

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY AND INTEGRITY

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MEETING

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WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 7, 2018

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The Advisory Committee met in the National Ballroom of the Washington Plaza Hotel located at 10 Thomas Circle, Northwest, Washington, D.C., at 8:30 a.m., Arthur Keiser, Chairman, presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT

ARTHUR KEISER, Chairman
FRANK H. WU, Vice Chair
SIMON BOEHME
ROBERTA DERLIN, PhD
JOHN ETCHEMENDY, PhD
GEORGE FRENCH, PhD
BRIAN W. JONES, PhD
RICK F. O'DONNELL
SUSAN D. PHILLIPS, PhD
CLAUDE O. PRESSNELL, JR., PhD
RALPH WOLFF
STEVEN VAN AUSDLE, PhD
FEDERICO ZARAGOZA, PhD

STAFF PRESENT

JENNIFER HONG, NACIQI Executive Director
HERMAN BOUNDS, Director, Accreditation Group
ELIZABETH DAGGETT, Staff Analyst
NICOLE HARRIS, Staff Analyst
VALERIE LEFOR, Staff Analyst
STEPHANIE MCKISSIC, Staff Analyst
SALLY MORGAN, Office of the General Counsel
CHUCK MULA, Staff Analyst

ALSO PRESENT

SHARON BEASLEY, Accreditation Commission for
Education in Nursing
BARBARA BRITTINGHAM, New England Association of
Schools and Colleges
ANNE COCKERHAM, Accreditation Commission for
Midwifery Education
ANTOINETTE FLORES, Center for American Progress
BARBARA GELLMAN-DANLEY, Higher Learning
Commission
RONALD HUNT, Accreditation Commission for
Midwifery Education
PETER JOHNSON, Accreditation Commission for
Midwifery Education
CHERYL JOHNSON-ODIM, Higher Learning Commission
DAWN LINDSLEY, Oklahoma Department of Career and
Technology Education
MARCIE MACK, Oklahoma Department of Career and
Technology Education
BETH MARCOUX, Commission on Accreditation in
Physical Therapy Education
HEATHER MAURER, Accreditation Commission for
Midwifery Education
CATHERINE McJANNETT, Accreditation Commission for
Education in Nursing
PATRICIA O'BRIEN, New England Association of
Schools and Colleges
KAREN PETERSON, Higher Learning Commission
MARSAL P. STOLL, Accreditation Commission for
Education in Nursing
SANDRA WISE, Commission on Accreditation in
Physical Therapy Education

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

8:29 a.m.

CHAIRMAN KEISER: Well, good morning, everyone. Welcome to the February meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity. My name is Art Keiser, and, if I would, I'd like to have the members of the Committee introduce themselves. John, would you start?

MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: John Etchemendy, professor at Stanford, former provost.

MEMBER O'DONNELL: Rick O'Donnell, founder and CEO of Skills Fund.

MEMBER DERLIN: Bobbie Derlin, former associate provost at New Mexico State in Las Cruces.

MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Federico Zaragoza, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development for the Alamo Colleges in San Antonio.

MS. MORGAN: I'm Sally Morgan. I'm Department of Education, Office of General

1 Counsel.

2 MR. BOUNDS: Herman Bounds, Director
3 of the Accreditation Group.

4 MS. HONG: Jennifer Hong, Executive
5 Director of the Committee.

6 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Arthur Keiser,
7 Chancellor of Keiser University.

8 MEMBER WU: Frank Wu, faculty member,
9 University of California Hastings College of Law.

10 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Claude Pressnell,
11 the President of the Tennessee Independent
12 Colleges and Universities.

13 MEMBER PHILLIPS: Susan Phillips,
14 University of Albany, State University of New
15 York.

16 MEMBER BOEHME: Simon Boehme, student
17 member.

18 MEMBER WOLFF: Ralph Wolff, President,
19 Quality Assurance Commons.

20 MEMBER FRENCH: George French,
21 President of Miles College, Birmingham, Alabama.

22 MEMBER VAN AUSDLER: Steve Van Ausdler,

1 President, Emeritus, Walla Walla Community
2 College out in Washington state.

3 MR. MULA: Chuck Mula, Department
4 staff.

5 (Remaining introductions made off-
6 microphone.)

7 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I'd now like to
8 introduce our Executive Director, Jennifer Hong.

9 MS. HONG: Good morning and welcome.
10 As Chairman Keiser just mentioned, this is a
11 meeting of the National Advisory Committee on
12 Institutional Quality and Integrity, or NACIQI.
13 My name is Jennifer Hong, and I'm the Executive
14 Director, Designated Federal Official of NACIQI.
15 As many of you know, NACIQI was established by
16 Section 114 of the Higher Education Act of 1965,
17 as amended, and is also governed by provisions of
18 the Federal Advisory Committee Act which sets
19 forth standards for the formation and use of
20 advisory committees.

21 Sections 101(c) and 487(c)(4) of the
22 HEA and Section 8016 of the Public Health Service

1 Act, 42 USC Section 296, require the Secretary to
2 publish lists of state approval agencies,
3 nationally recognized accrediting agencies, and
4 state approval and accrediting agencies for
5 programs of nurse education that the Secretary
6 determines to be reliable authorities as to the
7 quality of education provided by the institutions
8 and programs that they accredit.

9 Eligibility of educational
10 institutions and programs for participation in
11 various federal programs requires accreditation
12 by an agency listed by the Secretary. As
13 provided in HEA Section 114, NACIQI advises the
14 Secretary on the discharge of these functions and
15 is also authorized to provide advice regarding
16 the process of eligibility and certification of
17 institutions of higher education for
18 participation in the federal student aid programs
19 authorized under Title 4 of the HEA.

20 Further, in addition to these charges,
21 NACIQI also authorizes academic graduate degrees
22 from federal agencies and institutions. This

1 authorization was provided by letter from the
2 Office of Management and Budget back in 1954, and
3 this letter is available on the NACIQI website,
4 along with all other records related to NACIQI's
5 deliberations.

6 And with that, I'm happy to hand it
7 off to our very able chairman, Art Keiser. Thank
8 you all for being here.

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you, Jennifer.
10 Our first part of the agenda is we have a consent
11 agenda. And if I may, are there any third-party
12 comments on the agencies that are out for consent
13 agenda? Sensing none, are there, from the
14 Committee, is there a call for removal of any of
15 the items on the consent agenda? Sensing none,
16 is there a motion to approve the consent agenda?
17 Steven? Second by Federico. And any discussion?
18 Sensing none, all in favor of the motion to
19 approve the consent agenda, please signify by
20 saying or raising your hand. Thank you. The
21 motion passes.

22 We'll now go to our first agency,

1 which will be the Higher Learning Commission of
2 the North Central Association. And let me go
3 through the procedures first, how our standard
4 review processes are. The first, we'll have our
5 primary readers introduce the agency application.
6 The Department staff then provides a briefing
7 after the primary readers introduce the agency.
8 The primary readers question of the agency. The
9 agency representatives then provide comments.
10 The primary readers have an opportunity to ask
11 questions of the agency, including the standard
12 questions adopted by NACIQI for initial and
13 renewal applications. Questions by NACIQI are
14 followed by response and a comment from the
15 agency.

16 Then we have third-party comments and,
17 in this particular case, I think we do have a
18 third-party commenter. The agency responds to
19 the third-party comment, and then the Department
20 staff responds to the agency and the third-party
21 comments.

22 We then have a discussion of the

1 Committee and a vote. A final set of standard
2 questions on approving the institution program
3 and quality for initial and renewal applicants
4 are then asked for.

5 At this point, I'd like to introduce
6 Richard O'Donnell and Susan Phillips, who are the
7 primary leaders on the renewal of recognition of
8 the Higher Learning Commission. Are there any
9 recusals on this particular commission? Ralph
10 and Bobbie, if you would, step outside and we
11 will see you soon. We'll come get you.

12 Okay. Who will lead the discussion?
13 Susan, Rick, which one?

14 MEMBER O'DONNELL: I'll lead it. This
15 is Rick O'Donnell. Thank you, Art. I got a
16 little over aggressive with my razor this morning
17 and nicked my ear, and it won't stop bleeding, so
18 if you see me dabbing my ear with Kleenex, that's
19 why.

20 The Higher Learning Commission is a
21 regional accreditation agency that accredits
22 around a thousand degree-granting institutions in

1 about 19 states. It has been recognized by the
2 Secretary consistently over the years, and it
3 looked like a pretty clean report. So I will
4 turn it over to staff.

5 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. Good morning, Mr.
6 Chair and members of the Committee. For the
7 record, my name is Elizabeth Daggett, and I am
8 providing a summary of the review of the petition
9 for renewal of recognition for the agency, the
10 Higher Learning Commission, also known as HLC.

11 The staff recommendation to the senior
12 department official for this agency is to renew
13 the agency's recognition for a period of five
14 years. The current scope of recognition for this
15 agency is the accreditation and pre-
16 accreditation, also known as candidate for
17 accreditation, of degree-granting institutions of
18 higher education in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado,
19 Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan,
20 Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North
21 Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West
22 Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, including the

1 tribal institutions and the accreditation of
2 programs offered via distance education and
3 correspondence education within these
4 institutions. This recognition extends to the
5 Institutional Actions Council jointly with the
6 Board of Trustees of the Commission for decisions
7 on cases for continued accreditation or
8 reaffirmation and continued candidacy and to the
9 appeals body jointly with the Board of Trustees
10 of the Commission for decisions related to
11 initial candidacy or accreditation or
12 reaffirmation of accreditation.

13 This recommendation is based on our
14 review of the agency's petition and its
15 supporting documentation, as well as the
16 observation of an on-site evaluation in October
17 of 2017 and a Board meeting in November of 2017.
18 The Department did not receive any written third-
19 party comments. Our review of the agency's
20 petition found that the agency is in compliance
21 with the Secretary's criteria for recognition.

22 Since the agency's last review in the

1 spring of 2015, the Department has received two
2 complaints. Of the two complaints, one
3 complainant did not avail themselves of HLC's
4 complaint process. Therefore, it was not
5 reviewed by the Department. The other complaint
6 was reviewed by the Department, and the
7 Department found no evidence that HLC did not
8 follow its policies and procedures or failed to
9 meet regulatory requirements.

10 Therefore, as I stated earlier, the
11 staff is recommending to the senior department
12 official to renew the agency's recognition for a
13 period of five years. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Any questions of the
15 staff? Sensing none, I'd like to call to the
16 table the representatives of the Higher Learning
17 Commission. If you would, please, introduce
18 yourselves. You press the button when you want
19 to speak, and when you stop speaking you turn it
20 off.

21 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Good morning.
22 I'm Barbara Gellman-Danley, President of the

1 Higher Learning Commission. It's my pleasure to
2 introduce Cheryl Johnson-Odim, our Board Chair,
3 and Karen Peterson who is our Executive Vice
4 President for Legal and Government Affairs. We
5 also have a couple of members in the audience
6 with us.

7 At this time, I would like to thank
8 Elizabeth Daggett, Herman Bounds, and Jennifer
9 Hong for your assistance as we went through the
10 process of submitting our materials.

11 We're really glad to be here today,
12 and we have spent some time responding to your
13 questions on the pilot project, which is quite
14 exciting and actually does align with the work
15 we're doing at the Higher Learning Commission.
16 Rather than go into them now, I have them on me,
17 as needed, and whatever category we had actual
18 information for we are prepared to discuss.

19 I also want to mention that, as Chair
20 of C-RAC, I would like to point out that we have
21 a graduation rate study we did that provides a
22 great deal of information. I brought that with

1 me today in case you so choose to discuss it.

2 We are excited about the findings of
3 that. We note the improvements in the data
4 system recently by the Department, and we also
5 have opportunities to discuss a very broad look
6 at data that gives us a more accurate picture of
7 the completion and success of our learners. As
8 you well know, that's a moving target, and we
9 want to continue to help whoever is involved to
10 get the best data in front.

11 Just very briefly, when we started our
12 study, we identified institutions that were below
13 15 percent graduation rate if they were community
14 colleges and below 25 percent if they were
15 universities. At that time -- and we used IPEDS
16 and some of us used different approaches. So I
17 will say that there were seven different
18 approaches deliberately so we could test the
19 research and determine what we may find.

20 It was fascinating that when we did
21 extensive work looking at other data sources that
22 we found that our original 367 institutions went

1 down to 101 institutions, mostly based on the
2 fact that full-time first-time students is not
3 sufficient, and we respect the fact that others
4 have been added to the federal data set. That's
5 really excellent.

6 We looked at everything, and we
7 definitely took into account transfer students,
8 which makes a substantial difference. In my
9 professional life, I recall a very wise and
10 successful young man at my college, which was not
11 in the HLC region, Monroe Community College in
12 Rochester, New York, who was taken from us for
13 all the good reasons, a full scholarship to
14 Cornell, and I just can't even imagine where he
15 is today. That would be considered as a non-
16 complete. So, obviously, that's just one of many
17 examples of the value of counting transfer
18 students, part-time students, etcetera. So I'm
19 glad to discuss that, as appropriate.

20 There's a lot going on at HLC, and
21 since I was here the last time or if we even want
22 to look at five years from our last full

1 recognition, I'm rather excited to speak to this.
2 The very first thing I want to talk about is we
3 did a very intensive strategic plan. We call it
4 Beyond the Horizon. It has five tenets: value to
5 membership, innovation, student success, thought
6 leadership, and advocacy. The Lumina Foundation
7 was impressed and supportive and asked us if we
8 were interested. They had asked us a year
9 earlier would there be some projects that we may
10 want funded. We said what is highly abnormal to
11 say to a foundation: we're not ready yet and we
12 want to finish our plans so all the work aligns
13 with that.

14 They gave us a half a million dollars
15 to support two parts of that plan. One is
16 student success, which is obviously very
17 important to you. And the other is innovation,
18 and they are not mutually exclusive and neither
19 is innovation and accreditation, but it's a
20 challenge, as you well know.

21 Some of the ways we are working on
22 this grant, we have a think tank that we call

1 Partners for Transformation, and the rules are
2 there are no rules. We want to hear from you,
3 tell us what you think accreditation in the 21st
4 century should look like. We have very strong
5 individuals on that group: Gordon Gee from West
6 Virginia University, Michael Crow from Arizona
7 State, Burck Smith from StraighterLine. We think
8 it's very important to bring third-party
9 providers under the tent. We're very interested
10 also in data analytics, and we have
11 representation there. So I won't go into all the
12 names, but they're a very strong group.

13 We have two groups in student success,
14 one which is looking at the way they could define
15 student success. And I will tell you that we
16 have experts from NCHAMs and NILOA and other
17 groups. And after a half a day, they couldn't
18 come up with a definition, and they're the, you
19 know, kind of leading experts in the country,
20 because it's challenging. What do you really
21 take into account? What does the student want?
22 What were you looking for at the institution?

1 The other group is pretty exciting
2 because we're putting together low-performing
3 schools with high-performing schools to come up
4 with projects. So we have an institution that is
5 struggling, I don't want to point to anybody.,
6 and then we have the University of Michigan, and
7 they're working together and coming up with an
8 idea for pilot projects. So it's very exciting.

9 So those are two student success
10 groups, and we have one final group in innovation
11 which we're going to allow to try some pilot
12 projects without penalty if they fail because you
13 all have very prestigious backgrounds and you
14 understand, in order to succeed, you'll have to
15 allow some failures. And so, hopefully, none of
16 them will fail. So that's a very active part,
17 and we have people from all over our region and
18 outside our region on this project.

19 We have institutional representatives,
20 as well, of course. So it's a three-year
21 project. I'd like to emphasize how important
22 this is because our strategic plan is living. I,

1 myself, am a big strategic plan proponent, and
2 it's tied to our budget, it's tied to metrics,
3 and it's measurable.

4 I also would like to say that we are
5 open to the new folks coming into the business.
6 Well, Ralph is not in here and Simon. That kind
7 of thing where you're really working directly
8 with the workforce. The third-party providers
9 that have opportunities to help institutions
10 where they may not have the expertise, etcetera.

11 There's a lot to do in higher
12 education, and I want to end by saying that we
13 have a challenge, all of us, in higher education.
14 The current status of what's going on on our
15 campuses is very disturbing to us. I saw a sign
16 at one of the marches on TV that said it feels
17 like we're back in the 60s. And it's a shame
18 that we have to deal with the kind of turmoil
19 that our students and faculty and others have to
20 experience. And as accreditors, we are trying to
21 figure out when, if at all, we get involved. And
22 I welcome that discussion, as appropriate.

1 But we're very concerned. We want a
2 safe environment for our students, and we want
3 free speech. And sometimes, you know, they go up
4 against one another.

5 So I'm looking forward to your
6 questions, and those are the end of my comments.
7 And thank you for the opportunity.

8 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Rick, Susan. Any
9 questions?

10 MEMBER PHILLIPS: Yes, thank you. HLC
11 is doing some pretty exciting things. Thanks for
12 the briefing on it and C-RAC, as well. I wanted
13 to do just quickly the pilot questions that we
14 have been asking, HLC being one of the largest
15 accreditors.

16 So the questions that we all are
17 concerned about are, you know, how are your
18 institutions doing? If you were to take a
19 temperature read on them, how do you think
20 they're doing and how do you know?

21 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, first I
22 think it's important that all institutions can do

1 better. No matter how strong the institution,
2 there's always a part of an institution that has
3 continuous improvement needs, and some obviously
4 more than others. I will go through this a
5 little bit to give you some data, and then we'll
6 see how that impacts the questions.

7 Thirty-seven percent of our
8 undergraduate students are on Pell. The percent
9 of completers is not tracked by the agency, but
10 it's at the institutional level. The graduation
11 rates for three, four, and six years, 150 percent
12 of normal time, we have 25 percent for two-year
13 institutions, 50 percent for four-year
14 institutions. That's not enough. It's better
15 than some data would show, but it's not enough.

16 A couple of years ago, I wrote an
17 article in a community college journal saying if
18 you don't figure out the answer it will be
19 figured out for you. And while we respect the
20 students, and I certainly have a lot of years in
21 that world, it's important to approve. We do not
22 track debt, but we have several systems that

1 allow us to get that information, as well as the
2 low graduation rate.

3 So just for those of you who may not
4 be aware of all the intricacies, we have three
5 pathways. An open pathway which is less touch,
6 it's a move towards what's frequently called
7 risk-managed accreditation. We have a standard
8 pathway. It doesn't mean there's something
9 wrong, it just means you're going to get a little
10 more touch and we do move folks into that pathway
11 if they're not succeeding in others. And we have
12 a continuous improvement pathway, somewhat like
13 the Baldrige model.

14 Within those pathways, we have our
15 visits, but we also have annual updates and
16 assurance system and assumed practices, and that
17 kind of information does get gathered. And,
18 indeed, low graduation rates comes up as
19 something that we find we were going to do a desk
20 visit, an advisory visit, anywhere from
21 monitoring to a sanction. So that's how we
22 handle that information.

1 While we don't track the debt, it's in
2 about the \$10,000 to \$15,000 range for
3 undergraduate students. And, of course, as you
4 know, the federal compliance program has an
5 opportunity to respond to that and we get some of
6 the information there.

7 The repayment and default rates, while
8 we don't track it 100-percent separately, we have
9 non-financial indicators and that information is
10 shown. We do collect the default rate,
11 therefore, early in the year. If excessive, it
12 comes in the federal compliance guidelines and we
13 do follow up. So in the implementation of the
14 federal compliance guidelines, we find a lot of
15 information because that's our obligation.

16 What quantitative data do we use? You
17 asked that question. Well, we're starting to use
18 more because there's more available, and I
19 mentioned some of that previously. We have non-
20 financial indicators, we have financial
21 indicators. We have all kinds of things that we
22 can find: enrollment changes by percentage,

1 number of degrees awarded, changes in full-time
2 faculty, student default rate, minimal full-time
3 faculty ratio, student-to-teacher ratio, and
4 graduation and persistence rate compared to
5 peers. So that's a lot of information. We have
6 established documentation, and we don't get as
7 much information from the publics as we do the
8 privates, which is interesting, of course.

9 How did we establish these metrics was
10 your next question. We contracted with a
11 gentleman by the name of Vic Borden who's a well-
12 known institutional research person who advised
13 us on selecting the appropriate indicators and
14 our key performance indicators for our financial
15 and others. However, this is a moving target.
16 As we see the national concerns with graduation
17 rates and debt, we are doing more follow-up
18 research and correlation. So what we have now is
19 not the final.

20 We look at the zones, as you know.
21 There are zones for the financial indicators. If
22 they're on Heightened Cash Monitoring one or two,

1 we get that. They definitely hear from us if
2 they fall below the zone.

3 Let me go off script for a moment and
4 say that trends analysis is probably the best
5 thing that we can do. If we see an institution
6 that has one issue, it may not tell us
7 everything. But we see it in an institution that
8 is constantly, for example, having enrollment
9 declines. That's a trend that's a pattern. If
10 we see the student debt is rising based on the
11 financial rules of the federal government, that
12 says something.

13 Another is increased enrollment. If
14 we have an institution that's suddenly zooming in
15 enrollment, one can only ask am I missing
16 something? And I will tell you an example of a
17 president who came who's at a distressed
18 institution and he had about seven ideas of
19 innovation that was going to fix this
20 institution, and I said focus because you know in
21 those cases it's a matter of let me just throw an
22 innovation at something in their mind and we're

1 going to fix the institution. So we tie all
2 these things together.

3 You asked any periodic analysis to
4 determine the reliability and validity of the
5 metrics? We review our policies on a regular
6 basis, and sometimes it's clarification,
7 sometimes it's changing the policy. We do this
8 every three to five years. However, if we put
9 out a policy or ask for information that's
10 unclear, we follow it with guidelines and we'll
11 do that immediately.

12 So just a couple more. You asked how
13 might agencies establish clusters or programs?
14 We do it by Carnegie classification. We think
15 that's really important, and that's part of what
16 we did for our graduation rate project.

17 So there are some other things on
18 decision activities, and I'll hold off on that.

19 MEMBER PHILLIPS: Just two other
20 related questions. One is you mentioned that you
21 have three pathways, and I'm wondering how one
22 gets into one of those pathways versus another.

1 And then the second one is, related to that,
2 those institutions that are in those pathways, is
3 there a different level of, a different rate of
4 full accreditation probation, you know, the
5 action decisions, are they different across those
6 different categories?

7 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Yes, the first
8 pathway is AQIP, and Karen has been at the agency
9 for a long time, so feel free to raise your hand
10 if you want to add anything. What I'd like to
11 point out with AQIP, there's a report that's due,
12 action report, every year. And there's a, AQIP
13 is an eight-year process, but there are visits at
14 the four-year level; is that correct? Four
15 years?

16 The standard pathway is a four-year
17 visit. There are all kinds of -- everybody has
18 to put in metrics every year. So I just want to
19 say everybody has that. And then it's, after
20 that, could be up to a longer period of time for
21 standard.

22 But the open pathways is a ten-year

1 process, and they report out versus getting a
2 visit in the interim. And that's a big
3 difference.

4 So I'll use my alma mater for my
5 doctorate at the University of Oklahoma. They
6 have a special project that they do for the
7 comprehensive visit. And I met with them a while
8 back, and they were thinking about innovation,
9 etcetera. But the idea is it's not a matter of
10 the traditional approach. It's tell us something
11 that really matters to your institution and that
12 you're really working on how can you measure it.

13 So without going more granular, which
14 we'd be glad to do, there is less touch, less
15 face-to-face visits as in the final one, the open
16 pathways.

17 Now, do we move people out of that?
18 Sometimes, we do. So the very first thing we do
19 if we see a problem at an institution is they get
20 out of the open pathway and they have to stay out
21 of it for a number of years because we just feel
22 maybe, you know, they have issues that are going

1 to take some time to fix.

2 MEMBER PHILLIPS: And can one graduate
3 from the improvement pathway to the standard
4 pathway?

5 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, the
6 institutions, the continuous improvement actually
7 stands by itself. So in that case, it's similar
8 that if they aren't giving us what we need or if
9 we find out, for some reason, let's say they've
10 gone on monitoring for finances or federal
11 financial aid, then they are moved into the
12 standard pathway. So look at the middle one is
13 the one that we're going to be all over you,
14 although I think it's important to say we put the
15 pressure on on a regular basis. When we find out
16 an institution is on either of those two and they
17 moved to standard, we have extensive discussions
18 about is there a trend, is there something going
19 on with all institutions that we have to look at
20 those criteria?

21 MEMBER PHILLIPS: The related question
22 was about the sort of distribution of decision

1 actions. So is it more likely that you would get
2 a full accreditation in one of those pathways
3 versus the other? What kind of negative decision
4 proportion is there on each of those three
5 pathways?

6 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, we actually
7 have more folks in the open pathway. They're
8 doing quite well. But, Karen, could you respond
9 to that?

10 MS. PETERSON: Sure. So open pathways
11 is primarily designed for institutions with an
12 excellent track record with accreditation. And
13 so they are set up to have a comprehensive
14 evaluation year four but a full reaffirmation in
15 year ten and limited monitoring. We don't expect
16 that they would do more than a focused evaluation
17 to need more than an interim report.

18 If they have issues that justify more
19 significant monitoring than they would be moved
20 probably to standard pathway. Standard pathway
21 also has a year four and ten review, but,
22 typically, there may be more monitoring in

1 standard pathway of an institution, depending on
2 its accreditation history, the issues with which
3 it is really dealing with; and, thus, we have
4 institutions in standard pathway that have not
5 only interim reports but focused evaluations, as
6 well.

7 Because of the type of institutions in
8 standard pathway tend to have more risk, we also
9 see those institutions are, I don't want to say
10 likely but, as a group of institutions, maybe
11 those institutions that emerge as moving into a
12 sanction like probation or notice, depending on
13 the severity of the situation.

14 So, again, our open pathway
15 institutions tend to be our strongest
16 institutions and the nature of the accrediting
17 actions that are possible in that pathway are
18 really geared for that kind of institution that
19 needs limited oversight.

20 Having said that, we also want to
21 encourage them to work on improvement. So
22 improvement is a part of really every pathway.

1 But the way improvement works, it works
2 differently based on the pathway. In the open
3 pathway, we're encouraging an improvement
4 project. In the standard pathway, improvement is
5 embedded in the regular monitoring activities.

6 MEMBER PHILLIPS: And, overall, just,
7 you know, a 60,000-foot level, what percentage of
8 your institutions get a full accreditation, what
9 get some kind of monitoring, what percent gets
10 some kind of monitoring, some kind of --

11 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I actually have
12 that data. Let me find it, if you'll forgive me
13 for a moment here. You can speak in general, and
14 I'll take a look.

15 MS. PETERSON: Sure. Let me speak
16 generally about that. The majority of our
17 institutions get some form of monitoring.
18 Typically, it's in the form of an interim report,
19 and Barbara can give you more exact data in a
20 second, because, again, we try to keep on top of
21 institutional issues. But the way the pathways
22 are set up and why we moved into a pathway

1 structure to begin with was to begin to move away
2 from lots of interim monitoring and have that
3 four and ten-year review. So we're seeing
4 institutions on a much more frequent basis, and
5 they're also working on improvement throughout
6 the pathway, as appropriate to that particular
7 pathway.

8 Go ahead with some specific data.

9 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I'm going to give
10 you some specifics, but there's more than you
11 probably want to hear. But what I'd like to
12 point out is, just to remind you, HLC has a
13 unique approach where we have our team report
14 after a self study and a visit. And then if an
15 issue comes up or if it comes up between visits,
16 that needs to be heard by our Institutional
17 Action Council, meaning something is off. Then
18 we move it to that, and then it goes to the
19 board.

20 So I'd like to point out a number that
21 jumps out. From September to December of 2017,
22 we had 251 raised in front of the IAC. Some of

1 these things also can be lighter, you know,
2 lighter issues as far as I want to try competency
3 based, debt, etcetera. But we have a lot of
4 issues that go in front of them.

5 As far as the hearings, we have
6 hearings a few times a year. And most of what
7 happens with those institutions, close to 45
8 percent, is assessment problems, and that means
9 that they're not quite consistent in their
10 measuring of student outcome. So that's part of
11 it.

12 So we had, for example, back in 2013,
13 we had 700 go in front of that group, 500,
14 etcetera. So those do not mean that they're all
15 problems, but it means they need either approval
16 or there's a problem. Would you want to
17 elaborate on that one? Is that accurate?

18 All right. And then we have
19 everything from continued accreditation in that
20 same short time period, 21. Let's go back to '16
21 /'17. For a whole year, that's 105 continued
22 accreditation. Placed on probation, 11. We

1 usually have anywhere -- that's a big deal, so we
2 had 11 put on probation. We had remove from
3 probation about 7, put on notice 7. But what is
4 -- there are hundreds of monitoring that go on
5 where you don't reach the sanction.

6 We have had, I think it's important to
7 point out that when we were about to do
8 withdrawal, we've had a couple of cases where the
9 institutions closed or resigned from our
10 organization. In some case, we have a faith-
11 based institution that can't quite meet the
12 standards, and they have their national
13 organization that can join.

14 So I don't know how deep you want to
15 go, Susan, but that's some of it.

16 MEMBER PHILLIPS: Thank you.

17 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Thank you. A
18 couple of questions. Could you dig into a little
19 bit just on student achievement and what, since
20 you were last before NACIQI for full recognition,
21 has changed, if anything, and how HLC, the
22 standards it may have for student achievement,

1 what do you expect to possibly change upcoming,
2 and really dig into how you're holding your
3 institutions accountable for achievement.

4 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Absolutely.
5 Well, we are well aware not just of the
6 importance of the federal government accreditors,
7 NACIQI but the national discussion. Our entire
8 conference is dedicated to that in a year, but we
9 have a large percentage of our conference that's
10 been dedicated to it last year, the year before,
11 and this year. The fact that we set up those
12 student success groups is very important.

13 The fact that we identified
14 institutions and wrote them and asked for
15 context, frankly, put a serious amount of
16 pressure on those institutions. As one small
17 example, I had a phone call with an institution
18 that I consider a really great community college
19 with a great national reputation. Keep getting
20 grants, and I called the president and said how
21 come you have, like, an eight-percent graduate
22 rate? That's not okay. Now, in that case, I

1 know they transfer to universities, etcetera, but
2 it's still not okay.

3 We have a persistence in completion
4 academy that we are changing to student success
5 academy. So it is a very salient issue for us.
6 We've always looked at the numbers we get, but
7 when we see the non-complete or low graduation
8 rates, we're all over them and they get
9 monitoring or a sanction.

10 So I would say if there's any topic
11 that's a top topic, closely followed by
12 innovation, it's student success. With our
13 institutions, as we look at our criteria, we're
14 revising some wording in our criteria. We went
15 out to all the membership, and we are using the
16 term student success.

17 The other part of that is a focus on
18 students. One of the subgroups of our think tank
19 is student-centered accreditation. Rather than
20 institutional-centered accreditation, what's in
21 the best interests of the students.

22 In our internal discussions, when we

1 talk about student success, when we see a
2 proposal for something new or if we see a problem
3 going on, our whole discussion focuses around
4 what is the best decision for the student? What
5 can we do to help the students be successful?

6 So we're dealing with it at a research
7 level. A great deal of time, about 18 months,
8 went into the C-RAC study. The way we looked at
9 it, it was Carnegie classifications, a standard
10 deviation above and below, by sector, etcetera.

11 Now, we get some interesting excuses,
12 and we get some very good context. So if you
13 take institutions that have low income, first
14 generation student, it's going to be different
15 than a prestigious private institution. We know
16 that. Or a strong public institution. But I
17 don't think there's anything we're paying more
18 attention to right now than that.

19 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Great. Thank you.
20 So as a follow-up, I'm curious when you talk
21 about excuses. When I looked at the accreditor
22 dashboard data, I just did my own kind of cut of

1 HLC institutions looking at low graduation rates,
2 high default rates, low repayment rates, and came
3 up with, roughly, 400 public institutions that,
4 in my judgment, just looking at the data, would
5 be weak. But in predominantly public
6 institutions.

7 So I'm curious, as we think about the
8 triad for instance, do you think states are not
9 pulling their weight when it comes to holding
10 their own public institutions accountable? I
11 used to be a SHEEO in one of your states, so I
12 have a lot of understanding of the political
13 constraints. But I often found that public
14 institutions seem to get passed for all sorts of
15 reasons, and so I'm just curious your
16 perspective, as you interact with the governing
17 bodies in states, if you find that there's less
18 resistance to really looking at a public
19 institution that may not be doing very well just
20 because it's public and it's a public-centered
21 mission.

22 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, I'm going

1 to give you the example. I was not a SHEEO but I
2 was a vice chancellor in Oklahoma and Ohio, so
3 decades ago in Oklahoma, so I've got the triad
4 part down, minus the federal government piece.

5 What I'd like to point out is you're
6 a business person, too, and you know you can
7 throw all the money in the world at something,
8 and if there's not good decisions or mission or
9 strategic planning or metrics, it's not going to
10 do any good. That being said, I think the states
11 are overwhelmed, and I think that there have been
12 a lot of things thrown at them that they just
13 don't have the staffing to handle. That's not an
14 excuse, that's a fact. I know in many states,
15 once a state institution is authorized, that's
16 it. But every five years, a private institution
17 has to go through something akin to what we're
18 doing here or when we have our accreditation
19 visits. So one could wonder that. I mean, we
20 could have a great debate about that. You're
21 always going to be open. Extra dollars are
22 thrown at institutions that have difficulties,

1 distressed financially, etcetera.

2 However, we have to look at the state
3 issue. And when you add some of the data we did
4 at C-RAC, those numbers would go down. But,
5 nevertheless, some of the things are the
6 government accounting standards that are coming
7 into play where, if you have a, if you're leasing
8 property, it counts as capital. That freaked out
9 a lot of institutions because then their state
10 rates will go down as far as their chief
11 financial indicators.

12 In Ohio, if you're below the zone, all
13 the board members and president can be fired. So
14 I think Ohio kind of stays on top of it.

15 The states that I think are doing a
16 strong job, Tennessee and Ohio and others that
17 are doing performance-based funding because
18 that's really holding institutions accountable
19 and making sure that they're looking at such
20 things as if you have a developmental ed course
21 and you matriculate into a regular course,
22 everything. Everything is taken into account.

1 And I'm not as familiar with Tennessee as I am
2 with Ohio because I was there when we set that
3 up, but we went from 100-percent enrollment-based
4 funding to none enrollment-based funding. It was
5 a very small part of it. The institutions went
6 to no enrollment initially and the community
7 college caught up a couple of years later.

8 So I think the states vary, though.
9 And as you know this, as a former SHEEO, many of
10 you know this within the states, we have states
11 like Michigan that don't have a state
12 coordinating board. To Karen's credit, and I
13 would like to brag on her behalf and her staff
14 that they have been holding state-wide meetings
15 twice a year. So we invite our states in, and we
16 talk about all these issues. We've talked quite
17 a bit about student success, as well as
18 innovation. And because of that -- and at our
19 conference. So one in fall and one at our
20 conference in the spring, Karen and her staff
21 have established amazing relationships, and we
22 have state people on our think tank and other

1 groups, as well.

2 So it's a really challenging time for
3 the states. We have states like New Mexico,
4 Oklahoma, and others that have lost well over 10
5 to 15 percent compounded to even higher than that
6 because they lose it and then no more is added.
7 So while there are really no excuses, that's a
8 problem.

9 So you take Illinois, no budget for
10 three years. And then when they gave them some
11 money, they didn't go back. They just said,
12 okay, we'll give you money from April to July.
13 So many of you are presidents or have been
14 presidents or high-level positions or even think
15 of your businesses. What if your cash flow was
16 cut off? So then we see an institution that
17 they're going to lay off 300 faculty or position
18 some faculty, and we say we've got to look into
19 that.

20 So I'm very excited about our
21 relationship with the states. But we don't
22 always agree.

1 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Great. Thank you.
2 And I have one final question, switching to
3 graduation rates. I've read the C-RAC study or
4 skimmed it, and I congratulate you and your peer
5 accrediting agencies for digging into this. The
6 one thing that struck me in reading it is a lack
7 of focus in the report on admission standards and
8 admissions criteria. And I'm curious to get your
9 perspective on that because it seems to me that
10 with predictive data and predictive analytics,
11 while it's great to predict if a student is on
12 the right pathway, our institutions enrolling
13 students they know aren't going to be successful
14 and I would say be predatory and aided by the
15 federal government, but I'm just curious how do
16 you look at institutions' admission practices to
17 make sure that they're actually enrolling
18 students, even if they're open admissions, that
19 they're counseling enrolling students who aren't
20 going to drop out in six months and be worse off
21 than if they hadn't enrolled?

22 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, that's

1 actually a great idea because this is step one.
2 But I'd like to use an example, Arizona State
3 University which is known for innovation. They
4 have students success guides, and they have data
5 analytics that I've said facetiously you can't
6 walk around the campus and they know where you
7 are. So they have interdiction strategies
8 throughout the entire process.

9 I think we all know that when
10 institutions are having difficulty, they come up
11 with quick fixes, and those quick fixes are
12 letting anybody in in some cases. And I'm
13 talking about the small privates.

14 When we use the term predatory, I'm
15 quite agnostic by sector because that could
16 happen at any institution. We're all equal here,
17 whether something is going right or wrong. So
18 while years back there was some secret shopping
19 going on, I would hesitate to say that there
20 could be interesting secret shopping at public
21 institutions, at private colleges, etcetera.

22 So across the board, what you're

1 saying is absolutely right. It's the same thing
2 in business if you bring a customer in. You're
3 not bringing them in one time. You're bringing
4 them in, I used to work in cable television for a
5 while, you don't want a turn. You want them to
6 actually stay in because the cost of losing a
7 student to that student is enormous, and I would
8 say thank goodness for community colleges because
9 if it weren't for community colleges there are
10 many who won't even get in the door or wouldn't
11 be able to reverse transfer back to a community
12 college.

13 But, boy, you couldn't be more right.
14 What happens with that group -- now, let me tell
15 you one of the weaknesses, K through 12
16 counselors. We have found a lot of agony with K
17 through 12 counselors who are misleading or they
18 just don't have the background or they're not
19 getting the training for their advising folks.
20 And they just are sending them in the wrong
21 direction.

22 But many institutions for specialized

1 programs, such as nursing, will do pre-testing
2 and you have to have a certain grade, a HESI test
3 that's called. And so I think I actually love
4 the idea. I think it's really true that what
5 happens at the beginning is the most important
6 thing that you're putting down the right path.
7 Don't want to kill their dreams, but I had a
8 young person who was, she had it in her mind she
9 was going to go to Oberlin, and I said let's sit
10 down and look at the Oberlin ACT scores, and hers
11 was, like, not close to that. And what if you
12 get somebody in if they're going to succeed? You
13 haven't done them any favors. And you also
14 shouldn't guide them toward the wrong major. But
15 you got to get them in a major because if you
16 don't get them in a major we know that non-
17 declared are the students we lose the most.

18 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Great. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Okay. We open the
20 question now to the rest of the Committee. John?
21 You're going to be hard to see so make sure you
22 wave. John and then Claude and then Simon and

1 then maybe I'll take a question.

2 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: So this is an odd
3 question, I suppose, but I've often wondered how
4 you manage 944 institutions. So I'm on another
5 regional commission. We have about 150, and we
6 feel overwhelmed by that number.

7 How many do you have going through the
8 open pathway, and is that, you say that's light
9 touch. Is that part of your way of handling the
10 numbers that you have?

11 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: That's not an odd
12 question, but, no, people don't get into the open
13 pathways because it's easier to handle for us.
14 It's about those institutions being stronger, and
15 it's about two-thirds actually.

16 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: It's about two-
17 thirds.

18 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: But we have -- a
19 shout out to the most amazing staff. We have
20 about 60 staff, and we have 1800 volunteers that
21 are peer reviewers and we bring in consultants,
22 etcetera. And the average load from one of our

1 vice presidents is about 110 colleges that
2 they're responsible for. But keep in mind that
3 one big case could get their attention, a change
4 of control, substantive change, something like
5 that, but a lot of those cases it's rolling when
6 they come up for the information that is needed
7 from them. So it's not a matter of everybody is
8 coming at once.

9 We had board meetings where we had --
10 prior to me. I guess I didn't luck out. We
11 might have six institutions in front of the
12 board, and we had one recently where there were
13 22. And that means few of them get off probation
14 but most of them are in trouble.

15 We actually have it under control, and
16 I will say this might sound odd, too, so odd for
17 odd, I guess, we're a commuter city. So
18 everybody can't stay until 10:00 at night, so
19 they get their work done, they bring it home.
20 They're available to their institutions. And I
21 think all accreditors should move more
22 expeditiously.

1 So I will speak on behalf of HLC. My
2 colleagues, sorry, I'm not speaking on behalf of
3 anybody but HLC. Because sometimes an
4 institution needs to get the response in order to
5 be successful and serve their students, but it
6 seems huge, of course, but we're handling it.

7 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: It's very
8 impressive, and could you, with the people, the
9 institutions that are on the open pathway, how
10 much touch do they get?

11 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I'm going to have
12 Karen give the specifics because she was there
13 when it was written. Karen?

14 MS. PETERSON: Well, again, in the
15 open pathway, they have two evaluations, one at
16 the four-year mark and one at the ten-year mark.
17 And so, obviously, that involves a liaison, a
18 vice president from our staff, as well as a peer
19 review team on each one of those. Then they also
20 have a quality improvement project, again
21 generally facilitated by a liaison, and we have a
22 different committee that reviews that quality

1 improvement project.

2 So, you know, there are a number of
3 peer reviewers involved in that case, and a
4 single liaison that works with that institution.
5 But as you can see, there's time in between,
6 obviously, because we have a four and ten-year
7 mark. So the cases are staggered.

8 And, in fact, when liaisons are
9 assigned cases, we look at the pattern so that
10 they don't have too many cases in a given year.
11 So they are able to work with each institution
12 that's coming up in that particular year, and
13 then, obviously, they'll move on to the next year
14 of institutions as the years progress.

15 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Okay. Thank you.
16 It's very impressive.

17 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Thank you very
18 much. I'll tell the staff. They'll appreciate
19 it.

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Claude?

21 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Yes, thank you.
22 Well, I want to stay on the theme of the open

1 pathway in particular. So what I'm interested in
2 is how many, what are the institutional types
3 that you got in the open pathway, as well as your
4 standard pathway? And I know the Baldrige is a
5 whole separate thing. I totally agree, you know.
6 I was at an institution that went through the
7 Baldrige, as well.

8 And the reason I ask is because a lot
9 of times people believe that risk-informed
10 approach favors one particular institution type
11 than another. So can you, like, how many
12 community colleges, how many four-year
13 institutions, how many public, private? Just
14 ballpark. It doesn't need to be --

15 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I think it's
16 distributed the same way the number of the
17 colleges are because we have universities that
18 are well respected that might not be so good in
19 assessment or something like that. They're not
20 in the open pathway. But it's distributed by the
21 number of same, if our percentage, you always
22 have to figure about half are community colleges

1 as far as the actual number in the country, so
2 our percentage is across the board.

3 Some of our smaller faith-based or
4 tribal institutions, they need more touch. It's
5 just how it is. But when it comes to large
6 publics, regional publics that are smaller, the
7 privates, obviously, I don't even have to look at
8 the list, you're going to know a Grinnell is in
9 there. I'm right, aren't I?

10 So you're going to have that, but
11 there are also institutions that are really
12 staying after what they need to stay after as far
13 as the standards, etcetera. But we have no
14 hesitation to move people off that if there's
15 something wrong.

16 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Okay. So, you
17 know, we're trying to be sensitive, as a
18 committee, to the call for deregulation but
19 maintaining quality. We want to make sure,
20 absolutely sure that the institutions are meeting
21 their mission and purpose related to student
22 success. And so if you could just, if you could

1 wave a wand, are there things that we're tracking
2 that are really burdensome and not necessary?
3 Are there other things that we need to do a
4 better job in looking at related particularly to
5 student success? Because we're all about the
6 students, right? And, you know, the further we
7 get away, the more we think we're not but we know
8 we are. It's all about student success.

9 So just if you think through a
10 deregulatory approach, do you have some thoughts
11 on that?

12 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Yes. I have to
13 take off. I'm chair of C-RAC, so I'm speaking as
14 the HLC president, but we, as a group, have
15 looked at the fact that, for example, there are
16 ten regulations -- I've got it in here somewhere,
17 but I also have it all in here -- recommended to
18 be removed. Some of the indicators, like
19 financial, etcetera. And we're fine with them
20 being removed, but there's some that we still
21 would apply. One could have a big debate about
22 the financial part. I would argue to the Hill

1 that that's an issue when it comes to looking at
2 institutions. But we don't have to be told that.

3 I think it would be at great risk, I'm
4 going to say, we think the credit hour is pretty
5 old fashioned. All right. I'm just going to say
6 that. And competency-based education is not new.
7 I had it in the 70s at my first place. And we
8 think there are some things like that that are
9 really holding back innovation.

10 I agree with fully that balance with
11 quality is absolutely important. We don't want a
12 free-for-all. But we also want a little free
13 will. Students make choices and institutions can
14 make choices. I'm not in favor, we are not in
15 favor of bright lines, but we will always
16 continue to collect those kinds of things we've
17 talked about for trends analysis.

18 Let me see if there's anything else.
19 There's a few other things. But the key thing
20 is, as you may know, there's ten indicators the
21 federal government requires. In the House
22 version because there really isn't a Senate

1 version yet, they're recommended to be removed.
2 And some of those we spoke as accreditors and
3 said, you know, as much as we would love complete
4 deregulation in some cases, we're going to hold
5 on to some of those variables to continue to look
6 at those.

7 So I think it is a balance with
8 quality. And we spent quite a bit of time doing
9 federal compliance issues, and our members and
10 our survey for our strategic plan were very
11 clear: get into the quality assurance business
12 and try to stay out of the regulatory business.
13 So we think some of the information that's
14 gathered could be gathered by the federal
15 government.

16 To give you an example, the federal
17 government knows that there's a Clery Act, but we
18 have to ask if there's a Clery Act response. And
19 so, you know, these things take a lot of time in
20 our visits, and some of our peer reviewers have
21 said we don't have the capacity at some of these
22 institutions that get so hung up on the federal

1 then get into other things, so we want to make
2 sure we do that.

3 Yes, it's going to be very interesting
4 how it unfolds, but don't let go of the quality
5 part. The only thing I would say very strongly
6 is one metric is not enough.

7 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Just one last
8 question then. You mentioned the issue on the
9 credit hour piece, and, obviously, with CBE and a
10 lot of things going on, it doesn't fit well. So
11 do you have -- what would you recommend? I mean,
12 because so many things, there are so many things
13 related to the credit hour. There's no doubt
14 that the credit hour does not fit well in a lot
15 of situations. Do you have recommendations or
16 thoughts on that?

17 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Yes. Well,
18 partially. The credit hour, of course, is almost
19 similar to seat time in the K through 12 system
20 and sitting in a seat doesn't guarantee. I think
21 the outcomes focus would get you what you need.
22 What are the goals and objectives of the course,

1 what does the curriculum require, and how does
2 the student achieve those? And if they're not
3 being achieved, then that's a negative measure.

4 I can think of one quick example. My
5 son was in college, and he was in an accounting
6 class and the faculty member put everything up on
7 line as a backup. And he said why do I have to
8 go to the class? They're counting how many times
9 I go to the class. Of course, this is an
10 educator. You can imagine it was an interesting
11 discussion. But he was a self learner, and he's
12 saying why do I have to sit there and why does it
13 have to be 16 weeks? And those are the kinds of
14 things we need to be looking at being less
15 prescribed, but, as we do with all our policies,
16 holding our institutions accountable for having
17 fair, equitable standards that they apply on
18 their campus and that they're consistent. So no
19 deals. You know, you're not cutting a deal with
20 one department. It's across the board.

21 Would you add anything to that?

22 MEMBER BOEHME: Well, thank you so

1 much for coming. I'm excited that you guys are
2 here. Last time you showed up by yourself, so
3 I'm glad to see that you've brought some --

4 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I brought some
5 moral support this time.

6 MEMBER BOEHME: You did bring some
7 moral support.

8 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: And then brains.

9 MEMBER BOEHME: And it's also good
10 that, I think, if I remember correctly, the board
11 meeting was scheduled at the same time.

12 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Yes, it was, and
13 we're grateful it was not.

14 MEMBER BOEHME: Right. Well, we're
15 glad that you guys continue to value NACIQI and
16 take this seriously, and I was impressed with
17 your presentation today. And my question will be
18 almost the same as it was in June 2015 when we
19 got into quite a discussion about, and we
20 disagreed, about 28 institutions I identified in
21 2015 that had single-digit graduation rates. And
22 looking back at the transcript, you cannot speak

1 to them, and so I was wondering first if you have
2 an update on those 28 institutions. And the
3 second part is where are they now and what you
4 have done?

5 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: All right. So I
6 could refer to a few tabs. I'm going to try to
7 do it at this level, and then I can get specific
8 you want. But let's take one you mentioned that
9 did not have first-time full-time students. So
10 with the new data, a lot of those institutions
11 drop off. So if they're degree completion and
12 the idea is that you're getting your first two
13 years somewhere else, they're not on the list.

14 And so we took very seriously that
15 discussion and looked at our metrics and how
16 we're measuring things, etcetera. Some of them
17 are still on, and I know you called out some.
18 Let's say close to where I live, all right? And
19 so we talked about that, and some of those
20 metrics are still low and there have been
21 monitoring, there's been more than monitoring.
22 Some of those institutions, let's say where I

1 live where there's multiple institutions over one
2 title, one name, you know, a larger one, they've
3 improved some but they haven't improved enough.
4 And then they happen to be in a situation with
5 the state that has total disinvestment in many
6 ways.

7 So I would have to say that with the
8 data that we had, we had about 400 on the data.
9 When we did the work for C-RAC, it went down to a
10 lot less than that. So that's not saying they're
11 okay. It's saying that by the new metrics that
12 are available by the department and the transfer
13 students, etcetera.

14 The other thing we've done with these
15 institutions is we follow them on a regular
16 basis, and there have been some sanctions and
17 some that you mentioned. Some you mentioned were
18 already on probation. Some have moved toward
19 show cause and other kinds of things.

20 So we heard you, but we also knew
21 there were trends going on. The context that we
22 gathered scared the heck out of everybody, and

1 that's sometimes okay. And we're really focusing
2 a lot more. I'm going to ask Karen if she would
3 add to that because we've talked about this a lot
4 on site, if that's okay with you.

5 MS. PETERSON: So I think, I suppose
6 we can get into more specific cases if you wish,
7 but, again, there's a range of institutions on
8 that list. Some of them, as Barbara properly
9 pointed out, did not have first-time full-time
10 students to begin with. As you know, this is a
11 big issue in trying to understand data. Other
12 institutions on that list were focused at the
13 graduate level. Again, limited first-time full-
14 time metrics which really didn't provide much
15 information about that institution.

16 We also had a number of institutions
17 on there. As you know, they serve a particular
18 kind of agenda. They are open access. As a
19 society, we've generally made a commitment in the
20 past to those institutions, understanding that
21 bringing in students is important. Helping them
22 get an opportunity to have an education is

1 important, but it doesn't absolve the institution
2 of responsibility to work as well as they can to
3 get students through to completion.

4 So most of our institutions, in fact
5 the vast majority of them, as you can see from
6 the C-RAC graduation study, are working on
7 various projects to get students through more
8 swiftly and efficiently towards graduation and
9 completion. And it was interesting when that
10 data came out because I think we found that
11 there's sometimes an assumption that
12 institutions are not working as hard as they can,
13 but they are. But this is a needle that's moving
14 slowly because it takes time to move a student
15 through to completion. But most of our
16 institutions have projects in place to do that
17 and are seeing modest improvements but, over
18 time, they're seeing some improvements in their
19 outcomes.

20 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: One of the
21 things, if I might add, Simon, that we do is,
22 annually, we analyze every decision that's made

1 and what are the key areas that are causing the
2 institution's problems. So as I mentioned,
3 assessment is the first one. Finance is the
4 second one. Governance is on there. There are a
5 variety of issues. And when you have
6 institutions that have an assessment problem, you
7 probably do not have an assessment officer or
8 appropriate staff to make sure it's applied
9 consistently across the organization. So we put
10 a lot of pressure on that.

11 But I'm looking at some lists, and I
12 remember a couple of the schools you mentioned,
13 but I'm looking at some lists as far as
14 institutions that we know were put on probation
15 or removed from probation or show cause, and
16 they're related to the issues that you discussed.

17 MEMBER BOEHME: I was wondering if the
18 Board could comment about and give insight to
19 NACIQI, when making these decisions, how
20 graduation rates have played. I was very
21 discouraged from the June 2015 interaction
22 because I think there was a real inaction. What

1 I am starting to see is, and I think everyone
2 here has read the article in Inside Higher Ed
3 about C-RAC and that report, and it seems like
4 now it is being a serious concern.

5 I want the Board to comment and I want
6 to see how the organization has started to value
7 that because, as everyone knows, what's the point
8 when you don't get the credential, when you don't
9 get the skill, when you don't get something.
10 Instead, as we know, debt is one of the biggest
11 issues to students and to higher education and
12 policymakers here that you graduate and you have
13 nothing to show for it except these debt
14 payments.

15 MS. JOHNSON-ODIM: Let me say three
16 things as initial observations and then to give
17 you some ideas of what we've done at the
18 university where I am. Now, the university where
19 I was provost, now provost emerita, we have a
20 student population that is about 42-percent
21 Latino, about 9-percent African-American. And
22 the ACT, the average ACT score varies between 18

1 and 24. But our graduate rate is between 70 and
2 80 percent, so it's quite high. Now, of course,
3 this is a six-year graduation rate.

4 But I wanted to say in terms of
5 observation first is that I think that one of the
6 sort of elephants in the room is this issue of
7 access, and it's both a philosophical and a
8 practical issue. And in the last 34 years, we
9 all know that the entering student population has
10 changed a great deal. It's not just about racial
11 and ethnic diversity, but it's also about people
12 who are older coming back to school. The number
13 of people who are doing that is probably half or
14 more of the student population that we're dealing
15 with these days. So we have a different kind of
16 student population.

17 So we also have, when we talk about
18 access, it goes to more than letting people in
19 with low ACT scores, etcetera, because many
20 people now with the access are coming from places
21 where, at the secondary level, they are ill-
22 prepared and that has to do with, you know, K-12

1 education. So if you are graduating from
2 Evanston Township High School where my children
3 went, you have, you know, five labs and, you
4 know, so on and so forth, but you could graduate
5 from a Chicago public school where a teacher who
6 has a degree in Spanish can be told that they're
7 going to teach biology or physics, so you can
8 imagine that the biology course you get is
9 different.

10 I say all this to say that we're
11 getting a student population that needs other
12 kinds of touches in order to -- and, also,
13 perhaps just the last thing before I tell you
14 some of the things we've done at my institution
15 is to say that, you know, both what Karen and
16 Barbara have spoken to in terms of, you know,
17 what goes on at institutions is that, you know,
18 it is, it's about the mission of the institution.
19 So the board looks at that, but we have a very
20 strong and a very independent board. And we
21 certainly do not hesitate to say, based on
22 graduation rates and other things, that an

1 institution needs to receive one of the four
2 sanctions. And if you look over the last, I'd
3 say seven or eight years, more institutions have
4 been placed on some kind of a sanction for a much
5 higher touch.

6 So what are some of the things that we
7 look for in institutions from the perspective of
8 the board and some of the things that we've done
9 at my institution that have been successful
10 things? One of them has been having -- you know,
11 some of these are prior resources -- a center for
12 teaching and learning excellence, and that center
13 for teaching and learning excellence does all
14 kinds of things. Not only does it do peer
15 tutoring and professional tutoring, which is very
16 important, but it also trains teachers to deal
17 with new populations.

18 For instance, as I said, we have about
19 a 42-percent Latino population, so we have
20 seminars and webinars on teaching courses for
21 students who are bilingual, whose first language
22 is not English. And there are a large number of

1 students in that pool, not just Spanish-speaking
2 students but students from Eastern Europe,
3 students from Asia who are the new immigrants
4 from Asia, etcetera.

5 Another thing that we have required
6 are mid-semester reports so that halfway through
7 the semester, you know, a teacher has to report
8 on how a student is doing. Other things that we
9 have done include enhanced advising. Some are
10 bridge programs so that students who are coming
11 into an institution have a bridge program. They
12 talk to them about how to study, how to manage
13 their time.

14 And I'm giving these examples because
15 these are some of the things that the board looks
16 to institutions that have low graduation rates to
17 see if they're doing or to, you know, ask, you
18 know, what have you tried, what are the
19 innovative ways that you have attempted to
20 increase your graduation rate?

21 But, you know, graduation rates do go
22 to all kinds of things. First-time full-time

1 students is not a good or accurate measure. The
2 different student population that we have now,
3 the number of our institutions, students are
4 coming -- and these are not excuses, it's just
5 the reality of the situation -- students are
6 coming who are not coming to get a degree.
7 They're coming to do a particular kind of
8 program, and that's what they're coming to do.
9 So, you know, they come to a community college
10 one year, and then they go to four-year
11 institutions, so they don't graduate from the
12 two-year college but they may graduate from the
13 four-year college.

14 So, you know, I'll end by saying, and
15 sorry for so long an answer, but I think it's a
16 really very complicated question that our board
17 and I think the boards of other regionals, but I
18 know our board in which I've served for ten years
19 and I've been in higher education for 40, that
20 our board is a volunteer but hardworking board
21 that takes very seriously the most important
22 thing that we use as sort of a measure is that

1 student success. Students are the primary reason
2 that we are doing what we're doing.

3 MS. PETERSON: Let me add one more
4 thing to that in terms of specific findings that
5 our board has made over the past three years or
6 so and in terms of what's cited when we have an
7 institution put on probation or on notice, and
8 it's very common for low graduation rates to be
9 one of the findings, questionable finances,
10 concerns about integrity, those are the kinds of
11 things that come up in an ongoing basis when we
12 put an institution on notice or probation.

13 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: May I add a quick
14 anecdote, Simon? Would that be okay? I recall a
15 board meeting where we were looking at
16 historically black institution's recommendation
17 for show cause. And it was a very long
18 discussion, and all the issues were raised about
19 concerns for the students, etcetera. But at the
20 end of the day, the board said it's in the best
21 interest of the students that either they get
22 their act together or they're closed. And it's

1 agonizing discussions. I don't think when we
2 were observed by Beth we had a pretty hot
3 discussion but we didn't have an agonizing
4 discussion. But we have folks on that board who
5 represent all different sectors, and I will be
6 candid and dare say they walk out depressed about
7 the decision they had to make but they believe
8 it's in the best interest of the students.
9 They're not afraid to do what they need to do.

10 MEMBER BOEHME: Great. Well, and
11 thank you for that insight. As the largest
12 regional, I think people are looking to you and
13 looking for you to be a role model. And that's
14 why I was so disappointed in 2015, and I continue
15 to be optimistic that you will take graduation
16 rates and you'll take also default rates
17 seriously, as well.

18 I agree with you, too, that the data
19 is not perfect, but what we do have oftentimes
20 does not paint a pretty picture. And just
21 because it's not perfect, we can't necessarily
22 discount what we have. And, hopefully, with this

1 administration, we'll work on having better data
2 and looking at state-wide systems. We'll also be
3 looking at ways that we can have a more accurate
4 and better conversation.

5 But also as the accreditor that has
6 the most institutions, if the dashboard is
7 correct, the most institutions that receive over
8 \$200 million of taxpayers' dollars, there are
9 some institutions, as you know, that are not that
10 impressive in terms of graduation rates, default
11 rates. Some of them, I mean, hundreds of
12 millions of dollars.

13 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I think the small
14 privates are, I don't know specifically what
15 you're looking at, but let's take a couple of
16 sectors that would come out. The small private
17 universities are really struggling. There are
18 new creative options, everything from boot camps
19 to all kinds of competition online, etcetera.
20 The challenges that they are the economic engines
21 for their communities if they're in rural areas,
22 etcetera, but if they're not doing well we can't

1 rescue the community, so we will address it. And
2 then, of course, community colleges for reasons
3 we've discussed.

4 MEMBER BOEHME: Right. So let's say
5 Kent State University, which is a public
6 university, 11-percent default rate, a little bit
7 better graduation rate, 43 percent, and then, to
8 be balanced, a for-profit University of Phoenix,
9 13-percent default rate, graduation rate 16
10 percent. I mean, these are two very well-known
11 institutions, lots of students go to them. They
12 receive hundreds of millions of dollars of
13 taxpayers' money. Can you walk me through in
14 terms of where those graduation rates may or may
15 not, obviously 40 percent goes beyond the C-RAC
16 35 percent for four-year --

17 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, we'd love
18 it to be 100 percent, so I certainly want to
19 start by saying that. Karen may be able to
20 address more specifics, but I'd like to start in
21 general. I believe there's been a lot of focus
22 at the University of Phoenix in the past several

1 years on assessment and student outcomes. I
2 think they're really working on it, but there's
3 no question that the students that they take are
4 more at risk. All right. So that's a big part
5 of it. And we absolutely believe that they
6 should have higher rates, but they're moving up a
7 little bit based on the chart. So progress is
8 one thing, all right? Getting to a goal.

9 Because I was in Ohio, I will tell you
10 that, actually, Kent State is a strong
11 institution in general. It has certain programs
12 that are extremely well known. They've had
13 strong leadership. But those are students who
14 aren't going to the Ohio State University, which
15 has become very difficult to get in within the
16 state. They made a decision to become a research
17 university. And they are place bound. And one
18 of the things with Kent State, I'm not sure if
19 they're all separately accredited, the regional
20 branch campuses, so that's feeding into the
21 graduation rates. I believe they have up to
22 seven or something like that branch campuses.

1 They call them regional campuses, and those
2 numbers are counted in the whole and those are
3 folks that aren't leaving their region and they
4 do offer some associate's degrees, so they're
5 very similar.

6 But they don't get any more of a pass
7 than anybody else. And we have active people who
8 were engaged with that institution and their
9 representation. So I agree with you it should be
10 higher. But I do want to say, in the case of
11 Kent State, there's a lot of branch locations
12 that are in very small areas or right in an urban
13 area, like right near Cleveland.

14 Karen, would you add to that?

15 MS. PETERSON: I think the point
16 Barbara is making is a critical point. We have
17 two institutions with very different missions and
18 very different student populations. With the
19 University of Phoenix, we're dealing with
20 students, it's going to take them a number of
21 years to get through. Some of them don't get
22 through because their life changes in the

1 process.

2 With Kent State, we are dealing with
3 an institution that's, again, a large research
4 institution, different kind of focus, different
5 kinds of students. They're going to go through
6 more quickly, more effectively. But, again, they
7 are a different group of students with different
8 goals, less likely to have a life interference
9 that's going to stop them from completing.

10 Also, the goals of students at a place
11 like University of Phoenix are different. Some
12 students do come in to take a smaller group of
13 courses. They may not, at the end of the day, be
14 there to get a degree program. Regardless of how
15 we sometimes try to count them for Title IV
16 federal financial aid purposes. That's probably
17 less likely to be the case at Kent State.

18 So, again, we have to be careful when
19 we're comparing apples and oranges.

20 MEMBER BOEHME: And there's no denying
21 I picked two completely different universities,
22 but it was designed so I could see how you guys

1 think about this because I think what is so
2 upsetting is, yes, everyone has a different
3 mission and we should look at each institution as
4 something unique. But if it's true that you want
5 to build a student-centric accreditation model,
6 there are some very basic tenets that students
7 want to see.

8 And you're absolutely right. You
9 know, my dad just went to a community college and
10 took three classes and he was done. He certainly
11 doesn't help Kalamazoo Valley Community College
12 and its rating. It seemed like you may have used
13 someone as an example, an unnamed person in your
14 example. I transferred and I ended up at a
15 different university. I didn't help the
16 University of Michigan's, but I did help
17 Cornell's.

18 There's no disputing that. But if it
19 is true and regionals are going to come up here
20 and say that this is a student-centric model,
21 which I do believe that you are attempting to do,
22 there are certain things that oftentimes, more

1 times than not, the students that I've spoken
2 with, adult, and also the more traditional
3 students, which is less than the adult learners,
4 is oftentimes many of them do want to complete,
5 and that is a basic tenet that there are these
6 certain things.

7 And so I think I've seen and I'm being
8 persuaded that, since the conversation in 2015,
9 that there is a real growth around this
10 conversation, I think, within HLC, but, again,
11 you know, I'd like to see more the national four-
12 year graduation rate for public institution is
13 under 35 percent and obviously with this C-RAC,
14 in Paul Fain's article, there were 397
15 institutions or about 14 percent of the nation's
16 regionally-accredited colleges have a six-year
17 graduation rate below 25 percent, and HLC is the
18 largest regional. You have a big responsibility
19 as part of this.

20 And so I'm starting to see this. But
21 I guess I have to go back to the original
22 question. I would like to know, of the 28, in

1 exact numbers if possible, how many of them are
2 in probation, how many of them are in show cause,
3 or how many of them have had no action? Because
4 for a university or a college to still be in the
5 single digits and receiving taxpayers' dollars is
6 a ripoff to the students and to the taxpayer.

7 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, I use one
8 example. I don't have the 28 list in front of
9 me, but I have a list. And just a quick
10 correction, if you add transfer students, that
11 number goes from three-something down to 101.
12 And if you start adding part-time, it even goes
13 down lower.

14 But the examples of the community
15 colleges I gave you, when you start adding the
16 transfer, they're off the list. They wouldn't
17 count on your list anymore. You don't have all
18 of that in the data, but it is the data you have
19 available and it is better than it was a couple
20 of years ago.

21 So I think you'd have to call out a
22 name of an institution. I can't remember all 28,

1 although we try not to do that here. I mean --

2 MEMBER BOEHME: Chicago State
3 University was one that we talked a lot about in
4 2015.

5 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Okay, okay.
6 Well, and that's the one I referred to
7 previously. Again, Karen, do you want to address
8 any more about Chicago State?

9 MS. PETERSON: Well, I can come to
10 Chicago State in a moment, although, again, I
11 think we need to be careful about discussing
12 institutional cases in great detail because we
13 don't have the extensive institutional file in
14 front of us today. But I will say something that
15 I think is important to capture here as a point.
16 Yes, the numbers are important and, yes, we need
17 to focus on improving them. But how do you
18 improve that? And that's a critical question.

19 As accreditors, we look at how
20 students are served. Developmental, for example,
21 tutoring, mentoring. Each kind of student
22 population, we're acquiring a different group of

1 services to help them succeed. If students are
2 there and they want to succeed, that's the first
3 goal. But the second step is what is the
4 institution doing to help? Our core components
5 do require our peer reviewers to take a close
6 look at that and see if the institution is really
7 committed to providing robust services to help
8 those students succeed.

9 MEMBER BOEHME: And I don't want to
10 upset my colleagues because this question has
11 been going on for so long. But if it's true, and
12 we can argue until we're blue in the face about
13 these numbers and these universities, but I will
14 stop asking questions if they cannot respond to
15 that question.

16 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I've got a number
17 in front of me. It's gone up. I'm sorry. I
18 didn't mean to interrupt.

19 CHAIRMAN KEISER: The question, just
20 to follow-up on Simon, I have two questions but
21 the first one will be how many community colleges
22 or public universities have been removed from the

1 accredited list in the last, since '15? I think
2 that's where you were trying to go.

3 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: All right. Hang
4 on a second. I can -- as far as removal, we've
5 had a couple of cases where we've moved toward
6 recommending withdrawal or show cause in a couple
7 of institutions --

8 CHAIRMAN KEISER: How many have been
9 --

10 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: That we have
11 removed their accreditation? We have not.

12 MS. PETERSON: For a public
13 institution, is that what you're asking?

14 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Public institution.

15 MS. PETERSON: We haven't had a case
16 of a public institution have its accreditation
17 withdrawn.

18 CHAIRMAN KEISER: And I think the
19 issue that Simon was talking about specifically
20 where you had a state that stopped funding and
21 you've had huge layoffs of qualified faculty. I
22 mean, you had a whole lot, I mean, I can only see

1 what I read in the press. It's not just -- how
2 could you not take a final action upon that
3 institution with, you know, financial,
4 performance, faculty issues? It sounded like
5 they were very significant. Why would you not
6 take an action over the last three years in that
7 particular case?

8 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, we have
9 taken actions. There has been monitoring. And
10 Karen and a group of people visited, but I will
11 tell you --

12 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Well, when will you
13 take, when will you take a final action on an
14 institution like that?

15 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: When there's
16 trends across the board that everything is
17 failing, not just graduation rates.

18 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Well, but you had
19 also talked about that in terms of the financial
20 commitment of the state and the layoff of serious
21 parts of the faculty. You know, that seems to be
22 a very serious academic issue. You talked about

1 making excuses. It sounds like, because it was a
2 public institution, we make excuses.

3 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, let me tell
4 you what happened in Illinois, and I think I can
5 clarify this a little bit. We're non-partisan,
6 but we did contact the state and we let them know
7 the risk their institutions would be at if they
8 kept proceeding in this direction. And while
9 we'll take no credit, there was a budget that
10 finally came out after that.

11 As far as these institutions, a lot of
12 the numbers are staff that are presented as staff
13 that are not directly related in the academic
14 area. But we've actually done on-site visits and
15 we've followed up and we've done monitoring.
16 It's a very challenging issue, and I am going to
17 just be very candid with you because you're kind
18 of kicking someone when they're down when their
19 state has so much money, but it's not fair to the
20 students not to do well.

21 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Would you take the
22 same action to a private institution, whether it

1 be for-profit or non-profit, and give them that
2 same length of time that you did where you would
3 have in a public institution?

4 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: We would follow
5 our standards, so, no, we would not do anything
6 different for any institution. So if we put an
7 institution on probation, they have up to two
8 years. We only had one rare case where we
9 extended probation for six months because they
10 were about there, but we treat them all the same.
11 I won't tell you, though, it doesn't tug at us,
12 when Wisconsin cut \$300 million out of the
13 budget, that it doesn't tug at us as to -- we get
14 involved. We don't look away from it.

15 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Do you have a common
16 definition for graduation rate or retention or
17 completion? Do you have a singular definition?

18 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I think we look
19 at debt, we look at --

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Do you have --

21 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: A definition?

22 CHAIRMAN KEISER: -- a definition?

1 The reason I ask is, in Florida, the community
2 colleges got very creative in creating completion
3 points, and they get mixed up between graduation
4 and completion points. And if you finish a
5 course, you earn a completion point. Do you have
6 a single definition in which all institutions can
7 use to define what a graduation is?

8 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: I will not say we
9 have a single definition. I --

10 CHAIRMAN KEISER: So how can you
11 compare the data if everybody, if all the
12 institutions have the ability to create their own
13 definitions?

14 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Go ahead.

15 MS. PETERSON: Let me just address
16 that question. We collect data on a regular
17 basis. It's IPEDS-based. So are not -- if an
18 institution wants to track its completion points,
19 they can do that, but that's not what we're
20 collecting or reviewing. That would be something
21 they would do on their own for their own personal
22 edification, but we're looking, at this point, at

1 nationally normed data.

2 CHAIRMAN KEISER: But the IPEDS is
3 first-time first-term, so all the other data is
4 not reported to IPEDS. So it is self-reported,
5 correct?

6 MS. PETERSON: Well, data is self-
7 reported to IPEDS, but, obviously, that data is
8 supposed to be correct, and we rely on the
9 federal government to ensure that. But as you
10 know, the IPEDS system is working to improve to
11 get part-time students and other kinds into the
12 mix.

13 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, I would
14 like to say one concrete thing we're doing, and
15 that is we're buffing up our institutional
16 research. We're not an institution, but we call
17 that our research capacity. And what we've done
18 is we're trying to determine, based on our own
19 work for the C-RAC study, whether or not we
20 should, which indicators we should use as far as
21 College Navigator, the Scorecard, IPEDS, and all
22 that. And we're trying -- and the Carnegie

1 classifications.

2 One of the discussions that's taken
3 place within our think tank are really looking at
4 the Carnegie classifications. Now you're getting
5 into differential accreditation, all right? And
6 do you look at the community colleges one way, do
7 you look at the universities a separate way? And
8 at this point, we're not doing that. Everybody
9 has to meet the standards regardless of their
10 circumstances.

11 CHAIRMAN KEISER: But if you don't
12 have common definitions, I find that, you know,
13 this is one of the things that's bothered me for
14 a long time, it's like in the credit hour
15 definition, Carnegie 15, 30, 45 hours, based upon
16 the type of the course that's being taught, my
17 son went to a school where a three-hour course
18 was 30 hours, and that was purely electric
19 course, which, under the Carnegie, would have
20 been half of that.

21 So how, if we don't have common
22 definitions, how can accrediting commissions make

1 good judgments when it's all over the board and
2 the data you're using is really self determined?

3 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: You're asking the
4 same questions we are, which may not be a
5 satisfying response. But I will tell you that's
6 exactly why we got the half a million dollars
7 from Lumina and got people together who were
8 coming up with definitions because the one group,
9 the two student success groups, their whole goal
10 is to come up with a definition for student
11 success.

12 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you so much.

13 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Sure.

14 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Any other questions?

15 Well, thank you very much.

16 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Arthur?

17 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Oh, Fred, I'm sorry.

18 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: That's okay.

19 CHAIRMAN KEISER: It's hard to see you
20 there.

21 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: I know, I know.

22 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I'm blind so --

1 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: So I just want to
2 follow up on the data integrity issue and,
3 obviously, coming from a community college
4 sector, I'm very sensitive to the limitations of
5 IPEDS. Are there any promising data sources, any
6 promising practices? Can you just speak to that
7 a little bit, please?

8 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, first,
9 let's speak to the growth of data analytics. So
10 if you take one of the community colleges that
11 would show, the gentleman I called at a large
12 community college who had less than ten percent,
13 with the data analytics drilling down, it was
14 more like 40 percent, and a very reliable group
15 of folks were doing the data analytics. So
16 that's one thing. So predictive analytics, all
17 the kinds of things I mentioned, Arizona State.
18 And the community colleges, in many ways, are
19 really using that, some of them, the leading
20 community colleges, those that want to get to
21 where they need to be.

22 The second part of data sets is

1 exactly what our student success group is looking
2 at and our researchers because we were very
3 excited as a whole, C-RAC, that when we took into
4 account every type of student, the rates were
5 considerably higher.

6 Now, that doesn't mean they're all
7 getting the jobs they want. I was pretty excited
8 about the article today about people with
9 humanities degrees actually can get jobs. So the
10 data analytics, predictive analytics is a big
11 part of it. And the excellent question that was
12 raised about the first point of contact with the
13 student is critically important and what we
14 gather, and it's more than ACCUPLACER.

15 MS. JOHNSON-ODIM: May I just add one
16 thing, and that is that, just from the
17 perspective of my ten years on the board, in the
18 last three years, one of the things that I have
19 seen is a much more strict interpretation of
20 things. And by that I mean I think that there --
21 we have four levels of sanction for an
22 institution, and each of them takes some time or

1 can take some time. So things don't happen
2 immediately, but I have certainly seen a number
3 of sanctions that have been placed on
4 institutions. Sometimes, you know, it may take
5 two years.

6 So I certainly think that in the last
7 three years, to this gentleman's question, that
8 there has been movement, and I think that, as
9 Barbara said, I can hardly make you understand
10 how deeply the board takes this question of
11 student success and part of student success is a
12 graduation rate. So there is a lot of angst and
13 a lot of hard decisions that go on, and sometimes
14 it takes some time for them to be implemented.

15 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: And one final
16 comment, Mr. Chair, if I may. There's nothing
17 more gratifying than institutions that were
18 devastated that we put them on probation that
19 come back two years later and say thank you.
20 It's not what I would have expected because,
21 having been a president, I can't imagine thanking
22 HLC for probation. But, basically, these

1 institutions have come back and brought extremely
2 impressive data, and we are in the quality
3 assurance, versus shutting institutions down,
4 business as possible.

5 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you very much.
6 I hope I didn't miss anybody. We do have a
7 third-party commenter.

8 You'll have three minutes, and, if you
9 would, I will time you. And if you have --
10 please introduce yourself.

11 MS. FLORES: Good morning. Thank you
12 to the Committee for allowing me to speak today.
13 My name is Antoinette Flores, and I am a Senior
14 Policy Analyst at the Center for American
15 Progress.

16 I want to raise a concern for the
17 public record of an ongoing trend around HLC not
18 providing sufficient public warning about
19 financial issues at its schools. In at least
20 three instances over the past year, a college
21 announced major changes as a result of severe
22 financial problems catching students off guard.

1 In all three cases, HLC had the college on
2 financial monitoring, but, unlike all of the
3 agency's other actions, financial monitoring does
4 not require the institution to disclose this
5 information.

6 To be clear, HLC is doing a good job
7 of monitoring finances at its colleges and taking
8 action. My concern is that, by not requiring
9 transparency, HLC is leaving its students in the
10 lurch. In May 2017, students at Holy Cross
11 College received an accidental reply-all email
12 from an administrator revealing that the college
13 was in severe financial trouble and at risk of
14 closing. HLC had placed the college on financial
15 monitoring in 2016. The college was not required
16 to disclose this information, and so it didn't.

17 Also in May 2017, Northland College
18 announced salary cuts to all faculty and staff,
19 staff eliminations, benefit cuts, and ending some
20 of its sports teams. HLC had placed the college
21 on financial monitoring in 2016 and had issued
22 various monitoring actions over the previous six

1 years. The college was not required to disclose
2 this information, and so it didn't.

3 In probably the most severe instance,
4 right before classes were set to begin in August
5 2017, Marygrove College announced it would
6 eliminate its undergraduate program entirely at
7 the end of the first semester. It was also
8 placed on monitoring the year prior but was not
9 required to disclose this information, and so it
10 didn't.

11 If students don't find out a college
12 is in a financial bind, they might get stuck. In
13 this case, college enrolled students for the
14 upcoming year. Students took out grants and
15 loans to pay for it, and, at the last minute, the
16 college pulled the rug. Nearly 70 percent of
17 Marygrove's students are Pell recipients.
18 Transfer is always difficult, let alone a rushed
19 one in the middle of the year when cost is a big
20 concern.

21 It doesn't have to be this way. Other
22 agencies, like WASC, require a college to be

1 transparent in these cases. Public disclosure
2 ensures an honest dialogue about a college's
3 future and allows students the opportunity to
4 make an informed decision about whether to enroll
5 or to transfer from a college. Students deserve
6 an open and honest conversation about the school
7 where they choose to invest their money.
8 Instead, some have gotten a process shrouded in
9 secrecy. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you. And
11 thank you for recognizing the time limit. You
12 were 2:48. That's very good. Anybody have any
13 questions for Ms. Flores?

14 MEMBER BOEHME: So, Ms. Flores, and
15 thank you so much for raising this concern. Can
16 you just outline very specifically what your
17 recommendation would be to HLC and not just
18 compare it to WASC? What is the mandate, in your
19 opinion?

20 MS. FLORES: Sure. The recommendation
21 would be that HLC requires institutions to
22 publicly disclose this information when a college

1 is on sanction because, in this case, it's in the
2 institution's advantage but it's clearly to the
3 detriment of students when they're deciding to
4 enroll.

5 MEMBER BOEHME: And one more question.
6 Other regional accredit, WASC is one. Are there
7 any others that you know?

8 MS. FLORES: There are. I can't tell
9 you off the top of my head. But looking over
10 financial monitoring, there are other agencies
11 that require institutions to publicly disclose
12 when they're on monitoring.

13 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you very much.
14 I'll call the agency back, if they would like to
15 respond.

16 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Thank you. We
17 appreciate the input and the opportunity to
18 respond. In these cases, there were some other
19 issues. It isn't just related to the financial.
20 And there is a place on our website, if they were
21 looking up the history of the institution. I
22 hear what you're saying. There may be more in-

1 depth ways. That's possible to do that. But I
2 will tell you, and I think it's important to
3 point out, we do hold the administrators
4 accountable for communication if there are a lot
5 of leadership issues. And, yet, when they get
6 back to their campus, we do get complaints that
7 the administrators aren't being direct and candid
8 and open with the students or potential future
9 students.

10 We have a formal complaint process.
11 I cannot recall any formal complaints that we got
12 in these two issues at all. And if we got them
13 and if we had heard from the students, we would
14 have been glad to follow-up and respond. But I
15 will say a lot of this, there's only so much
16 accreditation can do, and if a president goes
17 back and chooses not to communicate, if there's a
18 monitoring concern or issue with their campus, we
19 have to determine how far we should push on
20 something like that.

21 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you.

22 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: So, Barbara, let

1 me see if I understand. So you, if you have an
2 action, you don't disclose it yourself, but you
3 expect the institution --

4 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Monitoring. No.

5 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: If you're
6 monitoring.

7 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: If it's the three
8 sanctions versus monitoring, there are public
9 disclosure notices that need to be on their site.
10 We absolutely tell them the language that it has
11 to be. If it's not there, I can just think of a
12 case very recently, we will get after the
13 institution. We check to make sure, and the
14 public disclosure notice needs to be on their
15 website in a retrievable place.

16 These cases are monitoring cases. And
17 in those cases, it's on our website as far as
18 under the history of the institution, but it's
19 not listed the same way. We do encourage and
20 pretty much demand the presidents, you know, or
21 an appropriate group communicates with their
22 campus. We have had, but not in these cases Ms.

1 Flores mentioned, we have not had complaints, to
2 my knowledge, about these institutions that would
3 identify they haven't heard what's going on.

4 So, yes, we do with the sanctions.
5 With the monitoring, you have to come to our
6 website to look at the history.

7 MS. PETERSON: So if I might provide
8 just a little bit more detail in the first case
9 mentioned by Ms. Flores, it's a monitoring case
10 on finances, so the information provided by the
11 individual administrator in the email was not
12 accurate. So I think we have that. It's very
13 important to emphasize that.

14 But the fact that we had the
15 institution on financial monitoring is on our
16 website. It's publicly available. People can
17 see that. Now, as to how much detail the
18 institution itself should provide to the public
19 about the nature of that financial monitoring,
20 that's always tricky. Should, in fact,
21 institutional president tell the financial, the
22 community that an institution has an operating

1 deficiency. How the students and parents relate
2 to that information? What do you do with that?
3 So we leave the judgment of how much information
4 about a financial monitoring issue is disclosed
5 to the president to determine how much should be
6 disclosed. But there is information on our
7 website to the public about the fact that that
8 financial monitoring is going on.

9 Now, the second case is different.
10 That's a show cause case, a far more serious
11 case. We have extensive information up on our
12 website about that. The institution is required
13 to disclose that. Again, I don't want to get
14 into extensive detail about a case that's
15 currently under review by the commission. That
16 is under show case. They will be back in front
17 of the board shortly, so what we say here
18 obviously should be very limited.

19 But, again, these are two very
20 different kinds of cases and there was extensive
21 information provided on the second case,
22 obviously, because of the serious nature and

1 disclosure requirements on the president in that
2 case that were not the case in the first case
3 where we're dealing simply with a financial
4 monitoring case.

5 MEMBER WU: This discussion brings
6 something to mind, which is I have the
7 impression, based on news reports, that there may
8 be dozens, even hundreds of decent but not well-
9 endowed private non-profit institutions that are
10 teetering on the brink financially. I think many
11 people have that impression. And we don't want
12 to start a vicious cycle where, because word gets
13 out, they can't recruit a class and then they
14 fall apart entirely. There's that risk because
15 some of them might be able to come up with a
16 plan.

17 But I wonder, and I would just offer
18 you an opportunity to speak to this, should
19 accreditor, should the regionals think about this
20 impending crisis and should NACIQI be doing
21 something? Because if -- and you've been
22 nodding, I just want to make sure the transcript

1 shows that there's general agreement on this
2 proposition that there may be many, many, many
3 institutions out there that, not because they're
4 bad, just because of the spiraling cost of our
5 education, they're at risk of going under, going
6 bankrupt. So should we be doing something about
7 this? We meaning you, the regionals, and we
8 NACIQI?

9 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Well, certainly,
10 part of your pilot project, when you look at all
11 those data points, you certainly can discuss
12 this. But let me speak as someone who's been a
13 president of a small private rural institution,
14 never claiming fiscal exigency or anything like
15 that, but the first communication needs to be
16 from the president to the staff. And as I think
17 we all know, a lot of institutions, the president
18 or CFO may keep the information a little bit
19 tight, and that's a problem, and we encourage
20 transparency on campuses.

21 The second thing, you said it so well.
22 In the press, if they are doing an action plan to

1 get out of the trouble that they're in and they
2 come public with this -- forget fiscal exigency,
3 no one can say that word, it's kind of a kiss of
4 death because if you say that everybody knows
5 there's really a problem. But the communication
6 with that changes for fundraising, it changes for
7 enrollment, and all those kinds of things, and
8 that's a dilemma that these institutions are up
9 against.

10 I think it's going to take care of
11 itself. They're going to close. There are
12 institutions like this, unfortunately, that, even
13 though they're the primary business -- because,
14 you know, millions of dollars is a business
15 regardless -- in their region, they may not make
16 it and they may not make it because it's not a
17 residential world anymore and their campus isn't
18 enough or they can't compete with all the things
19 that are being done on campuses, right, wrong, or
20 indifferent, to be very, you know, sexy and
21 attract students. It's a very threatened sector.

22 So I don't believe I have an answer

1 saying NACIQI should do something about it. I
2 just can't say that. But I can say we are on top
3 of all of these institutions. Yes, Karen?

4 MS. PETERSON: Let me add a little bit
5 to that. I want to step back a little bit from
6 the term crisis. I think that's perhaps maybe a
7 little strong, not to disagree with your point
8 but just to take it in a little different
9 direction. Yes, there's no question that there
10 are a number of institutions in the country who
11 are struggling with the ongoing problem of
12 enrollment, how do you bring students in, how do
13 you get the bills paid? Because if you don't
14 bring students in, then your operating revenues
15 are not going to be where they need to be.

16 I've been in this business a long
17 time, and I know this has been an ongoing
18 struggle for some of our institutions. Some of
19 them are able to pull it out one year after the
20 next. It's not always easy. But having said
21 that, in the past few years, we've seen a little
22 bit of an uptick in the number of institutions

1 closing each year. We've gone from maybe a
2 couple to about five. Now, that doesn't sound
3 like a huge number, but, you know, if you add
4 that up over the year, it starts to be a more
5 significant number.

6 So I think it's something where
7 accreditors are watching this very carefully.
8 All of us are monitoring institutions that have
9 financial challenges, moving them to a sanction
10 where it appears that they are in some impending
11 disaster mode. But I think we need to be careful
12 to keep an eye on this. We don't want to suggest
13 a sector of higher education is going to be dying
14 any time soon because that sector still, there's
15 a large number of students. It's still
16 relatively viable. But a number of these
17 institutions are looking for different ways of
18 paying the bills, different approaches to
19 bringing in students, different ways of
20 partnering. And I think that's important for us
21 to encourage where we can.

22 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: One of the things

1 we're doing, our board is working on putting out
2 a thought paper at some point on financial
3 sustainability. There have been a lot of really
4 good things written about it by other
5 organizations, but we'd like to talk about how do
6 you know when your accreditation is at risk
7 because of those kinds of things.

8 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank and then
9 Simon.

10 MEMBER WU: I'll just say something
11 very briefly for my fellow NACIQI members but for
12 the regionals, as well, and for all who are here,
13 which is I think we need to be mindful of this
14 and watch this. We, NACIQI, spend a lot of time
15 talking to you, agencies, about institutions who
16 we think ought to go out of business and how do
17 we address that. There also is a whole category
18 of institutions we hope don't go out of business
19 but face these challenges and for the public, for
20 the students, for the communities, somebody ought
21 to be watching this, and I think that somebody
22 would be the agencies first and NACIQI afterward.

1 So I just want to note that we are watching, not
2 just watching, we want to be constructive and
3 positive and do something useful in the world
4 here because if this accelerates a little bit
5 more, so even at five closures per year for each
6 regional -- is that, you're saying five --

7 MS. PETERSON: For HLC. I can't speak
8 for the other regionals.

9 MEMBER WU: Right. So we could be
10 looking at 25 or 30 across the country per year.
11 That's not trivial when you look at the number of
12 students and all the towns, etcetera. And if it
13 just goes up a little bit, you know, this is
14 worrisome because we're the authorities that
15 should be responsible for doing something about
16 this. I'm just noting, great that you're aware
17 of this, we all ought to be thinking about this
18 issue.

19 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Yes. So one of
20 the key triggers I would add is if we see draw-
21 downs from endowment that exceed a certain
22 amount, that institution is immediately flagged.

1 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Simon?

2 MEMBER BOEHME: I'll just be very
3 brief. I think Ms. Flores brought up a great
4 point, and it's good it sounds like you're coming
5 up with a white paper. And I think in your
6 opening remarks is, if we're going to be student-
7 centric, talking about, as Frank so eloquently
8 said, you know, not setting off this chaotic, you
9 know, death sentence by actually being overly
10 transparent, but it seems as though the example
11 she cited, and you're right, they were different
12 examples, but if they are impending, the students
13 are owed that. And I just encourage the board
14 certainly to continue talking about that. Thank
15 you.

16 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you. Any
17 further questions? Elizabeth, would you come to
18 make sure -- thank you very much.

19 MS. GELLMAN-DANLEY: Thank you.

20 MS. DAGGETT: I have nothing to add or
21 to respond to the agency or the third-party
22 comment.

1 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you very much.
2 Is there a motion from the two primary readers?

3 MEMBER PHILLIPS: Yes, we move to
4 renew the agency's recognition for a period of
5 five years.

6 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Seconded by Rick
8 O'Donnell. Are there further discussion? All
9 those in favor of the motion, signify by raising
10 your hand? All opposed? The motion passes.
11 Thank you, Higher Learning Commission.

12 We're going to take a seven-minute
13 break. Thank you.

14 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter went
15 off the record at 10:17 a.m. and went back on the
16 record at 10:32 a.m.)

17 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Welcome back. I
18 guess I didn't stick to my seven minutes, but
19 that's okay. Brian, would you please introduce
20 yourself? Push your button.

21 MEMBER JONES: I'm Brian Jones, the
22 President of Strayer University. And I apologize

1 for being late. I got caught up with kids and
2 school delays today.

3 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Well, thank you
4 Brian. We're now to move to the renewal of
5 recognition of the New England Association of
6 Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions
7 of Higher Education, or we call it NEASC. The
8 primary readers are Simon Boehme and Frank Wu,
9 and I call Nicole Harris to the front to give us
10 her report.

11 MEMBER BOEHME: Thank you, Chair. If
12 it's okay, I'll offer a quick recommendation
13 intro.

14 CHAIRMAN KEISER: That's fine. Sorry
15 for missing that. Thank you.

16 MEMBER BOEHME: No problem. The New
17 England Association of Schools and Colleges,
18 Commission on Institutions of Higher Education,
19 is a regional accreditor that currently accredits
20 approximately 237 institutions in the six states
21 of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New
22 Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The

1 agency's accreditation is used by institutions in
2 the region to establish eligibility to
3 participate in the federal Title IV student
4 financial aid assistant programs. The department
5 received one complaint for the agency during this
6 recognition period, which is discussed in the
7 following criterion 602.16(a)(1), student
8 complaints.

9 DR. HARRIS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
10 and members of the Committee. For the record, my
11 name is Dr. Nicole S. Harris, and I will be
12 presenting information regarding renewal petition
13 submitted by the New England Association of
14 Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions
15 of Higher Education, also referred to as the
16 agency.

17 The staff recommendation to the senior
18 department official is to renew the agency's
19 recognition for five years. The staff
20 recommendation is based upon my review of the
21 agency's renewal petition, additional information
22 requested, complaint response, and supporting

1 documentation, as well as an observation of a
2 site visit and commission meeting in October and
3 November of 2017.

4 During the current accreditation
5 cycle, the department received no third-party
6 comments regarding the agency's renewal petition
7 and one complaint in which the department
8 reviewed and found no evidence that the agency
9 did not follow its policies and procedures or
10 failed to meet regulatory requirements.

11 Therefore, and as I stated previously,
12 the staff recommendation to the senior department
13 official is to renew the agency's recognition for
14 five years, and there are agency representatives
15 present today and will be happy to answer the
16 Committee's questions.

17 This concludes my report. Thank you.

18 MEMBER BOEHME: I have just one brief
19 question for you. If you could maybe give us a
20 quick summary of what that complaint was.

21 DR. HARRIS: Absolutely. The
22 complaint came in in June of 2014. The complaint

1 was from a parent of a student that was
2 complaining about 602.18(c), which refers to
3 decisions based on published standards. The
4 parent felt that the agency did not review his
5 child's complaint properly. The agency was
6 requested to send information to the department
7 in reference to this complaint. They sent us an
8 outline and time line of all the documentation
9 that was sent, which was numerous, and it was
10 actually included in 602.16(a)(1)(9) with their
11 documentation and the response from the
12 department to the complainant. They outlined the
13 time line. They addressed each concern listed in
14 the complaint that was received by the
15 department. And after the review of their
16 documentation and our standards, the department
17 found that the agency did not have, did not have
18 any reason to not -- I'm sorry. Let me rephrase
19 that. The department did not find them non-
20 compliant with their policies and procedures and
21 their decisions.

22 MEMBER BOEHME: So in your opinion,

1 they did handle it correctly?

2 DR. HARRIS: Absolutely. And this is
3 just, you know, it may strike you as an odd
4 question and maybe you don't know, but under the
5 narrative for, you know, when we use this online
6 system and we can look at specific provisions
7 that either the accreditor does not meet or they
8 meet, and I've never seen within their narrative
9 an accreditor that did not meet at the first go-
10 around except, like, three times. Is that
11 common? I mean, I'm not an old soul of NACIQI
12 where that's, I've only been here, you know, four
13 or five years, but is that common?

14 PARTICIPANT: It did not meet?

15 MEMBER BOEHME: The standard in their
16 narrative.

17 DR. HARRIS: Did not meet which
18 standard?

19 MEMBER BOEHME: Almost all of them
20 except three.

21 DR. HARRIS: Oh, oh, okay. That issue
22 was, the does not meet was provided because the

1 focus review, in the documentation that we send
2 out to the agencies for review, if sections are
3 not, if nothing has changed, they're to put an
4 attestation and then we'll verify the
5 documentation. They instead put not applicable,
6 so I found them non-compliant in every section
7 except for three --

8 MEMBER BOEHME: Okay. Right, okay.

9 DR. HARRIS: -- because it wasn't
10 applicable.

11 MEMBER BOEHME: That makes sense.

12 DR. HARRIS: But Herman can speak to
13 it, as well.

14 MEMBER BOEHME: Sure.

15 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Herman, would you
16 please?

17 MR. BOUNDS: Yes, I just wanted to
18 comment about that issue. Since we started the
19 focus review, we've had a lot of agencies that
20 will forget about the attestation language and
21 then a lot of agencies will forget about the
22 multiple sets of documentation needed. So

1 nowadays you might see an agency that has a
2 multitude of does not meets initially, but it's
3 easily corrected easily when they provide that
4 additional information.

5 MEMBER BOEHME: Yes, I did not see
6 anything negative against the accreditor, but it
7 was unlike things that I have seen previously.
8 I'm just curious for what that was, so I
9 appreciate your clarity around that.

10 DR. HARRIS: No problem.

11 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Yes, Bobbie?

12 MEMBER DERLIN: And this is probably
13 for Herman, not specifically for you, Dr. Harris,
14 because I had a similar observation. This is a
15 well-established accreditor, so it seemed odd
16 that the initial was all not met. And I got the
17 part about the attestation needing to be in a
18 particular way, but it also appeared that there
19 was some documentation in terms of, and I may
20 have this wrong, folks, so forgive me, but three
21 years of self-study review that went from the
22 self study all the way through the board

1 decision, and it seemed like that documentation
2 was missing in some cases.

3 Do we consistently request that the
4 form of the documentation from the agencies? I
5 just wanted to check this. It seemed weird.

6 MR. BOUNDS: Sure we have. Since we
7 started the focus review, I believe, in, like,
8 2015, we've required that additional information.
9 The problem here is is that a lot of agencies,
10 when they were last reviewed, they were not
11 reviewed under the focus review, so it's a new
12 requirement for them. And what we want to do --
13 and it's not all criteria. Some criteria, we
14 really need to see the full cycle of the agency's
15 review, you know, the self study, we want to make
16 sure the site visit report reflects the issues in
17 the self study, if there were any, and then the
18 final commission decision. We want to track that
19 for one agency, I mean, excuse me, for one
20 institution in that institutional decision. So
21 that's why you'll see in a lot of the agencies
22 they'll have a lot of deficiencies in the draft,

1 but the draft is supposed to be that way. I
2 mean, we want to get as much information as we
3 can. You know, most people say, wow, they're
4 clean, but you got to look at the draft, and we
5 ask for a lot of information in the draft.

6 MEMBER DERLIN: Thanks. And I
7 appreciate that that process of interaction is an
8 important part of the process.

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you. If I may
10 call the agency to appear. Would you please come
11 on up and introduce yourselves?

12 MS. BRITTINGHAM: Hi, good morning.
13 I'm Barbara Brittingham, and I'm President of the
14 Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
15 for the New England Association of Schools and
16 Colleges. And with me is my colleague, Patricia
17 O'Brien, who is our Senior Vice President.

18 I bring apologies from David Quigley,
19 our vice chair who is Provost and Dean of the
20 Faculties at Boston College who was not able to
21 meet with us due to a scheduling conflict. He
22 had hoped to be here if we were scheduled on

1 another day and could not come today.

2 I want to take this opportunity to
3 thank Herman Bounds and Jennifer Hong for all
4 their support and guidance through the process
5 and particularly thank Dr. Nicole Harris who
6 observed a visit and provided us some useful
7 feedback, observed a commission meeting, and I
8 think that was really helpful. Our commissioners
9 get regular updates about this process, but
10 having Dr. Harris with us made it personal and
11 real, and we appreciate her time and attention.
12 She also has an extraordinary eye for detail, and
13 this process helps us always, I think, improve
14 and make sure that we are operating within the
15 federal requirements. We had a policy that is
16 related to an institution not getting good news,
17 and so our staff had reviewed it very carefully,
18 the commission had reviewed it and approved it,
19 and any institution who gets that policy I can
20 assure you approved it. And when Dr. Harris
21 looked at it she found an ambiguity in it that no
22 one else had found, so we appreciate that, and we

1 were able to make the corrections.

2 I want to speak a little bit about the
3 accreditor dashboard and then how our
4 institutions looks at success with respect to
5 student achievement.

6 If you look at the accreditor
7 dashboard that was just revised, the 2018
8 version, I think, when I see it, I think those
9 dashboard indicators reflect New England. I see
10 relatively high net price, which is reflective of
11 the New England region which, historically, has
12 had many independent schools and a longstanding
13 lack of high level of support from states. So
14 even though we've seen some additional state dis-
15 investment, that level of support in New England
16 has never been particularly high.

17 We also see relatively low loan
18 default rates. Fifty-two percent of our
19 institutions have three-year default rates at or
20 below five percent. We see relatively high
21 graduation rates. These are for first-time full-
22 time students only, and we're pleased to note

1 that institutions in the green zones on that
2 indicator increased from 68 last year to 77 this
3 year.

4 We also see relatively high salaries.
5 New England is, in fact, a relatively expensive
6 place to live, and we were pleased to note that
7 institutions in the red zone on this indicator
8 decreased this year from 30 last year to 24 this
9 year. Along with our institutions, of course, we
10 would like to see these indicators even more
11 positive.

12 What are we doing to look at
13 graduation debt and repayment? Well, first of
14 all, for about ten years now, our Commission has
15 had what we call Data First forms, and we call
16 them Data First because we want to encourage
17 institutions to begin their self-study process by
18 looking at the data and talking about it. These
19 forms are used as a comprehensive evaluation and
20 in interim reports and at certain other reports
21 that the commission may ask for.

22 The Data First forms relate to each of

1 the standards, but, with respect to graduation
2 debt and repayment, they include four years of
3 data on debt for students at all degree levels
4 leaving before or after they earn a degree. They
5 include four years of data on retention and
6 graduation for first-time full-time, first-time
7 part-time, non-first-time full-time, and non-
8 first-time part-time students. So retention and
9 graduation rates for all degree levels and
10 progression of degree levels the institution
11 entered or another institution that is transfer
12 rates.

13 Our commission, for about ten years,
14 has monitored institutions with high loan default
15 rates. We currently ask for reports from
16 institutions that have cohort default rates
17 higher than 20 percent for one year or over 15
18 percent for three years in a row. We've averaged
19 five institutions a year, and this year we
20 reviewed two institutions.

21 We have a special report from the
22 institution, a committee that's convened that

1 makes recommendations to the commission. They
2 will go to the March meeting. One of the things
3 that we have learned there is that many
4 institutions are increasingly working with loan
5 default prevention services, and many
6 institutions have also wished that they could
7 provide more financial counseling to students.
8 And I think that is a topic that will come up in
9 re-authorization.

10 I will note that when the commission
11 asks to report about loan default rates, I think
12 that, by itself, is a message and encourages
13 institutions to pay additional attention to loan
14 defaults.

15 Next year, we will have a similar
16 program to look at loan repayment, noting that
17 only 17 of our over 200 institutions
18 participating in Title IV have repayment rates
19 below the national median. Next year, we'll look
20 at institutions that have long repayment rates
21 below 40 percent using a similar process.

22 One other thing our commission has

1 done is update the preface page. This is the
2 page that goes at the beginning of the team
3 report. And in our relatively small region,
4 institutions that have comprehensive evaluations
5 or focused evaluations come before the commission
6 the semester after they're visited. The
7 president and the team chair are present and
8 often the board chair.

9 The preface page now includes
10 information on retention and graduation rates at
11 each degree level, three-year cohort default
12 rates for the three-year most recent year, three-
13 year loan repayment rates for the three most
14 recent years, the average percent of students
15 leaving with debt at each degree level, and the
16 average amount of debt for graduates at each
17 degree level.

18 Finally, over this past year, we've
19 instituted a new workshop to help students use
20 the data in their self studies and interim
21 reports and build the habit within their
22 institutions and capacity in their institutions

1 to make looking at these data a part of their
2 regular process.

3 I want to talk about how our
4 commission looks at success with respect to
5 student achievement. Our commission reviews and
6 revises its standards for accreditation every ten
7 years with a mid-course correction at the fifth
8 year. The current standards were adopted in
9 2016, in January, and went into effect July 1st
10 of that year.

11 The overarching statement about
12 student success is the statement of the standard
13 for Standard 8, educational effectiveness, which
14 says the institution demonstrates its
15 effectiveness by ensuring satisfactory levels of
16 student achievement on mission appropriate
17 student outcomes. Based on verifiable
18 information, the institution understands what
19 students have gained as a result of their
20 education and has useful evidence about the
21 success of its recent graduates. This
22 information is used for planning and improvement,

1 resource allocation, and to inform the public
2 about the institution. Student achievement is at
3 a level appropriate for the degree awarded.

4 This broad language applies to all of
5 our candidate and accredited institutions, a
6 rather extraordinary array including the Berklee
7 College of Music, Rhode Island School of Design,
8 the Naval War College and the Coast Guard
9 Academy, Northern Maine Community College and
10 Bunker Hill Community College, Amherst College
11 and Williams College, the Conway School of
12 Landscape Design and the Vermont Law School,
13 Rhode Island College and the University of Maine
14 at Fort Kent, Yale University and Massachusetts
15 Institute of Technology, Hartford Seminary and
16 Eastern Nazarene College, College of the Atlantic
17 and Maine College of Health Professions,
18 Massachusetts Maritime College, and Wellesley
19 College, Southern New Hampshire University and
20 the University of New Hampshire, Urban College of
21 Boston and Vermont Technical College. This
22 wonderful and extraordinary range of missions

1 indicates that, while student success is
2 important throughout higher education, no simple
3 means of measuring or ensuring it will work.

4 Our commission considers evidence of
5 student success in three broad categories. First
6 is retention progression and graduation rates,
7 and I'll talk more about that in a minute. The
8 second is assessment of student learning
9 outcomes, a faculty-driven exercise based on the
10 stated learning outcomes for courses, programs,
11 and institutions. And third is other
12 quantitative measures of student success based on
13 the institutional mission.

14 Regarding retention progression and
15 graduation rates, our commission participated in
16 the C-RAC project that looked at institutions
17 with low traditional graduation rates. That is
18 for first-time full-time students. We looked at
19 two-year institutions with three-year graduation
20 rates at or below 15 percent and four-year
21 institutions with six-year graduation rates at or
22 below 25 percent. That trigger identified 28

1 institutions. Each of these institutions was
2 asked to write a seven-page report, and it's
3 amazing how much information you can get into
4 seven pages if you actually have something to
5 say.

6 The institutions were asked to address
7 four questions: one, are the data correct; two,
8 what else do you know about your students'
9 progression toward a degree; three, what are you
10 doing to help your students move toward earning a
11 degree and what do you know about how successful
12 it is; and, four, what else are you planning to
13 do?

14 We convened a committee, including two
15 commissioners, to review these reports and make
16 recommendations to the commission. While I'd be
17 happy to talk about what else we learned, the
18 commission ultimately took action that placed the
19 28 institutions into four broad categories. One,
20 three institutions produced reports that were
21 problematic in that they did not persuade the
22 commission that they had a good understanding of

1 the issues, a full understanding of the data,
2 and/or a persuasive set of responses to help
3 students move forward. These institutions have
4 additional monitoring based on this review. Two,
5 seven institutions were asked to add information
6 about retention and graduation rates to their
7 next report. Three, seven other institutions had
8 an upcoming report where they were already asked
9 to address issues of retention and graduation.
10 And, four, 11 institutions submitted particularly
11 strong reports representing a good understanding
12 of the data, appropriate efforts on their way to
13 help students, a good understanding of their
14 success, and realistic plans for the future. The
15 commission looks forward to hearing an update in
16 the next scheduled report.

17 These institutions have undertaken a
18 multitude of efforts to support student
19 progression. These include targeted
20 institutional research to identify student groups
21 most at risk, enhanced and required orientation,
22 changes to class scheduling, initiation of food

1 pantries, improved advising, and small emergency
2 grants for contingencies such as car repair.

3 We noticed that institutions that
4 participated in collective efforts such as
5 Achieving the Dream and the Voluntary Framework
6 for Accountability found support and learned new
7 ideas from the peers in these projects.

8 Recently, we reviewed updated
9 information that is data from this year on the
10 same measures that we acted on last year. And of
11 the 28 institutions identified last year, we were
12 pleased to note that six of them came off the
13 list. Five institutions had the same rate this
14 year, four had lower rates, and twelve had
15 slightly higher rates, no higher than, usually
16 one or two-percent higher. One institution had
17 too full-time students to calculate a rate.

18 Only one institution was added, so we
19 were pleased that six came off and only one was
20 added. Our commission will review a report from
21 that institution at its meeting in April and
22 consider what to do next in regard to this

1 project.

2 As noted above, our commission also
3 considers student achievement as assessed by the
4 faculty on the course program and institutional
5 outcomes. While some institutions use external
6 assessors, in general, these efforts are highly
7 local. Our commission supports and expects the
8 efforts and is principally interested in whether
9 they lead to improvements in the academic program
10 and services for students.

11 The third to mention considering
12 student success is other quantitative measures of
13 student achievement. These vary greatly by
14 institutions and their mission. For some
15 community colleges, for example, a measure of
16 success can be progression to a four-year
17 institution before or after earning an
18 associate's degree. For other institutions,
19 license or passage rates, employment data, going
20 on to graduate school, gaining fellowships, or
21 earning recognition as a musician or an artist
22 are important outcomes of student success.

1 Our commission uses the Data First
2 forms that provide a framework for these
3 measures, as well as retention and graduation
4 rates. The forms are used by every institution
5 at the time of the comprehensive evaluation and
6 the interim report and at the request of the
7 institution by some through progress reports and
8 focused evaluations.

9 Does the commission take action on
10 these matters? Indeed, it does. Others have
11 recognized regional accreditation for its role in
12 articulating and maintaining focus on student
13 learning outcomes. Institutions are regularly
14 asked to address these issues in follow-up
15 reports, progress reports, focused evaluations.
16 In some instances, the commission has taken an
17 action that results in my meeting with the
18 president and board leadership to express the
19 commission's concern about the institution not
20 demonstrating it is paying sufficient attention
21 to student success.

22 What is the most difficult area in

1 this realm? For us, I would say it is
2 institutions having sufficient information about
3 the success of their recent graduates. Many
4 institutions work hard to get this information
5 through surveys, phone contacts, social media,
6 and other means. Our institutions want to know
7 about the success of their recent graduates, and
8 it's not always easy for them to find out. I'm
9 not here to take a position on the unit record
10 system but do note the challenges for
11 institutions that want to know how their students
12 are doing later and getting reasonably useful
13 information.

14 What will the commission do going
15 forward? I do not come before you with an exact
16 plan, but, that said, the commission understands
17 the important role it plays in addressing these
18 matters. Last month, our commission had a
19 special retreat, and one of the concluding
20 observations reflected the importance going
21 forward of accreditation having the public trust
22 in the quality of higher education.

1 Our commission recognizes that
2 accreditation's contribution to public confidence
3 depends significantly on students earning a
4 degree that will provide them with good
5 opportunities for economic success, as well as
6 the other benefits that come with a good college
7 education.

8 Going forward, we look forward to
9 investing in the improving use of data by the
10 commission and by our institutions and believe
11 that increased interest in competency-based
12 education in particular will help focus
13 institutions to make more sharply-worded claims
14 about the achievement of their students and
15 ensure robust assessment.

16 Thank you very much.

17 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you. Primary
18 readers, do you have questions?

19 MEMBER BOEHME: Great. Well, thank
20 you so much for your presentation. It seems as
21 though I don't need to ask the pilot questions
22 because you went point by point, and I certainly

1 enjoyed that.

2 And although there are a few questions
3 within the pilot which I think the committee may
4 find helpful that you elaborate on is, what
5 favorable monitoring and adverse actions were
6 taken?

7 I know you touched on I believe it was
8 three schools that provided insufficient
9 responses to the seven-page report that you
10 requested. But maybe if you could just speak
11 more broadly in terms of the monitoring and the
12 adverse actions and comment if the seven-page
13 report, because of graduation rates, is that a
14 separate kind of monitoring? Is that a new kind
15 of monitoring?

16 MS. BRITTINGHAM: That was a new kind
17 of monitoring that Barbara Gellman-Danley, who
18 was at this table a little bit ago, talked about
19 how each of the regional accreditors approached
20 this project differently, which I think gives us
21 an opportunity to explore the best ways to take a
22 look at this. And one of the interesting

1 outcomes of the C-RAC project was that our
2 findings were all consistent, regardless of how
3 we came at this project.

4 But the seven-page report was a new
5 level of monitoring, again, because the -- most
6 of the institutions, nearly all of them have a
7 scheduled opportunity ahead, either one that was
8 added or one that was already on the books, to
9 report back about retention and graduation rates.
10 And the Commission will continue to monitor this.

11 We have one more institution this
12 year, and then we'll figure out, what have we
13 learned here and what are we going to do going
14 forward?

15 MEMBER BOEHME: Did you take any
16 adverse action since the last time you've come in
17 front of NACIQI?

18 MS. BRITTINGHAM: In general, we have
19 -- there is one institution that is on probation,
20 and that institution will come before the
21 Commission this spring at the end of the
22 probation period. We have one institution, and

1 in fact Dr. Harris was at the -- at that
2 Commission meeting -- that was asked to show
3 cause, and the Commission information presented
4 during the show cause hearing was not complete.
5 The Commission didn't feel it had all the
6 information it needed to make a decision, and so
7 it will be coming back in April.

8 MEMBER BOEHME: And when we look at
9 graduation rates as a benchmark, and looking at
10 definitions going to the Chair's question with
11 HLC, does New England have a definition that it
12 applies for graduation rates?

13 MS. BRITTINGHAM: New England uses the
14 federal definition rates, but also on our Data
15 First forms it invites institutions to look at
16 additional rates. So some institutions look at
17 retention and graduation for first generation
18 students or for Pell recipients or for students
19 at a remote location or in distance education.

20 So some institutions will disaggregate
21 the student population, and in fact in our 2016
22 standards, in the standard on students and on the

1 standard on educational effectiveness, the
2 Commission says if you -- basically, if you have
3 more than one student body, you need to report on
4 each of them separately.

5 And the poster child for that is
6 Southern New Hampshire University, which has an
7 on-campus residential student body. It has some
8 remote locations that take the same program but
9 without living on campus. It has a distance
10 education program, and it has the direct
11 assessment program. So it really has -- and
12 graduate students.

13 But for the undergraduate students,
14 there really are four different populations, and
15 the Commission wants to know how each one of them
16 is doing.

17 MEMBER BOEHME: Great. And in terms
18 of the two schools that you have on heightened
19 cash monitoring level 2, can you provide just a
20 quick update with what's going on with -- are
21 they coming in front of you in April, or where
22 are they?

1 MS. BRITTINGHAM: Yes, I can. One of
2 them is -- is going to have a visit very soon
3 about a number of activities, so the Commission
4 will see that. After the visit, they will be in
5 the following semester. The second institution
6 is -- it has a religious mission, and that
7 institution is in the process of being combined
8 with an institution in another region from the
9 same church group.

10 MEMBER BOEHME: Would you describe the
11 health of your region?

12 MS. BRITTINGHAM: The region is
13 challenged, I would say. We have a lot of -- we
14 have a healthy number of what I call household
15 name institutions that are doing well. We also
16 have a number of small, independent colleges. We
17 have had some close. We have some in motion
18 right now that are combining.

19 There is a general prediction that
20 there will be more of that. And while our
21 Commission has traditionally spent more time with
22 independent institutions than with public

1 institutions, recently we have been -- the
2 Commission has been spending increasing amounts
3 of time with public institutions because of the
4 financial challenges and the demographic
5 challenges. And I can talk more about that if
6 you want.

7 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank?

8 MEMBER WU: Could I follow up on that?
9 So what thoughts do you have about what regionals
10 -- not just yourself but other regionals should
11 be doing? And what should NACIQI be doing?
12 Because I have the sense, and others seem to as
13 well, and you just said you predict this, too,
14 that there will be a non-trivial number of both
15 public and private institutions that will face
16 solvency issues.

17 That is, they may well go out of
18 business. Some might be able to turn it around.
19 Others might merge, for example. But others will
20 go out of business, and some of that might be
21 precipitous and harmful to the public, the
22 communities, and, most importantly, to the

1 students and families.

2 MS. BRITTINGHAM: Right.

3 MEMBER WU: So is there -- should we
4 be getting out in front of this? And help us
5 think through what -- what, in particular, should
6 NACIQI be doing about this? Should we ask every
7 regional, and so on? Because --

8 MS. BRITTINGHAM: I think asking is
9 good. I'm not sure what NACIQI should be doing,
10 but I can tell you a little bit more about what
11 our Commission is doing.

12 Our Commission has a retreat every
13 June, and a couple of years ago we had somebody
14 come in and talk to us about what we should be
15 expecting teams to do with governing boards, and
16 what the Commission should be doing with
17 governing boards.

18 And I mentioned that the president
19 comes in to me after a visit, and from time to
20 time the Commission will ask the governing board
21 chair to come along, or the president will bring
22 the governing board chair. My takeaway from that

1 retreat session was that the Commission should
2 more frequently be asking governing boards how --
3 at what point would they decide that they needed
4 to give serious consideration to merging or
5 closing.

6 And, in fact, I have had that
7 conversation with two or three institutions since
8 that. I think it is a -- I think it's something
9 that the Commission can helpfully do.

10 We've had some public institutions
11 merge. Two colleges in Vermont -- Johnson State
12 College and Lyndon State College merged. They
13 declined the opportunity to become Lyndon-Johnson
14 State College, and are instead Northern Vermont
15 University.

16 We have had -- the University of Maine
17 system has seven publicly -- I'm sorry, seven
18 separately accredited institutions, and the
19 smallest one has become a regional campus of the
20 flagship. There is a proposal on the table in
21 Connecticut to combine 12 community colleges into
22 a single community college, and that will come to

1 our Commission in April.

2 One of the things our Commission has
3 added in the last few years is what we call an
4 advisory opinion, and in both the cases of Maine,
5 and in a larger sense than just the one
6 combination, and in the case of Connecticut, the
7 Commission has invited the system and some of the
8 presidents in and given them an opportunity to
9 say, "This is what we're thinking about" to the
10 Commission, and asking the Commission for
11 feedback, so that they don't go too far down the
12 path and then have the Commission say no, nobody
13 wants that.

14 So I think that has been a useful
15 means of having a conversation with systems. We
16 had a meeting of our system heads at the annual
17 meeting and asked them if they wanted to get
18 together again and they do, and so we're hosting
19 them at our office in May. So we are working
20 more closely with state systems.

21 MEMBER WU: Thanks. That gives me a
22 sense. And you started by saying you don't think

1 there is anything for this body to do, other than
2 to inquire about this of agencies.

3 MS. BRITTINGHAM: Yes.

4 MEMBER WU: And just to keep it in our
5 minds.

6 MS. BRITTINGHAM: I think so.

7 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I have Bobbie and
8 then Claude.

9 MEMBER DERLIN: Hi. One of the issues
10 that emerges with heightened monitoring, more
11 activities through your Data First initiatives,
12 is that these activities, while valuable, can
13 place a certain amount of stress on institutions
14 in meeting the requirements. And you did also
15 mention that access to data is sometimes a
16 challenge for some of the institutions.

17 Could you speak a little bit about
18 what your Commission's procedures are to acquire
19 feedback from institutions about how this --
20 these new directions are influencing them.

21 MS. BRITTINGHAM: Thank you. I
22 mentioned our Commission had a retreat in early

1 January, and one of the things that we did in
2 preparation for the retreat is to have actually a
3 former Commission chair contact the accreditation
4 liaison officer at 10 or 12 -- 12 institutions, a
5 whole range of institutions that had recently
6 been through a comprehensive evaluation to ask
7 them for feedback about each step of the process.

8 And it is true that some institutions
9 struggle to come up with the data, and so one of
10 the things that we'll be doing is looking at our
11 Data First forms and making sure that we're not
12 asking for data that are not going to be useful.

13 And also, I think our efforts to help
14 have that information be useful to institutions
15 not only in the accreditation process but to
16 develop that habit of looking at data mitigates
17 it, because if -- if institutions see this as
18 only for accreditation, then it could become a
19 burden. Whereas, if it's something that they
20 find value in looking at over time, then it's
21 worth it.

22 MEMBER DERLIN: Thank you.

1 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Thank you for
2 coming. Appreciate it very, very much. I want
3 to follow up on Frank's comments. You know, I
4 think accrediting agencies are uniquely
5 positioned to -- from your vantage point to view
6 potential closures, obviously. They are -- and
7 also to understand other institutions of similar
8 mission and type that might be candidates for
9 mergers or, you know, some type of a
10 consolidation or collaboration.

11 I'm an association head. I've got 34
12 universities. And I don't know nearly what SEC-
13 COC knows about those institutions. And I have
14 one institution that is closing and announced
15 their closure this last spring. And it was a bit
16 of a surprise to the association because we
17 weren't privy to the financial situation.

18 So, you know, I would highly recommend
19 that the institutional accreditors really think
20 through that whole issue and whether or not you
21 might be in a position to offer suggestions. I'm
22 not saying being prescriptive, but to allow

1 institutions -- because typically when
2 institutions start a death spiral they get so
3 narrowly focused and myopic about how do we solve
4 it internally that they don't see opportunities
5 outside of themselves. And so I just want to
6 mention that as an encouragement.

7 And the other thing I -- I have a
8 question on is in light of some of what we're
9 seeing, and in a way I wish I would have asked
10 HLC, is that is there anything we need to do more
11 robustly as accreditors on teach-outs and the
12 closure thing.

13 The institution and my membership that
14 is closing is -- actually, they put together I
15 think a -- well, they put together a two-and-a-
16 half-year plan of closure, which I don't think is
17 sustainable. I don't think they can do that.

18 Once you announce it, students are
19 going to appropriately make provision to transfer
20 to the institutions assisting them that way.

21 But do you have any comments on the
22 teach-out piece and whether or not we should do

1 something more, rethink it or improve it?

2 MS. BRITTINGHAM: Thank you. That's
3 a great question. And our Commission, at certain
4 points, has asked institutions for teach-out
5 plans. And they are, frankly, of varying
6 quality, and they are short of teach-out
7 agreements, which institutions are reluctant to
8 go after because that is such an obvious signal
9 to institutions that are often their competitors,
10 that they are, you know, on the verge of closing.
11 So it's very difficult.

12 One of the mergers that we're seeing
13 in Boston is Wheelock College merging with Boston
14 University. Wheelock College was not under any
15 particular watch from the Commission. It was
16 under regular review, but they could look ahead
17 and see that they did not want to get to the
18 point where no one would want them. My words,
19 not necessarily theirs.

20 And so they have what I'm told, both
21 by the people at Wheelock and the people at
22 Boston University, a very smooth and successful

1 plan for the integration. They happen to be very
2 close geographically. I think it's harder for
3 institutions that are remote to figure out what
4 to do, because they don't have somebody right
5 down the street that they can merge with, and
6 that makes it more difficult.

7 I think in Simon's question the
8 institution that is part of a religious group,
9 that institution is in another region altogether
10 that basically is going to take over this
11 institution. So the circumstances differ. We
12 have the advantage of not -- you know, we have a
13 reasonable number of institutions, and we have
14 the advantage of a small geographic footprint.

15 And so it's pretty easy for us to go
16 see institutions or for them to come see us. And
17 we've had institutions come in in pairs saying
18 that they are thinking about merging, and we talk
19 about, you know, how can we help them. And we
20 can refer them to other people who have gone
21 through this to try to be helpful to them, but
22 it's a difficult issue and one we continue to

1 think about.

2 MEMBER PRESSNELL: One other question,
3 and it's one, really, I asked earlier as well.
4 As a committee, we're trying to be sensitive to
5 the deregulation call. And you saw that, you
6 know, your colleagues in HLC have the open
7 pathway, WASC has also an option there, too. Do
8 you have, or are you considering, any type of
9 risk-informed or risk-managed approach to
10 accreditation?

11 MS. BRITTINGHAM: This is another
12 topic that our Commission talked about at its
13 retreat, and I think the language -- I'll use the
14 language that they use. They didn't want a
15 system that would be perceived as tracking. What
16 they are interested in is a tailored approach for
17 every institution, and that's a high-touch
18 process, and I think we do some of that. But I
19 think it's something that we can do more of.

20 I think it's a topic for the Higher
21 Education Act to clarify the boundaries of what
22 accreditors can do. I know we've had some

1 guidance from the Department, but it's still -- I
2 have to say, it's not entirely clear to me what
3 the flexibility is there.

4 MEMBER BOEHME: Do you have any
5 institutions that have a single-digit graduation
6 rate by the metrics that you use?

7 MS. BRITTINGHAM: I think we do. Pat
8 is going to find out.

9 MEMBER BOEHME: Thank you.

10 MS. BRITTINGHAM: One of the things
11 that we -- while she's looking at that, one of
12 the things that we found and are encouraging
13 institutions to use is the student achievement
14 measures, SAM -- you're familiar with that --
15 which really puts together such a vivid display,
16 so that you can see how far beyond the simple
17 first-time/full-time it goes.

18 Do you want to --

19 MS. O'BRIEN: Yes. There's one
20 institution that the IPEDS graduation rate is
21 three percent. It's an institution that serves
22 adult students, just about all of whom attend

1 part-time. And so it's a very, very small
2 cohort, evidently not quite so small that it
3 couldn't be reported, but that would be one
4 example.

5 There is another -- please.

6 MS. BRITTINGHAM: Yes. That
7 institution also -- I've talked to the president,
8 and one of the things that she said was that they
9 have a federal grant that -- and I don't -- I'm
10 sorry, I don't remember the name of it, but the
11 purpose of the grant was to bring in students to
12 an institution that was accustomed to dealing
13 with first generation, low income students, to
14 give them a year of work and with the idea that
15 they would transfer.

16 So I think that's partly affecting
17 that rate.

18 MEMBER BOEHME: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Sensing no more
20 questions, thank you very much. There are no
21 third-party commenters? No.

22 I will call -- if you would return to

1 your seats, I'll have the staff come back and
2 respond to any comments or concerns.

3 DR. HARRIS: I have no additional
4 comments.

5 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Hearing no
6 additional comments, I'd entertain a motion from
7 the primary readers.

8 MEMBER BOEHME: I'll make a motion to
9 renew the agency's recognition for five years.

10 CHAIRMAN KEISER: There is a motion on
11 the floor. Is there a second?

12 MEMBER WU: I'll second.

13 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank Wu has
14 seconded. Now time for discussion. No
15 discussion.

16 Well, I'll call -- since I sense no
17 discussion, all in favor of the motion, signify
18 by raising your hand? All opposed? The motion
19 carries.

20 We are early. Would you like to take
21 a longer lunch, or would you like to move on to
22 the next one? Are you here, are you ready to

1 join us? Moving forward in front of our
2 timeline. That's phenomenal.

3 Chuck, you are the first -- well, let
4 me look at the two presenters. Ralph and
5 Federico, would either of you like to tee up the
6 discussion?

7 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Mr. Chairman,
8 committee members, guests, the Accreditation
9 Commission for Education in Nursing, ACEN,
10 formerly the National League for Nursing
11 Accrediting Commission, is the national
12 programmatic accrediting agency for postsecondary
13 and higher degree nursing education programs.

14 Its current scope of recognition is
15 the accreditation of nursing education programs
16 in schools, both postsecondary and higher
17 degrees, which offer a certificate, diploma, or
18 recognized professional degree, including
19 clinical doctorate, master's, bachelor's,
20 associate's, diploma, and practical nursing
21 programs in the United States and its
22 territories, including those offered via distance

1 education.

2 The agency accreditation is a required
3 element, enabling some of its practical nursing
4 and all of its hospital-based programs to
5 establish eligibility to participate in Title 4
6 programs.

7 The National League for Nursing,
8 precursor to the Accreditation Commission for
9 Education in Nursing, was first recognized as the
10 national accrediting agency in 1952 for the
11 accreditation of associate, bachelor's, and
12 higher degree nursing education programs.

13 Its scope was later expanded to
14 include diploma and practical nursing programs.
15 The agency was reviewed by NACIQI at its December
16 2006 meeting, and the agency was granted a five-
17 year period of recognition. In June of 2000-and
18 -- I'm sorry, I lost my place.

19 In June 2000, the agency again
20 appeared before NACIQI for an expansion of scope,
21 to include distance education, and was granted
22 the request. At the NACIQI 2012 agency meeting,

1 the agency requested its scope to include
2 accreditation for clinical doctorate education
3 programs, and was, again, granted that request.

4 At the NACIQI June 2014 meeting,
5 ACEN's report was incomplete. However, NACIQI
6 granted an extension of its recognition for good
7 cause for a period of six months and required the
8 agency to submit a report demonstrating its
9 compliance with the separate and independent
10 requirements, and to revise its bylaws to be
11 compliant with the secretary's separate and
12 independent definition 602.14(b).

13 The NACIQI reviewed ACEN's compliance
14 report in June 2015 and found ACEN to be non-
15 compliant with the separate, independent
16 requirements.

17 At this point, I will defer to the
18 staff for their analysis, recommendations, and
19 comments on ACEN's current status and its
20 compliance with the separate and independent
21 requirements.

22 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Chuck?

1 MR. MULA: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
2 members of the committee, for the record, my name
3 is Chuck Mula, and I will be presenting a brief
4 summary of the petition for continued recognition
5 by the Accreditation Commission for Education in
6 Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the
7 Commission or the Agency.

8 As part of the evaluation of its
9 current petition, Department staff reviewed the
10 Commission's petition and supporting
11 documentation and attended a Commission decision
12 meeting in October 2017. There are no third-
13 party comments in connection with the petition,
14 and no active complaints being reviewed by the
15 Department.

16 The Commission last appeared before
17 the NACIQI in December 2015 when at that time it
18 demonstrated its compliance with the secretary's
19 separate and independent requirements. And I
20 will go into this after the initial comments.

21 Our review of the agency's petition
22 found that it is in compliance with the

1 secretary's criteria for recognition. The
2 Department has no concerns, and its
3 recommendation to the senior department official
4 is to renew the agency's recognition for five
5 years.

6 That concludes my report. The agency
7 representatives are also here, and we'll answer
8 any questions that you might have.

9 To address the separate and
10 independent requirements issue, the agency
11 basically was an accrediting commission at one
12 time, a part -- and part of the National League
13 of Nursing's professional body, which is a
14 professional membership association.

15 It came after a long period of time,
16 successful operation under that agency. The
17 Department was aware of issues that concerned the
18 -- an influence by the association into the
19 accrediting commission's operational and
20 financial issues, or health, basically.

21 At one time, the agency was requested
22 by the Department to actually rewrite its bylaws

1 with the cooperation of the association to come
2 into compliance and to separate itself from those
3 association functions that were causing concern
4 for the Department.

5 That brought about a strain in a
6 relationship between the two organizations. The
7 association then -- and the Accrediting
8 Commission then separated, had different bylaws
9 developed, and spent a lot of time in court.

10 The time that we gave the agency good
11 cause extension is based on that time that they
12 were not allowed to comply with our requirements
13 because of the issues of the legal actions that
14 were being taken, and the time it took for them
15 to satisfy the legal actions, and then prepare to
16 satisfy our requirements.

17 Eventually, the agency did separate
18 officially from the association. The association
19 still has -- they officially legally are still
20 part of that association, but the association no
21 longer has any operational or financial
22 relationship or control of the resources of the

1 Accrediting Commission.

2 So it is now under its own bylaws, and
3 it is under its own operation, and it maintains
4 its own financial and operational standards and
5 is completely compliant with the secretary's
6 requirements.

7 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you, Chuck.
8 Are there any questions from the primary readers?
9 Ralph? Federico?

10 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Yes. Again, I want
11 to commend both Chuck and the agency for their
12 extensive work, as evidenced in the report. I do
13 have three quick questions. One, on the area of
14 student achievement, I understand that you have
15 an established an 80 percent licensure pass rate
16 as a target for your students. But you also have
17 job placement as a target, Chuck, so I wanted to
18 see -- my understanding was that the target for
19 job placement is set by the faculty, and that in
20 fact it varies by location.

21 MR. MULA: This question is probably
22 better answered by the agency. Our review

1 process, the secretary's criteria is very
2 specific when it comes to what we can actually --
3 how far in the weeds we can get.

4 Herman, if you want to say something
5 about that. But I think the agency would be able
6 to do more to help --

7 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Chuck, and I'll wait
8 for that. That's fine.

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Okay. Well, thank
10 you, Chuck. If I may call the agency to come
11 forward. And would you please introduce
12 yourselves.

13 MS. McJANNETT: Good morning. Thank
14 you for welcoming us here today. My name is
15 Cathy McJannett, and I'm chair for the Board of
16 Commissioners for ACEN. I have been with ACEN
17 for a number of years, and it is my pleasure to
18 serve as the chair.

19 I'm a diploma nurse from the beginning
20 and spent my nursing career not only working at
21 the bedside but also as a nurse administrator at
22 a community college, and just recently retired

1 and am now working as adjunct faculty, plus
2 remaining at the bedside as well. So my life is
3 very full with that.

4 I'd like to introduce you to Dr.
5 Marsal Stoll. And Marcy is our CEO. She holds
6 undergraduate and graduate degrees in nursing, as
7 well as a doctorate in educational
8 administration.

9 She began her nursing career almost at
10 the bottom of the career ladder as a practical
11 nurse and became a registered nurse, served as
12 part-time and full-time faculty teaching in
13 associate degree programs as well as college
14 administration and as well as SAX COC. We were
15 so thrilled in 2014 that she joined ACEN at that
16 time.

17 Dr. Sharon Beasley, to my right, is
18 the associate director of ACEN. Dr. Beasley has
19 been a registered nurse for 20 years, nurse
20 educator for over 12 years before joining us at
21 ACEN in 2015. During her tenure at the Technical
22 College of Lowcountry in South Carolina, she

1 served in many capacities, including educator,
2 administrator, and working with strategic
3 planning. Brain cramp on that word.

4 We'd like to express our appreciation
5 to Mr. Mula for all his support in our
6 recognition petition. His knowledge of
7 regulations was clearly evident, and his guidance
8 proved invaluable during this process.

9 We are extremely proud of ACEN and the
10 work it has done over the years for nursing
11 education, and ACEN is committed to our mission
12 of supporting the interests of nursing education,
13 nursing practice, and the public by functions of
14 accreditation.

15 The purpose of ACEN is to provide
16 specialized education for all types of nursing
17 programs, including the clinical doctorate, the
18 doctorate of nursing practice, specialist
19 certificate, master's and post-master's
20 certificate, baccalaureate, associate, diploma,
21 and practical nursing programs. We're all-
22 inclusive.

1 The ACEN accredits nursing programs in
2 secondary, postsecondary, and hospital-based
3 governing organizations that offer certificates,
4 diplomas, and degrees. As the leading authority
5 in nursing accreditation, the goal of ACEN is to
6 strengthen the quality of nursing education, both
7 nationwide and internationally.

8 Our belief is that specialized
9 accreditation contributes to the centrality of
10 nursing for the public good and provides for the
11 maintenance and enhancement of educational
12 qualities through continuous self-assessment,
13 planning, and improvement.

14 Currently, we accredit nursing
15 education programs located in the United States,
16 in the U.S. territories, and internationally.
17 Some of our international programs are located in
18 Scotland, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Turkey, Jordan. We
19 have a number of both domestic and international
20 programs seeking accreditation.

21 Another strength that I -- people I
22 work very closely with are the members of the

1 Board of Commissioners. We have nine nurse
2 educators, we have three nurse clinicians, and we
3 have three public members that serve on the
4 board. Our breadth and depth of the issues in
5 regards to nursing, the nursing profession,
6 nursing education, and higher education serves --
7 that provides a foundation for the accreditation
8 and policy decisions.

9 Our staff, as evidenced by Dr. Beasley
10 and all that work in our office, really enhance
11 our ability to serve these ACEN-accredited
12 programs.

13 I thank you for your time, and I'll
14 ask Dr. Stoll to take over.

15 MS. STOLL: Thank you. The ACEN
16 accredits over 1,200 nursing education programs
17 throughout the United States, U.S. territories,
18 and internationally. During 2017, the ACEN board
19 took 377 accreditation actions. Of the 377
20 accreditation actions, 128 programs were granted
21 eight years' continuing accreditation or five
22 years' initial accreditation.

1 Forty-nine programs were placed on
2 conditions for non-compliance with one or two
3 standards for ACEN's six accreditation standards.
4 One program was placed on warning for non-
5 compliance with three or more standards out of
6 ACEN's six accreditation standards. Seven
7 programs were placed on good cause for continued
8 non-compliance with any accreditation standard.

9 No programs were denied initial or
10 continuing accreditation. However, a program can
11 withdraw from the process before the ACEN Board
12 of Commissioners makes an accreditation decision,
13 and I will discuss this shortly.

14 Data shows that ACEN's Standard 6
15 assessment outcomes is the primary standard that
16 causes non-compliance followed by standard four
17 curriculum. Of the 1,200 ACEN-accredited
18 programs, ACEN serves as the Title 4 gatekeeper
19 for 59 institutions. These 59 institutions
20 represent ACEN-accredited practical programs in
21 postsecondary, adult education settings, and
22 ACEN-accredited practical, diploma, and associate

1 programs in hospital-based settings.

2 The accreditor dashboard reports ACEN
3 data for 34 institutions. Based on the
4 accreditor dashboard, 48 percent of the enrolled
5 students in these 34 institutions receive Pell
6 grants. Based on the accreditor dashboard,
7 approximately 77 percent of the enrolled students
8 in these 34 institutions receive federal loans.

9 Based on the accreditor dashboard for
10 these 34 institutions, the Title 4 student aid
11 volume is approximately \$30 million. And
12 according to the USDE federal student aid default
13 management website, for the ACEN 59 institutions
14 that ACEN serves as the Title 4 gatekeeper, 52
15 institutions had a reported default rate.

16 The seven institutions without a
17 default rate was due either, one, to no data
18 being reported by the Department; or, two, the
19 Department reported fewer or 10 borrowers, and,
20 therefore, data was unavailable.

21 Based on the federal student aid
22 default management website for fiscal year 2014,

1 the most recent information that is available,
2 the institutional default rate for the 52
3 programs that ACEN serves as a Title 4 gatekeeper
4 ranged from zero percent to 20 percent.

5 Nine institutions had a zero percent
6 default rate. Sixteen institutions had a default
7 rate between one and 4.9 percent. Sixteen
8 institutions had a default rate between five and
9 9.9 percent. Ten institutions had a default rate
10 between 10 and 15 percent. And one had a default
11 rate of 20 percent. We calculated the average
12 institutional default rate for these 52
13 institutions to be 5.7 percent.

14 Regarding program outcomes, through
15 our annual report process, the ACEN-accredited
16 programs report the licensure pass rate, their
17 certification pass rate for the graduate level
18 programs, completion rate, and job placement
19 rate.

20 Licensure pass rate for undergraduate
21 program, based on the 2017 -- 2013 standards and
22 criteria was the program's three-year mean for

1 licensure pass rate will be at or above the
2 national mean for the same three-year period.
3 That changed, and in the 2017 standards and
4 criteria it is now the most recent annual
5 licensure pass rate will be at least 80 percent
6 for all first-time test-takers during the same
7 12-month period. This change occurred after our
8 normal process of reviewing standards and
9 criteria.

10 The ACEN-accredited programs report
11 their NCLEC's pass rate from July 1 of one year
12 to June 30th of the next year. The National
13 Council of State Boards of Nursing, otherwise
14 known as the NCSBN, the organization that
15 administers the licensure examination, reports
16 their pass rate data on a calendar year,
17 January 1 to December 31st.

18 A review of our annual report data
19 demonstrates that the mean licensure pass rate
20 for registered nursing and practical nursing
21 graduates exceeds the NCSBN published national
22 pass rate mean.

1 Based on our data from July 1 of '15
2 to June 30 of '16, the most recent published
3 data, compared to the published data from NCSBN,
4 ACEN-accredited practical programs had an average
5 pass rate that was seven percent higher than the
6 national mean.

7 ACEN-accredited diploma programs had
8 an average pass rate that was four percent higher
9 than the national mean. ACEN-accredited
10 associate programs had an average pass rate that
11 was six percent higher than the national mean.
12 And ACEN-accredited baccalaureate programs had an
13 average pass rate that was the same as the
14 national mean.

15 In fact, the NCSBN, just this week,
16 released a study comparing the licensure pass
17 rate of accredited pre-licensure RN programs in
18 the United States to unaccredited pre-licensure
19 RN programs. And the NCSBN found that the first
20 time NCLEC's pass rate for graduates of a pre-
21 license accredited RN program was significantly
22 higher, at 87 percent, compared to unaccredited

1 programs, which was 72 percent.

2 For the 59 institutions for which ACEN
3 serves as the Title 4 gatekeeper, the reported
4 licensure pass rate from July 1, '15, to June 30
5 of '16, ranged from 61 percent to 100 percent,
6 and the average was 91 percent. Ten programs
7 reported a 100 percent pass rate, 26 programs
8 reported a pass rate between 90 and 99 percent,
9 19 programs reported a pass rate between 80 and
10 89 percent, and three programs reported a pass
11 rate between 60 and 79 percent.

12 Graduate programs take certification
13 exams. The ACEN criterion for certification pass
14 rate in the 2013 standards was the program's
15 three-year mean for the certification exam pass
16 rate will be at or above the national mean for
17 the same three-year period. And in the 2017
18 standards and criteria that changed to the most
19 recent annual certification pass rate will be at
20 least 80 percent for all first-time test-takers
21 during the same 12-month period. And, again,
22 this change occurred as a result of the review of

1 the standards and criteria.

2 ACEN-accredited programs report pass
3 rates for certification exams taken by graduates
4 of gradual level programs. As a variety of
5 certifying agencies offer certification exams for
6 various nurse specialties, a comparison with any
7 reference group is not recommended. However,
8 historically reported certification pass rates
9 have been 90 percent or greater for ACEN-
10 accredited programs.

11 Regarding completion, the expected
12 level of achievement for program completion is
13 determined by the faculty and reflects program
14 demographics. The ACEN definition for the
15 completion rate is the percentage of students who
16 graduate within 150 percent of the stated nursing
17 program length, beginning with the enrollment on
18 the first day of the first nursing course.

19 The reported average completion rate
20 for all 1,200-plus ACEN-accredited programs from
21 July 1, '15, to June 30, '16, ranged from 71
22 percent to 84 percent. For the 59 institutions

1 for which ACEN serves as the Title 4 gatekeeper,
2 the average completion rate for these programs
3 during the same reporting period was 71 percent.

4 Regarding job placement, the ACEN
5 criterion for job placement rate in the 13
6 criteria was expected levels of achievement are
7 determined by the faculty and are addressed
8 through quantified measures six to 12 months
9 post-graduation.

10 The 2017 standards and criteria now is
11 the expected level of achievement for job
12 placement is determined by the faculty and
13 reflects program demographics. The ACEN
14 definition for job placement is the percentage of
15 graduates employed in a position for which the
16 nursing program prepared them.

17 The reported average job placement
18 rate for all 1,200-plus ACEN-accredited programs
19 from July 1, '15, to June 30, '16, ranged from 91
20 percent to 98 percent. Data analysis suggests
21 that some programs have lower job placement rates
22 due to graduates continuing their education

1 rather than seeking employment.

2 For example, a practical nursing
3 graduate immediately enrolls in a registered
4 nursing program rather than seeking employment.
5 In this case, the program is encouraged to have a
6 separate outcome addressing academic progression.

7 Another factor impacting job placement
8 rates is the hiring practice of employers in a
9 variety of health care organizations, which may
10 influence the type of graduates preferred for
11 entry level positions. Health care organizations
12 may choose to hire fewer graduates from a
13 specific program type, for example, an associate
14 graduate versus a baccalaureate degree graduate.

15 Practical nursing programs continue to
16 report the lowest mean job placement rate,
17 although still a very robust 91 percent
18 employment. And clinical doctorate programs
19 report the highest mean job placement rate of 98
20 percent.

21 The job placement rate for graduates
22 of all program types from July 1, '15, to July 1

1 -- June 30th of '16, showed an increased job
2 placement rate of one to six percent over the
3 last reporting period, with diploma programs
4 having the highest increase at six percent. For
5 the 59 institutions for which the ACEN serves as
6 the Title 4 gatekeeper, the average job placement
7 rate for these programs during the same reporting
8 period is 90 percent.

9 If a program fails to meet any of the
10 effectiveness benchmarks for student achievement,
11 the ACEN requires the program to provide a
12 detailed action plan regarding how the program
13 intends to improve, so the program can meet the
14 effectiveness benchmark. We then review the
15 program's progress toward meeting any unmet
16 effectiveness benchmarks, typically on an annual
17 basis.

18 Programs not meeting an effectiveness
19 benchmark could be placed in non-compliance with
20 ACEN Standard 6 outcomes, placed on a compliance
21 timeframe as required by the Department and ACEN
22 policy, and monitored by the board.

1 The assessment outcomes can be a
2 challenge for some programs. Knowing this, the
3 recent revision of the ACEN standards and
4 criteria resulted in the streamlining of Standard
5 6, intentionally focusing only on the assessment
6 of the end-of-program student learning outcomes.

7 What is an end-of-program student
8 learning outcome? In other words, at the end of
9 the program, the graduate is able to do. So it
10 is the practice-ready behaviors graduates are
11 expected to demonstrate, the practice-ready
12 knowledge graduates are expected to comprehend,
13 and the practice-ready skills graduates are
14 expected to perform, and the three already fore-
15 mentioned program outcomes of licensure or
16 certification pass rate, completion rate, and job
17 placement rate.

18 The revised standards became effective
19 1 January 2017, and early observations reveal
20 faculty members' improved understanding of
21 outcomes assessment as well as effective ways of
22 assessing outcomes, purposeful data analysis, and

1 intentional use of analysis of data to drive
2 decisions that improve the program and students
3 achieving their educational goals.

4 We believe the change to Standard 6
5 will make ACEN programs even better and stronger
6 programs.

7 Finally, we will address the
8 activities to improve programs and quality --
9 institutional quality. Programs on conditions --
10 remember, that's non-compliance with one or two
11 out of the six standards; on warning, three or
12 more of the standards; or good cause, continued
13 non-compliance with any of the standards, are
14 monitored as required by the Department and ACEN
15 policy and are considered at-risk programs.

16 All programs, especially at-risk
17 programs, have access to supportive services from
18 the ACEN. I will briefly describe some.

19 The candidacy process. As part of the
20 candidacy process, the nursing program has an
21 assigned member of the ACEN professional staff
22 who mentors the program faculty and guides them

1 through candidacy and initial accreditation.

2 We know the mentoring process works.
3 For programs that completed the candidacy process
4 and pursued initial accreditation, in 2016, 44 of
5 45 programs were granted initial accreditation.
6 And, in 2017, 39 of 39 programs were granted
7 initial accreditation.

8 While we know the mentoring process
9 works, some programs chose not to complete the
10 candidacy process, and, therefore, did not seek
11 initial accreditation. In 2015, 25 programs did
12 not complete the process. In 2016, 17 programs
13 did not complete the process. And in 2017, 21
14 programs did not complete the process.

15 I don't know if these programs that
16 did not seek initial accreditation would or would
17 not have been granted initial accreditation.
18 Please apply your best judgment.

19 Another services advisory review. The
20 purpose of the advisory review is to assist an
21 ACEN-accredited program to prepare for continuing
22 accreditation. An advisory review is a one-time

1 opportunity for an ACEN-accredited program to
2 seek feedback from an ACEN professional staff
3 member regarding draft accreditation documents
4 selected by the program faculty and nurse
5 administrator.

6 For example, a draft of their self-
7 study report, draft of their systematic plan,
8 faculty profile table, et cetera, as the program
9 prepares for continuing accreditation.

10 An advisory review is 100 percent
11 optional and is not a requirement for continuing
12 accreditation. Professional staff feedback
13 indicates the staff member's best judgment and
14 does not guarantee that the Board of
15 Commissioners will determine that the program is
16 compliant with the ACEN standards and criteria.

17 An observer on a site visit team -- a
18 nursing program beginning initial or continuing
19 accreditation may designate one person to
20 accompany the peers on a site visit team to
21 observe and learn from the site visit team
22 activities and the review process experienced by

1 the host program.

2 Self-study forums. Self-study forums
3 provide attendees with the opportunity to gain a
4 deeper understanding of the standards and
5 criteria, the self-study process, as well as
6 guidance on writing their self-study report.

7 Program administrator workshop.
8 Assist novice or advanced beginner program
9 administrators who are leading ACEN-accredited
10 programs. Information related to accreditation
11 policies, processes, maintaining compliance, is
12 provided.

13 There is an abundance of online
14 resources on the ACEN website, such as the
15 accreditation manual, standards and criteria,
16 guidelines, instructions, templates, training, et
17 cetera, and the most important resource, the ACEN
18 professional staff.

19 The professional staff are experienced
20 nurse educators who are committed to helping
21 programs navigate the ACEN accreditation process.
22 The professional staff also provide what I brand

1 as intrusive advisement, especially for at-risk
2 programs. It is about getting at the heart of
3 what is causing the non-compliance.

4 The ACEN professional staff member
5 facilitates the program faculty to diagnose the
6 problems and find appropriate solutions. Our
7 intrusive advisement is an action-oriented,
8 proactive approach to involve and motivate the
9 program faculty, to seek help from the
10 professional staff when needed.

11 It is not handholding, but, rather,
12 active concern for a nursing program being
13 successful in the ACEN accreditation process.
14 And it is a willingness to assist the program
15 faculty to be successful, especially the at-risk
16 programs.

17 Do these tools work? Well, I have
18 already mentioned the candidacy process. While
19 most of the other supportive services are new, we
20 do know that in 2016 the ACEN Board of
21 Commissioners granted 63 programs continuing
22 accreditation and removed them from conditions.

1 Ten programs were removed from warning, and two
2 programs were removed from good cause.

3 For 2017 to date, 66 programs were
4 granted continuing accreditation and removed from
5 conditions, 10 removed from warning, and six
6 removed from good cause.

7 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Dr. Stoll, if you
8 could wrap it up.

9 MS. STOLL: I am.

10 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you.

11 MS. STOLL: As I previously stated, a
12 program may withdraw before the board makes an
13 accreditation decision, but in 2016 one program
14 was denied initial accreditation and no programs
15 were denied continuing.

16 Of the programs reviewed, in '16 four
17 programs that started the accreditation process
18 withdraw before the board made a decision. In
19 2017 to date, one program has -- that started the
20 process has withdrawn. However, the 2017 process
21 will conclude in March of 2018.

22 I am done with my remarks, and thank

1 you for the opportunity for this --

2 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I thought you had
3 read your whole petition.

4 MS. STOLL: No. Just trying to hit
5 all your questions.

6 CHAIRMAN KEISER: You certainly did.
7 Primary readers, questions?

8 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Well, thank you for
9 confirming that you indeed have established
10 procedures to ensure that the placement bar set
11 by faculty for job placement is at an appropriate
12 level, and I understand that to be 91 to 96
13 percent. So very, very impressive.

14 In reviewing your website, I noted you
15 have around 70 institutions that have voluntarily
16 withdrawn from the ACEN accreditation process
17 since 2015. Can you explain what is going on?
18 Is it a short-term phenomena or market
19 correction, or what is going on?

20 MS. STOLL: So some of the programs
21 that have withdrawn have -- for a variety of
22 reasons they could have closed. We're seeing a

1 diminishing number of diploma programs, for
2 example, throughout the United States. Some
3 programs have been at the practical program
4 level. Again, some of them have been related to
5 closings.

6 As you are aware, there is another
7 nursing accrediting agency, CCNE, and there is a
8 little bit of swirling that happens between our
9 two organizations. So for a variety of reasons,
10 either closings or administrative capacity,
11 sometimes finances, programs do voluntarily
12 withdraw.

13 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Thank you. And then
14 my last question is, again, on the dashboard,
15 you've identified two institutions that are in
16 heightened cash monitoring. Any updates on that?

17 MS. STOLL: No, sir. I don't have any
18 updates on that.

19 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Ralph?

21 MEMBER WOLFF: Yes. Thank you for
22 your thorough presentation. It answered some of

1 my questions about the -- how you got to the 80
2 percent.

3 I do have a question about the eight-
4 year term that you provide. Is the only --
5 either you get eight years or you are on
6 conditions, or are there those that will get less
7 than eight years without conditions? Is it a
8 sliding scale? Could you describe -- partly,
9 it's in relationship to our later conversation
10 about risk.

11 MS. STOLL: Okay. So for continuing
12 accreditation, it is done in, for lack of better
13 characterization, eight-year chunks. So a
14 program could be found in compliance with all of
15 the standards and criteria and granted continuing
16 accreditation for eight years. And then they do
17 the annual report where we do monitoring on
18 select variables, such as the program outcomes
19 that I discussed.

20 A program -- all programs are done in
21 eight-year cycles. So if a program is found non-
22 compliant with one or two standards, they are

1 placed on conditions for a maximum of two year,
2 if it's a diploma or a degree program; 18 months
3 for a practical program. The program is expected
4 to come into compliance within that timeframe.

5 And at the end of that timeframe, as
6 I indicated, a vast majority of our programs do
7 come into compliance at the end of the 18 or the
8 24 months. Some even come into compliance sooner
9 because the board has the discretion of doing up
10 to 24 months but less than 24 months. Has been
11 granted in certain circumstances.

12 So if a program comes off of
13 conditions at the end of two years, then they are
14 back up for a full reaccreditation in six.

15 MEMBER WOLFF: That makes sense.
16 Thank you. I did just want to follow up on the,
17 too, cash monitoring. Are you advised when a
18 program has -- is under heightened cash
19 monitoring? And do you then -- does that trigger
20 a particular review on your part?

21 MS. STOLL: Okay. So as I indicated,
22 we have a relationship with 1,200-plus programs.

1 All of our programs, the institution that they
2 are part of must hold institutional
3 accreditation. So for 11 -- almost, well, 1,150
4 programs, if we can just do easy numbers, an
5 institutional accreditor, such as a regional
6 accreditor or a nation -- national accreditor, is
7 actually the Title 4 gatekeeper, and they have
8 primary responsibility for that.

9 That said, the ACEN does monitor the
10 Title 4 status for all of our programs. And so
11 part of our subchange process includes that any
12 issues with the Department of Ed are brought to
13 our attention. We ask for, how is the
14 institution addressing the issue, even though
15 we're at the programmatic level, because that
16 could potentially impact the nursing students,
17 and we care about that. And so we do pay
18 attention to what is happening at the
19 institutional level.

20 For our 59 programs where we are the
21 Title 4 gatekeeper, then we do very much pay
22 attention to what is going on with the U.S.

1 Department of Ed and the program's relationship
2 with the Department of Ed, and then handle it
3 appropriately as an institutional accreditor
4 would.

5 MEMBER WOLFF: You mentioned at least
6 one of your loan -- one of the 59 had a loan
7 default rate of 20 percent.

8 MS. STOLL: Yes, sir.

9 MEMBER WOLFF: And I assume that you
10 would be monitoring that and working out with
11 them to --

12 MS. STOLL: Yes, sir.

13 MEMBER WOLFF: -- as a gatekeeper.

14 MS. STOLL: Yes. We are paying
15 attention to that. It's a practical program in
16 rural Pennsylvania, and there is socioeconomic
17 issues and other things of such nature that are
18 going on in that situation.

19 One other question. As you talked
20 about the variability, or at least the range, for
21 completion and placement, depending on how the --
22 at least for completion you have the 80 percent

1 rate, but you did identify that there are some
2 below the 80 percent, and they would be on
3 conditions, I assume, or -- but --

4 MS. STOLL: As I indicated, the
5 expected level of achievement is set by the
6 faculty for completion. And they have to provide
7 a rationale for their expected level of
8 completion.

9 That rationale could be that they are
10 looking at themselves and looking at the trend of
11 their completion rate. They could benchmark it
12 against their institution. They can benchmark it
13 against a peer group. They can benchmark it
14 against the ACEN data.

15 They have options that they can make
16 a rationale for why their completion rate is. In
17 some circumstances, a state could set a
18 completion rate. For example, in the State of
19 Alabama, there is a set completion rate that the
20 state imposes.

21 So they have to provide that
22 rationale. They are expected to meet their

1 expected level of achievement. If they don't
2 meet their expected level of achievement, then we
3 ask what is going on, why is it going on, what
4 are you doing about it, how are you trying to
5 improve, and we will monitor the situation.

6 It could potentially result in a
7 program placed on some kind of sanctions, such as
8 conditions or warning.

9 MEMBER WOLFF: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Steve, Frank, and
11 then I'll have a question.

12 MEMBER VAN AUSDLE: Well, for a
13 moment, I want to speak as a representative of a
14 demographic that cares deeply about what you're
15 doing in providing qualified nurses for us, and
16 in adequate numbers. And when you look at
17 projections, it is showing a significant shortage
18 of nurses into the future.

19 I'd be interested in your perspective
20 on, yes, I have been a president of an
21 institution that you have accredited. I know the
22 rigor. What are those two or three things that

1 makes it difficult for an institution to expand a
2 program because of your rigorous requirements
3 that I also appreciate? In other words, can you
4 help with the educational attainment of nurses in
5 our country, as well as the quality?

6 MS. McJANNETT: As a recently retired
7 college administrator of nursing, I would love to
8 answer that. I'm from California. The biggest
9 roadblock for nursing -- and I run into this
10 every day of my job -- was the facilities not
11 taking students. We could take more into the
12 classroom. We absolutely could.

13 But the fiscal component of the
14 college, not being able to provide us what we
15 needed to get these students to the level to
16 operate really well in a clinical setting, you
17 know, those sim labs cost millions of dollars, so
18 as nurse administrators our weekend evenings are
19 spent writing grants.

20 But that's a big part. But if we
21 could get the hospital systems to accept the
22 students into clinical -- I come from community

1 college. Nursing can't survive without community
2 colleges. They just can't. But the hospitals
3 are saying, especially in my region -- I'm sure,
4 what I understand from ACEN, all over -- is they
5 don't want associate degree nurses.

6 So when you're looking at completion,
7 my students -- I've got an agreement with one of
8 the universities, four of them actually, where
9 the students almost are doing concurrent
10 bachelor's programs. And so when they graduate,
11 it makes my completion rate -- or my job
12 placement rate look really terrible because I
13 can't count them as having jobs, because they go
14 immediately into a bachelor's program.

15 So if we could get hospitals to work
16 collectively as we go through this career path,
17 it would be wonderful. But it's money and the
18 health care systems.

19 Sharon, did you have anything to --

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank?

21 MEMBER VAN AUSDLE: Excuse me. One of
22 the insights might be that transfers should be

1 valued just as highly as graduation from an
2 associate program.

3 MS. McJANNETT: Absolutely.

4 MS. STOLL: And that's why we
5 encourage programs where they have what appears
6 to be a low job placement rate but a high
7 academic progression rate to have a second
8 outcome, so they're accounting for that positive
9 place. Because a student continuing his or her
10 education is a positive outcome, and so we do
11 have programs that track both -- their job
12 placement as well as academic progression.

13 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank?

14 MEMBER WU: Congratulations on
15 resolving your legal matters. I just wanted to
16 ask, now that that's over, and I infer since
17 there are no third-party comments that the parent
18 group that you still have some ties with, that
19 we're all good at this point.

20 Could you help us with a post mortem?
21 Because this did take many years, and
22 specifically could NACIQI have facilitated a more

1 expeditious outcome, or did we -- and I'm not
2 fishing for a compliment here. I'm just trying
3 to figure out, what was it that finally resolved
4 this? Was it that the Department of Ed actually
5 would have shut you down?

6 Because I think your exact scenario
7 isn't going to arise again, but I'm just
8 wondering, what sort of carrots and sticks can we
9 work with? So you're good now. So now you can
10 look back and say whatever you want. Should we
11 have been tougher, easier? Because I'm guessing
12 you did not enjoy being in the court system for
13 years and years and years.

14 MS. McJANNETT: I was here the
15 longest. So no.

16 MS. STOLL: And I entered the story
17 line about the crisis moment. The Department has
18 a process, and the Department followed its
19 process, of follow up and monitoring, and then
20 ultimately saying, you know what? There's no
21 more time left on the clock.

22 And so it was the recommendation from

1 Department staff and NACIQI of not continuing our
2 recognition that brought the parties to the table
3 that resulted in this positive outcome.

4 Since we were re-recognized not that
5 long ago, that's why we're right back here. It
6 took us three-and-a-half out of five years to
7 resolve the situation. But, nonetheless, it has
8 been a very positive outcome for the profession
9 of nursing, as well as for the nursing programs.

10 We are still a wholly-owned subsidiary
11 of the National League of Nursing. We are
12 located in Atlanta, Georgia. We are separately
13 incorporated. We are completely separate and
14 independent administratively and financially.

15 The League is located here in
16 Washington, D.C. They are doing their thing;
17 we're doing our thing. And we're both in our own
18 ways serving the profession of nursing and
19 nursing education.

20 MEMBER WU: This is just a brief
21 comment for this body. This suggests that it's
22 not a bad thing to use the tools that are

1 available to us where there are these odd
2 situations that arise, that that might actually
3 bring about a good resolution, because three-and-
4 a-half years in federal and state court is
5 probably not a desirable process to go through
6 for anyone. So just a note.

7 MS. STOLL: And the Department did its
8 job. That's simply what happened.

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Let me ask a
10 question, and then you can go, Bobbie. I have a
11 question, yes. I said I would take the next
12 question.

13 Anyway, I applaud you on having a
14 definition of "completion." However, you do
15 require in your associate degree programs general
16 education prerequisites and part of the program,
17 yet you don't count your completion data until
18 they begin the actual core nursing programs.

19 What about all those other students
20 who never got to the core as in some -- in many
21 community colleges that frontload the academics?

22 MS. STOLL: There are so many

1 iterations of ways colleges and universities put
2 any kind of academic program together, including
3 nursing programs. When I taught, we had a four-
4 semester program, GenEd was integrated throughout
5 the four semesters, there were co-reqs and
6 prereqs as part of the nursing program, and it
7 truly was a two-year, four-semester program.

8 Other colleges and universities
9 frontload their GenEd requirements and backload
10 their nursing. At the end of the day, we know
11 that for -- using associate degree programs as
12 the example, that the minimum number of credit
13 hours typically is 60 credits and ranges to 72
14 credits. The average number of credits is 70.

15 How colleges and universities cobble
16 all that together is at the college's or
17 university's discretion.

18 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I understand that,
19 but it doesn't really answer my question, which
20 is, is your completion rate an actual accurate
21 termination of what the completion rate is when,
22 if it is academics or frontloaded, and they are

1 not included in the calculation?

2 MS. BEASLEY: I think I understand
3 what you are asking. However, our definition is
4 applicable to all programs, all program types.
5 And because of what Marcy just mentioned, there
6 are so many iterations, so many variations, in
7 how programs implement programs of study.

8 And to kind of make sure that we're
9 able to track completion rate where we can report
10 the rates and use the data in a meaningful way,
11 our definition starts with the first nursing
12 course. And I understand where you're going with
13 that.

14 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Wouldn't it be more
15 accurate for those students who enroll in a
16 nursing program but don't take their nursing
17 programs until the back part of the course, that
18 if they drop out up in the front that those are
19 non-completers, and they will -- you know, it
20 basically kind of softens the impact of the drops
21 that are part of the academic program? Even
22 though it's required.

1 MS. McJANNETT: If I could just make
2 a comment about that. When students are -- at
3 the community college level, when students are
4 going through their GenEd, which is a requirement
5 for most community colleges that I am aware of,
6 they make career changes along the -- career path
7 changes along the way.

8 For the students that come into the
9 nursing programs, at least in California, most of
10 us have set criteria. And when we're looking at
11 their GenEds and different things, the Board of
12 Nursing's are the ones that say, "This is how
13 many units, and this is how many semesters it
14 takes." And the GenEds are counted. They are
15 counted by our boards of nursing when we do that.

16 And if you have students that come
17 into the program looking at ACEN, most of us they
18 are counted within that process, because they are
19 first-time takers of their anatomy, physiology,
20 micro. I mean, they have to be -- and get good
21 grades to get into the nursing program, and to be
22 able to track who decides not to get into that

1 because they failed.

2 We don't even know that they really
3 want to get into nursing until they get to the
4 very end of that. So it would be very
5 challenging to look at, I think.

6 MS. BEASLEY: Yes. And one other
7 thing to emphasize is the number of students who
8 transfer from other colleges and universities,
9 community colleges, to other nursing programs.
10 And so so many students -- you're raising your
11 hand, the finger? I have a minute? Oh, okay.
12 All right.

13 So many students transfer general
14 education credits toward their nursing degree and
15 nursing program. So that's something else.

16 MS. STOLL: And most baccalaureates,
17 your first two years are GenEds, and your nursing
18 is your junior and senior year. And some
19 students aren't even nursing students until
20 they're juniors.

21 And so to have consistency around all
22 of the different iterations in the way any kind

1 of academic program is put together, let alone
2 nursing, that's why we have the definition that
3 we have.

4 CHAIRMAN KEISER: It just seems to me
5 like kind of a cherry-picking kind of situation
6 where you take you the best students who don't
7 get through the General Ed and then they begin
8 the program, even though when they enrolled as
9 freshman they -- they were enrolling as a nursing
10 student. But that's neither here nor there.

11 Any other questions? Bobbie, then
12 Claude, and then Frank.

13 MEMBER DERLIN: I just want to join
14 the chorus. Thank you for your persistence and
15 being here and doing all this work over time.
16 You talked about some of the supportive services
17 you offer to program personnel as they are
18 pursuing their accreditation with you.

19 And I think you mentioned something
20 about institutional personnel participating as
21 observers of peer review teams, and I would be
22 interested in hearing a bit more. I know some of

1 these things are new. Have you actually had
2 experience with that? And how does that work?

3 MS. BEASLEY: Okay. I can --

4 MS. STOLL: Sharon coordinates it, so
5 go for it.

6 MS. BEASLEY: So the observer
7 experience on site visit teams is relatively new.
8 And in the fall, we actually had one person who
9 observed. The observers have to go through peer
10 evaluator training. Observers are responsible
11 for all cost and fees, including lodging, travel,
12 associated with the visit.

13 They do sign a confidentiality form as
14 well. They are privy to the discussions that the
15 site visit team has with the faculty, the
16 students, the staff, the college administrators.
17 They attend the public meeting. They attend the
18 tours of the clinical agencies. So they are
19 basically there observing everything that's going
20 on.

21 They sit in the evidence room. They
22 look through documents. They are not able to ask

1 any questions or interfere in any way with the
2 review process. So they are basically a fly on
3 the wall.

4 And the comments that I received from
5 the one observer from the fall, she attended one
6 of our self-study forums in April of last year.
7 And so she considered that to be the course
8 per se, and then she observed in the fall on a
9 site visit team. And she thought that was more
10 of the capstone. It kind of placed the icing on
11 the cake. It gave her a better understanding of
12 what to expect as the nurse administrator.

13 It also provided her with some ideas
14 and some shortcomings from her program's
15 perspective, and some things that she could
16 implement that would help for her site visit,
17 which is actually scheduled this spring. So very
18 positive feedback.

19 MEMBER DERLIN: So if I'm an observer,
20 I'm going to some other school's team.

21 MS. BEASLEY: One school, yes.

22 MEMBER DERLIN: And --

1 MS. STOLL: You get to shadow the team
2 that is there evaluating the program.

3 MEMBER DERLIN: I just don't get to
4 speak.

5 MS. BEASLEY: You do not get to speak.

6 MEMBER DERLIN: That would be very
7 difficult for me.

8 (Laughter.)

9 MEMBER DERLIN: Thank you very much.

10 MS. STOLL: Thank you. Thank you.

11 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Just real quick,
12 the -- I am going to sound like a bit of a broken
13 record today, because I am -- I really am trying
14 to explore risk-informed approaches to
15 accreditation, and we definition would like to
16 see programmatic accreditors be -- you know, to
17 do the same.

18 Have you considered such an approach
19 looking at institutions so that -- well, have you
20 considered such an approach of risk-informed
21 accreditation model?

22 MS. STOLL: I'm sorry. Could you

1 repeat your question one more time? Have we
2 considered what?

3 MEMBER PRESSNELL: A risk-informed
4 approach on your accreditation. So you heard the
5 regional accrediting bodies grapple with that a
6 little bit. And the regionals are making some
7 progress on that. We're hoping that programmatic
8 accreditors are going the same or thinking -- at
9 least thinking about it. Have you had some
10 thought about that?

11 MS. STOLL: I have given it thought.
12 We don't do what we heard described this morning.
13 I would argue that in a way we do take a risk
14 kind of approach in that when a program is found
15 non-compliant, they are placed on conditions,
16 they are placed on warning. I know it's not
17 exactly the same thing.

18 When we go through our subchange
19 process, things are leveled based on how
20 significant a change might be. It could be a
21 non-issue; we don't even need to look at it. It
22 could be something that's a letter of

1 notification. It could result in a prospectus
2 that is reviewed and approved on paper, or it
3 could result in now a visit that is being
4 triggered as a result of some change that is so
5 significant that we need to go in and take a look
6 at the program for continued compliance with the
7 standards and criteria based on that new thing
8 that the program is doing, such as implementing
9 distance education or implementing a new off-
10 campus instructional site.

11 So, at this point, that's about what
12 we're doing, but not what we heard this morning.
13 We have not had that type of conversation at our
14 Commission yet, no.

15 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank? Simon?

16 MEMBER WU: So this is a question for
17 our chair, for staff, and also I think a little
18 bit for Claude, who has been heading this effort
19 for us to do some policy work. We have heard
20 from just about every agency about some
21 deficiencies in IPEDS and in the other data, in
22 particular about transfers, which are good.

1 Typically, transfers, that's a good
2 thing, we want to see it, but not just transfers,
3 people who go on to some other program. Also a
4 good thing, but it shows up in the data. Both of
5 those show up as bad.

6 So for our chair and for staff, and
7 for Claude, can we in some document someplace
8 articulate this, so that somebody -- because we
9 are not in a position to change that, but we are
10 in a position to note this and agitate and
11 highlight it and say, "Hey, this needs to be
12 changed because institutions are being hurt when
13 they're doing something good and we're getting
14 data that's not quite right. It doesn't reflect
15 the reality." So --

16 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank, you know,
17 we're going to have --

18 MEMBER WU: -- can you say something
19 about this?

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: We're going to have
21 two separate opportunities to address that and
22 discuss it. One is tomorrow when we're talking

1 about data; and, two, when Claude presents his
2 report that we can amend or address other issues
3 that might or may not be in Claude's
4 subcommittee's report. So --

5 MEMBER WU: Great. I'll save it for
6 then, because I'm also looking for things where
7 we have consensus. And this is something where I
8 don't think there's anybody on the other side for
9 good reason, which is this is just a discrepancy.
10 This is just something wrong. It's fixable. And
11 no one is, you know, paying attention to fixing
12 it. So I'll raise it twice. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Simon?

14 MEMBER BOEHME: Yes. My question will
15 be quick. I noticed on the dashboard that you
16 had two schools that had a completion rate below
17 20 percent, and you commented a little bit
18 earlier in your answering the pilot questions,
19 and I also appreciate your thorough review. But
20 can you just speak a little bit more specifically
21 about what you're doing to address those programs
22 that have completion of the 57 -- only looking at

1 the 57 schools at your Title 4 -- in charge of,
2 what exactly are you doing with those two
3 schools? Or if there are more than two schools,
4 what kind of monitoring probation are they on?

5 MS. STOLL: Okay. Off the top of my
6 head, I can't even tell you which two schools
7 they are. But I can tell you what we do when a
8 program doesn't meet its ELA, whether we are or
9 are not the Title 4 gatekeeper. Programs report
10 data annually. That's one data point that we
11 collect.

12 We review the data in the office, by
13 the office staff. And if there is something that
14 needs follow up, the nurse administrator will
15 receive a letter from us asking, what are you
16 doing about it? How are you trying to fix the
17 problem? Et cetera, et cetera.

18 We receive that report back into the
19 office. If it is a satisfactory response, we
20 continue to monitor the situation. Sometimes we
21 have to go back and ask some questions until we
22 get a satisfactory response, but we will continue

1 to monitor the situation until the program has
2 met its level of achievement, has come up with
3 some other alternative approach perhaps, but,
4 nonetheless, it could potentially result in a
5 program ultimately hosting a focused visit,
6 having peers come, talking with the kind of boots
7 on the ground, find out what is going on more on
8 a one-on-one basis, and then that focused visit
9 report goes to the Board of Commissioners.

10 The Board of Commissioners could
11 ultimately make a decision to place the program
12 on conditions or warning, depending upon what
13 circumstances are, and then we'd let the process
14 proceed.

15 MEMBER BOEHME: And that has not
16 happened that often, because it strikes me, as
17 many of your programs do, quite well.

18 MS. STOLL: Related to job placement
19 and completion, no. Related to pass rate, yes.

20 MEMBER BOEHME: Okay. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Any further
22 questions? Well, thank you very much. If you'd

1 step by, and we'll let -- bring back Mr. Mula.

2 MR. MULA: I have no additional
3 comments, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you, Chuck.

5 Is there a motion from the -- one of
6 the two --

7 MEMBER WOLFF: To renew for a period
8 of five years.

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Motion by Dr. Wolff,
10 and seconded by Dr. Zaragoza. Any further
11 discussion? Sensing none, all those in favor of
12 the motion, please raise your hand. All those
13 opposed? Well, we are pretty unanimous today.
14 Very good.

15 We are now -- we'll adjourn for lunch
16 until 1:30. So we will see you back at 1:30
17 sharp.

18 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter recessed
19 for lunch at 12:21 p.m.)

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: We have two more
21 agencies to review today, and potentially a
22 third, depending on how fast we get through this

1 process. We are now at the renewal of
2 recognition for the Accreditation Commission for
3 Midwifery Education, or ACME.

4 Our primary readers are Kathleen
5 Sullivan Alioto, who is not here today, but
6 Claude Pressnell is here. Claude, do you have an
7 introduction?

8 MEMBER PRESSNELL: I do. Thank you,
9 Mr. Chairman. So ACME serves as the autonomous
10 body within the American College of Nurse
11 Midwives with respect to the development, review,
12 evaluation, and administration of all policies
13 and procedures related to the accreditation
14 programs offering the midwifery education.

15 ACNM is the professional association
16 for certified nurse midwives in the United States
17 and its territories. ACME conducts ACNM's
18 accrediting activities and currently accredits 39
19 programs located in 25 states, the District of
20 Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

21 Accreditation by ACME provides
22 eligibility for participation in various funding

1 programs offered by the U.S. Department of Health
2 and Human Services, including its advanced
3 education and nursing trainee-ship program, and
4 its National Health Service core scholarship.

5 The staff has found -- I think there
6 is still one outstanding finding, 602.20, the
7 enforcement of standards, which states that if
8 the institution or program does not bring itself
9 into compliance within a specific period, the
10 agency must take immediate steps -- immediate
11 adverse action, unless the agency for good cause
12 extends the period for achieving compliance.

13 So I'd like to turn it over to the
14 staff.

15 MS. McKISSIC: Good afternoon, Mr.
16 Chair, and members of the committee. For the
17 record, my name is Stephanie McKissic, and I will
18 be presenting information regarding the renewal
19 petition submitted by the Accreditation
20 Commission for Midwifery Education, also referred
21 to as ACME or the agency.

22 The staff recommendation to the senior

1 Department official is to continue the agency's
2 current recognition and to require it to come
3 into compliance within 12 months and submit a
4 compliance report 30 days after the 12-month
5 period that demonstrates the agency's compliance
6 with the issue below.

7 The staff recommendation is based upon
8 my review of the agency's renewal petition and
9 supporting documentation, as well as observation
10 of an ACME Board of Commissioners meeting in May
11 2017 and a site visit in Springfield,
12 Massachusetts, in October 2017.

13 The Department did not receive any
14 third-party comments or complaints during the
15 current accreditation cycle. Based upon the
16 review of the response to the draft analysis,
17 supporting documentation, a site visit
18 observation, and follow-up communication with the
19 agency, Department staff has identified one
20 remaining issue, which has been included in the
21 final staff analysis report.

22 In particular, the agency must provide

1 documentation and implementation of a standard
2 defining terms of good cause and systematic
3 procedures for monitoring a program's progress
4 toward compliance for 602.20(b) enforcement
5 standards.

6 Therefore, as previously stated, the
7 staff recommendation to the senior Department
8 official is to continue the agency's current
9 recognition and require it to come into
10 compliance within 12 months and submit a
11 compliance report 30 days after the 12-month
12 period to demonstrate the agency's compliance.

13 There are agency representatives
14 present today, and we will be happy to answer the
15 committee's questions at this time.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Claude, do you have
18 any questions of staff?

19 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Not at this time.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you. Members
22 of the agency, would you please come forward and

1 identify yourselves?

2 MR. JOHNSON: Good afternoon, and
3 thank you to Stephanie for all the support that
4 you provided us through the process. My name is
5 Peter Johnson, and I'm pleased to serve as
6 chairperson of the Accreditation Commission for
7 Midwifery Education, which I think has been
8 stated is also known as ACME.

9 With me today on my left is Anne
10 Cockerham, one of our Commissioners at large, and
11 at the other end of the table, Ronald Hunt, who
12 is our public member Commissioner, and next to me
13 is Heather Maurer, our executive director.

14 The U.S. Department of Education has
15 recognized ACME as a programmatic accrediting
16 agency since 1982. Our mission is to advance
17 excellence in midwifery education, and we are
18 here, as was said, seeking continued recognition.

19 ACME's work in ensuring high-quality
20 midwifery education is crucial to tackling one of
21 the most significant health problems in the
22 United States -- the shortage of maternal health

1 care providers. Every year in the United States
2 one million babies are born to mothers who did
3 not receive adequate prenatal care.

4 The national shortage of providers of
5 primary reproductive and obstetrical health for
6 women continues to rise, as does the female
7 population. The American College of
8 Obstetricians and Gynecologists, ACOG, reports
9 that currently 49 percent of U.S. countries do
10 not have obstetrical care providers, and they
11 project a 25 percent national shortage of
12 providers through 2030.

13 So we believe the solution to this
14 problem is to increase the number of certified
15 nurse midwives and certified midwives in America.
16 In 2014, a Lancet series on midwifery exploring
17 solutions to address essential needs of child-
18 bearing women globally makes a clear call for
19 investment in midwives.

20 Midwifery care results in high client
21 satisfaction, excellent outcomes, and lower cost
22 due to fewer unnecessary invasive and expensive

1 interventions. A systematic review of midwifery
2 care in the U.S. concluded that evidence that
3 care by CNMs is safe and effective. CNMs should
4 be better utilized to address the projected
5 health care workforce shortages.

6 So according to most recent data from
7 ACME's annual monitoring report, ACME accredited
8 39 programs -- accredits 39 programs, with one
9 program in active pre-accreditation status.

10 During this time, ACME-accredited
11 programs had 2,647 students enrolled in either a
12 master's, doctoral, or post-graduate certificate
13 midwifery programs. Six-hundred fifty-four of
14 these students graduated within the reporting
15 window; 120 -- 120 -- I'm sorry, 127 students
16 withdrew from programs due to academic failure,
17 personal reasons, or disciplinary action. More
18 than half of those withdrawals from the programs
19 were actually for personal reasons.

20 This represents a completion rate of
21 over 95 percent. The American Midwifery
22 Certification Board, AMCB, the certifying agency

1 that certifies our graduates from ACME-accredited
2 programs, ACME criteria 4(a)(2) establishes a
3 benchmark requiring all programs to have
4 aggregated annual AMCB pass rates of 85 percent.
5 That's higher than industry standard.

6 AMCB reported in 2016 that 93.9
7 percent of our test-takers had passed a
8 certifying examination.

9 So, finally, in the U.S. Department of
10 Education report to the senior Department
11 official on recognition compliance issue, the
12 report found our agency not fully in compliance
13 with Standard 602.20, which has been mentioned;
14 and, again, mentioned by Stephanie and explained.

15 So we fully acknowledge and agree with
16 the staff's findings. The ACME Board of
17 Commissioners, our decision-making body, will
18 have a policy established by March 2018
19 addressing 602.20(b), and will submit the
20 compliance report that has been requested to the
21 Department as requested.

22 So thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you very much.
2 Claude, would you like -- do you have questions
3 for the panel?

4 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Well, I am just
5 curious on -- on the policy, can you tell us what
6 you -- can you describe the framework of the
7 policy, or have you begun to draft it and take an
8 action on that, what that might look like?

9 MR. JOHNSON: Well, we are actually --
10 I think we are at a very timely window right now
11 because we do a criteria review every five years,
12 and we are coming up on that criteria review
13 within the next few months. And we will have an
14 opportunity to pull in our stakeholders from our
15 professional association, from the education
16 community, and get input into -- input into that
17 decision.

18 So I think it would be premature right
19 now to say what that will look like. Heather, do
20 you want to say anything?

21 MS. MAURER: We are actually going to
22 begin discussions starting this month in our

1 February Board of Commissioners meeting. We have
2 monthly meetings. We were waiting for this
3 meeting to get your feedback and the Department's
4 findings.

5 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Have you ever taken
6 any adverse action against programs, institution
7 monitoring, or -- it indicates here that you have
8 never had a -- you know, a reason to do an
9 extension for good cause. But what type of
10 negative actions have you taken against programs?

11 MS. MAURER: We placed the University
12 of Puerto Rico on warning for not providing us
13 with the pass rates. Their students were not
14 required to take that exam to be able to practice
15 midwifery in Puerto Rico. That program closed
16 down within 18 months of us placing it on
17 warning, which is unfortunate for Puerto Rico who
18 has a maternal health care shortage.

19 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Especially in light
20 of everything that has been happening down there.
21 It seems like we have difficulty all the time.

22 If I could have some clarification on

1 your success rate. You were talking about those
2 who did not continue in the program, and you
3 listed off various reasons as to why that might
4 be the case. And so were you counting them in
5 the calculation, or were you withdrawing those
6 who withdrew from the program out of the
7 calculation of your success rate? I was a little
8 confused on how you were doing that.

9 MR. JOHNSON: They were within the --
10 you have the more specific numbers here, right?

11 MS. MAURER: So your question -- I'm
12 trying to get clarity on your question.

13 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Well, there was --
14 you talked about certain individuals that have
15 withdrawn -- you were talking about the -- like
16 the disciplinary matters, personal reasons, and
17 so on and so forth. And so I couldn't tell if
18 you were saying as a result they were taking the
19 success rate -- they were taken out of the
20 equation for success rates, or the success rate
21 only dealt with those who completed the program
22 and took the exam or --

1 MS. MAURER: Correct.

2 MEMBER PRESSNELL: -- or were they
3 also included in the --

4 MS. MAURER: They are not included.

5 MR. JOHNSON: They are not included in
6 the people that take the examination because you
7 have to complete the program in order to take the
8 examination. They would have withdrawn before
9 that.

10 MEMBER PRESSNELL: So the number you
11 are giving us was exam pass rate, not program
12 completion rate. Is that what you were giving
13 us?

14 MR. JOHNSON: Well, we gave you -- we
15 gave you both. We gave you a --

16 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Could you recount
17 that for me, then?

18 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. What we said was
19 that we had -- we had 2,647 students enrolled in
20 the programs. And in this -- 654 students in
21 this reporting period have graduated. Okay? And
22 then -- and 127 of those -- is it -- yes, 127 of

1 that total body of students have withdrawn from
2 the program, and then we gave those reasons for
3 withdrawal. And half of those we said were for
4 personal reasons.

5 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Can you just
6 describe the general health of the programs
7 nationwide in terms of those who are under your
8 purview, how you -- you know, do you feel like
9 they're in a good situation, healthy, growing
10 situation? or --

11 MR. JOHNSON: I am maybe -- I might
12 defer to my colleagues here as well, some of whom
13 are -- well, Anne is an active program director
14 in a midwifery education program right now, so
15 she might have some perspective on this.

16 But I would say that, you know, we --
17 we monitor several factors related to the
18 sustainability of the programs, the health of the
19 programs, and the programs by and large are
20 operating to a -- you know, a level in terms of
21 capacity size and capacity that is consistent
22 with the resources that they have at their

1 disposal.

2 Our limiting factor is not so much
3 financial health as it is access to clinical
4 resources associated with midwifery education.

5 MR. HUNT: Also, if you look at the
6 overall health of the programs profession-wide,
7 as measured by performance during the
8 accreditation review, now it is not unusual for a
9 program to have a few deficiencies going through
10 the review, but because of the extensive process
11 we use through the monitoring of reports
12 afterwards, and our working with the programs to
13 get them back in compliance, we don't get into
14 situations where we have the put programs in
15 warning.

16 So I guess what I'm saying is, judging
17 by how a program has performed, going through the
18 accreditation process, and being able to meet all
19 of the criteria successfully at some point, that
20 the health would be considered pretty good.

21 MR. JOHNSON: And I guess I would ask
22 for just a little bit of clarification. When

1 you're speaking of health of the programs, are
2 you speaking about health against our criteria?
3 Ability to meet our criteria? Or health in terms
4 of their viability and sustainability?

5 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Well, I think
6 actually both. I mean, you know, honestly, it's
7 just kind of the -- if you would, you know, the
8 state of the membership within the association.

9 And if you generally feel like you've
10 got -- you definitely have some pretty strong
11 programs that are continuing to meet their
12 mission and purpose, or you have more struggling
13 programs than flourishing programs, I mean, it's
14 really not a specific question as it is kind of
15 if you step back and look at the overall body for
16 which you accredit, how do they look generally?

17 As a nation, should we concerned that
18 they are all near-failing programs? Or as a
19 nation, we should have confidence in --

20 MR. JOHNSON: I would have a high
21 degree of confidence, because we have people that
22 are tenaciously committed to what we're -- to

1 what we're trying to achieve against -- you know,
2 against a challenging set of circumstances.

3 But I would say that, by and large,
4 the programs are very responsive to the guidance.
5 We are -- you know, we are a highly collaborative
6 community, while maintaining the firewalls
7 between accreditation, certification, and
8 national association membership. We were doing -
9 - we do work very closely together.

10 We work very closely with an
11 association of midwifery program directors. We
12 meet with them biannually. The programs are --
13 we have been surprised, since Heather has been
14 with us, we have been -- instituted biennial
15 training programs for programs that are
16 interested in either becoming pre-accreditation -
17 - they're exploring pre-accreditation or they
18 want more insights into the accreditation
19 process. They want to be healthy and successful.

20 I have been surprised by how many
21 mature programs -- programs I wouldn't have
22 expected to come to these workshops that come and

1 invest the time.

2 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Any other questions?
3 Ralph.

4 MEMBER WOLFF: Thank you. I
5 appreciate your presentation. I just would like
6 to be a little bit more educated. I see a lot of
7 your programs are in schools of nursing. And so
8 do your graduates or students have nursing
9 degrees? Is it completely independent? Is a
10 licensure something -- is it -- I'd just like to
11 understand where you fit into -- we just worked
12 with ACEN. So where do you fit into the nursing
13 hierarchy, if you will, or --

14 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. It's a very
15 -- it's an interesting question. It's a
16 historical question. It's a question that has,
17 you know, a state regulatory component to it.
18 But most of our programs -- you know, most of our
19 programs have historically been in schools of
20 nursing preparing people as certified nurse
21 midwives.

22 But we are approved as an accrediting

1 agency for certified nurse midwives, certified
2 midwives. Both of those -- both of those
3 graduates have the same set of essential
4 competencies that they have to meet. There are
5 certain things in a nurse midwifery program that
6 we can -- that we can assume based on the nursing
7 education that precedes the midwifery education.

8 But the outcome -- the educational
9 outcome for both are the same, and they both set
10 the same certification examination by the
11 American Midwifery Certification Board.

12 We would love very much to expand the
13 number of programs outside of nursing, as well as
14 expand the programs inside of nursing. There are
15 regulatory -- there are regulatory factors that
16 make that challenging in some states where
17 midwives are licensed under boards of nursing.

18 MEMBER WOLFF: So, in other words, not
19 all -- do all states certify midwives, and it's
20 independent of nursing certification? I'm a
21 little confused.

22 MR. JOHNSON: No. Some states -- some

1 states will only certify certified nurse
2 midwives. Okay? People -- or I should say
3 license. We certify -- the American Midwifery
4 Certification Board that certifies certified
5 nurse midwives and certified midwives, it's the
6 same -- again, same competencies that they're
7 certified against.

8 But some states will -- some states
9 will license both, have a mechanism for licensing
10 both certified midwives and certified nurse
11 midwives. And some only have a mechanism for
12 certifying the -- for licensing the certified
13 nurse midwives.

14 MS. MAURER: To further explain, at
15 this time there are 10 states that license
16 certified midwives. All 50 states certify
17 certified nurse midwives.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Anne, did you want to
19 say something?

20 MS. COCKERHAM: Maybe I'll just add on
21 just a little bit. So bigger picture, the vast
22 majority of our programs and our students and our

1 graduates were nurses before they came into our
2 programs. And then this is an additional
3 qualification. Is that --

4 MEMBER WOLFF: Thank you. That's
5 helpful. Do all -- given that there are two
6 levels -- nurse and non-nurse certified -- have
7 hospital privileges? Or is there a limitation on
8 who actually gets to be in the hospital during
9 birth and supporting birthing?

10 MR. JOHNSON: Well, our graduates,
11 whether they be certified nurse midwives or
12 certified midwives, are all -- are all eligible
13 for licensure, credentialing within -- licensing
14 at the state level, depending on the state's
15 requirements, and credentialing within the
16 facility, depending on what the facility's
17 requirements are.

18 But no states where certified midwives
19 are licensed. I do not believe that there has
20 been any -- there has been any terrific
21 challenges to or onerous challenges to getting
22 those midwives credentialed within health

1 facilities.

2 MEMBER WOLFF: Thank you. Helpful.

3 MR. JOHNSON: Thanks.

4 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Any other questions?

5 Thank you very, very much.

6 Call back our staff.

7 MS. McKISSIC: I have no additional
8 comments at this time.

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: At which point,
10 Claude, I would entertain a motion.

11 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Yes. I make a
12 motion to continue the agency's current
13 recognition and require it to come into
14 compliance within 12 months, and submit a
15 compliance report 30 days after the 12-month
16 period that demonstrates the agency's compliance.

17 MEMBER DERLIN: I'll second it.

18 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Is that Bobbie?
19 Seconded by Bobbie. Further discussion? Hearing
20 none, all those in favor, raise your hand,
21 please, and wait until we count them. Okay. Any
22 opposed? Sensing none, the motion passes. Thank

1 you.

2 Move on to our next agency. The
3 agency is the State Agency for the Approval of
4 Public Postsecondary Education, the Oklahoma
5 Board of Career and Technology Education. The
6 primary readers are Rick O'Donnell and Federico
7 Zaragoza. And would one of you like to make the
8 introduction?

9 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Well, Mr. Chairman,
10 committee members, guests, under the current
11 scope of recognition for the Oklahoma Board of
12 Career and Technology Education, OBCTE, it
13 authorized to approve to approve public
14 postsecondary vocational education programs
15 offered at institutions in the State of Oklahoma
16 that are not under the jurisdiction of the
17 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

18 The OBCTE is vested with the power to
19 govern and establish criteria and procedures for
20 29 technology center districts encompassing 58
21 campuses across the state. The technology center
22 school districts offer a multitude of programs

1 with approximately 112,000 enrollments.

2 OBCTE accreditation enables the
3 technology center to receive funding under
4 Title 4 as well as other federal programs. The
5 OBCTE was first recognized in 1976 and has held
6 continuous recognition since that time.

7 The agency submitted its most recent
8 full petition for renewal, recognition for
9 consideration, at the fall 2015 NACIQI meeting.
10 At that time, its recognition was continued, and
11 it was requested to submit a compliance report on
12 several issues. That compliance report is the
13 subject of the current analysis.

14 Mr. Chairman, at this point, I will
15 defer to staff for their analysis and
16 recommendations.

17 MR. MULA: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair,
18 members of the committee. For the record, my
19 name is Chuck Mula, and I will be presenting a
20 summary of the compliance reports submitted by
21 the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical
22 Education, hereinafter referred to as the agency.

1 There are no third-party comments in
2 connection with the petition, and no active
3 complaints reviewed by the Department.

4 The Department's concerns are with the
5 following issues of non-compliance with the
6 secretary's criteria for recognition that were
7 submitted in our compliance report.

8 Number one, the agency's guidelines do
9 not meet the requirements regarding the inclusion
10 of students and governing bodies in the
11 development of the self-study document.

12 Number two, the agency did not provide
13 evidence that schools are given the opportunity
14 to respond to onsite review reports as required
15 in the agency's guidelines.

16 Number three, and finally, the agency
17 did not demonstrate it has policies, procedures,
18 and standards that specifically address the
19 requirements regarding recruitment, advertising,
20 transcripts, fair and equitable student tuition
21 refunds, and student placement services.

22 Therefore, the staff's recommendation

1 to the senior Department official is the agency
2 be granted an extension of its recognition for
3 good cause for a period of one year, and that the
4 agency submit a report demonstrating its
5 compliance with the cited criteria 30 days after
6 the expiration of the one-year period, with
7 reconsideration of recognition status, including
8 review of the report, appearance by the agency at
9 the NACIQI meeting to be designated by the
10 Department.

11 That concludes my report, and I am
12 available for any questions. There are
13 representatives of the agency here.

14 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Questions from the
15 speakers? From the reviewers?

16 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Chuck, I have a
17 question. It looked like a number of these items
18 were raised in the fall 2015 staff analysis, and
19 they still haven't been corrected. And if I'm
20 accurate in that, my question is, are these
21 difficult things from your vantage point for them
22 to have gotten done in over two years? Or are

1 they things that we should have expected to have
2 been done by this point based on the 2015
3 analysis?

4 MR. MULA: Excellent question. The
5 agency would not have any issue in compliance
6 with these because they have done it before.
7 What has happened is the agency had gotten
8 involved with the Baldrige method, included some
9 of their requirements in place of the
10 requirements that they have in their guidelines,
11 which of course were not in compliance with the
12 Department's.

13 So we know that the agency has the
14 documentation. We know that the agency has the -
15 - is able to demonstrate compliance. They just
16 did not include it in their reports because they
17 were using the other system.

18 So the Department is very confident,
19 since we know that they have the information, we
20 know that they've done it before, that they can
21 provide the documentation. This is a minor
22 documentation issue.

1 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Great. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you, Chuck.

3 I invite the members of the agency to
4 come forward. Please introduce yourselves.

5 MS. MACK: Good afternoon. I'm Marcie
6 Mack, state director of the Oklahoma Department
7 of Career and Technology Education, and with me
8 today I have Dawn Lindsley, our accreditation
9 manager.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to allow
11 us to come and speak on behalf of the Oklahoma
12 State Board of Career and Technology Education.
13 As we work through the process, and as was
14 mentioned, we have been accredited since 1976.
15 We have had some changes during that process. We
16 did have the opportunity in 2015 to come before
17 and address some issues.

18 There was a change in outline for the
19 accreditation. As Dawn and I have expressed in
20 2015, we are working to meet those compliance
21 areas. We do have the very specific eight
22 criteria that we go through for the five-year

1 accreditation for our 29 technology center
2 districts and 58 campuses, so that we ensure the
3 quality and integrity of our system.

4 And through that evaluation, we have
5 the self-assessment application, the onsite
6 visit, feedback summary report, which was a
7 component of question last time. We also have
8 the State Board approval and publications that we
9 provide; the action plans, which allows for the
10 opportunity for the technology center
11 administration after the visit to provide their
12 feedback and evaluation. We also provide
13 technical assistance as they complete their
14 action plans to move them forward and align with
15 the addition of monitoring that we require on the
16 third year.

17 We continual monitor the technology
18 centers, and then provide their reevaluation in a
19 five-year cycle. Each of the technology centers
20 are -- their accreditation is reviewed annually,
21 but their certification is for a five-year
22 period.

1 And we would be happy to answer any
2 questions. Dawn, do you want to explain our
3 process from 2015 to today?

4 MS. LINDSLEY: So when we came in
5 2015, we were at the end of a pilot process. We
6 have been piloting Baldrige for a couple of years
7 and knew that that process was not going to work
8 moving forward. And so we created a new model
9 moving forward which has some aspects of
10 Baldrige, but also combines with our 1976 model.

11 And so we have gone through that
12 process with our board, redesigning everything
13 from scratch, and now we have gone through two
14 complete cycles with our new model in fiscal year
15 -- well, in calendar year 2017. No schools were
16 ever not accredited during any of that time, and
17 so we have maintained the five-year cycle with
18 all of our schools. We do about 20 percent
19 annually.

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Questions from the
21 reviewers?

22 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: So a self-serving

1 question. Alamo Colleges is one of the Baldrige
2 institutions in the State of Texas, and so I
3 understand basically the pilot phase is over, and
4 you're moving on basically to -- went with the
5 old model. What are the one or two lessons
6 learned from this pilot effort that will carry
7 over to improve your new accreditation model?

8 MS. LINDSLEY: Well, I would say we
9 did not go back to our '76 model, and we really
10 truly created a hybrid between the two. I think
11 we came together with a pilot committee,
12 evaluation committee, and really asked them some
13 hard questions about, what did you like about the
14 '76 model? What did you not like about it? Same
15 thing with the Baldrige model.

16 And then that committee came up with
17 their seven standards, and these are the things
18 that we think that we need to move forward with
19 in looking at to make sure we're ensuring quality
20 within our schools. That was taken to the
21 statewide Accreditation Advisory Committee. They
22 gave their blessing on that, and then that went

1 forward to our board.

2 So that was -- the standards were
3 approved in October of 2015 for the new process.
4 We then developed the new model after that. We
5 have been through two cycles with the new model,
6 at least the first couple of -- first couple of
7 years of the process.

8 And so I think learnings from that, we
9 are really truly looking at where schools are at
10 right now, both anecdotally and with a lot of
11 data that probably wasn't included in what I call
12 the 1976 model. And so that was some pieces that
13 we truly picked up that will work well for us
14 moving forward.

15 And we got away from looking at, give
16 me a document and that's checked off the list to
17 what does your process look like, how do you
18 annually or regularly evaluate that process, how
19 do you make improvements if you notice that
20 something is wrong with that process, how do you
21 implement new processes, how do you know what is
22 key and important, and how do you know what is

1 just down in the weeds and can be taken care of
2 through procedures.

3 And so I think those are some of the
4 learnings we took away from the process moving
5 forward, and it truly took us from not looking
6 back at the last five years of what we've done at
7 our schools, but where are you at, where do you
8 want to go, and how can we help you get there?

9 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Just to follow-up on
10 Chuck's question, I'm assuming that you would
11 agree that under the -- kind of the revised
12 approach, you will be able to basically provide
13 the information and comply with the staff
14 requests?

15 MS. MACK: Yes, 100 percent.

16 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Question? I have a
17 question. I'm confused. You were requested to
18 come into compliance to our standards in 2015,
19 and you did not, and the same problem still
20 exists today. Why are we talking about Baldrige
21 when we're not in compliance with our standards?

22 MS. LINDSLEY: We're not utilizing the

1 Baldrige anymore. At that point in time, we were
2 ending that pilot and starting the new hybrid.

3 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Well, why are you
4 not -- why did you not come into compliance from
5 the requests in 2015? If your institutions did
6 not come into compliance when you asked them to
7 do that, what do you do to them?

8 MS. MACK: The issue of the compliance
9 in 2015, there was a change in the outline for
10 what the accreditation was going to be. We had
11 been utilizing what had been approved since 1976,
12 and there was a change in leadership that came in
13 and changed that to be the Baldrige outline.
14 That's what they wanted it to be.

15 So in our evaluation process, and
16 looking at that, we have to go back through in
17 the compliance pieces and make sure that we were
18 meeting all the requirements from the Department
19 of Education through the model that was outlined.
20 And so in that process, we discussed the pilot
21 outline of what that would look like, making sure
22 that we are meeting all of those marks.

1 And so we do have the documentation.
2 It was recommended that we go through the cycles.
3 We had the procedures in place, but we have to
4 provide the documentation, so we must complete
5 that cycle to make sure that we provide
6 documentation of the schools that have gone
7 through that accreditation.

8 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Yes. But 2015 is
9 now three years ago. And you were not able to
10 come in compliance from 2015, and you have a new
11 review which you're still out of compliance.
12 Help me understand why you feel that's
13 acceptable, that you can just not come into
14 compliance when the Department of Education asked
15 you to or required you to.

16 MS. MACK: What we were measured on in
17 2015 for compliance is not the model that we
18 currently are utilizing.

19 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Compliant with whom?
20 It wasn't compliant with us.

21 MS. MACK: The outline that was
22 utilized in 2015, the areas for which they

1 outlined. In 2014, there was another individual
2 that presented this piece, so we are -- the model
3 that we are using from that forward is what we
4 are coming in compliance with.

5 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Herman or Chuck,
6 maybe you can explain. I still don't understand.

7 MR. MULA: When they came before us in
8 2015, they were using the Baldrige model, and
9 they had some of their -- their basic
10 requirements included our requirements, but it
11 was a little bit on the foggy side. So what they
12 did is they -- they anticipated that they would
13 use the Baldrige requirements, and they responded
14 to that.

15 That was not compliant, although they
16 tried to take from our requirements and
17 incorporate it. What happened was it does not do
18 the same thing. Our requirements require us to
19 verify that the agency has the policies and the
20 process in place to be in compliance with those
21 requirements.

22 They could not do that because they

1 could not provide us evidence of that process,
2 because that requirement -- they were using the
3 Baldrige -- did not require them to provide us
4 evidence.

5 CHAIRMAN KEISER: But help me
6 understand why they -- or you can explain why you
7 felt that the Baldrige requirement superseded the
8 requirements of the Department of Education.

9 MS. MACK: The Baldrige model that was
10 chosen -- or why those superseded, we did not
11 feel that they superseded what the Department of
12 Education has. That is why we took the
13 recommendations as -- and moved forward with the
14 hybrid model and the pilot and worked very
15 closely with the Department to make sure that we
16 were in compliance, and we were meeting the
17 specific outline of the Department.

18 CHAIRMAN KEISER: But my understanding
19 is you did not come into compliance, and you're
20 still not in compliance. Is that my
21 understanding, or am I missing it? Or am I going
22 in a different --

1 MR. MULA: No. They are not in
2 compliance because they failed to provide us with
3 documentation demonstrating application. They
4 are in compliance with the other citations we had
5 given them in 2015, but they missed out on these
6 three issues because of the lack of
7 documentation, although their compliance report
8 explains that they do this. And we do have
9 evidence that this is now part of their regular
10 process again. We just do not have the
11 documentation to verify application.

12 MS. LINDSLEY: And if you want us to
13 go through each one individually -- for instance,
14 the first one, 603.24(a)(3)(2)(a), inclusion of
15 students and governing bodies in the development
16 of the self-study document.

17 We do have a student that sits on our
18 Advisory Council that goes through the self-study
19 document on an annual basis. And we do annually
20 meet with our board to do training, and they give
21 us feedback. So that is taken care of. We can
22 put that in writing.

1 CHAIRMAN KEISER: But you have so few
2 compared to what other agencies have to go
3 through. And yet three of them are still not
4 met. It's confusing to me why those weren't met
5 before you submitted your new petition.

6 Herman?

7 MR. BOUNDS: One thing I want to bring
8 up with the criteria for state agencies, although
9 it's less, it is very, very, very specific. So
10 the fact that the agency operationally is doing
11 these things, their policies have to be stated
12 such that they meet the question specifically.

13 So one of the issues, if we look under
14 the requirement for, you know, student
15 involvement in the self-study, that language in
16 some of the agency's documentation was confused
17 with what the site team does. So it's -- in our
18 eyes, it's just very specific of the things they
19 have to do to meet that specific requirement for
20 those issues that are left.

21 They did knock out a significant
22 portion of the things that were wrong back in

1 2015. It's just that these three issues that are
2 still present, the process or some of the
3 processes in place did not specifically address
4 the issue that the question requires. So
5 that's --

6 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Bobbie?

7 MEMBER DERLIN: Is it okay to have a
8 different question, or --

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: It doesn't mean I'm
10 not coming back.

11 (Laughter.)

12 MEMBER DERLIN: I have a unit of
13 analysis question. You have centers that are 29,
14 and then you have 58 campuses. So is the unit
15 accredited by your agency -- I mean, the district
16 -- districts and campuses, is it the district
17 that gets accredited, that includes all of its
18 campuses automatically?

19 MS. LINDSLEY: Yes.

20 MS. MACK: Yes.

21 MEMBER DERLIN: Okay. So campus --
22 it's not -- you can't have an accredited district

1 and have a campus in there on sanction.

2 MS. LINDSLEY: Correct. Because there
3 is institutional accreditation, and through our
4 process with our onsite visit, and their self-
5 assessment, they do an all-encompassing
6 accreditation application.

7 And then in the site visit we go to
8 every single campus that is a part of that
9 district during the onsite visit. The most we
10 have is nine different campuses with one
11 particular district. Most of them are one, two,
12 three, four campuses.

13 MEMBER DERLIN: Okay. Thanks. And
14 then my second question is, do you have any
15 districts on sanction of some sort now? And what
16 supportive services do you provide to those
17 districts in getting their issues resolved?

18 MS. MACK: We do have -- in our
19 current cycle we do have technology centers who
20 have been recognized for areas that they are not
21 in compliance. And through that process, they
22 have an action plan that they complete that will

1 go to the State Board for their approval of that
2 action plan, to provide them support to come in
3 compliance.

4 They will be given a certain time
5 period to come in compliance. If they do not
6 meet those compliance, then we will continue on
7 with either continuing their accreditation to
8 give them time for compliance or discontinue
9 their accreditation.

10 And there is technical support through
11 the various agency areas that we have that can
12 provide them technical support in the area for
13 which they had the deficiency. Whether that may
14 be financial aid, maybe that is in student
15 completion.

16 One of the pieces in here specific to
17 advertising enrollment forms, are they meeting
18 all of the compliance, federal requirements, in
19 their documentations.

20 MEMBER DERLIN: Thank you.

21 MS. LINDSLEY: To further explain
22 that, we give them 60 days, and then the board

1 has the latitude to give them further time, if
2 they cannot complete it within 60 days.

3 MEMBER DERLIN: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Steve, then Ralph.

5 MEMBER VAN AUSDLE: I think it has
6 been clearly stated that you will be in
7 compliance with policies, procedures, to
8 standards on advertising and recruitment of
9 students, for example.

10 MS. MACK: Yes, sir.

11 MEMBER VAN AUSDLE: So let's just
12 focus in on student advertising and recruitment
13 for a minute. Do you have a policy on paper that
14 just hasn't been submitted?

15 MS. MACK: Yes. We do have --
16 specifically for each of the technology center
17 districts, they have specific guidelines. We
18 have a statewide marketing group that outlines
19 and sets those guidelines for -- they do have
20 local autonomy in certain areas, but there is --
21 specifically, if you advertise your statements
22 that you must have on your documentation, some of

1 the areas, depending on the dollar amount, you
2 state the dollar amount for which that
3 publication was spent.

4 The technology centers do turn that
5 into the agency on a year basis in their June
6 reporting. So, yes, we do have an outline for
7 what they follow.

8 MEMBER VAN AUSDLE: Tell me about your
9 recruitment policy. What's the essence there of
10 what these institutions can do in recruiting
11 students?

12 MS. MACK: In recruiting students,
13 very specifically is the equity component, and to
14 the ability to -- there are non-discrimination
15 statements that outline very specifically of what
16 they can ask for on an enrollment form, what they
17 can't; outline very specifically what the
18 enrollment procedure is. If there is an
19 interview involved, what is the number of
20 students that they take, which may vary from
21 district to district, depending on their sending
22 school rate.

1 What are their slots for secondary
2 students, for postsecondary students? And that
3 is the -- that is the outline that they have, the
4 school districts, the graphics, the marketing,
5 and those type of things. They do that on the
6 local level, but we do have --

7 MEMBER VAN AUSDLE: And at the current
8 -- present time, you are compliant with the
9 Department standards? You just haven't shown the
10 evidence is what --

11 MS. MACK: Yes, sir. Correct.

12 MEMBER VAN AUSDLE: Okay.

13 MS. MACK: Yes, sir.

14 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Ralph?

15 MEMBER WOLFF: Thank you. I'd like to
16 turn my attention not to the issues that we've
17 just been talking about. I'm trying to
18 understand your process of accreditation. And it
19 may be, Chuck, for you as well as for the agency.

20 We've been hearing a lot all day about
21 data on completion. And I don't see -- I've been
22 going through your standards, and I don't see

1 anything here about tracking. So help fill in --
2 you have what are called quality standards, but
3 they are very general, and then you have a
4 scoring rubric, it looks like.

5 But I'm trying to understand, for
6 technical and vocational education, because we
7 also recognize a number of vocational accrediting
8 agencies that do collect this data, and they have
9 actually set specific numbers -- whether good
10 enough or not, it's a separate issue -- but how
11 do you address the whole issue of postsecondary
12 completion, placement, what happens to the
13 graduates of your programs?

14 Maybe you can point out, I don't see
15 where that would come out in at least the
16 materials that I'm scanning through now.

17 MS. MACK: Thank you for that
18 question. In the category section 7 on the
19 accreditation guidebook that they go through,
20 system impact, very specifically under the goal
21 of educational attainment.

22 The school districts on a yearly

1 basis, as students complete, they are required to
2 do a follow-up report, which is six months after
3 the completion of that school year. In that
4 follow up, it is our current rate for completion,
5 which does include positive placement, which is
6 secondary and postsecondary is 94 percent
7 positive placement.

8 If you just pull out our
9 postsecondary, it's 90 percent positive
10 placement. We measure, on positive placement --
11 continuing education is positive placement. If
12 they're continuing on into an associate's degree
13 or baccalaureate degree, employed is also
14 positive placement, employed into the area for
15 which they were trained, and military, also
16 counts for us as a positive placement.

17 We do capture those who are leavers,
18 those that are transfers, and those that are not,
19 and they did complete the program but they are
20 not employed. Those are metrics that we do
21 capture on a yearly basis, and they are reported
22 by the school in the system impact section of

1 their self-assessment that they do. And we do
2 report that out yearly in our annual report for
3 our system-wide impact that we do for our state.

4 MEMBER WOLFF: Great. Thank you very
5 much. I didn't get that far.

6 CHAIRMAN KEISER: What is your
7 completion rate?

8 MS. MACK: Our completion rate for
9 both secondary and postsecondary together is 94
10 percent positive completion.

11 CHAIRMAN KEISER: So 94 percent of the
12 students who start a vocational program in
13 Oklahoma finish?

14 MS. MACK: They either continue on
15 into postsecondary education because that also
16 measures our secondary students.

17 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I'm talking about
18 just the postsecondary.

19 MS. MACK: Just postsecondary is 90
20 percent.

21 CHAIRMAN KEISER: That's
22 extraordinarily high.

1 MS. LINDSLEY: Looking at different
2 measures, there are 25 different metrics that we
3 look at at an aggregate level through the
4 accreditation process, and those are included in
5 the system impact section.

6 In addition to that, we do look at
7 segmented data that the schools choose to submit
8 in their applications through standards 1 through
9 6, and that is specifically related to each of
10 those standards. So there are 25-plus different
11 metrics that we're looking at.

12 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Other questions? Go
13 ahead, Ralph.

14 MEMBER WOLFF: Just more for
15 clarification and understanding, the schools
16 themselves are accredited by either advanced ed
17 or the north central, or you're the only
18 accreditor? I'm trying to understand how the
19 districts you work with connect to other
20 accrediting bodies.

21 MS. MACK: The school districts are
22 accredited by the State Board of Career and

1 Technology Education. Some of them -- they also
2 are accredited by the state Department of
3 Education for the secondary -- they also serve
4 secondary students.

5 And then some of them may be
6 recognized by other accreditors, but primarily
7 all 29 of them are recognized -- we are
8 recognized as their accreditor as the State Board
9 of Career and Technology Education.

10 CHAIRMAN KEISER: George.

11 MEMBER FRENCH: Yes, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Haven't heard from
13 you all day.

14 MEMBER FRENCH: I have a simple
15 question on a procedural -- on the staff
16 recommendation. Do you want to wait until we get
17 to that part?

18 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Whichever you want
19 to do.

20 MEMBER FRENCH: Okay. It's that the
21 staff recommendation is to approve for good cause
22 for a year. I have raised this question before.

1 So we're saying for a year, until this time next
2 year, and then the report is due 30 days after we
3 meet next time. When would they come back before
4 us, if we continue for good cause?

5 MR. BOUNDS: I was talking to Jennifer
6 when you asked the question, but I think -- so
7 their good cause period is one year, and then
8 they have to submit a report 30 days after that
9 period demonstrating compliance with the cited
10 criteria.

11 Now, what will determine when they
12 appear before the NACIQI will depend on our staff
13 workload and when we can get them in and how the
14 next meeting is scheduled. But we will have
15 their compliance report. It has to be in within
16 those timeframes. When they get to the next
17 NACIQI meeting depends on the logistics.

18 MEMBER FRENCH: And I guess my
19 concern, Mr. Chairman, is we've been dragging
20 since 2015 on this one. It seems like we've been
21 dragging since 2015 on this one. I was just
22 trying to see if there was a procedure whereby we

1 could get them back in maybe next year at this
2 time.

3 MR. BOUNDS: We gave them a year just
4 because we wanted to make sure that they had
5 ample time to do things. I mean, if the agency
6 were to feel that they could fix this in six
7 months, I would have no objection to the motion
8 being changed.

9 It's better to make sure that they
10 have time to go back and conduct their meetings
11 and get their policies changed, you know, with
12 state requirements, and whatever those things may
13 be, versus put a short window in and them not
14 have enough time to correct the issues and get
15 the proper -- as I was stating before, to
16 actually get the proper language in their
17 policies that specifically addresses the state
18 criteria, because, again, the state criteria is
19 more specific and detailed than some of the
20 regular accrediting --

21 MEMBER FRENCH: Right. So we're bound
22 by six months or a year.

1 MR. BOUNDS: You could -- you're not
2 bound -- you are all not bound by anything. You
3 could -- if they say they can do it in a month,
4 you can --

5 MEMBER FRENCH: So you see where I'm
6 trying to go. I'm just trying to go to not one
7 year from today, which is when we'll be meeting
8 from NACIQI and their report is due 30 days after
9 a year from today versus 30 days before when we
10 meet next year.

11 MR. BOUNDS: That's from -- yes, I'm
12 sorry. It's from the date of the letter. So the
13 SDO has the 90-day, so it will be from the day of
14 that letter, not from the date of the meeting.
15 But I have no problem if the agency says they can
16 do it faster. You guys want to amend our
17 recommendation, that's -- I have no objection to
18 that.

19 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Claude, and then
20 Frank.

21 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Yes. As you can
22 tell, the -- a number of members on the committee

1 are really confused as to why -- why we're still
2 here. And so especially since, you know, you
3 never considered the Department's requirements to
4 be superseded by the Baldrige, so you knew you
5 had to be compliant with these anyway.

6 We told you you had to be, and I'm
7 kind of understanding or hearing from you that
8 you're actually in compliance but you couldn't
9 provide documentation that you're in compliance.
10 I'm really confused as to why that's the case.

11 So you really need to help us out here
12 because, you know, and staff indicates -- and we
13 look at these measures, these are not super
14 difficult things to do. And so what's going on?

15 Help us understand this a little bit
16 better because, again, if you would have thought
17 or if somebody would have thought, well, Baldrige
18 supersedes the Department, which you are saying
19 you did not do at all, then you should have been
20 in compliance at the very beginning anyway. So
21 it's concerning.

22 MS. MACK: For the conversation around

1 us, including Baldrige, above this particular
2 piece --

3 MEMBER PRESSNELL: No. No.

4 MS. MACK: -- that was not the -- that
5 was not -- we were not a part of the process when
6 that was designated for the State Board and the
7 agency. So in the process, as we evaluated that,
8 we want to make sure that we are in compliance
9 with the Department and making sure that we're
10 meeting that criteria.

11 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Right.

12 MS. MACK: To go through the process
13 and make sure that we have the evidence with the
14 criteria that we list in the self-assessment and
15 moving that forward.

16 We have gone through the process,
17 getting the evidence of the papers. The schools
18 must provide us their feedback. We have the six-
19 month for their action item to provide those
20 completed documents. We have been through the
21 process. We do have that when those documents
22 are completed, during the time period that the

1 window was open for which we could upload those
2 we did.

3 The window to -- for us not to upload
4 closed November 10th. The other documents that
5 we have, we finished the other cycles. We can --
6 we do have the documents to upload to meet that
7 criteria. They were not -- the schools had not
8 completed all of their piece for the evidence for
9 us to be able to upload that by November 10th
10 when the window closed for us to provide the
11 documentation and the evidence as outlined. It's
12 very specific for the states.

13 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Yes, I understand.
14 And maybe -- feel free, staff, to --

15 MR. MULA: What has happened is the
16 agency, these people are new to this. They're
17 not the ones that did the 215.

18 But what has happened is the process
19 of applying these requirements has not been
20 completed. So the agency didn't send us anything
21 when they should have basically told us they had
22 not had time to apply this certain application.

1 We would have understood that and made
2 different citations. But we did not know that
3 they weren't able to apply it. This is the first
4 time that I'm picking this up.

5 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Frank, then John.

6 MEMBER WU: I just wanted to speak in
7 support of what George was saying. I think it's
8 good for two reasons for us to look at not just
9 the formula we use.

10 The first is because that makes us
11 lazy. We should be thinking about does this
12 agency need more time or less time, is there
13 something, rather than just mechanically saying
14 one year. So I just think it's good for us to
15 get away from just boilerplate in each instance.

16 The second reason, though, this goes
17 back to the nurses we saw about two hours ago.
18 Our pressure actually can produce good effects.
19 Now I'm not saying that we just apply it
20 indiscriminately.

21 But where there's a reason to do that,
22 and there isn't a reason for delay, I'm all in

1 favor of saying 30 days or 60 or 90 or 6 months,
2 as long as we bear in mind the practicalities.
3 Often something has to go in front of a board or
4 be approved, and there's a process.

5 But we shouldn't just mechanically say
6 one year, one year, one year with each agency.
7 So thank you, George.

8 CHAIRMAN KEISER: John.

9 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: So let me describe
10 what I think I'm gathering. And maybe you could
11 confirm it or tell us something about the timing.

12 But as I understand it, you, not you,
13 but Oklahoma started trying to build a Baldrige
14 model assessment system. And you thought it was
15 consistent with the Department's requirements,
16 again, not you, but whoever your predecessors
17 were.

18 That didn't work out. And after
19 piloting it, you abandoned the pilot. And you,
20 now you personally have been trying to develop a
21 hybrid model that uses some of the Baldrige ideas
22 but conforms to the Department's requirements.

1 Am I right so far?

2 MS. MACK: Yes.

3 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Okay. So I guess
4 my question is, when did you abandon the pilot
5 and start on this new process of redesigning a
6 hybrid model, designing a hybrid model? When did
7 that happen? Was that 2015?

8 MS. LINDSLEY: So we, 2013 was when we
9 started the Baldrige pilot.

10 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Okay.

11 MS. LINDSLEY: So, '14/'15, '15/'16
12 school years we piloted. In the middle of that
13 process is when this committee said it is not
14 meeting our requirements, you need to change.

15 And so we expedited ending the pilot.
16 But we didn't want to end it mid-cycle. We
17 wanted that group to finish out. And so that's
18 what we did.

19 So, when we came to you in 2015, we
20 were finishing out that '15/'16 year at the same
21 time as training the schools moving forward on
22 the new model. So we were right in the midst of

1 that when we came last time.

2 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Okay. So that's
3 sort of what I understood, in which case it is
4 not, in my opinion, it is not at all surprising
5 that that was two years ago, that it's taken them
6 this long to redesign their model, abandon the
7 pilot, redesign and put in place the new system,
8 whatever it is.

9 And the fact that they're not in
10 compliance but have some remaining things to show
11 is not surprising. And so I don't agree with the
12 sense that I'm hearing that we ought to force
13 them to do it more quickly. I think giving them
14 a year is just fine.

15 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Any other questions?
16 Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry, Bobbie. I turned, and
17 then you put your hand up.

18 MEMBER DERLIN: Well, I was feeling
19 ambiguous, but now I'm not. So I just wanted to
20 check, and this is really a process
21 consideration. I'm not so sure it's a question
22 for the agency. So it might be Chuck or Herman.

1 So, if this group had an adequate time
2 to apply its policies, which are in compliance
3 with our rules, and we give them a year and they
4 are ready and submit their documentation in a
5 month or two, are they then on the queue to come
6 up for a meeting? They don't, I guess what I'm
7 saying is they don't have to wait a year, do
8 they?

9 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Do we want to
10 discuss this when we get towards a motion,
11 because these are all procedural questions?

12 MEMBER DERLIN: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN KEISER: If that, because
14 that is a -- I think we're going to get into
15 those conversations. Well, thank you very much.
16 And I guess it's your turn, Chuck, to summarize
17 if you have things to say. I'm sure you do.

18 MR. MULA: I would just like to go
19 back a little bit and hope to clarify to the
20 Committee what brought us to this place.

21 The agency's submission of its
22 original compliance report that was required at

1 the year 2015 meeting was basically in compliance
2 except the fact that there are documentation
3 issues that we require, that are requirements the
4 criteria requires, so that we could verify that
5 they applied this process.

6 There was no evidence from these three
7 areas in documentation where we could definitely
8 say the Department has verified that this
9 application is done according to their
10 requirements, which they are in compliance with.
11 The policies are good. Their change back to that
12 system that they originally had is working. They
13 just not have had the chance to apply.

14 If they would have told us that they
15 did not have the opportunity to apply this yet
16 because of the process that is going, the
17 feedback that's necessary from the institutions,
18 then we would have made a statement notifying
19 this Committee that they were in compliance,
20 except they told us that they were not able to
21 comply and maybe at a later time we would provide
22 that evidence to you.

1 Your ability, our ability and the
2 timeframes, a year plus 30 days, is in the
3 statute. We can't move. That doesn't mean that
4 you can't. But we will not be able to tell the
5 institution ourselves that, oh listen, we gave
6 you a year plus 30, but you can give it to us in
7 60 days if you want. We can't do that.

8 So you're allowed to do that. So, if
9 that's what you want to do, that's fine.

10 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Thank you. Is there
11 a motion? I will entertain a motion at this
12 point. It can be anywhere to begin the
13 discussion.

14 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Sure, I'll move the
15 staff recommendation that the agency be granted
16 an extension of its recognition for good cause
17 for a period of one year and that the Agency
18 submit a report demonstrating its compliance with
19 the cited criteria 30 days after the expiration
20 of the one-year period with a reconsideration of
21 recognition status thereafter, including review
22 of the report and appearance by the Agency at a

1 NACIQI meeting to be designated by the
2 Department.

3 MEMBER ZARAGOZA: Second that.

4 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Motion made and
5 second. Discussion, because I certainly do have
6 some? May I start?

7 I have a hard time here. We treat
8 governmental agencies differently than we treat
9 private agencies. It is not right.

10 The interest of the students is that
11 our agencies come in compliance. This agency
12 hasn't been in compliance since 2015, and that
13 includes 25 percent of their standards which they
14 have to meet with us.

15 You know, they don't have a lot. They
16 just have to meet the standards, like 10 or 11.
17 And they missed 25 percent.

18 And they didn't even understand that
19 they had to submit it after being told in 2015,
20 which certainly brings into question the
21 competence of the agency in delivering in the
22 accreditation process, which most accrediting

1 agencies wouldn't put up with if their
2 institution said, well, we just didn't know we
3 had to provide the documentation.

4 So I have a real difficult time. We
5 have taken another agency out for less. And
6 that's another whole discussion. I will
7 entertain more discussion.

8 MEMBER FRENCH: Mr. Chairman, I concur
9 with your sentiments. And my concern would be if
10 the staff recommendation and if Chuck feels like
11 they are in compliance and possibly were in
12 compliance since 2015 but they didn't provide
13 adequate information, so to speak, then I suggest
14 that we don't give them a year and 30 days,
15 because that means, this is 2018, that means 2019
16 they can't make our February meeting. So they
17 basically go to November 2019, which is almost
18 2020. That's two months from 2020. We're
19 basically going to give them two years to get
20 this right.

21 Now, I suggest that we give them less
22 than a year. If Chuck is correct in saying that

1 basically they're in compliance, then let's let
2 them show that they're in compliance, but don't
3 give them basically two more years before they
4 come back before us. I just can't see that.

5 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Herman.

6 MR. BOUNDS: I mean, now look, while
7 I don't disagree with Chuck's analysis, I want
8 everybody to be clear.

9 There are some language changes that
10 they need to make to their policies to correct.
11 So they have some minor issues that they need to
12 fix in policy even though operationally they may
13 be operating like we want. You know, the
14 students may be involved with the development of
15 self-study, but that language needs to be put in
16 documentation.

17 So I just want to remind the Committee
18 of that. There are some language changes that
19 needs to occur in their documentation.

20 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Further discussions?

21 MEMBER FRENCH: Do you have a second,
22 Mr. Chairman?

1 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Yes, we do. There's
2 a motion --

3 MEMBER WU: Wait, wait, wait, just --
4 I'm sorry.

5 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I'll wait, wait,
6 wait.

7 MEMBER WU: I'm sorry. So, if there's
8 a pending motion for George to do what he wants
9 to do, he needs to make a motion to amend this,
10 which I would support.

11 MEMBER FRENCH: So would it be a
12 friendly amendment?

13 MEMBER O'DONNELL: Well, I don't know
14 what your amendment --

15 (Laughter.)

16 MEMBER FRENCH: Six months, less than
17 one year and 30 days just to give the agency the
18 opportunity to come back before us at this time
19 next year or in the fall, six months.

20 MEMBER WU: Could you name a time? If
21 so, I would bet, George, if you said 24 hours,
22 that would not --

1 MEMBER FRENCH: Right.

2 MEMBER WU: -- be friendly. But can
3 you name --

4 MEMBER FRENCH: Six months, six months
5 is what I would.

6 MR. BOUNDS: I couldn't bring them in
7 for the next meeting because the Federal Register
8 notice announcing that meeting has already been
9 out. So it would not be until --

10 MEMBER FRENCH: A year.

11 MR. BOUNDS: -- December or whenever
12 that next meeting occurs in January, when that
13 next meeting occurs.

14 MEMBER FRENCH: When is that?

15 MS. HONG: We're looking at January or
16 February of next year.

17 MEMBER FRENCH: We won't have a fall
18 meeting this year?

19 MS. HONG: No, we're looking at the
20 end of May for the second NACIQI meeting of the
21 year.

22 MEMBER FRENCH: Well, thank you.

1 MS. HONG: Yes.

2 MEMBER WU: May I just note something,
3 which is I've realized we're in this sort of
4 surreal world of NACIQI where every time we say X
5 number of days or months or years it's actually
6 two X that? So, whenever we say one year, when
7 you look at it realistically, it's two.

8 So let's just bear that in mind, which
9 is why we should say six months and it will mean
10 a year. Because if we say one year, as George
11 has pointed out, it's really two years, maybe two
12 and a half years. So that's another reason to
13 just shorten everything.

14 MEMBER FRENCH: I would propose a
15 friendly amendment of six months.

16 MEMBER O'DONNELL: I would consider
17 that friendly.

18 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Okay. The motion
19 has been amended friendly and --

20 PARTICIPANT: I'm okay with that, too.

21 CHAIRMAN KEISER: -- and the second
22 has agreed to that. Okay. Is there any further

1 discussion? Bobbie, and I caught you this time.

2 MEMBER DERLIN: But I'm not going to
3 ask my original question. I just want to check.
4 If this adjustment is made and the timeframe is
5 now six months plus 30 days, is the agency
6 confident it can meet this?

7 CHAIRMAN KEISER: But what's the -- I
8 mean, they haven't met it for two years. So, if
9 they don't meet it --

10 (Off mic comments.)

11 MEMBER WU: Well, so we don't want to
12 come across I think as too harsh. But I don't
13 think we want to routinely ask agencies if they
14 can meet deadlines we impose any more than other
15 people who set deadlines say, you know, is this
16 okay with you, right? When we set deadlines with
17 students, we don't negotiate with them.

18 MEMBER DERLIN: Well, I certainly
19 don't disagree with that, Frank. But at the same
20 time, we also have Herman's remark that there are
21 some policy tweaks that they need to do. And we
22 don't know quite how that influences their

1 internal procedures. And if we don't care, then
2 we don't care.

3 MEMBER WU: Should we call the agency
4 back up, because -- so if the agency said our
5 board only meets once a year, which would be a
6 bad idea, but if they said that, then we would
7 have some sense they can't do it, right?

8 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Well, they can have
9 an emergency meeting. I mean, this is important.
10 They lose their recognition. They lose the Title
11 IV that those students are entitled to. So this
12 is not a game to play. This is a very serious
13 issue.

14 And for two years, they've neglected
15 to meet the standards. So I think you guys are
16 being very nice and much more patient than I am.
17 But then again, I have my own issues. So --

18 MEMBER WU: So may I, Chair, sum up?
19 I think if we pass this, we are actually
20 signaling to the world, which is the people
21 seated out here, that we are serious about
22 deadlines and we don't want to be lax and, you

1 know, we want to move this along, right? I infer
2 that's what George is saying.

3 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Okay. Any further
4 discussion? Sensing none, all those in favor of
5 the motion signify by raising your hand.

6 CHAIRMAN KEISER: All those opposed?
7 (Show of hands.)

8 CHAIRMAN KEISER: And I don't vote.
9 So I would have opposed, but I don't. So motion
10 carries.

11 We are now at a point, it is 2:55. We
12 have run out of institutions or agencies on our
13 agenda.

14 However, I am told that we have an
15 agency that is willing to come before us today
16 instead of tomorrow so they could probably go
17 home. And actually, I think they're here in
18 Washington, so they don't have far to go.

19 And I have recused from that. So I'm
20 going to turn over the microphone to --

21 MEMBER WU: Sure, I'm happy to. I
22 just want to confirm. There isn't a third-party

1 commentator issue. We're good to go with this
2 agency. Okay. Great.

3 CHAIRMAN KEISER: I'll be back.

4 MEMBER WU: Okay. Any other recusals?

5 (Off mic comments.)

6 MEMBER WU: Oh, a five-minute restroom
7 break. All right, five-minute break.

8 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
9 went off the record at 2:54 p.m. and resumed at
10 3:03 p.m.)

11 MEMBER WU: For the record, my name is
12 Frank Wu. I'm the Vice Chair, and I will be
13 presiding. Our Chair, Art Keiser, has recused
14 himself, so if we could note that for the record.
15 We now have a quorum.

16 And we're taking early -- and I note
17 for the record there are no third-party
18 commentators, and the Agency has consented to
19 coming before us one day early.

20 This is the American Physical Therapy
21 Association, Commission on Accreditation in
22 Physical Therapy Education, known as CAPTE, C-A-

1 P-T-E.

2 So we will proceed in the manner that
3 we always proceed, that's primary readers, the
4 Department staff, agency representatives. So the
5 primary readers for CAPTE are -- let me see. Who
6 are the primary readers? John Etchemendy and
7 Claude Pressnell. And, gentlemen, which of you
8 will be speaking?

9 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Yes, so I'll
10 introduce the agency.

11 MEMBER WU: Okay, John Etchemendy.

12 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Yes. So the
13 American Physical Therapy Association, APTA, is a
14 professional association of physical therapists,
15 physical therapy assistants, and students of
16 physical therapy.

17 And CAPTE, the Commission on
18 Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, is
19 the unit within APTA that is a programmatic
20 accreditor.

21 They accredit and pre-accredit
22 physical therapists, education programs leading

1 to the first professional degree, so those are
2 masters degrees and doctorates, and physical
3 therapy assistant, PTA, education programs, which
4 are at the associate level.

5 CAPTE accreditation is required for
6 access to the scholarships for disadvantaged
7 students program. But they are not a Title IV
8 eligible accreditor, which is why they can be
9 part of APTA and not violate the separate and
10 independent requirements.

11 CAPTE currently accredits 202 physical
12 therapy programs, 274 PTA programs, and 74 pre-
13 accredited or developing programs throughout the
14 United States and the District of Columbia and
15 its territories. They do some international
16 accreditation, but that's irrelevant to us.

17 The Commission on Accreditation in
18 Physical Therapy Education was first, sorry, the
19 CAPTE was first recognized by the Secretary in
20 1977 and most recently re-recognized in 2014.

21 And I will turn it over to the staff
22 now.

1 MS. DAGGETT: Thank you. Good
2 afternoon, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the
3 Committee. For the record, my name is Elizabeth
4 Daggett, and I am providing a summary of the
5 review of the petition for renewal of recognition
6 for the agency, CAPTE.

7 The staff recommendation to the senior
8 department official for this agency is to
9 continue the agency's current recognition and
10 require a compliance report within 12 months on
11 issues identified in the staff report.

12 This recommendation is based on our
13 review of the agency's petition and its
14 supporting documentation, as well as the
15 observation of a commission meeting in April
16 2017. The Department did not receive any written
17 third-party comments.

18 Our review of the agency's petition
19 found that the agency is substantially in
20 compliance with the criteria for recognition.
21 There are a couple of outstanding issues that the
22 agency needs to address in the recognition area

1 of required standards and their application.
2 Specifically, the issues concern the agency's
3 enforcement timelines and actions.

4 We believe that the agency can resolve
5 the concerns we have identified and demonstrate
6 its compliance in a written report in a year's
7 time.

8 Since the agency's last review in the
9 spring of 2014, the Department has received no
10 complaints. Therefore, as I stated earlier, the
11 staff is recommending to the senior department
12 official to continue the agency's current
13 recognition and require a compliance report in 12
14 months on issues identified in the staff report.
15 Thank you.

16 MEMBER WU: Thank you. Do we have the
17 agency representatives? Thank you. And if I
18 might remind you to press the button on the
19 speaker before you start speaking, and if you
20 would identify yourselves. Thank you.

21 DR. MARCOUX: Thank you. The
22 Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy

1 Education would like to thank you for this
2 opportunity to speak on behalf of the CAPTE
3 community.

4 My name is Dr. Beth Marcoux. I'm the
5 current Chair of CAPTE and currently Professor
6 Emeritus and past Chair in the Department of
7 Physical Therapy at the University of Rhode
8 Island, currently serving as adjunct faculty in
9 the Department of Physical Therapy at Franklin
10 Pierce University in Manchester, New Hampshire.

11 I am a licensed physical therapist and
12 have been involved in education of physical
13 therapists for the past 40 years.

14 Dr. Sandra Wise is our Senior Director
15 of Accreditation. She's been involved with
16 higher education, including over 20 years in
17 accreditation.

18 Also with me here today is the
19 accreditation staff who provide limitless hours
20 of commitment for quality assurance in physical
21 therapy education.

22 We'd like to express our appreciate to

1 Elizabeth Daggett for her technical assistance
2 during the review of CAPTE's petition. Her
3 knowledge of the regulations is clearly evident
4 and her guidance proved invaluable during the
5 process.

6 We are extremely proud of our
7 organization and committed to our vision of
8 excellence in education of physical therapists
9 and physical therapist assistants. And we
10 believe that educational quality and integrity
11 cannot be compromised.

12 The CAPTE accreditation process is
13 designed to ensure that there are appropriate
14 competencies in entry level practices of
15 graduates to assure safe care for physical
16 therapy patients.

17 An additional strength of CAPTE is its
18 diversity of the commission members. CAPTE
19 accredits physical therapists, known as PT
20 programs, at the doctoral level, as well as
21 physical therapist assistant programs, known as
22 PTA programs, at the associate degree level.

1 CAPTE is made up of 31 commission
2 members, 23 of whom are licensed PTs or PTAs with
3 academic and practitioner backgrounds. The
4 remaining members include three public members
5 and five higher education administrator members.

6 Our members have experience across the
7 spectrum of higher education, including colleges
8 and universities in all sectors, as well as
9 experience in distance education.

10 The commission's members'
11 qualifications and knowledge allow for sound
12 accreditation decisions.

13 CAPTE now accredits over 600 programs.
14 From 2013 through 2017, CAPTE granted candidacy
15 to 47 programs, denied candidacy to 29 programs,
16 granted initial accreditation to 87 programs, and
17 withheld accreditation from 12 programs.

18 Additionally, CAPTE took action on
19 1,157 accreditation reports and approved 63
20 substantive change requests.

21 Based on the CAPTE actions, the areas
22 of non-compliance most frequently cited and

1 resulting in citations and frequent monitoring
2 include standards related to, for physical
3 therapy programs, curriculum assessment, workload
4 policies, core faculty scholarship, sufficient
5 number of core faculty, and administrative
6 support.

7 For physical therapist assistant
8 programs, the most frequently cited required
9 elements were assessment process, core faculty
10 assessment, core syllabi, and determining
11 students are ready for clinical experiences.

12 We'd like to highlight the
13 commission's use of bright lines for student
14 achievement. CAPTE has set an 85 percent
15 benchmark for licensure pass rate, 90 percent
16 employment rate, and for PTAs, a 60 percent
17 graduation rate, and for PTs, an 80 percent
18 graduation rate.

19 Based on data collected from our
20 program annual reports, the average program
21 graduation rate for physical therapist assistant
22 programs is 85.4 percent and for physical

1 therapist programs is 95.5 percent.

2 Licensure pass rates are available
3 from the national licensing organization. We've
4 established what we believe to be a reasonable
5 pass rate based on a three-year history of
6 respective programs.

7 CAPTE requires programs to submit data
8 annually in relation to pass rates, employment
9 rates, and program graduation rates, as well as
10 other established required elements. These
11 required elements are clearly reflected through
12 the accreditation standards and are continuously
13 monitored via the accreditation annual report and
14 the continuing accreditation process.

15 Failure to comply with any one of the
16 required elements within the standards initiates
17 the two-year compliance timeframe for the
18 program.

19 If a program fails to meet any of the
20 bright lines for student achievement outcomes,
21 CAPTE requires the program to provide a detailed
22 action plan. The program's progress for meeting

1 any improvement is reviewed at six-month
2 intervals.

3 Programs not meeting the bright lines
4 within the two-year timeframe have accreditation
5 withdrawn unless the program has demonstrated a
6 good faith effort for coming into compliance and
7 the commission determines that a good cause
8 extension is warranted.

9 The bright lines are used to
10 distinguish programs at high or low risk. In
11 addition to being monitored through annual and
12 interim reports, at-risk programs can be given
13 shortened accreditation terms, monitored through
14 increased reporting, and potentially be subject
15 to a focused site visit.

16 Between November 2012 and November
17 2014, 33 programs were placed on probation. Of
18 those 33, 30 programs documented components of
19 compliance within their designated compliance
20 timeframe, with 3 programs having accreditation
21 withdrawn.

22 CAPTE offers multiple resources to

1 assist programs to come into compliance with all
2 accreditation standards and to promote program
3 improvement.

4 For example, workshops are held
5 throughout the country three times a year. The
6 accreditation staff is also available for
7 individual guidance. Development of learning
8 modules is underway to provide programs with best
9 practices for accreditation processes.

10 As a vast majority of the at-risk
11 programs maintain accreditation, the resources
12 provided are clearly beneficial in assisting
13 programs with successfully reversing their risk
14 status.

15 With respect to outstanding concerns,
16 one, the agency must provide documentation to
17 demonstrate it has taken an adverse action and
18 enforce the timeframes required by this section.
19 And, two, the agency must provide documentation
20 to demonstrate that it clearly communicates to a
21 program when it grants an extension for good
22 cause.

1 First, Section 8.26(b), page 77 of the
2 CAPTE Rules of Practice and Procedure state that,
3 one, if the program is judged not to be making
4 satisfactory progress toward bringing the program
5 into compliance, CAPTE will act to place the
6 program on probation accreditation and/or shorten
7 the accreditation cycle or withdraw
8 accreditation.

9 Two, if the program does not come into
10 compliance within the two years of being
11 determined to be out of compliance, CAPTE will
12 withdraw accreditation unless the program has
13 provided sufficient evidence of a good faith
14 effort to meet the standards and elements and
15 CAPTE is convinced that compliance will be
16 achieved within a reasonable timeframe not to
17 exceed two years.

18 The data referred to earlier for the
19 2012/2014 timeframe includes three programs whose
20 accreditation was withdrawn for failure to comply
21 with CAPTE standards within its maximum
22 timeframe.

1 Additionally, CAPTE would like to
2 relate one more specific example of taking an
3 adverse action in enforcement of timeframes.

4 In spring 2013, a physical therapist
5 assistant program was found to be out of
6 compliance with required bright line for pass
7 rates, requesting a compliance report for the
8 program for the fall of 2013.

9 Based on continued non-compliance, the
10 program had its accreditation withdrawn in the
11 fall of 2014, which was then subject to
12 reconsideration.

13 The program requested and was granted
14 a reconsideration hearing in spring 2015, whereby
15 the original decision was reversed and the
16 program was placed on probation for six months
17 for good cause.

18 Although the program continued to be
19 out of compliance and was to have its
20 accreditation withdrawn, CAPTE was notified of
21 the institution's intention to close. CAPTE
22 continued probation accreditation until the

1 program taught out its last students.

2 With respect to 602.20(b), clear
3 communication to programs that they've been
4 granted a good cause extension, CAPTE's Rules of
5 Practice and Procedures indicate that CAPTE will
6 withdraw accreditation unless the program
7 provides evidence of a good faith effort to meet
8 the standards and elements and CAPTE is convinced
9 that compliance will be achieved within a usual,
10 within a reasonable timeframe not to exceed two
11 years.

12 The rules and procedures thus define
13 the circumstances under which a program can
14 demonstrate that there is cause for an extension
15 to be granted.

16 The documents provided to programs for
17 their accreditation status now clearly indicate
18 that the program was granted an extension for
19 good cause. CAPTE's decisions that are published
20 on its website will include a category
21 identifying programs that were granted a good
22 cause extension.

1 Examples of the good cause and
2 decision templates are available should any
3 NACIQI member want to review those documents.

4 Once again, on behalf of the
5 Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy
6 Education, the commission members and staff would
7 like to thank the Department and the Committee
8 for the opportunity to present additional
9 information in support of our petition.

10 Dr. Wise and I are ready to answer any
11 questions you may have.

12 MEMBER WU: Why don't we start with
13 the primary readers? I see John Etchemendy.

14 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: So I'd like to
15 understand the -- first of all, congratulations.
16 This is really impressive. The numbers that you
17 have here are really impressive on completion and
18 pass rates and so forth, and employment. All of
19 those numbers are incredibly impressive.

20 Could you explain how long the
21 programs are and how you measure graduation
22 rates? So how long is the doctorate? How long

1 is the masters? How long is the associate? And
2 what is the length of time that you measure for
3 graduation rate?

4 MS. WISE: I'd be glad to answer that
5 question. The associate degree programs are
6 generally two years --

7 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Two years, yes.

8 MS. WISE: -- like the traditional.
9 The graduate programs, now at the doctorate
10 level, we just have one masters program left
11 that's being taught out by the end of this year.

12 So the doctorate programs will run
13 anywhere from two and a half years to four years.
14 So there's no standard length of time for the
15 doctorate program.

16 So, consequently, our graduation rates
17 are tailored to the cohort where the student
18 started. So we look at, we ask the programs to
19 look at what students started the program, and
20 then within a year after completion, how many of
21 those students graduated with that cohort,
22 because of the steplock nature of the programs,

1 you know, you have to take this course or take
2 this course, you have to go this way, the
3 students who may be dismissed or fail have to
4 wait out and go into the next cohort.

5 So we don't count that within the
6 graduation of the first cohort. They go into the
7 next cohort. So they count against the
8 graduation of the first, and will go into the
9 other one.

10 So it's real hard to say that we give
11 them 150 percent time and all of that because of
12 the lockstep nature of the program. So does that
13 answer your question?

14 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Yes. So it's
15 really the length of the program plus one year
16 basically --

17 MS. WISE: It is primarily.

18 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: -- is what you
19 look at. Okay.

20 So how exactly did you choose the
21 number, the target numbers, the 60 percent for
22 the PTA and the 80 percent for the doctorate? It

1 sounded to me like you looked at three years of
2 data and that was the average?

3 MS. WISE: Yes.

4 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: So you took the
5 average to be the bright line.

6 MS. WISE: That's where we started.
7 So, and I am three years into this. And so I
8 wasn't here when they did the review and renewal
9 of their standards and required elements, which
10 happened in, started in 2013, '14 I should say.

11 So, when they were looking at them,
12 they began to want to set the bright lines. And
13 that's what they did, so because there's no
14 research that establishes what it should be and
15 what constitutes a good rate for outcomes as far
16 as competence in practice and things like that.

17 So what the committee on the review
18 for the standards did was, they did. They looked
19 at the three-year average rate and then
20 determined from the committee review whether
21 that's where they wanted to set it.

22 And so some of the rates are even

1 higher than that three-year average, because they
2 felt that the average wasn't really where they
3 wanted the programs to be.

4 So, with that then, they sent that out
5 to the communities and the stakeholders for
6 review, took in their comments. And from that
7 review and the commission's decision is how this,
8 the benchmarks were set.

9 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: So, yes, and it's
10 interesting.

11 MS. WISE: Yes.

12 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: It's great if you
13 can, if it works. But in effect, what you do
14 when you take the average as the bright line,
15 then you basically say half of your programs are
16 out of compliance from the beginning, from the
17 get-go.

18 MS. WISE: Yes.

19 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: And you've all got
20 to get --

21 MS. WISE: Yes.

22 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: -- get above that,

1 which is great if it works. It's a little bit
2 dangerous I think.

3 MS. WISE: So I pulled some other
4 numbers just to let you know where we're at right
5 now.

6 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Okay.

7 MS. WISE: Would that help?

8 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: I think you gave
9 us some other numbers. And they look really
10 great. The more recent numbers are even higher,
11 right?

12 MS. WISE: Yes. So I just looked at
13 our latest data that -- we look at the rates
14 every spring, because we get them at the end of
15 the year. So, in spring of 2017, which is not in
16 this petition, for the PTA programs, which is
17 where we find the average is at 60 percent, we
18 only had 10 programs below it. So I think it is
19 --

20 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: It's working.

21 MS. WISE: -- a reachable target.

22 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Yes, it's working.

1 MS. WISE: And it's working to bring
2 them up.

3 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: That's great.

4 MS. WISE: Yes.

5 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: I applaud that in
6 spite of the fact that it seems to be an odd way
7 to pick the --

8 MS. WISE: Right.

9 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: -- the bottom
10 line, right?

11 So the one additional question was
12 suppose one of the, a doctoral program fails to
13 meet the 80 percent. Maybe they drop, you know,
14 they drop below, say, 75 percent or 70 percent.
15 And you tell them, okay, you have two years to
16 come into compliance.

17 Given that the program is a four-year
18 program, isn't it going to be kind of difficult
19 for them to all of a sudden come into compliance,
20 unless they decide that, well, we're going to
21 graduate everybody or somehow go back and the
22 people that left and decided they were dropping

1 out, you grab them back and -- I mean, how does
2 the program go about and make that change in two
3 years?

4 MS. WISE: So this is probably where
5 this good faith effort comes in and how we need
6 to clarify, which is what is on our
7 recommendations for improvement, is to make it
8 clear that that's what we're doing for the
9 program.

10 So we would look at them. They have
11 to come in. And we monitor them every six months
12 for a plan that they've developed to increase
13 their graduation rates.

14 And the commission will decide if the
15 plan sounds reasonable, if it's going to do what
16 it's supposed to do. And then we'll watch for
17 trends. So we'll watch those graduation rates
18 every year for two years.

19 And if they're trending up and they're
20 real close, then we give the good faith effort
21 and put them in. You know, if they're not, they
22 could go on show cause for just six months to see

1 if the next rate comes up.

2 So that's how that timeline works.
3 And we just need to do a better way of
4 communicating it to the programs.

5 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: No, no, that seems
6 reasonable. Great. Well, thank you. And it's
7 very impressive what you're doing. And I resist
8 asking you about my herniated disc.

9 MS. WISE: And she could take care of
10 you.

11 MEMBER WU: John, feel free to do that
12 during the next break. Any other questions?
13 Yes, Claude.

14 MEMBER PRESSNELL: Thank you again for
15 coming. I appreciate all that you do.

16 So I wanted to have you address, if
17 you would, particularly the findings. You had a
18 lot of narrative around what appeared to be
19 addressing the findings. So was there some
20 reason why you couldn't demonstrate compliance
21 during the review on 602.20(a) and (b)?

22 MS. WISE: Yes, probably it was the

1 fact that I wasn't real clear myself what was
2 needed and that I was attempting to find
3 evidence, excuse me, for a process that probably
4 was more involved than what the staff liaison was
5 really looking for.

6 So, in essence, I provided some
7 documentation where we were withdrawing, but not
8 what lead up to it as she had wanted or as was
9 the expectation. And so they're just -- we have
10 it. We just, again, need to provide it.

11 MEMBER PRESSNELL: And the staff
12 indicated that they don't see any problem with
13 you providing it.

14 So kind of again a global look at your
15 programs that you accredit, do you generally feel
16 really good about they are? Are there certain
17 pockets in the United States that may need more
18 programs, or you have high concentration in
19 certain areas that may need less programs? Or
20 what's your thinking on that and just the overall
21 health of the programs as a whole?

22 DR. MARCOUX: I think there are

1 currently a number of rapidly developing programs
2 in all areas. Physical therapy is viewed as a
3 moneymaker. And so a lot of schools are adding
4 it. A lot of universities and institutions are
5 adding it.

6 I think there's always need for more
7 programs in rural areas. And for example, the
8 area in Boston, Massachusetts has eight currently
9 DPT programs. And they probably could be, do
10 with less.

11 So I don't think we have any control
12 of it. But they're just -- I think we have,
13 certainly have sufficient numbers at this point
14 in spite of the U.S. Department of Labor and
15 Statistics comments that we're the fast-growing
16 and the needs are increasing. We seem to have
17 plenty.

18 MEMBER WU: I see no other questions.
19 I'll ask one. I have to say, of all the agencies
20 that I've seen, I would characterize just from
21 the numbers that you've shared you as
22 impressively tough. I say that in a very

1 positive way.

2 I wonder if you might share, is that,
3 this is intentional, just in who you turn down
4 and not just in absolute number terms, but
5 proportionally you seem to be maintaining some
6 tough standards.

7 This follows up on what John noted.
8 I wanted to give you a moment just to speak to
9 that.

10 MS. WISE: Again, I think it's, excuse
11 me, a pattern that the programs have shown over
12 time, that they're able to maintain these high
13 rates. And so it really isn't unexpected that
14 the programs think they're too high because
15 they're able to meet them.

16 And again, I have other numbers to
17 show you that we're not seeing too many programs
18 that fall below those rates that have to go on
19 our continuous monitoring process. So that
20 indicates to us that they're set right.

21 And then the feedback, you know, we
22 get from, especially in the site visits from the

1 employers, the clinicians that are out there, the
2 clinical sites, say the students are coming to
3 them well-prepared. And they're highly
4 employable. They're very skilled.

5 Again, that's an indication that what
6 we've put into place, as CAPTE's put into place,
7 is working.

8 The programs right now themselves, I
9 will say there are some anecdotal talk of the
10 employment rates, to go back to what we're doing
11 and how many programs there are. So we may see
12 some more noise around that at some point as the
13 programs, new programs come onboard.

14 But so far we've been able to maintain
15 that high quality. And we would really hope to
16 be able to do that going forward.

17 DR. MARCOUX: I would just also add
18 that, as a physical therapist, I think physical
19 therapists by nature are relatively competitive.
20 And so people want to be the best. And so they
21 compete to be the best.

22 And so I think, you know, one of the

1 comments we received was that CAPTE's standards
2 are minimum. And so out in the community I like
3 to say they're not minimum, they're minimal.
4 These are the minimal ones you can meet. But
5 they're not minimal by any stretch of the
6 imagination.

7 So I just think we're driven to be the
8 best. And I think that's reflected by the
9 programs.

10 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Frank, could I --

11 MEMBER WU: Yes, John.

12 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: Following up on
13 this, I think one of the things, one of the
14 dangers of setting a very high graduation rate
15 standard is that you worry that the programs are
16 going to make it easy to get through. And so
17 that was an initial worry I had.

18 But, of course, you have, you in
19 addition have the licensure rate requirement and
20 the employment rate requirement. And they're all
21 very high.

22 And so I think that sort of

1 triumvirate is absolutely great. And, you know,
2 I wish there's a way that we could apply that
3 more broadly. But, of course, in many programs
4 there's no licensure and so forth and so on. But
5 that's great. So --

6 MEMBER WU: Okay. Thank you so much.
7 And I think we now ask staff to come back and add
8 any comments as needed.

9 MS. DAGGETT: I have no further
10 comment.

11 MEMBER WU: Okay. Is there a motion?

12 MEMBER PRESSNELL: I would be happy to
13 do that. The motion is to continue the agency's
14 current recognition and require a compliance
15 report in 12 months on issues identified in the
16 staff report.

17 MEMBER ETCHEMENDY: I second.

18 MEMBER WU: Okay. The motion's been
19 duly made and seconded. Discussion? Okay.
20 Seeing no discussion, all in favor signify by
21 raising your hands and keep them up till they've
22 been counted by staff. Okay. Any opposed?

1 (Show of hands.)

2 MEMBER WU: Okay. I believe that ends
3 our discussion of CAPTE. And we will summon our
4 Chair back.

5 Let's take a five-minute break. I
6 believe that is the end of business for the day.
7 But it's not my prerogative to say that. So a
8 five-minute break.

9 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
10 went off the record at 3:31 p.m. and resumed at
11 3:34 p.m.)

12 CHAIRMAN KEISER: If I may, just to
13 let you know, we are ahead by one agency. So
14 tomorrow we hopefully will move the Friday agenda
15 up till tomorrow afternoon and most probably will
16 not have a meeting on Friday. So those of you
17 who are planning to stay on Friday, you're able
18 to go home. Go to your families.

19 I don't see the agenda tomorrow being
20 really difficult. So we should be able to have
21 the discussion on the proposals to the
22 legislature by the end of the day. And if we

1 have to, we might just go a little over the 5:00,
2 but we'll get it done.

3 (Off mic comments.)

4 CHAIRMAN KEISER: Tomorrow we have
5 Middle States, New York Border Regions, and WASC.
6 Three, we have three tomorrow. And we have a
7 presentation on the student records in the
8 morning for an hour. Okay.

9 Well, thank you all. We are
10 adjourned. We're adjourned for today. See you
11 tomorrow at 8:30.

12 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
13 went off the record at 3:35 p.m.)

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