 our students in sixth grade backward, in order to prepare
2 them for this.

3 So we are certainly committed to trying to
4 make sure that we can increase our outcomes for all of our
5 kids, but we certainly, as I've been a member of this
6 conversation, we've wanted to be thoughtful in terms of the
7 implementation of this as we move forward, specifically
8 because what we do understand is that a high school
9 diploma, much like other types of certificates, has
10 universal application across the country. And so what we
11 mean in terms of a high school diploma in Colorado, and the
12 expectations of what that might mean, obviously we want to
13 position our children and our students to be situated for
14 whatever careers and choices they might make once they move
15 beyond the state, if that's a choice that they happen to
16 make. Thank you.

17 MADAM CHAIR: Thank you, Dr. Cobb.

18 Are we completed here?

19 MS. HOLMES: Madam Chair, we have as much
20 time as the agenda allows and you allow for questions,
21 either of the panel or of the three of us. We had
22 originally slated this to be a 90-minute item, which would
23 end in six minutes.

24 MADAM CHAIR: No, that's okay.



1 MS. HOLMES: Of course, I will defer to you
2 as to how much time to allow for Q&A.

3 MADAM CHAIR: Dr. Hammond and I have just
4 been discussing this up here. Because we cancelled that
5 item on the agenda, 7.01, we can add time, and we could add
6 30 minutes for question-and-answer. However, I have been
7 requested that we take a five-minute break before we do
8 that. So we will take a five-minute break and then we'll
9 return and discuss this very interesting subject. Thank
10 you.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberly C. McCright, Certified Vendor and Notary, do hereby certify that the above-mentioned matter occurred as hereinbefore set out.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 2nd day of January, 2019.

/s/ Kimberly C. McCright
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