1   U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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4   RACE TO THE TOP

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6   GRANT REVIEW

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10   Phase 1 and Tier 2 State Presentation

11   The State of North Carolina

12

13   8:30 a.m.

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16   Wednesday, March 17, 2010

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20   Holiday Inn

21   550 C Street, S.W.

22   Washington, D.C.

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

 2               BILL HARRISON:  Good morning. I'm Bill

 3    Harrison, Chairman of the Board of Education and we are

 4    looking forward to having the opportunity to share

 5    with you our Race to the Top proposal and responding to

 6    any questions you might have so you have a clear

 7    understanding of our ability to get this work done.

 8               Our agenda; I will spend a minute or

 9    or two introducing our team then we will hear

10    from Governor Perdue and she will talk about education

11    reform in North Carolina, our history of action, our history

12    of achievement and how we are going to move forward.

13               Following that, we will have a very

14    brief power point presentation.  Each of our team

15    will participate in that and then we

16    will provide you the bulk of this time for

17    questions and we will respond to those questions.

18               On my left is the honorable Governor Beverly Perdue

19    and she is with us, not only because she is the Governor,

20    but because she knows what's in this proposal.

21    She's spent time in the state senate and sponsored

22    much of the legislation that you're going to read
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 1    about as far as reform efforts in the state
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2   of North Carolina over the years. She served

3   eight years as Lieutenant Governor.

4   During that time, she sat on the State Board

5   of Education and is almost solely responsible

6   for the North Carolina Virtual Public

7   School being in the state of North Carolina,

8   So a history of innovation and she is right on top of

9   this thing.

10   I have been on the state board as chair

11   for the past year. Prior to that, I was a teacher,

12   I was a principal and I spent eighteen years as a

13   local superintentant.

14   To the Governor's left is June

15   Atkinson. She is our state superintendant.

16   She is in her second term. She became

17   state superintendant after a long distinguished

18   career in the department of public

19   instruction in a variety of leadership roles.

20   To June's left is Bill McNeal. He is the

21   executive director of the North Carolina association

22   of school administrators.

1   Prior to that, Bill served as the

2   superintendant in the Wake County public schools,

3   the largest school system in the state of North

4   Carolina and one of the highest achieving urban school

5   districts in the nation and Bill was actually

6   national superintendant of the year a few years ago.

7   To my right is Glen Kleiman. He is the

8   executive director of the Friday Institute

9   for Educational Innovation and professor at

10   the college of education at North Carolina

11   State University. Glen has been very

12   instrumental in this time at the Friday

13   Institute of really developing partnerships

14   with not only the state education agencies, but

15   with a variety of local education agencies across

16   the state. Prior to coming to the Friday

17   Institute, Glen served as vice president of the

18   Educational Development Center in Massachusetts

19   and was the co-director of the northeast regional

20   lab.

21   That is our team and I will now turn

22   it over to our Governor.

1   GOVERNOR PERDUE: Good morning.

2   Thank you.

3   North Carolina is very glad to be here

4   this morning.

5   In economic development language, I

6   am called North Carolina's "closer". That

7   means I pitch hard. But the strength of North

8   Carolina as a state and as a people is actually

9   what makes the difference time after time for

10 us.

11   Our state is home to the nation's first

12 public university, to many other private and

13 public universities. We have a strong and

14 vibrant community college system and our college system

15 is within driving distance of every single

16 citizen in North Carolina. That's our pledge.

17 We have 115 public school systems.

18   Education, traditionally, has been the

19 difference maker for the people of North

20 Carolina. We have been seen for years, and

21 continues to be, fertile ground for action and

22 collaboration from all levels of leadership.

1   We are risk-takers, the people of

2   North Carolina. And we've been a lighthouse for

3   innovation for the last four decades. I believe

4   that our Race to the Top application attests to

5   those strengths.

6   Stakeholders all across our state

7   collaborated on our proposal. Because of that

8   collaboration, we are very excited about having

9   a hundred percent agreement for our plan from

10   every school district superintendent, every

11   local school board and every local teacher.

12   That's a hundred percent and that's not easy to

13   do.

14   We have a history in our state of

15   working well together for a common goal and

16   that goal that has defined us is simply success

17   for all of our kids regardless of their zip

18   code.

19   In the area of clear high standards,

20   North Carolina has been at the forefront of the

21   standards movement long before it was called a

22   movement. We adopted statewide standards in

1   1985, statewide tests tied to school improvement

2   and accountability in 1992, and school-based pay

3   for performance incentives based on student

4   growth in 1996.

5   Now, we are moving beyond that and

6   beyond some of the assessments to pilot

7   diagnostic assessments using hand-held

8   technology in North Carolina's Public Schools.

9   The teachers and the students think it's really

10   cool. They like learning technology.

11   Teachers can now diagnose a student's

12   strengths or their skill sets and they get

13   immediate feedback to adjust their instruction

14   based on each child's individual needs and

15   that's the way schools should be.

16   We have unique students and teacher

17   identifiers. We can match students and their

18   results to teachers. Every school and every

19   teacher already has access to Web-based data on

20   value added achievement results.

21   So North Carolina has long been

22   committed to the classroom, to students, to

1   great teachers and great leaders. Since 1986,

2   we've had a teaching fellows program that's

3   recruited some of North Carolina's most talented

4   high school students into the teaching

5   profession. We provide full tuition, incentive

6   and special preparation for 500 new teachers

7   every year.

8   Since '97, we've provided financial

9   incentives for teachers to become nationally

10   board certified. About 12 percent of our

11   teachers have that high standard, more than any

12   state in America. We are proud of that.

13   We've provided alternative

14   certification pathways and that wasn't easy.

15   Almost half of our teachers hold at least one

16   license earned through the alternative route.

17   We are rolling out our new

18   comprehensive evaluation system for teachers and

19   for principals based on what we think is the

20   most demanding standards of practice.

21   Ten years ago we developed the Teacher

22   Working Conditions Survey, the results of which

1   we used to drive change in schools. Other

2   states across the nation have followed.

3   In the area of low-performing schools,

4   three years ago we began turnaround work in

5   local forming high schools which has proven

6   really successful. We've gone so far, me as

7   Governor and the state board, to take over an

8   entire school district in northeastern North

9   Carolina.

10   We have replaced leaders and teachers while

11   adding mentoring, coaching and building

12   community support as the nation's educational

13   leaders.

14   You know as well as I do how critical

15   that community support is to any success that we

16   may have because we've had teachers and

17   principals across the state at the table. We

18   have increased our capacity to provide each

19   individual student with the support he or she

20   needs to succeed.

21   In each school district we are having

22   community conversations with the people who can

1   really make a difference in a child's life:

2   parents, teachers, principals, volunteers,

3   business community members who see their future

4   workforce in the eyes of our state's school

5   children.

6   Our statewide mandate P-K through 20

7   educational cabinet which I chair, we've had

 8   that very same conversation. We believe that a

 9   top notch education must be the birth right of

10   every child born in our state.

11   That's why I have called our entire

12   system to refocus on a single goal. Every child

13   no matter where he or she lives in North

14   Carolina must graduate from high school with

15   what it really takes to succeed in a career, in

16   a two- or four-year college or in technical

17   training. That's the goal for every North

18   Carolina child. That's the heart of our Race to

19   the Top application.

20   So today, our state is not about

21   assurances to you. We are about action and

22   achievement. You know, we live our state's

 1   motto and that motto is, "Esse Quam Videri."

 2   That means to be, rather than to seem.

 3   Ladies and gentlemen, you can go

 4   anywhere in the country to experiment, but I

 5   strongly suggest, yes, even urge, that you allow

 6   North Carolina to deliver for America on our

 7   goal which is career college, ready, set, go.

8   Every child, no matter where he or she

9   lives in North Carolina or actually in America,

10   must graduate from high school with what it

11   really takes to succeed in a career, in a two-

12   or four-year college program or in technical

13   training.

14   Now, our team will briefly describe

15   some of the major initiatives of our Race to the

16   Top proposal. We look forward to answering your

17   questions.

18   Thank you very much for having us here

19   this morning.

20   MR. HARRISON: Thank you, Governor.

21   June.

22   MS. ATKINSON: Thank you. Good

1   morning to you.

2   Imagine it is the year 2014. What has

3   contributed to North Carolina exceeding its goal

4   of our graduation rate and what has North

5   Carolina done to drastically increase our

6   achievement of our students?

7   Our proposal builds on the lessons

8   that we have learned over the past decades in

9   working with statewide initiatives such as an

10   accountability system, content standards,

11   teacher and school effectiveness, data systems and

12   assistance to low-achieving schools.

13   The lessons that we have learned have

14   allowed us to benefit from the past so that we

15   may advance to versions 2.0 or 3.0 with reform

16   and innovation.

17   North Carolina has a statewide

18   infrastructure to be successful when rolling out

19   complex initiatives. We have strong

20   collaborative leadership at the local and state

21   levels. We have a history of starting and

22   implementing work that has helped students and

 1   teachers.

 2   Some examples of our collaborative

 3   leadership, school reform and innovation include

 4   our early college initiative. We have 33

 5   percent of all early colleges nationwide,

 6   statewide articulation agreements between our

 7   public schools and community colleges. Each

 8   year over 30,000 high school students take a

 9   community college course.

10   The early adoption in the '90s of our

11   aligned statewide accountability system where data

12   are available to all of our stakeholders. Our

13   statewide school connectivity initiative and our

14   performance for pay are other examples.

15   Regardless of what we have done, at

16   the heart of the matter is that we want great

17   teachers and leaders so that we will have all

18   students to be college- and career-ready. The

19   Race to the Top will allow us to move further

20   and faster.

21   At the core of our proposal is that of

22   developing an aligned system of standards and

1   assessments. We are now positioned to go to

2   version 3.0 with standards and assessments with

3   our adoption of the common core standards.

4   We look forward to collaborating with

5   other states and with our educators in our state

6   so that we can deliver a statewide technology-

7   delivered assessment system that will include a

8   learning management system, formative diagnostic

9   interim and summative assessments.

10   This statewide tool will ultimately be

11   accessible to every educator and every student

12   in our state. And it will facilitate our

13   answering the question about student learning:

14   What's next and what do I have to do to learn

15   this concept or skill?

16   Our system will be similar to a GPS,

17   allowing students and teachers to recalculate if

18   they make the wrong educational turn.

19   This assessment and learning

20   management system will allow us to customize,

21   personalize education for every single student.

22   In this arena, RTTT will equal student mastery.

1   While we have many miles to go and

2   much to do to raise student achievement, North

3   Carolina has a history of raising student

4   achievement.

5   During the last five years, we have

6   also raised standards when others may not have

7   taken that route. We know that regardless of

8   where we are today, we need to increase our

9   student achievement beyond our success that we

10   have now. Race to the Top will allow us to do

11   that.

12   Thank you.

13   MR. HARRISON: Thank you, June. Bill.

14   MR. MCNEAL: We know that in order to

15   make quality decisions, you need good data and

16   that data will lead to not only better

17   decisions, but if you look at the heart of

18   innovation, you look at the heart of reform,

19   you're going to see good data leading to quality

20   decisions.

21   And if you look at the student level,

22   if you're trying to make certain that there is

1   improved student performance, you have data such

2   as formative assessment, you have benchmark

3   assessments, you have diagnostic assessments.

4   How you use that information in order

5   to improve classroom performance of students is

6   absolutely the key. So good data helps you in

7   that sense.

8   If you look at the school level and if

9   you are the principal of that school and you're

10   trying to make key decisions, you look at your

11   end-of-grade test scores, you look at your end-

12   of-course test scores.

13   You then use that data to determine

14   instruction, what you need to do, what other

15   support pieces that need to be in place, so it

16   becomes extremely important.

17   At the LEA level, which is the agency

18   at the district level, I mean, there is so much

19   information out there. One is a Teaching

20   Working Condition Survey, which tells us about

21   the working conditions for teachers and how they

22   feel about those working conditions.

1   You can also use end-of-grade, end-of-

2   course. There is just so much information

3   that's rich that if you mine that information,

4   it's amazing what you can get from it.

5   At the state level, and if you're

6   trying to inform policy and figure out exactly

7   what you need to do, well, if you using the

8   Working Condition Survey, that can help you

9   determine what are those things we need to fund.

10   The UNC system, which is the

11   University of North Carolina General

12   Administration, did a study on teacher

13   preparation. There is so much information

14   there. So as part of our collaborative and

15   partnership with them, that has helped us.

16   There is the comprehensive evaluation

17   that we've actually put in the RTTT grant that I

18   think will give us some rich data that can

19   inform us for the future.

20   So bottom line, the objective is how

21   do we make quality decisions for improved

22   performance, and that's about staff and

1   students.

2   Engagement in collaboration I alluded

3   to. It's interesting to me that we have a

4   history in our state of collaborating.

5   I believe if you look at all of the

6   major initiatives, even at the state level and

7   thinking state leadership -- obviously, our

8   Governor is here -- in fact, if you look at our

9   Governor's history, you will see that she was

10   heavily invested by the time she was in the

11   state senate, the time she was lieutenant

12   governor. If you're talking teacher salaries,

13   teacher performance, there are a number of

14   issues that we are building on in our grant.

15   So we can see very easily that we've

16   had the leadership, not only at the Governor's

17   level, but in the General Assembly. Our State

18   Board of Education, our Department of Public

19   Instruction have a record of achievement.

20   And North Carolina didn't become a

21   leader simply because we rest on our laws. We

22   understand that it is about being out front

1   doing what is right for the classroom.

2   You can see other associations have

3   signed on with this professional association,

4   whether it's the teachers -- a hundred percent

5   of the teachers are with us -- superintendents,

6   principals.

7   In fact, I head up organizations that

8   superintendents and principals belong to.

9   They're all on board.

10   We're looking at -- parents through

11   their associations have signed on. You can see

12   public and private colleges and universities.

13   You heard the Governor speak of the

14   education cabinet. Public and private colleges

15   and universities sit on that cabinet along with

16   K-12.

17   A network of grant-makers, these are

18   people who have step to the table who believe

19   that there is interest to do a great job in

20   North Carolina. As a result, they've not only

21   stepped up to provide their own support

22   personally, but have also funded a number of

1   these initiatives, and not to mention education

2   associations, such as the New School Project,

3   the Hunt Institute, just to name a few, MCNC.

4   And then there are national

5   organizations, Teach for America, New York City

6   Leadership Academy have all stepped up and

7   stepped in in order to help us.

8   The idea is that we bring to the table

9   -- and we think it's extremely important -- a

10   hundred percent of the 115 LEAs that are

11   supporting this grant.

12   Effective teachers in all classrooms

13   look at the research. We know that every

14   student deserves a great teacher and as a result

15   we know the evaluation system becomes extremely

16   important; that if you haven't aligned the

17   evaluation system with the standards, then it's

18   a matter of making certain that you're teaching

19   the right things and you're teaching the right

20   things well.

21   So if you want to move your teachers

22   from qualified to effective and eventually to

1   excellent, then you need to make certain that

2   you truly understand what they need in order to

3   be supported, the kind of professional

4   development that helps drive them.

5   And then you bring in your partners in

6   order to help you do those things. Our

7   partners, such as Teach for America, the

8   university partnerships that we currently have,

9   the local work that's done by -- at the district

10   level, as they are preparing teachers through

11   professional development and making certain that

12   everyone understands that we are following the

13   standards and, as I indicated earlier, they're

14   all at the table as these standards are

15   developed.

16   Strategic staffing becomes important

17   because then it is getting the right teacher in

18   the right place at the right time. That becomes

19   extremely important to us.

20   And then the expansion of virtual

21   teaching, that if we want to make certain that

22   teachers can get information anytime when it's

1   convenient for them, then virtual teaching

2   becomes extremely important because then we

3   understand their busy lives and, as a result, we

4   want to make certain that things are customized

5   to the point that we provide them the support

6   that they need.

7   So you can see why statewide

8   professional development would be important to

9   us for this very reason. Everything has to be

10   aligned. We want to make certain we're

11   following the standards, that we're following

12   the curriculum, and, I'll reemphasize, a great

13   teacher for every student.

14   MR. HARRISON: Thank you, Bill. Bill

15   closed with a great teacher for every student

16   and we know if you're going to have great

17   teachers and you're going ensure the

18   recruitment, selection, development and

19   retention of great teachers, you need great

20   leaders.

21   So we have in place a statewide

22   principal evaluation system. That system is

1   aligned to standards.

2   I think what is unique to North

3   Carolina, we have a teacher evaluation system, a

4   principal evaluation system and, now, a

5   superintendent evaluation system that are

6   aligned with each other and certainly aligned to

7   the standards.

8   We also have our university system in

9   the process of revisiting their MSA/Master

10   School Administration programs to ensure that

11   their programs are aligned to our evaluation

12   system and to those very same standards.

13   As Bill mentioned, the move from

14   qualified to effective teachers, we think the

15   same thing needs to occur with principals. It's

16   not about obtaining a license. It's about

17   leading a school and increasing student

18   achievement.

19   So just as we're going to work out a

20   system by which we can utilize student growth

21   information to evaluate our teachers, we're

22   going to do the same for our principals.

1   There are many successful innovations

2   in identifying, developing and supporting

3   effectively. We're working on those. We're

4   trying to discover more.

5   One of the drawbacks, in our opinion,

6   to the present MSA programs is it's self-

7   selecting, and we feel that we need to develop

8   an intentional manner by which we identify young

9   talent, that we recruit that young talent, we

10   develop those folks. Once we get them there, we

11   provide support to them.

12   I think back to my first day as a

13   principal, a superintendent called me in back in

14   1979 and said, "Bill, I want you to go down and

15   fix this school and here are the keys." It

16   takes a whole lot more than that than just

17   handing someone the keys.

18   And partnerships -- you heard the

19   Governor, you heard June, you heard Bill talk

20   about partnerships. Why it has worked in North

21   Carolina is because we have brought everyone to

22   the table.

1   I don't think you'll find a level of

2   collaboration anywhere that you see in North

3   Carolina.

4   We are developing regional leadership

5   academies. We are going to start in the eastern

6   part of the state in that district that the

7   Governor talked about us taking over and work

8   with the University of North Carolina system,

9   work with the LEAs. We're going to work with

10   the LEAs across the state.

11   We're going to do most of the work in

12   this particular district, work with the New York

13   Leadership Academy and develop a mechanism/a

14   process by which we can assure we have that

15   great leader in every school supporting a great

16   teacher for every child.

17   The turnaround of low-achieving

18   schools is a concern of ours. We heard the

19   Governor at the outset and I hear it every time

20   I talk with her. That doesn't matter. It does

21   not matter where a child lives in North

22   Carolina. He or she is entitled to, and is

1   going to get, a quality of education.

2   We've been in the assistance or

3   turnaround business since 1995. We began with

4   an assistance team that kind of went in, made a

5   difference, but left.

6   Once we left, though, we found out

7   things went back to pretty much as they were.

8   So now our focus in version 2.2, June, is on

9   building capacity.

10   We need to make sure that when we pull

11   out, that we have the capacity to continue

12   making it happen for all kids. We think the

13   Regional Leadership Academy will help make that

14   happen.

15   We also have customized approaches. I

16   spent time in an urban district in how I dealt

17   with our low-achieving schools. And that urban

18   district is much different than how we're going

19   to approach this issue in a remote rural area.

20   So our system is differentiated. We

21   take into the consideration the capacity of the

22   local areas and we customize or craft a

1   turnaround program for that particular area.

2   And oftentimes it comes down to

3   personnel changes, adding staff. Professional

4   development is critical, but the time comes when

5   we need to change leaders, we need to change

6   teachers and we need to change the culture and

7   we're willing to do that.

8   We have evidence of success of our

9   work in the past three years. We've moved 34 of

10   our high schools and middle schools from that

11   low-achieving classification, if you will.

12   We have 5 low-achieving school

13   districts that our turnaround teams are working

14   with. In the past year, 85 percent of the

15   schools in those LEAs have experienced gains in

16   achievement.

17   And we utilize other innovative

18   programs. They are STEM programs, we have early

19   college programs, and we have charter models

20   that have worked.

21   So Race to the Top equals an effective

22   school for every student.

1   MR. KLEIMAN: Thank you, Bill. Since

2   I see from our time that we're ahead our time

3   mark, I'm going to add a brief personal note.

4   I'm the new member of this team. I've

5   been in North Carolina for less than three years

6   and I've worked in many states previously over a

7   long period.

8   North Carolina really brings an

9   incredible commitment, an incredible group of

10   people that takes collaboration beyond anything

11   I've ever seen before and lots of wonderful

12   work. It's a real pleasure to now be a member

13   of this team and to be here today.

14   Going back to this line -- they've

15   asked the guy from Massachusetts and Brooklyn to

16   talk about rural schools -- when I came to North

17   Carolina, as I'm sure many of you know about the

18   research triangle -- Charlotte, Ashville --

19   North Carolina is a very large and interesting

20   state. We have almost 1.5 million students. We

21   have almost a hundred thousand teachers. We

22   have 2,500 schools, very diverse state, very

1   rural state. Most of our 115 LEAs are either

2   rural counties or small towns.

3   So we have some challenges that are

4   different than other areas. And one of the main

5   contributions North Carolina can make to the

6   national movement forward is to help understand

7   what strategies apply in these small, often

8   economically-distressed rural areas.

9   As you know, much of the work you read

10 about comes out of the urban centers and some

11 of that applies and some of that doesn't.

12   So we understand very equally the

13 different needs of rural areas and the types of

14 settings and the work that needs to be done

15 there.

16   And you've seen in the proposal, for

17 example, initiatives around teachers for rural

18 schools, looking at recruiting, preparing and

19 supporting teachers for the rural school area;

20 the same with principals, as Bill mentioned, the

21 rural leadership academies.

22   The statewide technology

1   infrastructure, which is beyond any other state,

2   is critically important. It brings resources to

3   all of the small urban, small rural schools from

4   the coast to the mountains.

5   Virtual learning is very important.

6   Our virtual school has grown rapidly and has

7   proven successful for many. We're also moving

8   more and more to online professional

9   development.

10   We have joined the E-Learning for

11   Educators Program which is funded by the U.S.

12   Department of Ed through the Ready to Teach

13   Grant and we're building forward with that.

14   And as the Governor and others

15   mentioned, we really are engaging communities.

16   And you've seen in the proposal the STEM

17   community collaborative, the jobs commissioning

18   work. Lots of this is really how we engage

19   community resources and go beyond just the

20   school building to improve education for

21   students in these areas.

22   So a key part of Race to the Top,

1   while we certainly will be supporting the urban

2   areas which are critically important, but also

3   building capacity in these rural schools.

4   Another key area is the STEM focus.

5   North Carolina is a very rich state in STEM

6   businesses. IBM has their largest facility

7   there, Cisco, SAS's headquarters. The list goes

8   on and on. And there's incredible commitment

9   and involvement of the business community within

10   education.

11   We have, as you've seen in the

12   proposal, rigorous standards, particularly

13   around math and science, raising expectations

14   for the students' graduation requirements, many,

15   many STEM-focused initiatives, many

16   aimed at minority students, engineering and

17   other technical fields providing lots of

18   support, lots of partnerships between the

19   universities and the schools involve those.

20   We also are integrating STEM

21   throughout the curriculum and, as I mentioned,

22   very strong support from North Carolina

1   businesses. And also, a group of North Carolina

2   foundations are very supportive. So part of

3   Race to the Top is expanding STEM opportunities.

4   We've already alluded to several times

5   the technology infrastructure. We view

6   technology not as entity itself, but as a

7   support means for all of the reform areas,

8   technology to serve education, not to serve

9   technology.

10   We've had a number of technology-

11   enabled education initiatives that have been

12   very successful. Some of you may know about

13   Project Impact, which was a Title II-D funded

14   project which has very strong evidence of

15   success.

16   And you've seen in the proposal our

17   proposed next generation technology

18   infrastructure building on lots of work already

19   done under the Governor's leadership while she

20   was Lieutenant Governor, and moving to a

21   computing infrastructure which will provide

22   cost-effective reliable technology to all 115

1   LEAs, including the smallest, most rural ones in

2   ways they simply cannot do on their own because

3   they can't get the staff, they can't get the

4   funding.

5   So technology to enhance all

6   initiatives is a critical part of Race to Top.

7   MR. HARRISON: In closing, why invest

8   in North Carolina?

9   Well, it is obvious to me. I hope it

10   is obvious to you. We've talked about each of

11   these points. I don't need to go down those.

12   There's a strong collaborative

13   leadership which ensures that we have the

14   capacity to scale this up to full support. I

15   mean, it's going to happen. This is not

16   something that we've just put to paper. We've

17   got folks across the state at the table and this

18   will happen.

19   June has talked about our history of

20   implementing reform and our ability to build on

21   lessons learned.

22   Many of the initiatives that we have

1   in place right now are consistent with the Race

2   to the Top assurances, so we are positioned to

3   move forward quickly.

4   And as Glenn closed with, our

5   technology infrastructure is second to none and

6   we will make it happen. Thank you.

7   REVIEWER #1: Welcome, again. I'm

8   Reviewer #1. My colleagues have asked me to

9   facilitate our discussion and I'm honored to do

10   that and we're honored by your presence.

11   This is certainly a distinguished panel.

12   We will be abiding by the "our cloud"

13   (ph) technology which is this omnipresent clock.

14

15   Congratulations on being one of the finalist

16   states. You've jumped a bunch of hurdles just

17   to get this far and we want to congratulate you.

18   We have a number of questions and they

19   range from the general to the specific and we

20   ask your indulgence, therefor, in trying to

21   limit your initial answer to just a couple of

22   minutes so we can follow up.

1   Your presentation, too, may have

2   triggered some questions from me or among our

3   colleagues and so we want to make sure that we

4   get as many of those questions answered.

5   You need to know, as you probably

6   suspect, that each of us has spent many, many

7   hours reading your application. Many of our

8   questions, therefor, will be directed to

9   clarification.

10   And if you don't understand the

11   question, please ask whoever has asked the

12   question to clarify it until you understand what

13   we're trying to find out.

14   I've been asked to interrupt if I see

15   the timing is such that we're not going to get

16   through our agenda of questions and so I ask

17   your indulgence if I do, in fact, interrupt or

18   if one of my colleagues does.

19   And lastly, we ask, since we have

20   spent some time coordinating our questions, that

21   you not necessarily attribute a point of view to

22   a question or even sometimes to the way the

1   question is asked because sometimes we've

2   thought that we need to be the devil's advocate

3   in order to ferret out what is probably your

4   best foot forward.

5   So with that, I'm going to ask my

6   colleagues to ask their first questions. More

7   or less, we're going through your application

8   from A to F, but we may jump around particularly

9   during any followups.

10   Reviewer #2.

11   REVIEWER #2: Could you clarify the

12 specific roles of the various state agencies and

13 other bodies that you have involved in the

14 proposal. There are many actors and moving

15 parts to it.

16   So if a problem arises, who takes

17 charge there and, you know, how are the various

18 groups and agencies going to interact in

19 implementing this in its detail?

20   MR. HARRISON: We have a couple of

21 things in place.

22   We certainly will have a program

1   management office. And I think one of the

2   strengths that we have that will enable us to

3   make this happen and not go in a whole lot of

4   different directions is we see this as the work

5   of the department.

6   June has in place with her team

7   personnel addressing all of these issues. We

8   have the Governor's Education Reform Commission

9   that's kind of going to be an oversight at a

10   much higher level.

11   But this is directly under the state

12   board of Education with the state

13   superintendent.

14   I also skipped over this slide when I

15   was introducing the Governor, but these are

16   folks who are involved in this work on a daily

17   basis. And I mentioned the Friday Institute --

18   Bill has alluded to the associations -- that we

19   have a history of collaboration.

20   And one of the things that we talked

21   about early on -- in, I think, our initial Race

22   to the Top meeting -- we had about 150 people

1   attending that and we talked about what this was

2   all about and that we needed to put aside some

3   of our biases and some of our programs, our pet programs and make

4   sure that we were all focused.

5   So we think that we have a mechanism

6   in place. And I'm going to ask June if she

7   would elaborate and provide a few more specifics

8   on that.

9   MS. ATKINSON: Our State Board of

10 Education will take the lead role in policy as it's

11 necessary to move Race to the Top forward.

12   Of course, our Governor will be --

13 will play a lead role as a director as we move

14 forward. The day-to-day operations of Race to

15 the Top will reside as the responsibility of the

16 Department of Public Instruction and we will

17 have other supporting roles that -- from our

18 associations and supporters to move forward with

19 an aligned system.

20   REVIEWER #3: Can you clarify how you

21 propose to build teacher expertise to enhance

22 student achievement particularly in reading and

1   STEM areas and assessment literacy for use of

2   the data.

3   MR. HARRISON: We mentioned early our

4   evaluation system and this is actually our -- at

5   least our second go at a statewide system of

6   evaluation.

7   And one of our lessons learned is that

8   we did not have the level of professional

9   development the first time around as we have this

10   time.

11   So this is you, too, I guess, June,

12   and we rolled out a very elaborate professional

13   development system to ensure that teachers

14   understand what this process is.

15   And, again, a major portion -- you

16   know, we talked about the technology

17   infrastructure that we have in place. We talked

18   about professional development being key issues.

19   And that's a major part of what we're doing.

20   REVIEWER #3: We saw the professional

21   development process was very well-laid out. We

22   wanted more detail about -- specifically

1   regarding resources, human resources and content

2   area resources, performance targets and

3   partners.

4   MR. HARRISON: Okay, June.

5   MS. ATKINSON: First of all, we will

6   build on what we've learned over the past five

7   years in reading.

8   We have developed a well-defined

9   professional development that has a combination

   10   of online, as well as face to face, as well as

   11   coaching and mentors.

   12   We will use what we have learned from

   13   that to go through the same type of process of

   14   professional development as it relates to

   15   mathematics.

   16   What will be key to our professional

   17   development will be our learning management

   18   system. That system will be used as

   19   professional learning communities for teachers

   20   in mathematics, also in science.

   21   One way to look at our proposal is

   22   that not only do we want to customize learning

    1   for students, our goal is to customize learning

    2   for teachers. We know that teachers are at all

    3   different levels.

    4   And by having consistent online

    5   education, we can make sure that we can embed

    6   the professional development as a part of the

    7   work of the teacher in the classroom.

    8   REVIEWER #3: Yeah, that was pretty

    9   clear in your proposal.

10   What we are asking about -- more
11 specifically about the kinds of resources you're
12 going to draw upon to help
13   MR. HARRISON: I think we have a
14 number, and then I want to turn it over to
15 Glenn.
16   We had a professional development task
17 force in the state about four years ago that I
18 happened to chair while I was a local
19 superintendent.
20   And we paid a lot of attention to the
21 standards of the National Staff Development
22 Council of process, content and context and we

1   built things around those.
2   We also have a number of partners that
3   I would classify as being semi-autonomous. We
4   have the Teacher Academy, we have the North
5   Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching,
6   and we're working with those groups to make sure
7   that some of the work -- that all of the work
8   that they do is aligned with what we're doing
9   with Race to the Top.
10   Glenn.

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11          MR. KLEIMAN:  Yeah, if I can add to

12     that.  It's a very good question and it's a

13     question that we're working very hard on.  I

14     don't have all of the answers yet.

15          As Bill mentioned and June mentioned,

16     we have lots of professional development going

17     on.  We have lots of good organizations working

18     on it.

19          Another I'd mention is Learn NC which

20     is based at UNC Chapel Hill which is online

21     work.

22          But one of the things we've came to
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1     realize in working on Race to the Top, that what

2     we have is somewhat fragmented.  We're not sure

3     -- the current system doesn't reach every

4     teacher with what that teacher needs.  It isn't

5     yet using the full extent, the technology

6     potential and we don't have the kinds of

7     evaluations to perform continuous improvements

8     that we need in the system.

9          So Race to the Top we see as a

10     wonderful opportunity to build upon these pieces

11     and make a coherent, sustainable statewide
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12   system so that each time we're rolling out new

13   initiatives, there's a system in place to do it

14   and that system has ongoing evaluation and

15   ongoing improvement.

16   So there's lots of very important work

17   there. I think we have a handle on the

18   research, the principles, what we need to do.

19   We have lots of good building blocks, but

20   there's lots of pieces that we cannot yet answer

21   very specifically.

22   REVIEWER #3: Thank you.

1   MR. MCNEAL: Let me add one other

2   piece.

3   The partners aren't just partners in

4   name only. We also understand that the

5   administrative piece of that is extremely

6   important.

7   Their ability to understand what it is

8   and the staff development that's professionally

9   done for their teachers, they need to understand

10   it because they need to be able to support that.

11   So we are ourselves working with the

12   Department of Public Instruction as we're

13   helping administrators understand what it is

14   they need and why STEM is so important, why

15   reading is essentially important.

16   The initiative we're working on right

17   now is the math initiative, working with the

18   university level as they are training

19   administrators to be able to understand that

20   math is a literacy and the problem areas that so

21   many of our teachers have had difficulty in

22   teaching math and higher-level math and then

1   what they need to do in order to be able not

2   only to attract, but to retain and provide the

3   support that teachers need in that arena.

4   So it isn't just a partnership that

5   looks as if it's just window dressing. It's a

6   partnership that's very much is involved and

7   engaged.

8   MR. HARRISON: Governor?

9   GOVERNOR PERDUE: And we really do

10   believe in our state, as all other states are

11   stressed with the financial disaster that

12   confronted us last year, that you have to tear

13   down some of the existing silos and blend silos and we are in

14   the process of doing that as we write this

15   spring's budget.

16   So we have new patterns of required

17   behavior where all the different coalitions have

18   provided fast development of all of our

19   different high schools, early college. We have

20   four or five really good programs that we are

21   trying to coalesce around one centrally steered

22   organization with one funding stream.

1   I think it provides for more effective

2   government and it certainly provides for a more

3   efficient and effective capacity to put

4   resources where you need them and that will

5   direct all other resources toward staff

6   development into one overlying plan. It's time

7   that we had a plan.

8   REVIEWER #1: Thank you. Our next

9   question is in the data arena. And Reviewer #4.

10   REVIEWER #4: Sure. The application

11   asked for evidence that the state has a

12   longitudinal data system that includes all of

13   the elements of the American Competes Act, and

14   your response says that the CEDARS system will

15 support and enable the use of student data to

16 improve achievement, that many of the elements

17 are in place and that all of the elements will

18 be in place.

19   And our question is can you specify

20 which elements were in place at the time of the

21 application.

22   MR. HARRISON: June, do you want to

1   respond to that one?

2   MS. ATKINSON: At the time of the

3   application, all of the elements were in place

4   except for the unique student identifier and the

5   teacher unique student identifier, and since

6   that time, we have that in place.

7   So now, we meet all of the

8   requirements of the American Competes Act.

9   REVIEWER #4: Through K-12, then

10 higher ed; is that right?

11   MS. ATKINSON: Yes -- oh, our

12 longitudinal data system will require further

13 work in our bridging our data warehouse at the

14 public school level, to that of the community

15 college system, to that of the university

16   system.

17   We do have a system in place that has

18   been coordinated by the Employment Security

19   Commission that relied on Social Security

20   numbers.

21   So we believe that moving to the

22   unique student identifier, those bridges will be

1   facilitated very effectively and efficiently.

2   MR. HARRISON: Glenn, why don't you

3   mention a couple of other data sources.

4   MR. KLEIMAN: One of the good things

5   in North Carolina is all of the data is readily

6   available.

7   And if you look closely at lots of the

8   national research studies and things like Teach

9   for America, for example, it's all based on

10   North Carolina data because there's a data

11   center at Duke and there's one at UNC Chapel

12   Hill that has all the data, organizes it, reads

13   it, makes it available for researchers.

14   They've done a lot of work, for

15   example, in the study of the pre-college

16   preparation programs which look at the linkage

17 from the pre-college program to the teachers'

18 training, to the effectiveness in terms of

19 student achievements. So those kind of linkages

20 can be done.

21   In the current system, it's an

22 enombous effort to put that data together. With

1 CEDARS and the longitudinal data system, made it

2 much easier, but that data is available and is

3 used quite widely.

4   REVIEWER #1: Thank you. You have a

5 question regarding the teacher preparation.

6   REVIEWER #5: While your application

7 provides some detail about the alternative

8 licensure program for teachers and

9 administrators and certain of the programs like

10 the administrative preparation program through

11 the Regional Leadership Authority -- or Regional

12 Leadership Academy appear to meet the

13 definitional requirements for qualifying and

14 alternative routes for certification, it's not

15 clear that the other programs satisfy those

16 requirements.

17   Can you describe information that

18   clarifies the program sufficiently for us to

19   understand or determine whether they meet the

20   definitions.

21   MR. HARRISON: I'll take a stab at the

22   Regional Leadership Academies and then let June

1   or Glenn handle the teacher.

2   Our notion with the Regional

3   Leadership Academies is those are to be

4   developed. We're not exactly sure how they're

5   going to look.

6   We have a couple of components that

7   will be givens, that everyone will have a system

8   to select. We don't want this to be self-

9   selecting.

10   Everyone will develop a program that

11   will be based around those standards that we

12   mentioned. They will have the flexibility to do

13   that through course work, do that through

14   experiential learning, to do that through any

15   way that they deem appropriate, but they need to

16   address that standard.

17   It needs to have a meaningful

18   internship experience. We found that all too

19   often our internships that accompany the

20   traditional MSA program are not what they need

21   to be because the university is not doing all

22   they should do, nor is the LEA doing all that

1   they should do.

2   And then the final component is that

3   there is an intentional induction method. What

4   are we doing to do beyond giving that principal

5   the keys.

6   So I think that truly has the --

7   presents an opportunity for us to have a truly

8   alternative path to the principalship.

9   June Would you like to do the teacher?

10   MS. ATKINSON: The State Board of

11   Education has a policy in place that allows any

12   local school district to develop an alternative

13   program. It requires that the components of

14   that program be presented to the state board for

15   approval, so that is one alternative route.

16   Charlotte-Mecklenberg, our second

17   largest school district in the state, has taken

18   advantage of that teacher alternative program.

19   Another deals with lateral entry. We

20   have policies in place that will allow anyone

21   who has a content specialty and a degree in a

22   certain area to be -- the transcript to be

 1   reviewed.

 2   And through our regional licensing

 3   center, these teachers or these potential

 4   teachers are given the information necessary,

 5   the courses that they may need to take.

 6   And then they have choice of where

 7   that person can take those courses. So they are

 8   two of our major alternative routes for

 9   certification or licensure.

10   REVIEWER #5: The application states

11   that to qualify as alternative routes for

12   certification that the programs have to be able to

13   be offered by organizations that are not

14   necessarily institutions of higher education,

15   that they be selective, that they have some kind

16   of an internship, that there's the possibility

17   of reduced course work and that there is

18   induction or mentor support.

19   Have you touched upon all of those in

20   the administrative preparation program? I'm

21   wondering whether those components are also

22   present in the teacher programs.

1   MS. ATKINSON: Yes, they are.

2   REVIEWER #5: In all of them?

3   MS. ATKINSON: We rely on our

4   partners, for example, Teach for America, to

5   provide the support necessary.

6   When we talk about Charlotte-

7   Mecklenberg, they did it up to the local school

8   district to provide the support.

9   We do require by state board policy

10   all teachers to have mentors and to have an

11   induction program regardless of how they get to

12   the classroom.

13   REVIEWER #5: Thank you.

14   REVIEWER #1: I actually have a

15   question about evaluation and there's two

16   components to my question.

17   One is would you remind us how quickly

18   you're going to have in place the evaluation

19   system that incorporates student growth as an

20   important component; and, secondly, would you

21   tell us about the challenges you've faced in

22 gaining support for that, particularly in the

1   teacher-principal community, and tell us how you

2   have met those.

3   MR. HARRISON: Okay. I think it's

4   interesting.

5   We had a state board policy that

6   prohibited the use of EVAS data in the evaluation

7   of teachers. And I was not aware we had such a

8   policy until I became chairman of the board

9   because we certainly used EVAS data to evaluate

10 teachers and principals in the district that I

11 was leading.

12   REVIEWER 1#: I'm sorry, EVAS is?

13   MR. HARRISON: I'm sorry, Educational

14 Value Added.

15   MR. KLEIMAN: It's a value added model

16 built by SAS that's available throughout the

17 state, whatever the acronym stands for.

18   MR. HARRISON: I know some of those

19 acronyms, but not all of them.

20   But we did receive a little bit of

21 push-back. But as we talked our way through

22 this -- and we probably spent more time -- and

1   Glenn could probably address this because some

2   of his team members kind of staffed this

3   particular committee with this -- but one

4   afternoon we actually brought the partners

5   together in the Governor's office and the

6   Governor said that you can't tell me that

7   student outcomes, student growth can't be part

8   of our evaluation. And we're going to figure

9   out a way to make that happen.

10   And that -- it was more of a

11 collaborative effort, but the Governor did have

12 that conversation with our folks and all of a

13 sudden that made it move a little bit easier.

14 But there was a lot of give-and-take.

15   And one of the things that we want to

16 make sure and why we emphasized our past,

17 whenever we said in that proposal, it's going to

18 happen. And we -- and, again, I think our

19 history demonstrates that it will happen.

20   But we also emphasized the

21 partnerships. And whatever we come up with,

22 it's going to be the result of all of the

1   stakeholders from Bill's group to the teacher

2   group sitting at the table helping us do that.

3   Glenn, why don't you talk about some

4   of the some of the --

5   MR. KLEIMAN: We spent so much time on

6   this one, the infamous section D-2 of the

7   proposal. I think it deserves a little more

8   time here, a very complex process, lots of

9   debate.

10   EVAS, which we mentioned -- this is

11   also TVAAS in Tennessee developed by SAS, which

12   is a local Jackson base in Cary -- frankly, SAS

13   paid for the building of the Friday Institute.

14   We have very close connections there, folks

15   at the UNC Center for Public Policies and the

16   people that do policy, lots of experts in this

17   area.

18   And my staff and I spent a lot of time

19   on this and with NCAE and with Bill McNeal's teams and

20   it was not a simple process and it won't be a

21   simple process, but we made good progress.

22   We have in place, as has been

1   mentioned, a strong teacher evaluation program

2   and principal evaluation program that was

3   developed with McKrell (ph) and has been rolled

4   out. That was designed around supporting

5   teacher and principal development and is a very

6   good tool for that.

7   It had within it places for using

8   student achievement growth data, but it was a

9   little vague, frankly. So the first step which

10   we put into place immediately is a requirement

11   that the best available student achievement --

12   student growth data be used and documented as

13   part of that process, and that was readily

14   agreed to by the associations and everyone

15   involved as a reasonable first step so we could

16   implement immediately.

17   We then got into the complexities,

18   both at the technical level -- technical

19   measurement level and the policy level about

20   using student growth data to evaluate teachers

21   as individuals.

22   We already are doing such for

 1   evaluating schools and North Carolina has

 2   incentive programs for incentivizing everyone in

 3   the school when the school is successful.

 4   And we believe it is an important

 5   principle there, that it's encouraging teamwork

 6   and collaboration and we don't want to lose

 7   that.

 8   We know that to use something -- EVAS

 9   is a great example. It's a longitudinal value

10   added model. It's statistically very strong.

11   It's used widely. And I spent three hours with

12   Bill Sanders who is the developer of it and when

13   I ran out of questions, he was telling me what

14   questions I should have asked him. You know, we

15   really worked through this stuff.

16   But we know we only have the type of

17   data for about a third of the courses right now,

18   the kind of end-of-grade, end-of-course data we

19   need.

20   We know there are issues around what

21   about special education teachers, what about the

22   fact that students are not assigned to classes

1 randomly, which is really the statistical

2 assumption underlying a lot of these methods,

3 what about team teaching situations, what about

4 the early grade teachers where you don't have

5 longitudinal data, what about the different

6 incisors (ph) you have for a high school teacher

7 who teaches multiple classes on the same topic

8 versus an elementary school teacher. The list

9 goes on and on.

10   So we came to the conclusion and we

11 worked this through with NCAE and NCASA and all

12 of the associations that we have a deep

13 commitment to using student data to inform

14 evaluation, but we really need a fair,

15 transparent system to do this and we cannot

16 immediately turn a switch and have that. The

17 issues are too complex.

18   So we are planning a two-year process

19 to work through this all and some of the folks

20 recommend that the state set up pre and post

21 tests for every class. That was actually a

22 request that came out of a meeting with the

1   superintendents as the best way of doing it.

2   There were models of using student

3   learning objectives that Charlotte is testing,

4   part of the Gates project.

5   So we're really digging into this

6   seriously to develop a system with stakeholder

7   involvement that will be fair, reliable and

8   accepted by the participants. We think that's a

9   two-year process.

10   MS. ATKINSON: We have two things

11   going for us in this area.

12   One is that we have had a student

13   growth accountability system since the 1990s.

14   So our teachers and our administrators are

15   accustomed to our growth system for assessing

16   the quality of education by school and by

17   district.

18   The second is that we've had a

19   standard course of study in place in North

20   Carolina for many years and that standard course

21   of study includes all disciplines, all grades,

22   all courses.

1   So we have a start of developing the

2   learning -- the student learning objectives that

3   could be used.

4   In having many conversations with

5   teachers and meeting with over 90 percent of our

6   NCAE representatives, the message was loud and

7   clear: If you are going to use student growth

8   measures as a part of our evaluation, please

9   make sure that it's fair, please make sure that

10   all teachers are eligible and include us in the

11   conversation because we want to be a part of the

12   collaboration to move North Carolina forward.

13   MR. HARRISON: And, Bill, your folks

14   are going to be impacted by this.

15   MR. MCNEAL: Absolutely. And let me

16   make certain you understand the conversation.

17   We're sitting with Glenn and his team

18   as they're developing things at the Friday

19   Center. We're sitting with June and her team as

20   she's looking, you know, at how best to roll

21   this out.

22   Our job is to make certain that not

1   only are administrators on board, but

2   administrators can take the lead role. So as we

3   work with administrators, then we try to bring

4   the level of training that helps them become not

5   only more sophisticated, but they can be able to

6   walk the walk and talk the talk as they

7   understand the importance of making certain that

8   we have that component as a part of the

9   evaluation, you know, how we can leave that out

10   and essentially say that we're not going to be

11   looking at exactly how students are performing

12   somewhere sometime. What it looks like becomes

13   a key part of that.

14   So we are in a position to help make

15   certain that our people work through all of that

16   and understand exactly what needs to be done.

17   REVIEWER #1: Thank you. Reviewer #3,

18   you had a question on the cluster approach.

19   REVIEWER #3: Can you clarify how the

20   cluster networks for STEM will operate within

21   the state with regard to capacity-building,

22   equitable distribution, access for girls, and I

1   would also like to know about your partners in

2   addition to the universities.

3   MR. HARRISON: The New Schools Project

4   has been a major partner on that and that's the

5   entity that has worked with professional

6   development in support of our early college high

7   schools.

8   And we're looking at a STEM cluster, a

9   cluster of STEM schools -- clusters of STEM

10   schools across the state to set as models.

11   Glenn and his folks have been working with that,

12   so I'm going to call on him.

13   MR. KLEIMAN: Somewhat. We actually

14   wish Tony Habit from the New Schools Project was

15   here to give you more details, but we'll give

16   you what we can.

17   The model of the anchor schools in the

18   network comes really out of the work around the

19   early college high schools and is actually a

20   school at Clark University of Massachusetts, was

21   used as an anchor to -- which was really ahead

22   of others.

1   So we're looking at schools where

2   there are resources to really take the lead and

3   develop new curriculum ideas, develop ways of

4   training teachers, develop new community

5   partnerships, real extensions for innovation and

6   experimentation that then provide to a network

7   of other schools the models that have been

8   developed and been successful.

9   So that's the concept and it's a good

10 concept. And, again, we have some aspects of it

11 well in place, lots of partners that will

12 support it.

13   It's very closely tied to the STEM

14 community collaborative now. It's very closely

15 tied to the UNC system. NC State University

16 will play a key role since we're a STEM-based

17 university.

18   Those folks up at Chapel Hill deliver

19 a lot of folks. We're the folks who do the

20 engineering, computer science, mathematics, et

21 cetera.

22   That is very much tied to the business

1   community that one of them -- one of the

2   proposed schools is tied to the Duke Medical

3   Center, for example; one is tied to the

4   aerospace industry; one is tied to engineering

5   and energy which is key at NC State University.

6   So there's lots and lots of

7   intellectual fire power available and lots and

8   lots of work to figure out how do you bring that

9   all together into functioning schools first that

10   will be very successful.

11   And they are largely building on the early

12   college high school model which has been

13   successful in the state. And then how do you

14   use those as a center for outreach for extending

15   the idea.

16   So, again, I hate to be the one who

17   keeps saying, you know, these are good questions

18   and we know some things and we're moving

19   forward. Several of those schools are already

20   in progress of being designed.

21   None of them are up and running yet,

22   the ones we're talking about in the proposal,

1   and lots of resources, lots of intellectual

2   resources, lots of work. But, you know, we

3   don't have all the details worked out, so I'm

4   not -- so I guess I should wait for a followup

5   question.

6   REVIEWER #3: Well, I saw in your

7   application -- and we're asking for clarity --

8   it looked like the anchors were going to --

9   there are four anchor schools and those four

10 would each impact 24 other schools and 5

11 teachers, it looked like, but --

12   MR. KLEIMAN: Not 5 teachers. And

13 those -- the 24 is a, you know, estimate. I'm

14 not sure -- it's certainly many more than 5

15 teachers.

16   REVIEWER #3: Well, there was

17 something in there about 4 and then 1.

18   Anyway, so the 24 times 4 doesn't look

19 like a big, you know, distribution. So that's

20 what I'm asking for clarity about. How does

21 that cluster network work?

22   MR. KLEIMAN: Help me on this one, (inaudible)

1   June.

2   MS. ATKINSON: As you will see in our

3   proposal in another section, we are building on

4   our STEM schools that we have now; for example,

5   we have Project Lead the Way. These are

6   throughout North Carolina. These are pre-

7   engineering programs. We're building on our

 8   health sciences. We're building on our schools

 9   within schools.

10   So ultimately, all of the hundred-plus

11   schools can be connected to the STEM network and

12   we can use the knowledge that we have gained

13   from those schools within schools and with our

14   partnerships, with entities outside of North

15   Carolina, within North Carolina to spread the

16   good about STEM throughout the state.

17   REVIEWER #3: So can you give us an

18   idea of your performance targets statewide.

19   MS. ATKINSON: The performance targets

20   as relates to student achievement or --

21   REVIEWER #3: In student learning

22   opportunities and STEM and then -- yeah, then

 1   the achievement, but looking at the access and

 2   distribution.

 3   MS. ATKINSON: Number one, our State

 4   Board of Education has target goals in reading,

 5   mathematics, et cetera. That's part of our

 6   performance tool. You asked that question

 7   earlier and we didn't say that.

8   But our goal is for these students to

9   be college- and career-ready. We want these

10   students to be able to go to our community

11   colleges, technical schools, universities

12   without remediation.

13   We want them to be able to get credit

14   for community college courses, university

15   courses taken while they are in high school and

16   we have those types of systems in place.

17   So our ultimate measure will be if

18   these students can pursue college careers

19   without remediation.

20   Also the part of the metric as far as

21   Project Lead the Way and others is to increase

22   the number of females and under-represented

1   minorities in those areas. That is a part of

2   the metric for our STEM schools and our schools

3   within schools.

4   MR. HARRISON: Was part of that

5   question access to students across the state, as

6   well?

7   REVIEWER #3: Yeah. I'm looking at

8   the cluster networks and it wasn't clear how the

9   distribution works, like the implementation and

10   capacity-building through all of your LEAs.

11   MR. HARRISON: Yeah. What we're

12   trying to do through those anchors is create a

13   network of STEM opportunities for students,

14   similar to what the Governor said at the outset

15   to our community college system, that everyone

16   in the state is within reasonable driving

17   distance of a community college.

18   We want to make sure that every

19   student across the state has access to these

20   STEM opportunities. It may be through our

21   original academy and we're working in one in the

22   eastern part of the state with North Carolina

 1   State New Schools Project.

 2   Some of that access might be provided

 3   to students through Learn North Carolina which

 4   offers courses online. Some of those

 5   opportunities might be made available to

 6   students through our North Carolina Virtual

 7   Public School.

 8   We also have online opportunities

 9   through the community college and university

10   through Learn and Earn and we also have through

11   the University of North Carolina at Greensboro

12   iSchool.

13   Now, one of the things that the

14   Governor has directed the education cabinet to

15   do is make sure that those multiple online

16   courses are truly aligned and they're not looked

17   at as four or five different courses.

18   So the -- we're looking at those being

19   regional anchors as kind of the research center,

20   if you will, or the leading center, but then

21   reaching out to students all across the state in

22   a variety of ways.

1   It might not necessarily be face-to-

2   face opportunities for our students.

3   REVIEWER #4: Did that get to it a little more?

4   REVIEWER #1: It looked like Dr.

5   McNeal has something to offer and then just as a

6   process, I've got about five questions. We're

7   just about right on target. So --

8   DR. MCNEAL: Well, I wanted to make

9   certain that you also understand that even as

10   you're talking anchor, STEMs also originate

11   based on what the community resources happen to

12   be, as well.

13   And typically, if you're looking at a

14   health science model, then you start looking at

15   a community and figure out, you know, what those

16   resources that exist in that community and then

17   those resources help anchor part of that.

18   So you'll see the connection with

19   business because what you'll also understand is

20   that they become partners as a part of that,

21   whether it's the hospital system that's tied to

22   East Carolina and how that works with the STEMS

1   project that's now in the east.

2   And you'll see that throughout the

3   STEM project, and the reason I happen to know

4   that is because I also sit on the advisory group

5   with the STEM crowd so making certain that we

6   have that kind of connection that makes certain

7   that we're forming the kind of partnership that

8   helps build communities.

9   REVIEWER #1: REVIEWER #5 has a

10   question about outcomes -- student outcomes,

11   sorry.

12   REVIEWER #5: Yes. Your application

13   makes clear that one of the areas of greatest

14   challenge is the education achievements and

15   success of students with limited English

16   proficiency which is a rapidly growing

17   population in North Carolina.

18   Can you clarify how the Professional

19   Development Initiative and other plans and

20   strategies that are part of your Race to the Top

21   application respond to this challenge.

22   MR. HARRISON: I'll say very briefly

 1   and then turn it over to June.

 2   I think our diagnostic assessment is

 3   probably the biggest thing that we're doing to

 4   reach some of the youngsters that we

 5   historically have not reached, that we're truly

 6   giving our teachers on-time information that

 7   they need to make informed instructional

 8   decisions for those youngsters.

 9   But the strength of that is not only

10   saying to those teachers that Bill is four

11   months -- two months behind after four months of

12   school, but knowing that Bill is two months

13   behind, here are his deficits and here is what

14   you can do to enable Bill to have an opportunity

15   to catch up.

16   There's -- we've been piloting the

17   assessment. Again, the professional development

18   is a very strong piece of that.

19   And, June, I'll let you elaborate, if

20   you'd like.

21   MS. ATKINSON: There are several other

22   strategies we use.

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1   Number one, we are revisiting all of

2   the teacher preparation programs in the state.

3   Integral, too, that process is that of teachers

4   being able to work with students who have

5   English as a second language.

6   Number two, any professional

7   development provided to teachers will have

8   embedded as a part of the process the work of

9   the children who have English as a second

10   language.

11   Also when we talked about our

12   professional development, we talked about

13   customization. We will develop online modules

14   that will allow teachers to access at will the

15   necessary strategies to work with teachers.

16   We will also continue to promote

17   professional learning communities so that

18   teachers within a school can learn from each

19   other as it relates to helping children who have

20   English as a second language.

21   We are also working with partners in

22   our Hispanic/Latino communities to involve parents

1   and others who can develop that support system

2   that is necessary for progress of our students

3   who have English as a second language.

4   We certainly will rely on our

5   assessments -- our English language assessments

6   to determine what should be the customization

7   necessary for students to be successful.

8   They are some of the strategies that

9   we will be using -- we also know that our Teachers

10   Working Condition Survey results have shown that

11   our teachers saying, "We do need help in

12   working with students who have English as a

13   second language," and our partners will be very

14   important.

15   DR. HARRISON: Glenn.

16   MR. KLEIMAN: Just one very quick

17   addition.

18   It's also -- it is a critical issue in

19   North Carolina and the population is growing

20   rapidly. It's a key area where the university

21   LEA partnerships that have always been proposal-

22   focused, those are designed to really be led by

1   the LEAs to focus on what are our critical needs

2   and in many of those LEAs, the critical need is

3   addressing English language for those students,

4   so those programs are being developed,

5   recruiting people into them who may be bi-

6   lingual, multi-lingual and then focusing on

7   those particular needs.

8   And we think the growth of those will

9   be an important strategy for helping address

10   this, as well as all the things you mentioned.

11   REVIEWER #5: Are there any specific

12   strategies that you're thinking of that are

13   related directly to high school graduation as

14   opposed to all of this, of course, along the

15   way?

16   Is there anything additional targeted

17   to graduation?

18   DR. HARRISON: June, you looked like

19   you jumped up. Go ahead.

20   MS. ATKINSON: Are you talking about

21   graduation for all students?

22   REVIEWER 5#: For an English language

1   learner.

2   MS. ATKINSON: When we look at our

3   statistics about graduation grants, we see that

4   this is an area where we have the lowest

5   graduation rate.

6   We are promoting that school districts

7   put into place freshman academies where students

8   can get the necessary acceleration and extra

9   assistance.

10   We are promoting the use of case

11   management where parents and community leaders

12   can come together to join hands to surround the

13   student so that that support can be a part of

14   that -- for those students.

15   We are also promoting communities in

16   schools where there is a support system for

17   students who need extra help and who are

18   struggling.

19   DR. HARRISON: And a part of the

20   community and school's work is providing

21   graduation coaches for folks.

22   One of the things that we're working

1   hard on -- I think we've seen it. It happened

2   at our early colleges at some of our smaller

3   redesign schools -- are the relationships that

4   are being developed between teachers and

5   students and principals and students are making

6   a difference.

7   And also, you know, my observation

8   after 34 years in the business is youngsters

9   who have an advocate have a whole lot better

10   chance of making it. We're trying hard to

11   connect with community groups, with faith-based

12   organizations to ensure that every child has an

13   advocate.

14   And oftentimes our English language

15   learners, the parent doesn't speak English at

16   home and has a difficult time advocating for

17   that youngster.

18   And, Bill, do you want to finish this

19   one?

20   MR. MCNEAL: Yeah. Speaking to the

21   community and the advocacy portion of that,

22   there is a group that has taken the lead role in

1   making certain that there is a partnership

2   between the schools, as well as a community, and

3   that's the North Carolina Society of Hispanic

4   Professionals.

5   Essentially, they have stood out,

6   stepped out and said, "We want to make certain

7   that all of the students graduate and how do we

8   bridge the divide that now exists between the

9   home and the school," and they've led that

10   through conferences, they have set up advocacy

11   groups whereas they are meeting with school

12   district personnel.

13   And through their leadership -- and

14   it's interesting. The head of the organization

15   was just added to the advisory group of school

16   of education over in NC State University, so all

17   of us are there trying to figure out what do we

18   need to do to ensure that these students

19   graduate.

20   DR. MCNEAL: Governor, go ahead.

21   REVIEWER #1: I'm sorry. We need to

22   move on. We have some others areas to go

 1   through.

 2   GOVERNOR PERDUE: I'm a strong hands-

 3   on Governor, obviously. You heard that up here.

 4   I believe desperately in high school

 5   graduation for every child. Neither of my

 6   parents graduated high school and this is

 7   personal to me and my husband.

 8   We are really very publicly talking

 9   about the fact that in North Carolina and in

10   America (inaudible), I want to emphasize the need for every

11   child in the 21st century to have a high school

12   diploma. It's unacceptable in our state.

13   And for the first time we have a

14   Governor in rotaries, in chambers and in

15   situations all over the state which is actually

16   pleading with the business community to partner,

17   to be a mentor to a kid and for everybody in our

18   community to do our part.

19   We must fix this problem for America

20   if our workforce is going to be globally

21   competitive.

22   REVIEWER #1: Thank you. We have

1   three sort of must questions and then the

2   possibility of a wind-up question.

3   So the next question actually is

4   Reviewer #5's, as well. It's about turnaround

5   schools.

6   REVIEWER #5: Your presentation and

7   your application make clear that you have

8   significant experience turning around low-

9   achieving schools.

10   However, the application says that the

11   school turnaround model you have used is most

12   similar to the transformation model, but it's

13   actually a blended model.

14   And you also talk about creating 11

15   new schools using a process that's closely

16   aligned to the (inaudible) model.

17   It was unclear whether you intend to

18   keep using your own versions of the models or

19   whether you're committed to using the models as

20   described in Race to the Top.

21   DR. HARRISON: Go ahead, June.

22   MS. ATKINSON: We are committed to

1   using the models in Race to the Top. Our

2   message was intended to say that we had

3   developed our assistance to low-achieving

4   schools to be nimble so that we can adjust.

5   Our model is based on the notion that

6   we identify the data, that we have a need

7   assessment to determine that which is needed for

8   that school to move forward.

9   Then we provide that support by

10   helping them choose a model that would meet the

11   community and the school's needs and then we

12   would closely monitor.

13   And should we not see progress, then

14   we would move more closely to the point where we

15   would give greater guidance, greater assistance,

16   greater monitoring and in some cases take over.

17   So we do support and we are nimble to

18   be able to use the four models in Race to the

19   Top.

20   REVIEWER #1: Reviewer #2 has a school

21   finance question or questions.

1   how your equalization formulas actually equalize

2   in terms of demonstrating some outcome numbers.

3   We have the formulas in the

4   application, but can you clarify how this

5   relates to spending differences between

6   districts and then spending differences for

7   special needs peoples as compared to non-special

8   needs peoples.

9   What are the actual outcomes of these

10   formulas in the application in terms of money?

11   DR. HARRISON: We have a number of

12   equalization funding mechanisms in the state.

13   We have the Low Wealth Fund, which

14   really grew after a lawsuit was filed, and I

15   happened to be the superintendent in the Lowell

16   system when that was filed back in 1994.

17   We have a small schools funding for

18   schools that have fewer than 3,000 students and

19   we have disadvantaged student supplemental

20   funding that provides the school systems based

21   on the percentage of students on free and

22   reduced lunch.

1   And as these funding sources have

2   grown and sent more money into our little wealth

3   school systems we found that some have better

4   capacity than others to effectively and

5   efficiently use the dollars that we've had.

6   One of the things that we found in the

7   system that we've gone and taken over is they

8   were making some real poor choices on how they

9   were allocating their funds. And one of the

10 things that we've done is taken over that.

11   Any salesman that would come in with a

12 silver bullet, they'd write him a check. And

13 so, again, I think this goes back to one of the

14 points we made earlier on.

15   A low-performing school in an urban

16 district with much capacity can make some good

17 decisions. And to me, again, having been a

18 superintendent in a larger urban area, sometimes

19 it comes down to political will and it will make

20 it happen for kids and make those tough

21 decisions.

22   In others, such as the one that we

1   moved into, the capacity really wasn't there to

2   make wise decisions about how to spend those

3   funds.

4   So as we've seen the funding increase

5   and hopefully equalizing, the outcomes have

6   varied. We have some schools that have made

7   great progress as a result of additional

8   funding; we've had some that haven't.

9   And we think, as the Governor has

10   alluded to, the economic times, she's alluded to

11   her role and I think we're going to spend much

12   more of our energy in getting out and working

13   with LEAs and making sure they're using their

14   dollars wisely.

15   I think that it's time to put some

16   things aside. It's time to re-prioritize.

17   REVIEWER #2: Let me interrupt to say

18   what I'm asking is the spending differences

19   between the districts, not how they use the

20   money, but how -- you can have a formula, but

21   not much money in it, so that you don't equalize

22   spending.

1   You can have an adjustment for

2   disadvantaged children, but not much money in

3   it, so you really don't get much money to those

4   pupils.

5   So I'm really asking about the

6   allocation of dollars, not the effective use of

7   the dollars.

8   MS. ATKINSON: North Carolina has

9   three -- has a multi-tiered approach to funding.

10 We have positions. All school districts are

11 guaranteed a certain number of positions.

12   On top of those positions we have

13 dollar amounts that would go to school

14 districts.

15   On top of that funding, we have

16 categorical allotments for exceptional children,

17 career technical education, for example. So we

18 have that tiered approach.

19   On top of that, we have the funding

20 sources that Bill just mentioned -- for

21 disadvantaged funding, et cetera.

22   So when you look at the amounts spent

1 for a pupil, you will see for the typical

2 student who does not have any special needs, who

3 does not live in a low-wealth district, that it

4 may be in the range of $7,000 for that student.

5   But then when you have a student who

6 gets funding for all of those multi layers, then

7 it could be as high as $15,000, as an example,

8 for that student.

9   So our approach is a tiered approach

10 where we have a foundation and the first layer

11 of the cake, and then it continues to build

12 where we do have students who would be beneficiaries of all of

13 those levels of funding.

14   REVIEWER #2: Now, how do the charter

15 schools work into that, would they have exactly

16 the same tiering or do they have a different

17 formula that would have a different outcome?

18   DR. HARRISON: They would have the

19 same tiering based on the locality where they're

20 chartered.

21   And let me mention -- and I'm sorry if

22 I missed that question -- and I think June was

1 getting to this. Many of our lowest wealth schools

2 systems have a higher-per-pupil expenditure than

3 some of our wealthier and that we in North

4 Carolina, I think, provide about 70 percent, on

5 average, of the funding to our schools, which I

6 think is high.

7   MR. MCNEAL: And, Bill, the only other piece

8 that plays a significant role in this whole

9 funding would be the local piece, whether or not

10 the local community puts in additional dollars

11 depending on the ability of that community to do

12 funding-wise what it feels it needs to.

13   REVIEWER #1: The characterization

14 that Dr. Atkinson gave of bringing new possible

15 formulas, that's using state money.

16   Then a community might bump it up for

17 the non-needy child; right?

18   DR. MCNEAL: And Low Wealth actually

19 was designed to balance some of that out.

20 Smaller School was designed to balance some of

21 that out.

22   REVIEWER #3: Does the local still

1   provide equal amounts of dollars to the charters

2   in their localities?

3   DR. MCNEAL: Yes.

4   MS. ATKINSON: Yes.

5   REVIEWER #1: Joe has a question about

6   autonomous.

7   REVIEWER #4 : Yes. You gave an

8   example of the early college high schools as

9   being innovative autonomous public schools and

10 the definition of those -- of innovative

11 autonomous is that you exchange accountability

12 to the school for flexible instructional models,

13 selection and replacement of staff, budget

14 control within that school.

15   The early college high schools, is

16 that the way they operate or do they not meet

17 the definition?

18   MR. KLEIMAN: Yes. Actually, I know

19 the answer to this because Tom Ziko from our

20 Attorney General's Office reviewed this proposal

21 in great detail before they signed off and

22 questioned whether we could call those

1   autonomous and checked off legal requirements

2   and came back and confirmed that, yes, they do.

3   REVIEWER #4: I mean, so they operate

4   with budget control at the site?

5   MR. KLEIMAN: Yes. And the challenge

6   we've had with those schools is sometimes

7   there's some tension, that they seem to be too

8   autonomous in the districts in which they

9   reside, frankly, but they have a great deal of

10   autonomy comparable to a charter school.

11   REVIEWER #1: I have a last question.

12   How as a result of receiving the RTTT grant that

13   you requested will the life of students and

14   teachers change in the classroom on a day-to-day

15   basis?

16   DR. HARRISON: June, do you want --

17   MR. ATKINSON: Walk into the typical

18   classroom in North Carolina in the year 2014 and

19   you will see a teacher facilitating learning.

20   You will see students working at different

21   paces.

22   You will see students who get

1   immediate feedback about their learning. You

2   will see teachers working with students with

3   additional assistance and help.

4   As you walk down the halls of the

5   school, you will see some students engaged in

6   virtual learning, while others are working in

7   small groups.

8   You will see in the school a place where

9   parents and business people are in and out of

10   the school. You will see a focus on student

11   mastery rather than seat time.

12   You will hear very few conversations

13   about, "Oh, we had to go to school 180 days and

14   ten months of the year."

15   You will hear people talking about

16   what do I need to do in order to master learning

17   that has been identified through the common core

18   standards for each student in North Carolina.

19   DR. HARRISON: And I think in any

20   state, you will find pockets of excellence. And

21   our goal in Race to the Top would help us

22   achieve this more quickly is to make those

1   pockets of excellence the norm.

2   I happened to visit one of our school

3   districts, Morrisville Graded School, that had a

4   one-to-one program. Every child from grades 4

5   through 12 has a laptop.

6   And I was telling the Governor on the

7   way up here that -- and this was two weeks after

8   we were in for our board meeting. The Governor

9   joined us -- the district that we had taken

10   over, I said what I saw was exactly what we

11   need, that I walked into high school classes, I

12   walked into elementary classrooms and they were

13   finally at the point that teachers were

14   facilitating learning.

15   A teacher was working with a small

16   group of children. We had four or five other

17   groups working on their laptops truly engaged.

18   And what we are striving for -- and

19   this is kind of what June was saying -- is

20   making our schools places where kids want to be,

21   not places where they have to be.

22   We're about engagement and I finally

1   saw it happen at the elementary level and in the

2   high school. I saw a 43-year veteran math

3   teacher that was excited about what he was

4   doing, a 33-year-old elementary teacher who felt

5   like she was a brand new teacher.

6   MR. MCNEAL: But we think the grant --

7   we've been trying to impress upon you that we

8   didn't just start this process. We've been down

9   this path.

10   We have the lessons learned and if

11   inherent in your question whether or not if we

12   don't get it, we're going tp stop, with the

13   Governor is sitting here, I know that's an

14   emphatic no.

15   It will allow us to expedite things,

16   but we've learned some things. We know what

17   must happen for our children. We know that

18   there is a direct connection between what happens

19   in that classroom and what happens economically

20   in our state and in our nation, so we get it.

21   And so we will continue to move down

22   that path.

1   GOVERNOR PERDUE: What the money does

2   actually is help us to move faster further.

3   As we prepped for the work today, that

4   was the common denominator that we all felt.

5   North Carolina is committed. We are actually,

6   all of us from pre-K through 20, committed to

7   this concept of career/ college ready.

8   I am tired of employers telling me

9   that they had high school graduates who can't

10   read and write. I am tired of the unemployment

11   rate. It's unacceptable.

12   And we really are tired of the data

13   thinking that it's okay to have two sets of

14   schools in North Carolina. We have children who

15   are being educated currently by their zip codes

16   and that is wrong in any state in America.

17   And so the Race to the Top money will

18   obviously help us with resources. It will help

19   us enrich student learning and enrich

20   communities of learning.

21   But all in all, we are committed to

22   this. We really hope that you can see in us the

1   beacon, the lighthouse, whatever words you use

2   in education, that would allow us to become a

3   template for America. I believe we've done it

4   before.

5   If you look at our track record that's

6   well outlined in our application and you can see

7   that North Carolina has consistently been a

8   leader in how this country has moved forward

9   faster with more tenacious work.

10   We want this program to succeed. We

11   believe in what you're about. We believe in

12   innovation, we believe in technology and we

13   obviously believe in accountability.

14   And we can deliver on that for our

15   people, but we can also deliver on that for you

16   and for this administration.

17   REVIEWER #1: We've got a couple

18   minutes. Was there anything somebody wanted to

19   ask that didn't get to ask it? I guess not.

20   Thank you very much.

21   DR. HARRISON: Can I just thank the

22   committee. I've been a reviewer of many

1   proposals, nothing of this size and your

2   questions make it clear of how you put a lot of

3   work in going through all the details.

4   I know you've been through many large

5   proposals in a short period of time, so thank

6   you for your good work.

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