RAC-Appalachia

September 5, 2023

- [Muhammad] Thanks so much, folks, and good afternoon. This meeting will come to order for the Regional Advisory Committee for the Appalachia Region. This meeting is open to the public, and will be recorded for public record. At this time, I'm going to conduct roll call, so when I read your name, please unmute yourself, state "present," and then go back on mute. First up is Andrea Trio.

And if I do mispronounce your name, please correct me. Next on my list is Adam Cheeseman.

- [Adam] Present.

- Next is Andi Webb.

- [Andi] Present.

- Shannon Grimsley.

- [Shannon] Present.

- Cora Coefield. Brittany Oman...

- [Deb] Muhammad, I see...I'm sorry. I see Cora in on the other side. I will move her over to the panel list.

- Awesome. Thank you so much.

- Brittany Oman.

- [Brittany] Present.

- Shanae Mosley. Shanae Mosely? Angela Hargrave.

- [Angela] Present.

- Rachel White.

- [Rachel] Present.

- Aimee McDonald. And Robbie Fletcher.

- [Dr. Fletcher] Present.

- I'm going to pronounce this name wrong, Brandi Hitzelberger. Hitzelberger?

- [Brandi] Hitzelberger, yeah. I'm present.

- Awesome. Thank you. Mike Hogg.

- [Mike] Present.

- And Heather Crabbe.

- [Heather] Present.

- Awesome. Thank you so much. Awesome. So that is everybody. Thank you for that. One thing that I would like to acknowledge before moving forward, if you have a question during our speaking parts that you would like to make a comment, state, you know, anything and everything, we just ask that you please raise your hand, and wait for the Chair to call upon you.

Then you can unmute yourself, and then state it, and then go back on mute. That way we can have some order in our discussions. But before we begin our discussions, I would like to go around, and briefly state your name, what organization or stakeholder group you're representing, or even your area of expertise. And I'll go first.

My name is Muhammad Kara. I'm the DFO. You've probably been getting a bunch of emails from me. But it's nice to meet everybody. I will start in the same alphabetical order that we did attendance, so first on my list is Andrea Trio. I think she was gone as well, so we'll go to Adam Cheeseman.

- Hey, everyone. Adam Cheeseman. I'm the Superintendent of Doddridge County Schools in North Central West Virginia, and I'm entering my eighth year in this role. It's good to be with you all.

- Thank you. Andi Webb?

- Hi, everyone. I'm Andi Webb. I am the Professional Learning Specialist in Arlington Public Schools. First year, just finishing my first year in this role, and 24th year in education.

- Shannon Grimsley?

- Hello. Good afternoon. Shannon Grimsley, Superintendent of Rappahannock County Schools, Virginia. I'm on my seventh year in this role. Nice to see everybody.

- Thank you. Cora Coefield? Cora, if you are speaking, I believe you're on mute.

- [Dr. Coefield] This is Cora Coefield. Can you hear me?

- Yes.

- Okay. I am Cora Coefield, and I'm a Federal Program Specialist with the Virginia Department of Education.

- Thank you. Angela Hargrave?

- Hi. This is Angela Hargrave, and I serve as the Executive Director for the Office of Student Equity, Enrollment, and Discipline for Memphis Shelby County Schools. This is my 31st year in education, and my 15th year in this role.

- Thank you. Rachel White?

- Hi, everyone. I'm Rachel White. I'm an Assistant Professor in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies department at the University of Tennessee.

- Let's see...Robbie Fletcher?

- Hello. My name is Dr. Robbie Fletcher. I am Superintendent of Lawrence County Schools in East Kentucky. And I also want to give a quick apology to everyone. In my haste to try to get in contact with everyone, I said I would be emailing everyone. That was something that we need to be going through SharePoint, since this is public work.

So again, I want to apologize to everyone for that mistake of mine.

- Thank you. Brandi Hitzelberger?

- Hi, I'm Brandi Hitzelberger. I'm in Louisville, Kentucky, and I'm a parent of a deaf-blind child, and I'm with the National Family Association for Deaf-Blind.

- Thank you. Mike Hogg?

- [Mike] Hi. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Mike Hogg. I'm a former school superintendent, and currently the Vice President of Place-Based Partnerships for Partners for Rural Impact, serving in Eastern Kentucky. It's good to be with you.

- Thank you. Rebecca Roach?

- [Rebecca] Hi. I'm Rebecca Roach from Morehead State University. I'm an Assistant Professor in Early Childhood Elementary and Special Education.

- Thank you. And last but not least, Heather Crabbe.

- Hello. My name is Heather Crabbe, I'm out of Northern Kentucky. I have two children in the Kenton County School District. One is in middle school, and one is in high school. I'm also an Associate Provost at a local university, and I am an attorney.

- Thank you. It looks like we have two hands raised. I'll start with Andrea. I cannot hear you on my end. I don't think anybody else can hear you. I'm not sure if...

Tina or Deb, can you step in to possibly see if there's any mic issues?

- Sure. Andrea, the only thing I can suggest, down below you'll see the microphone icon, it says Mute. There's an up arrow right next to that microphone. If you click, make sure that you have the correct speaker selected.

- [Andrea] How about now?

- Yes.

- Yes.

- Great. Sorry about that.

- No worries.

- I believe I have you down for our meeting attendance. If you'd like to go ahead and introduce yourself, that would be great.

- Sure. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Andrea Trio. I'm an elementary school Principal, representing the State of West Virginia in Ohio County, and also a West Virginia Milken Educator.

- Thank you. And then we'll switch over to Brittany.

- Hi, everyone. My name is Brittany. I am a Special Education teacher, and this is my ninth year. I work in Arlington, Virginia.

- Awesome. Thank you. I know...I'm trying to make sure I get everybody on my checklist, but I believe that was everybody. If not, please let me know. In the meantime, we can move on to the next slide, please. I'll quickly go over our meeting agenda today, and our objectives. First is to review the educational data from each region, and the public comments that were received.

We'll discuss initial observations regarding critical education needs of the region, specifically your region. And then we'll identify clear action steps to be completed to gather information on the critical education needs of the region, and how those needs can most effectively be addressed through technical assistance activities.

From here, I'll pass it on to our Liaison.

- [Tara] Great. Thank you, and good afternoon, everyone. My name is Tara Donahue, and it is a pleasure to serve as your liaison for the Appalachia region. And I'm looking forward to getting to know you in the coming weeks, and providing any logistical and technical assistance support you may need. So for this meeting, I'm going to quickly review the information that was in the regional profiles with you.

And this will give you a chance to see what is happening across the individual jurisdictions, but also give you a sense of any trends or patterns that you may see within your region, along with any differences. And so as we mentioned last week during the orientation, we're not able to cover every topic area, but we wanted to give you a flavor for some of the most pressing issues facing our education system, and you'll have a chance today to talk about additional issues you may want to look at.

So I will be bringing up the profiles so that we can scroll through that together. Give me one second. Hopefully you can see this now. So we'll just quickly kind of review each of these topic areas to give you a sense about what's here.

And so first, you'll see a group of reflection questions, and we'll go over those a little bit in detail in a moment. But that is really to help you think about how this data...what does it mean to you? Is it what you expected?

And if not, what surprised you? And then we'll get into the discussions about what other data do you need to better understand the needs in your jurisdiction or region, and we'll go into detail then about how that needs assessment can help you attain this data. Who are you going to talk to? What data do you want to gather from other people? And then, how can we support you in collecting that input? So we started with just information about districts and schools.

So you can see here, this is based on the most recent numbers reported from the National Center for Education Statistics website. So we have listed the number of operating districts, public schools, charter schools, and private schools for each jurisdiction in your region. And this is followed by the number of students enrolled in both traditional public schools and charter schools, which is also disaggregated into pre-K through grade 8 enrollment, and 9 through 12 enrollment.

And the number of students reported to be enrolled in private schools is also included. In the next section, we've included the disaggregated data for three to five-year-old enrollment, and public elementary and secondary enrollment by race ethnicity. So this allows us to dig a little deeper into the region's geography.

We have provided disaggregated data that shows the number of students enrolled in public and charter schools by geographic region such as city, suburban, town, and rural. And then, this is followed by information about special populations, including English language learners, students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and students qualifying for special education services.

And you can see we have also included data from the United States as a whole here in these tables, so that you can see how your region and jurisdictions compare to what has happened nationally. We then jump into graduation data, which includes the total adjusted cohort graduation rate, or ACGR for four-year cohorts, and disaggregated data provided for students with disabilities, English learners, economically disadvantaged, homeless-enrolled, foster care, and private school.

ACGR information is also available by race ethnicity, which you can see is provided to you here. And at the end of the section, as you notice, each one does have reflection questions, just to help you think about the data in those

sections a little bit more. We then talked about student academic information, and to provide the best comparison data that we had available, we included results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP, which is also known as the nation's report card.

We included information here for the 4th and 8th-grade math and reading. And again, with a comparison for how the average...what the score was for the United States overall. Next we have non-academic information, and this is information related to out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, and other non-academic information included for the school, the percent of students who reported being bullied either on school property, or electronically bullied.

We also have the number of firearms that were possessed at school, or how many were reported, and then the numbers that were nationally available for the number of students who did this per 100,000 students enrolled. So after we finish up with the student data, we start getting into teacher information. So for here, we looked at public school enrollment information, as well as the pupil-teacher ratio, and the number of teachers serving in private schools.

And we also looked at data regarding teacher qualifications, and this allowed us to look at the degree levels and years of experience. And although recent data on qualifications was not available, more recent data was available about the percentage of teacher candidates who were enrolled in or completed a teacher preparation program. And that included those who were enrolled in traditional programs, and those who were enrolled in alternative programs.

And the alternative programs are also noted by whether the program was based in an institution of higher education, or if it was non-IHE based. And then, the profile ends with a large table that covers some of the different financial information about each jurisdiction.

And this includes federal, state, and local revenue sources, and current expenditures. And the current expenditures were divided by total instruction and support services, and then we also have some brief information here about Title I expenditures. So that just gives you an overview of the types of information that we provided. As noted, this was an overall on some of the themes that we could have gone into, as we wanted to also make this a reasonable length for you to absorb.

And as I said, we'll talk more about what this does...what information this provides to you, and what you still need. So we can go back to the slides now. The purpose of the RAC is to identify priorities, and so to do so, the RAC must address the question of how can we identify the highest priority education needs of this region, and how those needs may be addressed through technical assistance activities.

So here are some questions that you may want to consider as you're thinking about the data available to you, what else is out there, and how this will inform your final report, which prioritizes the needs in your region. So we'll quickly go through these. So you want to consider, you know, how do we ensure that all students achieve academic excellence, and have access to effective instruction?

How can we ensure that all students and communities have the educational resources they need to fully participate in their education? How can we ensure an outstanding, well-paid, well-supported, and diverse educator workforce? And how do we support the well-being of students, teachers, and the school communities? So, next slide, please.

And this next slide just highlights some of the overall reflection questions that were at the very beginning of the profile. So like I stated previously, just to get your overall reactions to the data presented, is it what you expected across your region, or within the jurisdiction or stakeholder group that you represent? If it's not what you expected, what surprised you? And then, what we really want to focus on today is to think about data you need to help you better understand the needs in your jurisdiction or region, and are these data available at the state level?

And do you have access to this data through another vehicle? And how can the needs assessment help you attain this data? So we want you to think through who do you need to talk to to get more data? What do you need to access? Is it information that you think can be best gleaned through a survey, a focus group, or additional public comment forums?

And we can help you and support you in disseminating that information, collecting it, and then analyzing it. So next slide, please. And so as of Friday, there were no profile...or public comments recorded, but thank you to any of you who were able to share that over the weekend, because we did get three public comments for your region, that are now posted under the Meeting 1

folder for easy access, and we'll move that also into the Public Comments folder.

But you had one education stakeholder respond to the public comments, and two parents, so we'll quickly just review what the questions are on that public comment, and what the responses were. So the first public comment are, what are one to two...or sorry, the first public question is, what are one to two educational needs within your region that the RAC should prioritize?

And the general consensus, or what the public comments have indicated so far is education funding is a priority, access to high-quality child care, making sure that students have adequate reading and math skills, particularly helping them get back to where they were before COVID, and especially children with special education and language-based learning disabilities such as dyslexia.

And then, services for students with multiple disabilities. The next question asked on the public comment form was, why do you believe these are the educational priorities that your region should address? And the responses to this were issues of struggling to find quality teachers and resources to help educate students.

Also, of just being able to read. Without the ability to read, there is not much that can be done without severe difficulties. So again, going back to those literacy fundamentals. Also, again, a focus on disabilities, and making sure that all students are able to receive adequate educational services.

For question number three, which is what information can the RACs collect about these priorities to better understand and address the needs? Some suggestions were to do research research on adequate funding for schools, and research on how to provide child care. There also was a comment about making sure that assessments and test scores, and even observations of classroom ensure that the most appropriate instructional methods are being used to address the needs of all students.

There's also a suggestion about surveying kids about their learning in school, and whether they feel confident, and what would be helpful for their success. And surveying the population of special education students in public schools to make sure...and this includes the vision and hearing impaired students, to make sure that all students are diagnosed appropriately. And finally, the last comment

asked if they could provide or had any additional comments about educational needs in the region, and how those could be addressed.

And again, it reinforces some of the things that they noted earlier, ensuring that all teachers are trained in science-based reading methods to help children with language-based learning difficulties, and making sure that qualified special education students...or teachers are available for all these students, and that early interventions are put into place. Also, a suggestion was to make sure that all teachers and school staff receive appropriate behavioral training.

So just from those comments, I mean, some of the overall themes looked like funding early child care, addressing special education, and students with multiple disabilities, reading skills, having quality teachers and resources across all schools, and making sure that teachers can implement appropriate instruction for all students, and have the necessary training to address all student behaviors.

So now I will turn it over to the Chairperson to lead the open discussion, but here are some of the questions that we might want to think about as we start to detail what that needs assessment is going to look like. So is there a specific area of the profile...we also can go back and review specific areas of the profile that you would like to review in detail.

And then, we want to have general discussions about what you think the top priorities are facing your jurisdiction and/or region. And then, you know, what input do you want to hear from other stakeholders, and what are our strategies for going about collecting that input? So next slide, please, and then I will turn it over to Dr. Fletcher. We're encouraging you to raise your hand if you have a comment, and you'll be called on.

And we are also monitoring the chat feature, if you'd like to add any information for all of us to see. Okay? Thank you.

- Before we begin that discussion, there was, I think, RAC member, Andi Webb, I think had your hand up at one point?

- I did, thank you. And if you are going to address this, it may be redundant. But my question is how much of an impact will those three comments have on our decision-making moving forward, given that we're representing several

different states? It was a 24-hour comment period, and we only have those three.

So I just wonder what the impact of those three comments will have on our planning.

- I want to start to address that. Thank you for the question. Yeah, so moving forward, they have up to 24 hours before your meetings to respond, but as of Friday, we didn't have any, so that was the short turnaround. The public comment forum will remain open, so we will continue to update that as they come in, and you will also have the ability to do more specialized public forums, too, if there are special groups, or special questions you want to ask that get beyond these general ones.

So that's up to you as a committee, about how much weight you want to put on those public comments, especially given the small number and the small turnaround time that everybody has had to respond so far.

- Thank you, Ms. Donahue. Any other questions before we move on to this portion, from anyone? From Ms. Donahue or [inaudible]? Okay. If not, one of the things that was sent in the SharePoint, and you can find it through...I think Ms.

Donahue is sharing this as part of the presentation. But also too, if you have another window up, and if you're like me you'll have several up, you can go under the SharePoint in the Regional Advisory Committees under Appalachia, and then option number five is the need sensing materials.

And then just keep following the need sensing materials. Every time it says need sensing matrix or need sensing, keep clicking on that 'tll you finally get to a document that starts off with, it says the RAC Need Sensing Matrix Doc. And as part of this discussion that we have, you're going to have a group of some questions that we need to address, and one, I think that our RAC member Andi Webb brought a really good point, from what stakeholder groups do we still need to ask questions?

For example, as a superintendent, I feel very comfortable in talking with other superintendents, other school leaders across the state, but there's going to be a lot of groups that I can't reach. And I also feel very comfortable in talking to people from Kentucky. So how do I contact? And that's going to be some

obstacles we'll have to get through with Mr. Muhammad...I'm sorry, Mr. Kara, and also Ms.

Donahue, is how do we reach across state lines? For me, personally, how do I talk to other superintendents? I have access to all the different email addresses, things like that in Kentucky, but we'll have to also find out who else we need to talk to. So some other things too that we'll need to address, and we'll look at each one of these as we go through the stakeholder group, is okay, when you talk to that stakeholder group, what's the actual area of focus or priority area for that group?

For example, I think that in a lot of the comments that I'm a part of, the focus area in our state, and I think it's also...I know for sure Tennessee is looking at increasing teacher...the salaries for starting teachers up to $50,000, I believe, in the next couple of years. So, you know, one of the big topics of discussion here is, does there need to be a minimum salary for teachers, in particular teacher recruitment?

How do we do that? What type of data? What type of data do we want to collect? Is it going to be an online survey? Or maybe your role allows you to have a focus group. Maybe as someone working with higher education, and institute of higher education, maybe you have a focus group that you can talk to, and have Zoom meetings that you could take some qualitative data with.

And then also, too, do we want to do surveys? We can do public comments, other items like that as we go through. And then, what type of platform? I mean, do we want to be Zoom, smartsheet, website, SurveyMonkey, other items like that? And then, what type of output, and then analysis, and also interpretation? What do the numbers say? When you look on these online surveys, what do they say?

As you can see there, what themes are we hearing from the constituents? And how do we interpret the results as priorities? So again, that is my understanding of this process, at the end, we'll be putting together a very extensive report on what we believe that are the major needs of the Appalachian region. Some of the things to really think about, again in this group, and we'll open it up for discussion again, from which stakeholder groups do you want to collect data, okay?

So start thinking about that, and then here shortly we'll take some notes, and we'll allow you to put that out there. And then, how do we want to collect that data? And then too, the big question for me is how do we get support from the Manhattan Group in helping us collect that data, and how do we make contacts? Because it's my understanding that we also have a responsibility to seek input from governors, chief state officials, for example for us it's the commissioner of education, and also REL Governing Board.

So we'll have to have someone that we're going to appoint to reach out to those groups. So as you go through the data, you know, was there a stakeholder group that may, from your area, that you feel like that we're missing? And try to go through that across the top there. What would be the... I think there's an example, if we could get an example, please? There we go.

For example, a teacher preparation institution, I think that we have some people that are from different universities on this group. Maybe the stakeholder group would be a teacher preparation institution. And then, the focus may be teacher shortages. Well, how do you want to collect that data? Do you want to do it with a focus group of less than 10? Then you'd have a Zoom platform. And then the output would be the meeting transcript, and then...

But here's the challenges, or the analysis could be what kind of support do you need from the other groups? And then, how do you interpret that? That would be a qualitative interpretation. Once you go through and see what people's what's your insights or interpretation of what's going on in that meeting. And then, you know, some of the questions that they have here, what are some of the challenges faced by teacher prep institutions?

[inaudible] teacher preparation institution representatives think teacher shortages in the state and region should be a priority for federal technical assistance. And then, what type of technical assistance supports are needed to address this issue? So this is an example, okay, just as an example as you go through, and you can think about that too, as the different examples that...maybe that'll pique some interest from you.

Next slide, please. Again, we mentioned some of the... Each one of us have different roles that we play. Some of us are connected to educational organizations, whereas others, I think one of our committee members here is a parent of a special needs student, but also has some national organization

connections. I think one of the things is I went through, that came to mind to me, is what are a particular type of special needs?

What are maybe some of the disabilities that maybe we're not addressing, that may need more funding or may need more help? So each one of us has special roles that may be able to pick a perspective stakeholder group that we want to work with. But again, as you see them listed, schools, teachers, administrators, parents, adult ed programs, businesses, librarians, local education agencies, state educational agencies.

And then other customers that again I believe that we're required to reach out to would be chief state officials, or for us it be a commissioner of education, governors, and also the REL group. So think about those as far as stakeholders. Next slide, please.

So here's where we get into then discussion. When we start looking at the matrix, from which stakeholder groups do we need to collect data? What is the purpose of collecting data from this group? How can we collect it? And what support do we need from the group in helping us collect the data? I hope that these have so far kind of piqued your interest, and maybe you have some burning question or burning thought on your mind.

So would anyone like to go first, as far as a stakeholder group we need to collect data from? RAC member Cheeseman...

- Yes, thank you, Mr. Fletcher. Just a couple of comments here up front...and I do have an idea with the stakeholders. But some of the data that we looked at earlier, I'm just kind of curious, I saw it was from '19 and '20, and then maybe some from '20 and '21, so it's obviously a couple years, you know, outdated.

But I noticed in terms of West Virginia, there were 60 districts noted. And to my knowledge, we've never had 60 districts. We have 55 county school systems, and then we do have a school for the deaf and the blind, which I believe is counted as a LEA, which would be about 56.

And I also noted we had no charter schools. Well, in the last couple of years, actually, legislation has been introduced, and we do have a handful of charter schools now. So just noticing that some of that data is a little bit, you know, outdated. But looking at it, the rest of it looked very close for West Virginia.

Obviously, our achievement scores are nowhere near where we need to be... But in terms of stakeholders, you know, I'm in this business to try and help students, and try to help kids, and you know, is there not room here for some of our students as stakeholders, talking to our kids and seeing, you know, what is it that...

You know, I always say this, especially in West Virginia, we've been stuck in the 1980s for so long, we just keep doing the same things over and over again. And you know, our kids, kids today are different. This is a different generation, and so they've grown up in a different environment. And so I wonder if there's not room for students' voice in this?

After all, that's the reason that we're called to do what it is that we're doing. I may have got the cart ahead of the horse. I've scheduled a sit down meeting with our state Superintendent of Schools, Michele Blatt, for next Tuesday to have a conversation with her.

And may be I was out of turn doing that. And then I'm also the past president of our Superintendent Association, and so I've got a pretty good connection, you know, with our superintendent group, so I've also got some conversations flowing around that, you know, as well. But just in terms of stakeholders, just maybe think about what does it look like if we could talk to some kids?

- Thank you, sir. I guess one of the questions that I would have as far as that, are we just looking in general at what students' perception of needs in our area, or are there specifics...

- Certainly, I think so. You know, they're in the classrooms with these teachers. In West Virginia, we have a teacher shortage. That's no secret. That's probably no secret for many of your states. And not only what we're seeing then is with a lower teacher shortage, the quality then of teachers that we are putting in the classroom, you know, is a lower standard.

And kids will give you that perspective. They're very honest, you know, when it comes to that. And many of you as superintendents, principals, you know this, the honesty of kids. And so, I think just getting their perspective. I just...everything we do in Doddridge County, I talk to the kids, right? I want to hear their perspective on it.

And so, that's just one example. But other things, you know, broadband internet is a big issue in West Virginia. I've got a list of things here that we are kind of up against, that I think, you know, would apply, but I don't want to monopolize all the talking. I'm also a preacher. If you get me going, I'll talk a long time, so...

- Thank you again, Mr. Cheeseman. I appreciate the input. And again, I think you can't go wrong with asking the input of students. Matter of fact, you'll probably gain an insight. I would gain an insight that...I would probably gain a lot of insight from students. And the more and more you talk to them, the more and more we realize, so...

RAC member Rachel White.

- Thanks, Mr. Fletcher. I was just going to build on what Mr. Cheeseman was saying. Primarily, all of my work focuses on superintendents, and I teach in the Educational Leadership program, so primarily aspiring principals and superintendents. And so I know many superintendents and principals have student advisory groups, so I just wonder if we can harness the power of those?

And within the next week or two, if they are planning to meet with their student advisory groups, if this is something that can be added to their agenda. And then I don't know, like Mr. Cheeseman said, if I put the cart ahead of the horse, but I have a really strong relationship with a lot of the executive directors of the state superintendent organizations, so I'm trying to coordinate just a focus group of sorts that would incorporate both executive directors of the statewide superintendent associations, but also have them share with their membership.

So anyone that wants to be involved in that conversation can come, and I would just sort of conduct it like I would conduct a research focus group, and have transcripts that provide some insight into some of the issues that they're dealing with.

- Thank you for that. RAC member Rebecca Roach, you're next.

- Thank you. I think one thing we have to think about is the question that we're asking, and that will depend on which shareholders we want to reach out to. I know in Eastern Kentucky, we are really challenged by the teacher pipeline. We don't have enough teachers, especially in our small, rural districts that don't pay as much as our great big urban districts.

And so in that case, if I'm asking about the teacher shortage, then that's going to be different than if I'm talking about classroom quality. So maybe if we can decide what our big questions are, then we can decide who we're going to reach out to to answer those questions.

- And I think tagging on to that, Ms. Roach, I think that that's one of the things with this activity, who are we going to ask, and who's going to be responsible for asking those questions? Then, how can the MSG group help us to get to the right stakeholders? And maybe even also maybe get some interviews from maybe if Ms. Donahue can connect us with folks, that would get us where we need to be in that too.

Ms. Donahue, is there anything you would like to comment on that?

- Yeah, just we will definitely support you with the work, even with the governor and chief outreach. And you know, we're talking about whether that's in writing, we can help submit smartsheet forms, like the public comment currently is in, and that will help us reach a greater number of people. We do need to be cautious if you're doing focus groups. They do need to stay under 10 people in order to meet the OMB clearance, so that might be just a challenge with that.

But yes, we are...you know, we want to listen to you, hear who you want to reach out to, and then we will do everything we can to support you in making those connections, figuring out what those right questions are, and then collecting that data, and helping you analyze that to create your summary, and determine what those priorities are for your final report.

And to add to that, I believe we have a lot of leeway in the questions we can ask, or what we want to ask, or what type of questions should be asked, but then the method of data collection may have some more restrictions with it. But again, this group has that freedom to say, okay, what do we feel is the most pressing issue for our area?

And when I say our area, not only Eastern Kentucky for me, but also for Tennessee, for West Virginia, for Virginia, and things like that. To add to... I'm sorry, go ahead.

- I'm sorry, Chairman. This is Dr. Coefield, and unfortunately I am in transition. I do not mean to speak out of turn, but when the opportunity presents itself, I

would like an opportunity. I'm in a mobile device, and therefore I don't have access to all of the features on the platform that everyone else has.

- Okay. Ms. Coefield, I think you'll be third in line. I'll have you third, after the next two. But thank you for that, and I apologize that we can't get you to that through the mobile device, but we'll get to you shortly.

- No problem. Thank you, sir.

- Thank you, Dr. Coefield. The other thing I did want to add to to RAC member Roach's comment is I know that in Kentucky, one of the biggest issues that we have is the discrepancy, the gap in spending between a property-rich district versus a property poor district. If you look at, for example, there's... You know, the amount of money that comes in per pupil spending may be very different when you look at a Louisville school versus a Lawrence County school.

Again with Louisville, they have that opportunity, which is perfectly fine, but how do we close those gaps? Because it does put some of us at a disadvantage. So for me, that would be one of the top priorities to look at. So next, RAC member Hitzelberger.

- Hi. I'm a parent, so if you want parent input, obviously I can reach out to several parent groups. My specialty would be vision impairment and DHH, but I'm happy to reach out to any special needs communities.

We've been involved in several, and work with OSEEL a lot. needs communities. We've been involved in several and work with OSEEL a lot here in Kentucky, with Gretta Hylton. And my son went to school, just graduated from School for the Blind, so, you know, that is kind of the people that we know, that special needs community, so I'm happy to reach out there.

I honestly think probably for parents, a survey works best, because I feel like they open up a little bit better when their names are not on it, and they can feel like they can be truthful without backlash. But that's just my opinion. But I'm happy to do any research in that area, or you know, talk to parents, because I have several parents that I know in Kentucky, and actually I'm from Tennessee, so I have several connections in that area as well, so...

- Well, again, based on your expertise, Ms. Hitzelberger, there's going to be some questions that you may want to ask that I wouldn't even think of as a superintendent. You know, as a parent of special needs, and being a part of

those organizations, you're going to see a lot of information that I'm not going to. So if there are some questions, and specific questions that are coming up, absolutely, we're going to rely on your expertise to get that information in.

But also too, your expertise on what type of questions need to be asked, and then how do we... I agree with you, parents are a lot better with anonymous surveys, at least the ones I've worked with, because they want to have input, but also too, maybe the possibility of some open-ended questions, too, for that input, because maybe there are some things we don't think about.

So thank you for that. Thank you so much.

- Thank you.

- RAC member Andi Webb.

- Thank you. I was wondering if we could be specific with teachers? Could we possibly include phrasing such as "practicing classroom teachers," particularly post-COVID? Because as Mr. Cheeseman was mentioning, some of this data is a little outdated, and while it's hard to get live data, especially with it being from 1920, unless you were a practicing teacher during COVID, it's hard to have a perspective that is completely accurate of what the needs are in classrooms right now.

So I would encourage some specific phrasing around practicing classroom teachers, particularly post-COVID. Thank you.

- Thank you for that. And I think once you, if you put together a survey, we can find out and maybe even delineate which...you know, how many years of experience that someone has, versus how many they don't. I hate to eliminate a group, but on the other hand, I would like to see perspective of both those that were pre-COVID, during COVID, post-COVID. And of course many of us fall into all three categories, of course, but it would be very interesting to see the perspective of a newer teacher, versus someone that maybe was a new teacher in COVID, versus a teacher that was there before.

So a lot of those surveys might be able to have those information where we can do some disaggregation with it, too. Thank you for that. RAC member Brittany Oman...

- I'm happy to jump in, but I think I remember Dr. Coefield was going to go next?

- Oh, yes. I'm sorry. Dr. Coefield...

- I just don't want to take her spot.

- Thank you, Ms. Oman. Thank you. Dr. Coefield, I apologize. And thank you, Ms. Oman, for pointing that out.

Dr. Coefield, please...

- Thank you, thank you. I appreciate the opportunity. Well, one of the things that I really want to bring to the table as far as being a state representative is looking within each of our state offices, looking at how federal programming is implemented and facilitated. Because within there, there is a monitoring process, and a lot of the data points that we're looking for are probably collected through that monitoring process.

So to reach out, and to have a succinct state representative of a cohort, or personnel that can add to the data that states have already collected as it rolls up from schools to divisions, and from divisions to a state level.

So one of the stakeholder groups that I think of are the federal program coordinators within divisions that are already conducting needs assessment processes, and looking at some of the topics such as teacher recruitment, teacher pay, because in Virginia, that is one of the main things. And when we start talking about what could the potential of an incentive-based type of program look like, in reference with some guidance as to what that could look like, versus the differences of individual divisions based on what resources they have, some have the resources for that, some do not have the resources for that.

But when we start talking about supplementing versus supplanting, how can we take a look at the feedback and the data that has come in through some of the monitoring processes and the needs assessments that are being conducted to make sure that states are in compliance with the federal guidance and regulations and resources?

So I just wanted to put that on the table as an area of consideration. Dr. Coefield, that is an excellent point. There's going to be a lot of groups that we can get data that's already been collected. For example, in Kentucky, the

Kentucky Associated School Administrators has already put together a lot of data and a lot of qualitative and quantitative data on issues in teacher recruitment and things like that.

So there's going to be some reports not only within the state departments of our respective perspective districts, but also too in maybe some other groups that we're a part of, that we can collect that data. But you're absolutely correct. You're going to have so much as far as needs assessments are being collected, and we can hopefully get access to that data. So thank you for that, Dr.

Coefield. Great point. And RAC member Oman. And again, thank you for catching that for me, Ms. Oman. I really appreciate that. You're up next.

- No problem. I'm an elementary school teacher, so fairness is, like, a big deal. As said, elementary school teacher, I teach special education, so one of the things that stuck out to me when looking at all of that data for the region was the special needs population by state, also looking at our special needs populations by race, by ethnicity, and sort of seeing where those connections either fall or don't fall.

I just also wanted to second Andi, and what she said regarding if we're sending out a survey, or asking teachers who are student-facing, that specificity is so important, like she said. Are you secondary? Are you elementary?

Do you spend 100% of your day with children, or is it 50%, because the other times you're coaching? Pre-COVID, post-COVID... And then, really focusing in as the data kind of pointed out, if we can, on some of those high needs areas are students with free and reduced lunch, students who require EL services, and then obviously from my perspective, our students with special needs.

I'm happy to sort of talk candidly with some of the teachers in my district. I'm not sure if it's just qualitative data that we want, or if anecdotal data... Like I think Ms. White was saying, like a transcript might be helpful because it could also provide of information as we're talking about opinions and input just from Virginia, and from where I work, but on those teacher shortages. Why are teachers leaving?

Why are teachers staying? We've heard it all in the media and in the news, but from actual teachers who are deciding to stay. I've thought about leaving many times, but there are a lot of reasons why I stay. Can we keep bumping up those

reasons for why people stay, and then maybe lure some teachers back? I could go on and on.

But I'm happy to, as a teacher who is 100% student-facing full-time, utilize whatever connections I can with other teachers to bring some of that information to the group.

- Thank you for that, Ms. Oman. And something that we may want to connect you with our Ms. Hitzelberger, both of you have a background in special education, maybe from two different perspectives. As we look at maybe again a focus area as we move forward, maybe there could be some teaming. And also with Ms.

Webb, you know, as far as what type of survey we want to put together. So, great points. Again, you know, one of the things I didn't really think about is when I think about...it seems to be 100% student-facing, versus teachers that may be part-time, versus the others. That's great data to disaggregate, so that's a great point. Thank you for that so much.

RAC member Ms. Aimee McDonald, you're up, please.

- [Aimee] All right, great. Well, my name's misspelled, but it's okay. I'm sure it's going to get fixed. I was like, oh, there's a D on there... I was just going to point out as far as now in Kentucky we say ML, multilingual learners, reaching out to the people who know more about that population in Kentucky. So KRM, Catholic Charities, Americana, getting data from them would be really useful. And then also looking at the possibility of our ML learners have a PSP, but it's not held to the same standard legally as an IEP.

So getting information regarding that so that we can give them services, and give them the time that other people who have an IEP would get. And then my other thought was also, when we were talking about parent data, in Kentucky we have something that's called the Kentucky Collaborative, so it's NCFL, National Center for Families and Learning, and the Prichard Committee.

So there's going to be a wealth of data already from parents and families that we would be able to use.

- Awesome. Great input. Thank you for that. RAC member Mosley, I see your hand up.

- [Chaney] Hey there. Let me lower that real quick. I missed the introductions. Chaney Mosley. I'm at Middle Tennessee State University. Throwing it out there, but I'm hearing a lot... If we're talking about stakeholder groups, I have not heard anyone mention employers.

I'm focused on secondary education, and then secondary to post-secondary transitions. I think it would be helpful as a... I mean, that's who we're educating students for. So, that's my thought there.

- Great point. And one of the things to think about there too is what exactly is the type of information we want from employers? You know, there's a lot of great things as far as that too. But again, you're exactly right. We haven't mentioned employers, but that's a great point. Anything you want to add to that?

- Sure, I will. I mean, I think the two types of information that we hear employers talk about...well, the one they talk about most are employability skills, and those referred to as soft skills, 21st century skills, communication, collaboration, creativity, etc., I think those employers would often say. So I work in the career and tech-ed space, many will say I can teach the technical skills, but what I can't teach is someone to problem solve and collaborate with other team members.

And so I think that that is an area for reinforcement, likely an area for reinforcement, and so maybe, like, what are the types of skills, generally speaking, not technical, not specific to your industry, but in general that you would like to see the emerging workforce come with?

- I think you're going to see across the nation, and in some pockets in Kentucky and a little bit stronger in other areas, things like portrait of a graduate which deals with those employability skills, dependability, empathy, other things. You know, those are things that we don't typically think of as our core curriculum, that maybe we need to look at as far as how do we move forward to that?

And maybe, there may be some thoughts around that type of discussion too, so...

- Well, I know it can be controversial, but there's a lot of crossover between employability and social-emotional learning as well, so do with that what you will.

- Well, you know, we have to meet all the needs of our students, that's the bottom line. And that social-emotional learning is a big part of that, absolutely.

- Thank you.

- RAC member McDonald, you still have your hand up. Do you have something you'd like to add? I don't see any more hands up. Ms. Donahue, would you like to add as far as anything that we need to kind of maybe bring this back in, what would you suggest as our next steps moving forward at this point?

- Sure. There are a couple of comments in the chat. Mr. Hogg had written, "In the classified staff, housing authorities is DCBS." I don't know if you want to say any more about that?

- RAC member Hogg, do you want to... Hey, Mike, you want to add to that, please?

- Yeah, just thinking about the connection between housing, the shortage of housing in our country right now, and the number of unhoused folks. And I think that there's a perspective there, potentially, with some nonprofits, Communities Unlimited, and some of the data that they're gathering would be powerful.

And of course, our classified staff, a lot of times we move straight to the professional staff, and forget about the classified, so being mindful of some groups there as well. So, yeah. Thanks, Robbie. I appreciate it.

- No problem. And it was very ironic, or very coincidental that Mike and I were in a meeting together here recently, then we turn around and we're in another meeting together. So, it's always good to work with Mr. Hogg. He does a great job. Let's see, we also have a comment here from RAC member Hargrave as far as the data and attendance supervisors in Tennessee.

Anything you'd like to add to that, please?

- Hi. Yes, I was just thinking that that group, we have a group from across the entire state, of the supervisors who are dealing with attendance issues, and truancy, chronic absenteeism across the state. And so, I know that we actually have that meeting coming up, where everybody will be gathering. So I was thinking that's a good group to collect some data from as well, as far as some of

those barriers, and even some of the things that we were just talking about with students who are unhoused, or are facing some of those kinds of challenges that keep them from attending school.

- Thank you for that input. We appreciate that so much. And I think that, you know, something that kind of came to mind is also too, I don't know how it is in your area, but in our area, we have more and more grandparents that are raising their kids.

We talk about housing, but we also talk about just the situation that our...and the gap there that's between grandparents and their grandkids, but yet they're having to raise them, and what type of support they may need in each district. So that might be even a data point that we want to look at. So again, just a thought, throwing it out there. But thank you for that. All right, other input, or other, as far as looking at the four questions we have here, any thoughts on how we need to get the MSG group to help us collect the data, or anything, any comment of that nature?

Ms. Donahue, I'll turn it over to you at that point.

- All right, thank you. I appreciate all of your comments and feedback. You have wonderful ideas, and it sounds like well-connected, so I don't think we're going to have any problem getting data. It looks like it's just a matter of kind of narrowing it down. So first, I'd just like to say the data that was provided to you did come from NCES, and we did this across all 57 states and jurisdictions in order to provide everybody with the same kind of information, understanding that you would have access at your state level, or you might know people that could even provide you with insights to things that were not publicly available.

So that was the starting point, and it was exciting to hear your conversation go in that direction, about all the other places that you know that you can dive a little bit deeper, and pull information totally relevant to your region. So we thank you for that. Because there were so many different ideas, I think the next step is really to narrow down your focus on what you can achieve in the next few weeks, and then from there, we can build out the strategy on how we're going to do that.

As far as the logistics, communication, dissemination, building the instruments, I'll be your key person, key contact for making all of that happen, and working with you to give you ideas, and finalize those final instruments as they go out

and get disseminated. But I think the key point right now would be to kind of narrow that focus down.

And I'll have Muhammad kind of come in, too, on what processes need to be put into place to reach agreement on some of these issues.

- Yeah, absolutely. I think, Tara, if we want to...I know we have about 30 minutes left in this meeting. Do we want folks to kind of regroup, and dwindle down their ideas, or do we want to talk more about the logistics of SharePoint, and that entity?

- Yeah, I could go over the SharePoint slides, just to give everybody... I know you've probably been kind of combing through them over the past couple of days, so this will narrow down your focus, and let you know exactly where things are. And especially from this group, hearing so much about communication, and that we will a lot of different activities going on at the same time, I want to make sure that we all know where we want to track all of this.

And again, we will spend the remaining minutes really discussing the matrix to determine your priorities. So just quickly, these are the folders you should see when you first open up your SharePoint, or get access to it. So you can see we have a variety of...we're trying to organize it based on the different activities that you're participating in.

That includes the orientation meeting. So if you go to the next slide, you'll see that we'll put all the materials from last week's orientation there. And then also, for the next slide, we'll have the primers that were available on the ethics training that you went to. So if you need to reference any of the information that was shared with you there, this will be the place for you to find that.

Next slide. So this is the profiles, and as you see, you already have the regional and the national disaggregated data available for you. We'll be, within the next couple of days, uploading your individual jurisdictions. These have pretty much the same information that you saw in the regional, it will just display it a little bit differently because we're focused on, you know, one state rather than four across your region.

Doing one final check on the data references, and then you'll be able to click on the links for anything that were in the profiles. And as we're... What we heard

as far as organization, such as superintendents, school boards, we have that all pulled out for your different regions, and so this will also be a starting point where we'll put a document up here that has links to associations and organizations, and then I heard all of you share many others that you may be involved with, so those will be living documents that you are free to add to.

Because SharePoint is our primary collaboration hub. This is where we're keeping everything as Word documents now, so you can write comments on, you can write questions. And this will be your major opportunity to communicate with one another, because you will only have one other meeting to have a conversation like this one.

So feel free to be able to, like I said, use the comment feature, put notes, track changes, things like that into here so people know what you're thinking, and you can have some sort of a dialogue going. Next slide. Okay, so all the meetings, or all the information from this meeting and your follow-up Meeting 2 will be also available to you.

It'll include the slides, a recording, and a summary. Next slide. Okay, this will be the important folder, and this is where the need sensing matrix will live. And so after this meeting, we will fine-tune that more, narrow it down, and post it here so you all have a chance to review it, again put comments in before it gets finalized.

For any instrument you may be using, such as surveys, focus groups, or public comments, we will store everything here so everybody has access to it, and it will be available for everybody to review and to track. If you go to the next slide, within the Surveys, Focus Groups, and Public Comments folders, there are subfolders which will be the communication documents.

So these will be the outreach letters that explain why you're asking a particular group for certain information. As we put things together, we'll give you guidance, or if you work with me, you know, we want to put a survey together. So, we'll talk about what the advantages of a Smartsheet are, and how we can quickly build that out and get the link sent out to whichever stakeholders you want to send it to.

Full copies of the instruments will live here, and then this is also where we will maintain the data files as we work into that last phase of actually building the report. Next slide. So this is where, because we did talk about so many different

opportunities to reach out to various stakeholders, we do need to be tracking every conversation and all the data that are collected.

So here is where we will post all the communication materials, and keep a tracking sheet so we know who was contacted, when they were contacted, and what kind of response was received from that contact. And this way, we'll be able to monitor that, look at response rates, and just be able to keep a running record of what's going on across all the individuals in the RAC, so everybody knows what is happening.

Next slide. And similarly, once we start collecting the data, we'll keep the raw data files here. Whatever analysis, whether it's quantitative from a survey, we can put that into the Analysis folder. If it's a focus group, and we have a transcript, we'll be able to summarize any themes or look for the patterns that we're seeing within those focus groups in the analysis.

And then, the summaries from each of these data collection activities will be placed into this subfolder, and that will be the key folder for finalizing the report. So, next slide. Okay, and so this is where we will have the report.

You'll be provided with a template, and in the draft folder, that is where everybody will be able to write sections, keep their comments, ask questions. And again, we're back to that collaborative nature of having this discussion forum right here in the SharePoint, so everybody has an opportunity to share and get their voice heard.

And then, once you move into that final stage, the final report will be kept here as well. And next slide. Okay, and so the Resource folder, contact information, and then any additional resources will be kept here. And again, particularly the resource folder and the documents that go there, those will be living documents.

So as you're reaching out to other people, or come across a website, or are part of an organization that other people may not be aware of, we can continue to add to those resources. And we'll be looking across all the regions to see if there's things that might be helpful for everybody so we have a collaborative space, and people can learn from each other, and be able to access some of the same materials.

Okay, next slide. All right, so we also, like I said, we spent a lot of time discussing a lot of ideas, so why don't we spend another eight to ten minutes

really looking at that need sensing matrix, and determining some of the priorities so that we can determine what stakeholder groups make the most sense to connect with next, and start thinking about what we want to get from those groups.

As we know, the school year is starting, so probably a lot of your groups are going to have limited time and availability. So regardless of what data collection strategy we use, we want to make sure we're using their time efficiently, and you know, each question that we ask is intentional, to really get to the heart of what you want to look at as a region. So if we could spend a little bit more time of kind on narrowing that focus, that will help myself, your Chair, and our DFO kind of combine all the thoughts, and get a draft plan to you that you can react to and we can get finalized within the next couple of days.

So, we'll look for hands. Or Dr. Fletcher, I don't know if you wanted to take this back of kind of narrowing down everything that you heard, and to really focus on what we want those priorities to be.

- I think for me, you know, and again, each individual is going to have different areas, focus areas that they feel that they're bringing to the group is the way we're reading this. So as far as a stakeholder group, I think for me, a focus, looking at the template that's here, an area of focus, or priority area would be teacher recruitment.

So the stakeholder group that I would like to reach out to is the KASA group, and the reason for that is there's data that they already have available, so there wouldn't have to be collection data. So the type of data I'd be looking at would be the survey data that they have, and what they'd release to me. Again, the technology platform, again it would probably a spreadsheet, just a spreadsheet they could share with me.

And then hopefully, I can get their data analysis, and ask permission to use that. But then again, my interpretations of that would be, what does the data tell us about teacher recruitment? So that for me, if I just look at what I'm... My suggestion would be, for the very first thing for me personally, would deal a lot with teacher recruitment.

So, I think that's a theme. Another theme I'd look at would be special education, but I'm going to need some help as far as in particular, when we talk about special education groups, what's our focus priority area with special education?

So I'll open the floor up for that, if anybody would like to discuss that. RAC member Oman, Ms.

Oman?

- Thanks. I don't necessarily have, like, a concrete answer, but some of the things we could think about in terms of special education, are we looking at K through 12, and the entire gamut of that? Do we want to focus on elementary, secondary?

And then beyond that, are we wanting to focus on students with low incidence disabilities, high incidence disabilities? When we look at special education, do we want to focus more on the student experience, Or do we also want to pay a bit of attention to the staffing? Because I know special education staffing is part of an issue. Part of the impact on student learning is the lack of staff, the lack of licensed staff, the lack of available staff, trained staff, etc.

So just some things to put into the sphere. I don't have strong opinions either way. But I think if we can sort of focus on maybe two of those things, or even one of those things, because there are so many to look at.

- Well, that might be an area that, as far as doing a survey to see which would be a better focus. If you have... You know, ranking these one through five, one through seven, one through eight, and send them out to a particular stakeholder group. And I'd have to rely on you for that. Which stakeholder group do you feel like would be the best to answer that? And rank these as one through eight, which would be the main focus.

So I think there would be, you know, first of all getting more input on special education K through 12, and what are some of the focus areas there? What type of data are you trying to get? And then, maybe after you take that first round of data that pulls in, then you may even be able to look at a second round of what needs to be possible...as you interpret this, what could be next steps?

- If I may, when the opportunity presents?

- Yes, absolutely. Dr. Coefield, please...

- Thank you. Thank you. Listening to the discussion, one of the things that came to mind is really assessing the critical shortage areas. And special education has long since been one of those areas that we look at as far as that

comes across our office as the need for support in making sure that teachers are properly licensed and endorsed. So we kind of can, kind of, for lack of a better word, can kind of address two issues at once, looking at the critical need, and the shortage in that area, depending on what the data says as far as the intensity of that in relationship with recruitment.

And then, you know, what is the qualitative communication in reference to why is there such a shortage? We then can look into the quality of programs that the professionals are engaging in, and the outcomes for children.

So looking at some of those areas that may be critical shortage areas as related to recruitment. And also to piggyback on that, understanding that difference between recruitment and retention. Because there are some areas that we're seeing across the state of Virginia where you may have the personnel in place, but how do we keep them?

How do we retain them? But then there are areas where there are divisions that really need to recruit. They need to bring people to that area. So, that may be some areas where we want to kind of look at that fine line there.

- Okay. Ms. Hitzelberger...

- Yeah, I agree with what you're saying, it's just we don't have enough properly trained staff. We're shoving teachers into the special ed classroom, and they're not properly trained in behaviors, or vision and hearing, and multiply challenged kids, and our kids are trying to communicate, and they're getting frustrated, and behaviors are coming out.

But also, I think what is a real issue is kids are not being properly identified on the IEP as what their diagnosis is. And then, if they are... Well, I guess, like, a big issue that I see, of course, is deafblind.

A lot of kids are missing that diagnosis, or a vision or a hearing diagnosis, and then the teachers aren't realizing that they are deafblind, and they're not getting access to education. So I think understanding, I guess, more of the child's needs....I don't really know how to say it, more training in IEPs...I don't know.

I don't know how to say it, but...

- The evaluation process, perhaps.

- Yes. Yes. Because I see a lot of kids get left behind because they're not getting the access that they need to education, because they're getting the wrong referral on an IEP.

- Ms. Oman, was there something you'd like to add to that?

- Yeah, I was just going to briefly say, Ms. Hitzelberger, what comes to mind when I hear that as a SED teacher is the training and the licensure and all of the professional development that has to come as a special educator to understand what you're seeing or what you're not seeing, those conversations, and really feeling confident when you come to the table for that evaluation, whether it's an initial evaluation or a re-eval.

And I think that ties into what Dr. Coefield was saying about the endorsement, and the quality of the professional development, and the retention of those teachers so that you don't have a first-year teacher teaching every time. But if we've retained that 7-year, 8-year, 12-year special educator, then they're much more well-versed to identify those students appropriately, and then give them the special education services that they require under the law.

- And Ms. Roach, I think you had your hand up, and you were shaking your head yes. Was there something you'd like to add to that?

- Just to follow up, yes, I think about teacher recruitment, getting that warm body in the classroom, but also teacher quality. And so in applications, sometimes, you know, things change so quickly, especially during COVID. We saw, you know, all of a sudden trauma-based education, thinking about trauma became a really big deal, but those students who started out as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, didn't get that here with us because we didn't see it coming.

So I think about some of the grants that used to come out that were teacher quality grants, that would help fill in the gap so that when some of our students graduated, there would be professional development provided for the things that were missing. So I guess what I'm saying is there's a difference between recruitment, getting that warm body, and then teacher quality.

- And to add to that too, as you know, a few years ago we lost the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program. And talk about having someone with a mentor of how to do everything from referrals, to just the day-to-day operations of school,

not only in special education, but also just in the classroom. So in Kentucky, we've lost that internship program, and it's really up to local districts on how we fund that, how do we take care of that, how do we train teachers?

And some districts may not have the funding for that.

- Yeah, I would love to hear from principals and instructional supervisors about teacher quality, you know [inaudible]

- Absolutely.

- And if I may, to respond to that, I'm listening to what you're, Dr. Fletcher, what you're talking about there as far as losing these programs, if there is... Looking at data for states that are receiving Title funding, that component of depending on which Title it is, that is that component of teacher quality in there, and that is defined as far as what that should look like.

And one of the major components when we're looking at Title II is that component of mentorship in residency types of programs who supplement what the needs assessment data is revealing about making sure that there is quality education and programming for professional development for our teachers that are currently employed.

- Yeah, an excellent point, Dr. Coefield. Thank you so much. Ms. Trio...

- Yes, thank you. Not to be redundant on what's been mentioned, but to certainly piggyback off of some great conversation that we're having, when I look at it as a building-level administrator, professional development is a, you know, key component that sticks out to me. But personally, when I look at incoming teachers, I'm not sure if they're coming from colleges and universities ready to, like, you know, put their boots to the ground and get going.

I know a lot of our field is about actively just engaging and being a part of, but maybe we could backpedal a little bit, and look into some of the programming that our colleges and universities, you know, are using and doing, and what kind of professional development and training are they giving to these future educators before they even come into the building?

And then going on top of that was the internship programs. You know, we've started something here in the past couple of years, in the state of West Virginia, with internship programs with... You know, it's no longer a UNI, and many of

us on this, you know, forum today that...student-taught, it was seven weeks and seven weeks.

And now we're looking at a full-blown year of residency, which I think is something that we need to take a look at for those coming into the field. Even backing further into that, the state of West Virginia is moving forward with a grow-your-own initiative, where we're looking at juniors and seniors in high school who are interested in going into the field of education, and doing some of the work while in high school.

But it's a big piece of recruitment, and training begins in the junior year of high school. And so it's intriguing parts of the field that we want to just grow our own within the state, and maybe that's something that we could look at. But I think it all drills back to what kind of professional development are we giving? What can we obtain here a little bit better?

But thinking about the special education piece too, somebody had mentioned about the exceptionalities, and I agree with that too, you know? I'm seeing a lot of... I'm one of those pre-COVID, during COVID, post-COVID educators, but I'm also seeing a lot of exceptionalities coming our way that relate more along the lines of trauma-informed, expanded school of mental health, students being identified with disabilities that are unlike what we've seen pre-COVID, right, and the many years before that.

So I think a good piece of a focus area and priority would definitely be professional development, and we could wrap a whole lot just around that one area.

- Thank you for that, and great point. Ms. Roach, I see your hand up.

- Well, I just wanted to follow up, and Dr. Fletcher, could I ask Andrea Trio a question?

- Absolutely. Please do.

- With the new teachers who come in, who leave the university, do you find that they lack the content knowledge strategies? Or are you seeing a professional disposition problem? Because I've been presenting at some conferences about disposition, and when I did those presentations, I expected university faculty to be at those, but the room was packed with superintendents and principals, and

instructional supervisors saying hey, the teachers who are coming in don't have the professional disposition that we want.

- Correct. Definitely the latter, Rebecca. I feel that they come in pretty strong with content, and teaching some new tricks to veterans, which is fantastic when it comes to curriculum. However, it's the lack of professionalism that we really see. And it's a different generation coming in, too.

So a lot of myself at the building level, it's working with teachers weekly about what our professionalism looks like all the way from dress, to how we act.

- Yeah, that's what superintendents and principals told me. They said, I can even get professional development, you know, or I can get materials to help them supplement our program. But the new teachers coming in, the professional disposition is really, really weak. All right, thank you.

- You're welcome.

- Thank you for that. Great points. Mr. Hogg, I see your hand up.

- Yeah, thanks, Robbie. I just have a question or a request, maybe, that we go to the link that a lot of us probably distributed to get those public comments, just to land on those. I know that we think about the survey tool, and gathering information. Is it broad enough and specific enough to allow us to execute on the charge that we've been given, at least as a baseline, if you will?

Does that make a lick of sense, as we say where I'm from?

- I think it does, Mike, but now I still have... Ms. Roach, you have your hand up still? No? Okay.

- Sorry.

- That's okay. Again, Mike, I think that one of the things that, as we follow through our charge, some of those links, we may have to extend that information out so that we can have more time to take up that information, I think, before meeting too. I think also too, moving forward, and I think Ms.

Donahue would agree with me, I think it's going to be very important that we have where exactly are we going to be talking with each other, putting together plans, where exactly, Ms. Donahue, would you like for us to do that within the

folder? I know there's a lot of different areas for communication, but if there's specific communication, where would that be?

- I think the way we have it set up, because everything can be FOIA'd, which is why we're not sharing different email addresses and things like that, so we would like you to just put your comments right into the document. So when we flesh out this needs matrix, we'll put that in there, and then everybody can add their comments to that. And then we will have a deadline for you to do that, and then we'll pull that down and synthesize everything that was there, and then share out a final draft.

We'll do the same thing for... Well, depending on how we end up doing the instrument development, you know, ask for feedback right within the folder, and it'll have to be through comments, we'll just keep everything as a live word version.

- Okay. Thank you for that. Ms. Grimsley.

- Yes, sir. Thanks so much. Just listening to the expertise of everyone on this panel, and the members, I'm really impressed. And I was wondering, because I feel like all of us have similar advocacy efforts, legislative priorities and groups that we serve on, or have collected a lot of statewide regional data already that has already identified some major areas in the region.

So rather than spending a whole lot of time, given the short window that we have, would it be okay to have a spot where we can all collectively take what has been identified already as these major areas, the data collected, and sort of dump that all into the SharePoint so we can review that, and maybe create a document to then send out to stakeholders to say, can you rank these?

Or these are the areas that have already been identified, and a lot of extensive research being done in I think all of our areas and roles. Could that be a way to maybe start and maybe expedite it a little bit, so we're not trying to find a perception of need that, again, is

[inaudible]

- I think, Ms. Grimsley, I think as long as you get permission from the group to put that data in here, I think that would be an excellent way to move forward, particularly with the short time frame that we have.

- That's a great idea. Actually, run it...just put it in my inbox first, and then I can upload it and send out a message to the group, with BCCs, letting everybody know where it is. So that way everybody knows it's been uploaded, and has the exact location to find it. I don't think just sending you...

I'm not sure if I can just send you a link, because I'm not the one who gave you access, since it's on the ED. But I'll either, you know, give you a clear map to where it is, or see if the link will work if I send it to you.

- Well, I see our DFO with his hand up, and I need to turn it over to Mr. Kara. Please, Mr. Kara, you're next.

- Thank you so much. I know we have about two minutes left, and I want to make sure we all have a quorum, because we are going to have to vote on these need sensing that everybody has talked about. I really appreciate all the intentional thinking and sharing. So I was wondering, and I don't know, Dr. Fletcher, if you've taken some notes or not, but if you just want to quickly reiterate some of the broad themes that you all are wanting to tackle, or some of the need sensing that was said throughout the group, so the whole group understands and knows kind of what is going to be taken charge, for instance.

And in that same token, we're going to have to do a voice vote in order for the whole committee to come together, and understand and affirm that these are the issues that you all will be addressing. Does that sound good with everybody? A thumbs up or a nod is perfect.

- Yes.

- So Dr. Fletcher, I'm going to turn it back over to you real quick just to kind of give a high-level overview of the things that you've heard. And then from there, I will call for a vote.

- Okay. And I will... If anyone would like to add to this, what I have is recruiting teachers, retaining teachers, professional development of teachers, and also special education not with as all that relates to special education, but also too as it relates to identifying students and meeting their needs.

Were there any other items that maybe I missed? If someone would like to put it in the chat.

- This is Dr. Coefield. I made note of quality... And some of these, I don't know if they would fall as subcategories under the overarching, but quality PD, and I think grow-your-own could definitely come under the retention and recruitment. Those were the only two that I had.

- So when we deal with retainment, and...I'm sorry, with recruitment, we're also talking about grow-your-own. And then when it talks about retaining, I think quality PD would be a part of that also, too. So those are the overarching themes that I have at this point. Any others? And again, Ms. Donahue has put these in, again, to read those, recruiting and retaining teachers, quality professional development of teachers, special education, all of the above, and identifying the needs, the student needs, and then making sure those needs are met.

And then of course, quality PD again, as far as grow-your-own, and under recruitment and retaining.

- Ms. McDonald, anything that maybe we missed?

- Well, just because there was so much data in the previous slides, like, are we not going to include... And I know that they're not special education, but because [inaudible] is similar to an IEP, can we not include multilingual learners in there as well?

- Well, I'd be happy to add that as one of the parts, as far as issues related to multilingual learning. Mr. Kara?

- I'm just going to do one last sweep. Is there anything else before we all do a voice vote? I will just call for the vote, and if you all agree, you'll just say aye, and then I'll call for those who say no. Ms. Grimsley, go ahead. Oh, maybe not. Is there anything else before I call for the vote?

- Ms. Grimsley, was there anything you want to add there, please?

- Yeah, sorry. I think I heard somebody also mention the accessibility for students too, and broadband connectivity, make sure that... I know that's a huge priority area for my region, so I just want that to be said.

- Thank you for adding that. I think also our Mr. Cheeseman had mentioned that a little bit earlier. So, that's our six items.

- So in that, you all can take yourself off of mute. So all those in favor... Oh, sorry. Was someone trying to say something? Okay. So, you'll just say aye.

So all those in favor of working on the six items that are listed, and have been said, moving forward for this RAC need sensing committee, please say aye.

All: Aye.

- Perfect. All those opposed? Perfect. Well, thank you for that. I know we are two minutes over time, and I would be remiss not to share. I know the schedule or the timing of this RAC committee was a concern during some of our administrative meetings, so I would like to note that the RAC committee...or the committee is working on moving the second RAC meeting to a later date.

Details regarding new dates will be shared in the Federal Register, so please be on the lookout for that. We took what you said into consideration, and we'll be working on that. Is there any questions before we adjourn the meeting? Perfect.

So with that, I move to adjourn the meeting for the Regional Advisory Committee for the Appalachia Region, for September 5th, at 3:03 p.m. Thank you so much, everybody.