

**RAC-West Region  
Meeting #2  
October 11, 2023**

- [Muhammad] Good afternoon. My name is Muhammad Kara. I'm the Designated Federal Official for the West Regional Advisory Committee, and I would like to call this meeting, or this meeting will come to an order for the Regional Advisory Committee for the West Region. I would like to acknowledge that this meeting is open to the members of the public and will be recorded for public record.

At this time, I will conduct a roll call. So members that are on here, please unmute yourself, and say present when I call your name. First on my list is Joseph Martin. Okay. Next on my list is Kelly McQuaid.

- [Kelly] Present.

- Thank you. Next on my list is Meg.

- [Meg] Present.

- Thank you. Next on my list is Vanessa.

- [Vanessa] Present.

- Awesome. Next on my list is Kathy.

- [Kathy H.] Present.

- Thank you. Next on my list is Michelle.

- [Michelle] Present.

- Thank you. Next on my list is Tonia.

- [Tonia] Present.

- Thank you. Next is Brandy.

- [Brandy] Present.

- Awesome. Next is Tiffany.

- [Tiffany] Present.

- Thank you. Next is Kathy Prather.

- [Kathy P.] Present.

- Thank you. Next is Alexa Cunningham. Okay. And last is Gerry. Great. Okay, let me just... So based on our attendance today, we have met a quorum.

And one thing that I would like to acknowledge is if members throughout this process would like to be recognized or would like to have any input, please use the Raise Hand function, and let the Chair or the Liaison call on you. We can go to the next slide, please.

So today's agenda, we're going to basically review the meeting agenda and objectives, and review the assessment report outline. We will provide an overview of the needs-sensing activities, we will deliberate on priorities and recommendations, we will vote on those priorities. Then we will discuss the assessments assignments and timeline, we'll vote to establish subcommittees, and then we will adjourn.

And then we'll move on to the meeting objectives. So by the end of this meeting, you should have reviewed additional input received from stakeholders, and public comments to finalize the assessments of the critical education needs of the region, specifically your region, and deliberated on the education needs assessments to finalize recommendations to be included in the final assessment report. Finally, we will establish subcommittees to complete the assignments.

And from that, from this point, after meeting the meeting objectives, I will pass it on to our liaison, Robert.

- [Robert] All right, thank you, Muhammad. So our assessment is going to address the following questions. First, why did the committee determine this is a priority need for the region? And how will you justify to the U.S. Department of Education, or the Department, that this should be a priority for the region? What technical assistance support can the Department provide to address this priority?

And then, are there other educational issues that were not determined to be priorities that the Department should be aware of and consider as they plan for the next five years and beyond? Next slide, please. Now, as Muhammad mentioned that, you know, we will begin our planning for the assessment report, and we have developed an outline for the report.

Each of the RACs have been using a very similar outline so we can have continuity across the different regions. In this outline, we're going to have...you know, cover page introduction, executive summary introduction, a discussion of the data collection that you all have conducted through your work, a summary of findings, and then recommendations.

We are trying to group our recommendations under these headings, knowing that, you know, the priorities that will be identified by the RAC will, in all likelihood, align under these headings. But if there is a heading here that does not [inaudible] that will be removed or adjusted in alignment with what you guys have developed.

Next slide, please. And then next slide, and then back to you, Muhammad. Actually, this goes to Kathy Hayes. My apologies.

- Great. All right, so what we're going to do today is review the needs-sensing activities that were completed...I'm just going to have to close this so I can see this...and review the summaries of the needs-sensing activities that were completed.

We're going to discuss our top five priorities...we're going to discuss out top five priorities, and we're going to vote on whether or not this topic should be a priority after we finish that discussion. We're going to provide the rationale why this issue should be a priority, or why it should not be a priority, and we're going to identify or brainstorm about what technical assistance is needed to support said priority.

Next slide. Okay, so we are starting now our discussion on the priorities or the nominations. We have five priorities that we discussed doing.

We have quite a bit of information on some of them, and not so much information on others. So we're starting with chronic absenteeism. I was one of the people that worked on that, and Vanessa, I think, was the other one that worked on it. So why or why not should this be a priority?

Do we want to start with the people who are advocating for it? Or should we talk about people who think maybe it shouldn't be a priority? I don't see any raised hands, so all right... Well, Vanessa, you and I are going to talk.

And I'm going to talk about why I feel this should be a priority, chronic absenteeism, is because districts across the nation are suffering from chronic absenteeism, and in my district, Los Angeles, it's a big problem. It was a problem before the pandemic, and it really blossomed or exploded after the pandemic. And I looked at several sources to justify my argument, one of which was a study that my team is doing.

I didn't work on it specifically, but as director I had to review it, about the causes of chronic absenteeism. And they interviewed the PSAs or the attendance counselors to see what their perception of the needs were, and they said they felt like chronic absenteeism was, number one, a physical health issue, number two, a mental health issue, and number three, a school issue.

In other words, students felt disaffected or disengaged from school. I also found a dissertation that talked about chronic absenteeism among African American youth, and this person actually talked to the kids, which I think is a better source, because the grown-ups, we have our reasons why we think things are happening, but we're not really talking to the kids we don't know, and their perceptions were they just didn't feel engaged by school.

They didn't feel welcome at school, they didn't have somebody who identified with them at school, that made them feel like it mattered if they came to school or not. Another issue was

that he discovered in his research that partial absences, in other words kids skipping classes was more of a problem than actually missing school. And this, of course, was in the high school level.

He was working with high schoolers. So Vanessa, do you have any other thing you would want to say about why this should be a priority?

- Yes, Kathy. Thank you. I would say twofold. One, I looked at universal data for the four states that we represent, and it looks like especially amongst Native American and Black and Latino populations, that chronic absenteeism is actually, like, super high, like almost double that of white and Asian.

And that was very striking, because that was quantitative. And then I also led six focus groups, which, you know, for the state of California, so I only did it for one state, but it is the largest state and represents a lot of diversity, and all of them mentioned chronic absenteeism as a key issue.

So I definitely would recommend that this be a priority for a number of reasons. One is, you know, obviously the ethnicity, the disproportionality there. I also think that there is some serious accounting issues with attendance, and actually with central office and sites accounting for attendance accurately.

And I believe these are creating really big system-wide problems, especially in states where allocations are due to...allocations for funding are actually connected to attendance. Thank you.

- So any other comments? I know nobody else added anything, any data or anything, but anybody else have any comments from their research?

- Kathy, we have two individuals with their hands raised.

- Okay.

- We have Joseph. You can go ahead.

- [Joseph] I want to add just a little bit to what Vanessa noted. The discussion groups that we've had, that I've had over the last several weeks, in addition to the things that I think she mentioned, there are also some additional issues with regard to how much poverty impacts whether the kid goes to school or not.

Poverty comes up almost in a lot of different ways. Sometimes the enthusiasm just is not there, and the kids lose trust in the home environment. So that's one part of it, they're just not able to...

They see themselves that other kids are wearing nice clothes, they're wearing nice tennis shoes, athletic shoes and so forth, so they feel embarrassed, and so they end up not going. That's one part of it. But there's also a huge, another bigger issue around that.

That issue has to do with the lack of well-qualified and well-prepared teachers being able to deal with these challenges that come up. For example, most schools that I've seen in reservation communities don't have the luxury of being able to pick and choose who they want to be a teacher.

So they basically wait for a warm body to come around, usually in spring, and they have a phrase out there, they call it the "Labor Day Specials." Those folks can't find a job elsewhere, so they end up popping up at these university and college teacher fairs, and that's how they end up getting these positions.

But they're just totally not fit to be teaching in those communities, so the lack of preparedness, and thus I think the quality of teaching suffers, and as a result of that the kids get turned off. When they get turned off, they don't want to come to school.

So that, I think, has a real linkage, and they connect with one another all the way.

- Kelly, do you want to add something?

- I do. I dropped into the document, or into the folder a study by Helios, a presentation by Helios and WestEd on chronic absenteeism in Arizona, and just wanted to highlight a couple of things. In 2021, the Arizona chronic absence rate exceeded the pre-pandemic levels.

So when you're arguing that it should be a priority, they did a study on a 5h grade cohort from 2017 to 2019, and it had increased by five percentage points, but it doubled over those same grades from 2019 to 2021.

So I would agree that we're seeing this in Arizona as well. And if you're looking and talking about... They looked at the rates of chronic absence for American Indian or Alaskan Native students, it nearly reached 50% in a 7th grade cohort in 2021. So as far as some stats to back it up.

And their presentation, you know, for your third point does include some ideas that we can take back too, but...

- Yeah, I agree.

- I was going to mention I found an article on the counselor ratio, counselor-to-student ratio, and the lowest ratio in the entire country is in Arizona.

- I saw that as well.

- So that's obviously the people that are there to support the students, and they're either not qualified, or just not there because we don't have enough.

- And in the feedback, in the survey feedback, there were some psychologists who weighed in on the struggles they're having reached their load.

- I might add...this is Joe again, I might add that, according to some of the reservation communities, particularly the most remote school systems, whether it's operated by the BIE schools or the public schools in the state, you'll find that they would much rather hire a social worker than they would a counselor.

Social worker because of all the epidemic that poverty creates, health issues, other kinds of conditions at home, and they're trying to find a way to create a better match between some of the issues that are existing at home and in the communities and trying to help the school find a better way to deal with those things.

I looked at a survey here some time ago, and I was looking just out of curiosity to see how many of the existing teachers that are out there in those schools have at least some training about how to deal with at-risk conditions and at-risk issues...

- Joseph, I'm going to have to cut you off. I apologize, but we are almost out of time. I think we've talked about the rationale pretty deeply, but we do have to give the Feds, and I say that with all due respect, some ideas about what can we...what kind of technical assistance activities should exist, or should they provide that will help us address this issue of chronic absenteeism.

As we can see, some of the causes are systemic, and very, very wide, and things like abject poverty is something that I don't know how the technical service, the Technical Assistance Centers address. But give me some ideas about how, and what they can do to address these issues. Alexa...Alexa, then Kelly.

- Yes, thank you. I was just at a meeting, and we heard one district in Utah is addressing by having attendance specialists that deal, and parent specialists that work with the students and the parents together on stressing attendance. So part of the guidance office, their duties are not a guidance counselor, and these are classified or hourly employees, but they're really working closely with students and parents to make sure both understand the importance of school and helping with the barriers.

So that might be one suggestion.

- Thank you. Kelly?

- Sorry about that. Having trouble. One of the studies that we dropped in talked about schools are really familiar with an MTSS approach, and so looking at it from a Tier 1, celebrate

attendance, ensuring students feel welcome, looking at some of the causes, so thinking about prevention.

Tier 2 was to really dig deeper into the causes, and provide some mentorship, academic services. And then there was also what to do with Tier 3. The Helios/WestEd presentation I mentioned simply said, you know, support LEAs in identifying evidence-based interventions to address chronic absence, especially for the student groups who've experienced those steep increases, study the ones that are working well.

I was intrigued by the tiered approach because it seems like it's a very specific thing, we could offer schools in a framework they're already familiar with.

- Okay, great. Joseph, I'm going to let you speak briefly, and then we'll vote. I believe that's what [crosstalk]

- One of the ideas I've come across that works very effectively is that most of these kids have that feeling that no one really cares about them to be able to survive at school. So the school that have put together a mentor-mentee relationship, where there's a teacher assigned to every student, maybe there's 10 students that meet with a teacher on a daily basis just to make sure that things are okay, and that they're being attended to, their needs are being attended to, that gives the kids some confidence that my attention and my need is being addressed, that someone really cares about me.

And rather than waiting for going to a counselor, someone meets with them at least once a week to check in with them, to make sure that everything's okay.

- Okay, thank you, Joseph. Vanessa, I'm going to ask you to put your comment into the chat just because I think we're out of time, and we need to vote, if I'm correct. All right, so what does what my script say? All right, so we will now vote to say whether or not chronic absenteeism should be one of our priorities. As I call the vote, please use the Raise Hand function so we can accurately call the vote and take a screenshot for the record.

I call for a vote for the West RAC to include chronic absenteeism as a priority. Please keep your hands raised as we take a final count.

- [Tara] Screenshot taken.

- Okay. Thank you. And we're ready to move on to our next one, which is...I'll wait for the notes to tell us, okay, the opportunity gap.

- And sorry to just to interrupt, Robert, could you zoom in a little bit? Some folks are having a little trouble viewing the document.

- Yep.

- Back to you, Kathy.

- All right. So why should the opportunity gap be a priority? And I'm going to let other people lead, instead of me being the first voice in this one. [crosstalk]

- Yes, I was...

- If your hands are up, does that mean that you want to contribute to this, or does that mean that you voted for it? Okay. All right, I'm going to start then with Vanessa, because she didn't get to speak last time, although she did....I mean, she didn't get her last... And then Michelle, then Joseph, then me. So go for it.

- Thank you, Kathy. So for this one, I did a number of...six focus groups across a number of themes and sub-themes. And it was really apparent to me that the opportunity gaps, especially with systems issues, working with targeted populations, having, you know, efficacious practice continue to come up.

If you read the focus group summaries, you'll see it over and over and over again. Working with foster youth students is the high-need and can also be doubly represented across some other targeted populations.

And a lot of the folks who participated mentioned that as students, you know, the opportunity gap only widens as students fall further and further behind with different life course goals. So housing, transportation was one, those were named in every single group that I held, as well as in the articles that I added into the SharePoint, which, you know, were by, like, Dr.

Pedro de Gara, who's a lead equity practitioner. So I definitely do want to argue, if any of the priorities, that this would be one that we address. Thank you.

- And then I said, I think...who did I say was next? Michelle? I don't remember. Okay...

- Yeah. So definitely agree with what Vanessa was saying, and then just to kind of add onto it, the data that I looked at really was from the Nation's Report Card, which is coming directly from the U.S. Department of Education. And looking at the data year over year, the top achieving demographic of students were white, male, suburban, typically-abled native English speakers who do not qualify for free or reduced-price school lunch.

So I think we can see kind of the dominating factor there, except for reading where sometimes females outperform males. So I think there are multiple ways that we could address the achievement gap or the opportunity gap, and actually, the Learning Policy Institute out of Palo Alto, California already has a lot of great suggestions that the government could be taking on currently.

And all of these suggestions I wrote up in a document that's included in the share file, but the top areas that they suggested actually include a lot of our, you know, focus areas already, so school suspension rates, school climate, chronic absenteeism, extended year graduation rates, and then college and career readiness.



So I'm going to stop there because I put a lot of that information into our documents already, but I just thought that this area obviously makes a lot of sense because it's already addressing a lot of the needs that we're seeing.

- Thank you, Michelle. Kelly? Okay, Kelly, are you there?

- Yeah, I'm sorry, I don't have my hand up on this. You probably saw it earlier because I'd forgotten to take it down.

- Okay. That's fine. Joseph?

- I think there's a big difference between remote locations and semi-urban and urban areas. So it falls back on school leadership and teachers in terms of just how well prepared they are to know that you can't...it's not a one-size-fits-all, the way you approach.

You might have had success in an urban school someplace else, but if you come to a remote location, it's going to be way different. So I would err on the side that this [inaudible 00:26:52.544] being able to address opportunity has to be done through proper training, adequate training for the teachers and administrators. If they don't have it, if you're in an urban area, you probably get opportunities to get additional training so that you can bring those opportunities to your kids.

If you're in a remote area, you don't have that same opportunity. So more resources to create opportunities for additional training and technical assistance would be one way to approach those things, and that's what you'll hear mostly from administrators out there.

- All right, so thank you, Joseph. You know, just yesterday I got an article, so I guess I can't include it, but I am going to mention it. It was a study done that showed that the Department of Defense schools were providing the best education for students of any other, you know, any other entity in our country.

And if you think about the reason that they're doing that, one might posit it's because all the students have housing, and their parents have jobs. So you know, I've not done any studies there, and I haven't really read that article, but it's been talked about a lot in the district, about well, why...what's the Department of Defense doing?

But one can posit that. And you know I'd also like for people also to say why it shouldn't be a priority. Because not everybody voted for chronic absenteeism, so that meant that there are some people that didn't agree it should be a priority, and I'd like to hear from you guys why you think it's true. And I have a very open mind, whatever you say, but I think that we, as a nation, we have to address the opportunity gap.

And we're at our peril if we don't, because what we are doing is graduating students who are not prepared for college, and not really prepared for the workforce, and part of that has to do

with the opportunities that these students do not have. Opportunities for well-trained teachers is one, opportunities for people that actually care about them is another.

Even it starts in preschool. I found an article which I posted where African-American boys were disciplined to a much greater degree than any other children in the preschool, and it has to do with cultural differences, and how people should behave. And so if you're four years old, and you're being given the message that you're different and you're wrong, there's something the matter with you and you deserve to be punished...

Another administrator told me once, I said, why are the English learners in the 2nd grade class outperforming the Black kids? And she said, have you looked at the principal's office? If you go to the principal's office, you'll see a line of chairs in which little Black boys are sitting because they're being punished for not behaving in class the way the teacher wants them to behave. So if we don't address it, it's at our peril.

That's all I have to say. Anybody else have anything to say about why we should use this, the opportunity gap as a priority? Okay, yes, Vanessa?

- Yeah, just one more thing I want to underscore. I think for a long time we've looked at achievement gaps, only academic data, math, you know, ELA, etc., and the opportunity gap is actually looking at all of the factors that go into that young person attending school and matriculating through.

So it is a lot more...it's focused more on life course outcomes, right, than strictly how are they doing in math, how are they doing in ELA? Those are really important, but if our students are not...to your point, Kathy, if our students are not thriving as, you know, resident citizens or even non-citizens in their regions or their states, then, you know, it's not the democracy that we want it to be.

So I wanted to just underscore that. Thank you.

- Absolutely. So anybody else have any comments, pro or con? Good timing, there's two minutes left to discuss the priorities, so why don't we go down to the technical assistance? And so, I... Oh, Meg, you had a comment. Was it for the evidence, or for the technical assistance?

- No, I just wanted to echo what Vanessa and Joseph were saying about rural communities. I think sometimes we underestimate resources that big cities have, things like food banks, clothing banks, you know, homeless shelters. And so that, you know, to speak to their points that, you know, if students are not having their basic needs met, then the academics kind of just fall by the wayside.

So I just wanted to echo that.

- Thank you. Okay, how can the Technical Assistance Centers address these issues? I guess if we knew the answer, we'd be very, very, very smart. Yes, Michelle?

- One of my ideas was by making it a priority to hire teachers who are reflective of the demographics of students that we serve. And I definitely think that there is a big... We could use the resource that we have of recruiting teachers from the areas that...recruiting teachers who live in the areas of the schools that they serve, right?

Teachers who have grown up in the same communities as their students are going to show those students that they matter, and that they're able to achieve in those setting as well. So I think that, you know, providing some sort of monies or grants to schools that can prove that they are recruiting or hiring from their neighborhood I think is something that could be really beneficial.

Creating a federally-aligned social-emotional learning curriculum, creating federally-aligned culturally responsive teaching curriculum, I think, could also be helpful. And I really highly recommend to everyone to read the recommendations given out by the Learning Policy Institute because they do have really great clear next steps that I think that we could tap into.

- Yes, Joseph, I'm going to call on you in a minute. But I'm just going to say that I think that, yes, we need to hire more teachers who represent the students that they teach, but we also have to provide more opportunities for people to become teachers. Because once they become teachers, they've already somehow made their way through college.

Either they have huge student loans that are a big burden, or they somehow made their way through college. And we have to encourage... And then that means also that we have to pay attention to our students while they're in school so that they can graduate and meet the requirements to then become teachers. But yes, I agree with everything...I mean, I always agree with everything everybody says, but I just wanted to add that.

Joseph, what did you want to add?

- I want to add that I think on the professional development side that I think you have to approach it from a standpoint of targeted teacher training candidates. Universities, I think, have to go out and find some resources. Helios is one example.

that's targeted in Arizona, towards rural educators. Some of the universities here in the state have access to the professional development grants through the Office of Indian Education and the U.S. Department of Education, and some of that has been used to target and to train either Native educator, Hispanic, Latinos, and others from rural areas primarily that want to become a teacher, and then provide them with the support.

That way I think you create opportunity to expand those opportunities to make sure that you have a better match. Otherwise, it's like tossing or flipping a coin to see who we can get to come as a teacher to our community. If the universities work directly with the school districts

and school systems, and find for me a candidate, and then, you know, bring that as a cohort to the university and prepare them that way, so that you talk about...

It can't be the same kinds of curriculum that they offer. I think it has to be a specialized curriculum so that there's a better match of the training topics for those teachers and administrators.

- Absolutely. I'm going to jump on that point and talk about culturally relevant education. Because even when we talk about socio-emotional learning, not everybody expresses themselves in the same manner. And so we have to be very sensitive, and think about, really, the people we're working with when we talk about their behavior, and the way that they behave, and why they behave the way they do.

And in the teacher training programs, I mean, right now in California, you know, you take one class, and that makes you legally able to teach English. And that doesn't mean that you really understand their culture or their issues, or not even their language. So it has to be done, and it has to be done correctly.

It's not just like, okay, I can check the box, okay, I watched an anti-bias training so I can check the box, because it hasn't changed how I think. All right, we have to move to a vote. And so I will say, members, as I call the vote, please use the Raise Hand function so we can accurately call it and take a screenshot for the record.

I call for the vote of the Region West to include opportunity gap as a priority. Raise your hands. Tell me when you've got it counted.

- Screenshot taken.

- Thank you. All right, we're going to move on to the next one. You won't have to hear me talk because I didn't study the other ones as closely as you did, though I'm sure they'll have an opinion.

- Give me one second, please.

- Okay. Take your time.

- [inaudible 00:37:52.571] share screen.

- In the meantime, everybody lower their hands so I don't get confused about who wants to contribute and not in the next conversation. Oh, school choice. Okay, Kathy and Tiffany, are your hands up because you want to talk about the priority? Okay.

Great. From Vanessa, she added to the chat, "Across city departmental focus on livable wages, housing, social workers, community schools." Okay. So the school choice, well, what did we... Who worked on school choice, and what did you find?

- [crosstalk 00:38:38.946] Go ahead, Vanessa.

- I just want to clarify that that chat was for the previous recommendations that can be done. Thank you.

- Oh, okay. [inaudible 00:38:55.468] choice, I know that people contributed to it.

- Yeah, I can start. This is Meg. So at least in what I was looking at, the data really just shows broader trends, not necessarily specific to my state. A lot of national surveys looking at charter, public, private, homeschool. Definitely during the pandemic there was a dip to go more to the homeschool online formats, but it's shifting back.

I think, though, that...and maybe I recall differently, when we were considering the discussions about school choice, it was more like nowadays what students are wanting. Do they prefer online? Do they want a different workday schedule? So I don't know that the data that we gathered addressed that sufficiently, so I think in some ways, I guess I'm saying that should not be a priority because we don't have enough data.

- Okay.

- Yeah, this is Brandy. I worked on this, too. And I agree with Meg, I don't think we were able to find the data that the team really wanted to look at for this. What I did note was that parents that usually hire SES parents, and then parents with higher educational levels, which oftentimes aligns with SES, are more able to have their children attend the school of their choice than people from either rural communities, or those with lower SES.

So I think there's some inequity in how and what parents are able to choose for their children, but again, like Meg said, I don't think we were able to gather some of the data that the team wanted.

I wasn't able to find anything specific about what children and youth and parents, what kind of format they are interested in having their children attend for school.

- Okay. So Vanessa and Meg, you both have other comments? If so, go ahead Vanessa.

- Yes. Thanks, Kathy. My comment is related to merit admissions. And that also played into being selective about, you know, whether intentionally or unintentionally certain groups attending or being admitted to those schools. A lot of cases, there's case law that I think can be used to make sure that public schools are actually accessible to all students, and does not require admissions.

I also want to mention resource alignment. When we're talking about school choice, I'm concerned about the use of enrollment, because popular schools have higher enrollment counts, which means that there are sometimes more resources at those schools than unpopular schools with maybe lower enrollment count.

And if you look at those trends, those are typically in lower income communities. So I think that definitely this definitely should be something to consider. However, I don't think it should be a priority for this discussion.

- Thank you. Meg?

- I just wanted to kind of echo some of this, and I'm wondering if some of the challenges that we're identifying couldn't be addressed through the opportunity gap, through strategies or MTSS? So you know, as Vanessa was saying, improving the quality of schools, or the supports that are already there, instead of targeting as a priority just through specifically looking at school choice.

- Well, I agree with you that it was a very broad topic. Because we put parent involvement in there as well, and school choice not only talking about charter schools versus non-charter schools, but other kinds of choices that parents make. It's a very complex problem, and the opportunity gap could certainly discuss how parents have access to the information they need to be able to make the right choice for their students.

In some places, it's very controversial whether a parent sends a child to a charter school or a community school...or maybe not a community school, because that's another whole thing, but a neighborhood school. Because it is viewed often by school districts that they are losing students.

They don't consider their students still their students, even though they live down the street from the community school, and the parents opt to put them in a charter school. And I always said, look, if you don't want to lose students, improve the instruction, improve your schools. They're leaving because they're not getting what they need at their neighborhood school. And so we have a lot of strategies to try to keep students, and the best strategy we can have to keep students would be improve the services that we provide them.

- Well, and what we see...I'm from Reno, Washoe County, and our parents have to provide transportation to either a charter school, or if they want their student to attend a public school that is not their zone school.

So that really limits access to parents that have, you know, various working schedules, and we don't have good community public transportation. So it really again falls along, like, SES lines, who really gets to choose what school they want their children to go to.

- Exactly. Any other comments before we talk to the technical assistance?

- This is Joe. I think most of the communities that I've worked with will say that it's not a priority for the very reason that this is the only school that we have. It's very difficult as it is to create a new school elsewhere because of the lack of resources.

That's why I think when you go into reservation communities, and some of the most remote rural communities, you'll find that there isn't discussion about school choice. It's just not there. Those discussions come more in the form of which teacher I want my kid to be taught by.

So [inaudible] the fact that that's the only school that they have in that particular community, and primarily because of the lack of resources to start new schools.

- All right, unless anybody thinks differently, I think we should move to the technical assistance portion of this theme. And I would like to say that if we were to decide to choose this, and we wanted to give some advice about the technical assistance, data needs to be made available across all school types.

And that data needs to be presented in a very parent-friendly manner. So big charts, big tables, with lots and lots and lots of data are just going to turn the user off, and they're not going to really look at it, and they'll make decisions based on what their neighbors tell them, or something else. So if we really want to understand school choice, we need to have the information available to us so we can make an informed decision.

And that would have to include, of course, the number of high-need students, socio-economically disadvantaged, also, you know, we'd need to know the ethnic groups that are represented in those schools, and what the schools offer with respect to transportation, enriched studies, after school programs, etc. Okay, Meg, then Vanessa.

- I think also if choice is an option for parents, I think that you also have to consider the mobility, and how that impacts students. So what supports do students have? You mentioned military bases. A lot of times those parents are more affluent, there's a lot of home support. But some families don't have that, and just shifting, even, you know, multiple times within their academic career can really be detrimental, not only socially, academically, emotionally.

So kind of some transition counselor, or some type of assistance with that mobility.

- Thank you. Vanessa?

- I think we need to have really clear and transparent lottery processes. Parents need to understand exactly how to get their kids into these programs. And a lot of times these lottery processes are very erroneous, they cater to specific socio-economic status, and they're usually not normed across districts.

So really kind of focusing in on the algorithm, how do we even get these kiddos into the lottery? And then, making sure that that process is super transparent.

- Michelle?

- I'm also thinking that we should consider students with moderate to severe disabilities, and how that plays into where they go to school, and which schools specifically can support them, and how that also contributes to parent choice or lack thereof.

- And I'll add to that. In order to be able to attend a magnet school, it is often very difficult to understand the application form. And I always joke that you almost need a PhD in order to be able to fill it out, and game the system so you can figure out how to get the points you need to get your child in the school you want to.

And that's not fair. All right, anybody else? We'll move on to the vote, then. Please use the Raise Hand function and keep your hand up in time for us to be able to count it. We are now voting on whether school choice should be a priority as determined by the West Region RAC.

I'm going to say it exactly how it's written. I call for a vote for the West RAC to include school choice as a priority. Please indicate that you think it's a priority by raising your hand. All right.

How much time do you need to count those votes?

- Screenshot taken.

- Thank you.

- [inaudible 00:50:54.565] - All right, the next one is social emotional learning. I bet we're going to have a rich discussion about that. So who worked on this, and who has something to say about it?

There's not a lot in the...excuse me, in the folder. Tonia?

- This is Tonia. I appreciate you, thank you. I acknowledge that I did not work on this particular area, but have had an opportunity to work with teachers, certainly, that have concerns regarding the social-emotional wellness of their students and of their colleagues, and that recently research was shared that indicated that mental health, social-emotional wellness is one of the leading concerns for Americans behind...or excuse me, ahead of even health concerns with regards to cancer, to diabetes, to COVID.

That information just recently reached my email box sometime this week and had me discussing with colleagues the significant concern that persists.

I also want to acknowledge, if I may, that particularly here in Southern Nevada, we have had a significant number of student suicides that persist both in our rural and urban communities with regards to social-emotional wellness, and I would strongly support this as a priority.

Thank you.



- Thanks, Tonia. Vanessa?

- Thank you, Kathy. I think that social and emotional learning is definitely critical, you know, to embed in instruction, which I think is happening. However, I think that the focus on behavior is a little overreaching. I think there's a real big focus on what are the behaviors students are doing in class that are not desirable?

And while that, you know, could or could not disrupt academic instruction, I think some of the internalizing behaviors, such as cutting and eating disorders is much more apparent, and harder for teachers to identify. So I would really recommend this priority in terms of really reshaping what do we mean by social and emotional learning?

Like, what are we looking for? And then how do we prepare, again, our teachers in the classroom, and also other educators to intervene?

- Michele?

- I would also just like to say that our teachers typically are not mental health providers. So assuming that our teachers have the skill sets to provide a proper social-emotional learning environment is also assuming that they have the skill sets of mental health providers at times. So I do think that as part of our recommendations, I know we're not there yet, but if that is something that we are hoping to see at our school sites, there does need to be some sort of training that's done with fidelity, through KPIs throughout the school year so that we know that our teachers are actually able to do this, rather than just saying, yeah, you should be implementing SEL in your classroom.

- Joseph?

- It's not...It is definitely not one of the priority areas in teacher training, or for training for administrators, so it takes a backseat. I think you can all imagine that it makes a great deal of emphasis on the issue about standards, standardization and so forth, and social and emotional stuff takes a backseat to that.

And that's why I think, as one of the speakers said, that teachers just don't have mental health issue intact enough to be able to address this adequately in any classroom. So my thought on all of this is that the less emphasis on standards, because standards by itself is not going to improve education.

Good, healthy minds of kids is what's going to make the difference. When they're motivated, and they feel socially equipped and emotionally charged up to deal with these things, they can challenge themselves. But emphasizing too much standards in some cases, they don't mean a whole lot to kids.

- Let's see, Brandy, and then Kathy.

- Yeah, I know we were talking about teachers and their mental health training, but in the districts and states I've worked in, it seems like hiring and keeping mental health professionals in the school, so school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers is always...it seems like it's often a lower priority, and most places and states are not at the nationally recommended levels.

And we're seeing an increase in needs of our students needing mental health support, and we're not able to hire or fill enough of those mental health professional positions to provide the level of support our students need, so then it does kind of fall back on the teaching staff.

- Okay, I'm just going to make a comment, and then I'll go to Kathy. When I think about socio-emotional learning, I don't...and I think about mental health concerns, I don't think about them in the same way. So I just kind of want to... We said socio-emotional learning, but did we mean as a group addressing mental health issues?

Because yes, socio-emotional learning, in some places there are trainings of teachers on how to teach socio-emotional learning, and then it's teaching students, I think, more how to deal, for example, with aggression, or how to deal with when people are not nice to you, and how to learn to get along, and how to express yourself verbally, like you can talk about your own feelings.

So it's connected to mental health, but when I think about socio-emotional learning, I don't really think about school psychologists, I think more broadly about teachers. And it doesn't mean that the way I'm thinking about it is the right way, it's just I think we need to know what we're thinking about when we say socio-emotional learning. Then it was Brandy's turn, then Kathy's, right? No, Kathy first...or I don't know.

Kathy, go ahead. I think you were next.

- Okay...the other Kathy. I really think that if we are looking for why or why not, I think we can tie this to Maslow's hierarchy, that the students cannot learn if they are not emotionally in a place to be able to accept and learn information.

So I think it falls into that, that those needs have to be addressed in order for learning to take place. So I just see that as another research-based reason that this needs to be a priority, because if a student is not in a place to learn, they won't learn.

- Good point. Brandy, you had your hand up, and you took it down. Do you still want to have anything to say?

- No, I actually spoke right before you did last, Katherine, so I'm good.

- Okay. So here's an issue that I see as far as this being a priority. I think it is a priority, I think it's a priority across education systems around the country, but we don't... My

understanding, and Muhammad and Robert can tell me right or wrong, but we can't...we only can use the data that we have posted.

It's not like we can go out and do another search for information to address this issue. We don't have very much data. We have very little. So if that's the case, then how can this become a priority? It should be a priority, it's something that I think every district is trying to address, but we don't have the information to really write it up in a report. So Muhammad or Robert, what do you think about my question?

- I will... Unfortunately, I'm going to sit on a fence here and say that I will defer to the committee. It is completely you all's choice to use, you know, whatever data that you've collected, and/or your own personal experience, or whatever you deem fit. I would also recommend, you know, if you all looked at the state profiles or the national profiles, that held a lot of data as well.

But ultimately, it is the committee's decision to either go with this priority, and provide, you know, some solutions and technical assistance, or not. But I will, like I said, defer to you all.

- Okay. Kelly, what do you want to say?

- Well, I'm kind of thinking the lack of clarity around the definition, because I was kind of wondering that... Sorry, I'm having trouble with my camera. The lack of clarity around the definition, the lack of data. And then, when I was reading through the surveys, like, we had some 700-plus responses, the issues that I saw that kept recurring throughout it had more to do with some of the other areas, although I did see behavior come up a lot, and to some degree mental health.

But I saw some of the other ones coming up more. So it's interesting that you brought that up.

- Great. Good. Michele?

- Yeah, I'm just looking through the public comments very briefly, and there are over...I'd say over 30 comments that include the words "mental health." So I do think, you know, the public is saying that there is a need for at least a mental health component of it, so I'm wondering if we could include mental health as part of the social emotional learning.

- Well, we can do whatever we want to do. Muhammad just told us we can call it what we want. So how are we going to help the Regional Centers provide technical assistance on this issue?

- I think if they provided support and funding for people to go and get their degree in a mental health field, school counseling, school psychology, that would be helpful.

Or if there was any mandated caseload caps on these areas, that would also be helpful. I didn't know if we were circling back, and adding mental health to this or not, so I'm not sure

if my comment is really relevant. But being a previous school psychologist, I'm going to say it anyway, so...

- Joseph, are you going to say something?

- Yeah. I think this, for me, it ties back to... The comment you made made me think about this, is that it ties back into cultural responsiveness training in terms of if I feel like I'm socially accepted at a school, and that my environment is such that I can compete here, I can learn here, I feel cared for, I think this is a good place to be at to learn, all that ties back into an element of cultural responsiveness teaching.

- Okay. Meg, then Vanessa.

- I kind of want to link it to that last priority we're going to discuss also, because if you have a revolving door in your building, it really makes it tough, no matter how much PD that you offer, and training, if people aren't there, if there's no consistency with the staff. And then with that, you know, I don't know how we can support so it's not a 15-minute PowerPoint, and then people are considered trained.

- Right.

- Because the quality of the PD and ongoing spiraling, you know, embedded PD, the importance of that.

- Now Vanessa?

- Thank you, Katherine. I think that we need to really focus on what a sense of belonging looks like. I think that's really easy. As well as the, you know, the focus on the profession of social work, counselor, psychologist, nurse, there's a lot of overlapping competencies there.

So I think it really is the whole child, so how do we get, you know, more of a...not mandated, but how do we get something where states are considering these professions as instrumental as teaching professions, if that makes sense?

Because to your point, we can't teach our students if our students are unwell, or if our students feel like they don't belong in our school. Thank you.

- Go ahead, Joseph.

- I just coughed. Sorry.

- Okay. That's okay. It's really interesting, because on our school experience survey, we have a whole section on socio-emotional learning, and there are four to six constructs, and they include growth mindset, self-regulation...I don't know, ability to get along with others is a better name for it.

Anyway, there's five to six of them. And our schools look at those data very carefully, and we've also been able to establish there's a relationship between student outcomes, and how students answer on the survey, and we do provide training in socio-emotional learning. Not to every school, it's the schools that request it.

But apparently, it's not as widespread as I had imagined, because I thought everybody was doing SEL. So we need to move to a vote, and I'll be happy to do that right now. So back to my notes, wherever they are... All right, members, as I call the vote, please use the Raise Hand function so we can accurately call the vote and take a screenshot for the record.

I call for a vote for the West Region to include SEL, or socio-emotional learning as a priority. Please raise your hand if you think it should be a priority.

- Screenshot taken.

- Thank you.

Lower your hands, please, and we're moving on to the last, but not least, teacher retention and recruitment. All right, this was a pretty rich one. Kelly provided a lot of information for us.

- If I may, I'd like to start by saying that the data that I had an opportunity to research indicates that over three-quarters of the country is addressing or dealing with teacher shortages with regards to recruitment and retention, and that includes all of our states in the West.

My information is located in the resources folder. I also put together a Word document that has some QR codes that links to additional information and data and articles, and tried to provide some commentary specifically around some of the challenges that are being had, acknowledging that all of us are experiencing significant shortages for various reasons.

I will note that most recently here in Nevada, in Southern Nevada, in the school district, in Clark County School District, we had eight schools that were not able to hold classes for children, ranging from elementary to high school, with regards to absenteeism, as well as not only the teaching shortage, but substitute teaching shortage as well.

I hope that that is helpful in adding that information.

- Thank you. Okay...Tonia, then Vanessa.

- Thank you, Kathy. I think that for teacher retention and recruitment, it's not only a pipeline issue. I think, you know, we've historically had pipeline issues in education, but it's also livable wages, that, you know, teachers are being...you know, in cities that are very, very expensive to live in, and they're not getting livable wages, according to CPI.

I think it's also because of housing. Many teachers are, you know, stacked on housing. Either they have roommates, or they live two hours away from their teaching assignment. There needs to be a focus on making sure that teachers get housing, just like we focus on, you know, our soldiers having residences if they're an officer, right?

Like, there has to be more there in terms of life need. I think that if we do that, that would address some of these issues, because it seems to only be getting worse. Thank you.

- Kelly, then Meg.

- It was interesting, when I was looking at both the comments from the survey and the literature that everyone was able to collect, there's a difference between recruitment into the profession, and recruitment into the classroom. So when you think of recruitment, both in the literature and in some of the information that we pulled here in Arizona, there are people available who are even certified, but they're not in the classroom.

So the the pool of applicants, I think the Hamilton project talked about there are 100,000 to 200,000 more graduates with a teaching credential each year than there are available slots, so there's the potential out there, but they're not coming into the classroom. And what I saw, the themes that I saw pulled out in the survey data and also in the literature is it's really the teacher working conditions that we need to dig into more, because definitely, I agree, the previous comment that teacher compensation came up quite a bit, teacher pay.

There was classroom funding, teacher quality... It's great that we have these alternative pathways to get people in, but the teachers in the classroom are reporting that they're being asked to do more mentoring and induction for people who were not well prepared to get into the classroom, which is increasing their stress.

And repeatedly I saw come up that academic support, which we know that support from principals is one of the best predictors of teacher attrition in a school. So I think it's kind of that collective... They mentioned stress, they mentioned a lack of respect. So our ability to retain them is multifaceted, so it's definitely worth more study.

In Arizona, one of the things that I dropped in, that we see a fairly consistent pipeline, but we see the highest rate of, you know, departures in teachers from zero to four years. So they don't even make it four years.

That was like, 23%-plus. We expect teachers who have 30-plus, they're going to be retiring out, but what we're really seeing at highest is teachers in their 20s and 30s are leaving, before they even hit four years. So that was, you know, just some of the reasons I think most people I talked to even anecdotally, they're having trouble getting teachers into the classroom, and keeping them.

And that means, to tag back on something that Joseph had said earlier, your economically disadvantaged students, Black, Hispanic, they have a significantly higher share of their classes are taught by teachers who don't have a conventional teachers license.

- Thank You, Kelly. Meg, then...I don't know who had it up first, but we'll get to them...

- Yeah. And just in talking to teachers and principals in the field, what I'm hearing also is maybe sometimes the byproduct of some of this lack of teachers in the classroom, meaning that the stress it puts on the other staff members working. So you have administrators having to cover classrooms, sometimes counselors, assistants, paraprofessionals, instructional coaches.

So they're being pulled away from their duties, and then that work kind of gets backed up. I'm hearing districts have even problems hiring bus drivers. So just all-around staffing in schools, you're competing with businesses, you know, fast food, retail that are paying the same, if not more, for some of the classified staff. So it's an all-around staffing issue, but it's not just the teacher.

But they do, of course, have the most direct contact with students.

- Tonia?

- Perhaps I should defer to Joseph. I believe that he has not had an opportunity to speak, and I have. I just want to be most respectful.

- That's fine. Thank you. Joseph?

- In addition to the obvious, with the low-paid, lack of support from administrators and so on, if you go into the remote areas, you'll find that the lack of teacher housing, the lack of teacher housing is a big factor.

In addition to that, many of the remote communities also don't have hospital services, don't have places to go grocery shopping. The closest town might be 200 miles, or quite a way for them to get there. So all that creates a lot of undue pressure not just on the individuals, but I think the entire school system as a way.

And then, they have to find ways, schools have to find ways to make up that difference by raising teacher salaries, and offering some other kinds of incentives that would help keep some of the very best teachers at the school. But in combination, I think those lack of facilities sometimes makes a big difference, whether you hire a very good coach, a very good counselor, a very good teacher, math teacher, and all of a sudden, they come back and say you don't have hospital facilities here, or you don't have adequate resources in these other areas, so we've decided to go elsewhere.

- Thank you. Anybody... Okay, Tonia, you're on.

- Thank you. I appreciate you. In light of everything that everyone's saying, I think we also, particularly as we consider perhaps this is a priority in how technical assistance activities could support us, that we... And I apologize, I'm not articulating myself well, that we need to consider how we are conceptualizing a career, that younger or early career educators are coming in and not seeing options beyond 30 years in a classroom, are looking for leadership opportunities, are looking for opportunities to contribute and engage in other ways, other than exclusively instructional leadership.

And with regards to the infrastructure, acknowledging what has been shared already. I've specifically spoken to superintendents of rural school districts here who have been certain that they've had someone hired, and as those individuals, to Joseph's point, are driving hours out into the middle of the desert, are recognizing that this isn't something that they can commit to.

And then colleagues that are closest to us in the rural district, about an hour away, also pay in excess of \$150 to \$200 a month for connectivity, which is not guaranteed. So we're talking about not having other ways to be connected to the broader community as well, with regards to supports.

- Thank you. Okay, Kelly, you had your hand back up.

- Well, and I forgot to mention that the more experience that a teacher has in the classroom, the longer we keep them in the classroom, the better they are at classroom management generally, and student motivation. And that experience is directly related to a drop in that chronic absenteeism. So those proportion of students with high absenteeism decreases quite a bit for both ELA and math.

- Thank you. All right, let's move to what advice we're going to give the Technical Assistance Centers. Michele's got her hand up?

- Obviously, increasing teacher pay federally would be wonderful, but I also think I had... I actually heard a really great idea from an administrator in the Bay Area, who said not tying funding to enrollment would be a way that we are increasing the mental health of our teachers.

Because teachers obviously with a larger class size, which the schools incentivize because of enrollment monies, are having a harder time in the classroom than schools where teachers have a smaller class size. So if funding isn't tied to enrollment, then schools are getting the funding that they need, and also, teachers are getting a class size that's better for their money.

- Well, and also along those lines, ADA, average daily attendance. If students are chronically absent, you're not getting the funding for them. I mean, so that's something that, you know, in a way, we're shooting ourselves in the foot when we have a lot of kids out of our classrooms.



- All right, I don't know who put their hand up first, because I'm trying to read the comments, so let's see... Joseph, you can go first this time, then Alexa, then Kelly.

- Okay. I think based on the last comment, rather than just looking at student count, and using that as a base to determine how much funding goes to a particular school, I think you have to go a lot deeper than that, and I think you have to look at the formulas to determine how much money is being allocated.

If you want real change to support these schools, I think you have to look at the funding formulas and come up with a model that's going to help address some of those differences. There's no doubt in my mind that to operate a school in a place where you don't have any paved roads or paved bus routes, or where you can't afford to hire high-quality teachers, those kids are going to suffer in some way or not.

So I think that's why you need to look at the real crux of the issue, which is to look at those funding formulas, and make the adjustments there. The reason why military schools have high...are considered good schools, number one, they're adequately funded. They have some of the highest per pupil expenditures compared to other schools.

So they can afford lower class size, and they can pick and choose who they want to become a teacher and pick and choose who they want to hire as administrators, and plus all the other things that were mentioned in that.

- Okay. Who did I say was next? Alexa...

- Me...yes. Thank you. I think that funding is important, housing is important, but I also think if we know that we're losing our teachers in the first three, four, five years, providing opportunities for continued mentorship, for teacher-leaders to work with our new teachers, to make sure that these new professionals, or change in profession, have the support they need at their schools, or they know where to get it.

So I just think that we've got to just continue to look at ways that we can support them during the day, and after the day, so that they know how to manage the system, and where to go for help.

- Thank you. Kelly?

- Well, if support from principals is one of the biggest or strongest predictors of whether or not we're losing teachers, then I think we need to support principals, and help principals understand both how to recruit... There were some citations for, you know, the student teachers tend to end up working in the district where they did their student teaching, or they end up working in the school where they did their student teaching.

But also in how do you improve your teachers' working conditions, and there are some very specific things that we could help principals do, which would increase that kind of collegial

environment. Not just a PLC without support, but really having some true collaboration, giving teachers some decision-making, really fostering that positive school culture, helping them and supporting them with student behaviors, those types of things.

Because I think there are some specific things that if we support our principals, then they can support our teachers. And we mentioned academic support throughout the survey, admin support. They're like, we need admin support. So admin would do it if they had the resources, or maybe the understanding themselves.

- Vanessa?

- Thanks, Kathy. I totally agree with that. I think as a former admin, it's definitely imperative to get support. I also want to underscore institutional anti-Blackness. I think that we, as a system, are still not quite there, and it's bigger than, like, hiring Black teachers.

That's one really important goal that I think we need to have across the board. And also, it's in how we talk about people, and our language and our pedagogy, implicit bias. So I think that those types of learning sessions would be really helpful for institutional leaders, as well as school administrators, right, and school practitioners.

Thank you.

- You know, it's interesting, because I have often said, well, middle-class families don't want their children to be teachers, grow up to be teachers anymore, and that we don't have a lot of respect for teachers. But as I hear what you guys are talking about, about the low pay, and the difficulty of finding housing, and some people having to pay...you know, drive long distances to be able to teach, I think it's more that we don't want our kids to be teachers because we don't want them to suffer that kind of a life.

So it really kind of means we need to have a strong advocacy group for improving the quality of teaching, and the lives of teachers, as well as administrators. I was just looking at these comments from REL governing boards, and this came out of Nevada, and Felicia Ortiz, who she's the State Superintendent of Education, I think, she says that "The Regional Assistance Centers can do the research to provide the support we need to get policy and legislation passed. They can bring programs and practices that show results to the forefront so that more schools and districts can adopt them and make a notable difference."

And I absolutely do think that we do need that kind of advocacy in front of our state legislators. I mean, California used to be very high in terms of the quality of education they provided their students until Proposition 13, which passed in 1978, and now we're pretty much...we're definitely at the bottom.

Not the bottom-bottom, but we're very close to the bottom because we don't have the funding anymore. So I think that we need to change the way we think about teaching and teachers...

- And Kathy, if I can interrupt real quick, so we're right at time, at 3:30, and we still need to, I believe, vote on this priority, and also establish, vote and establish subcommittees. So I think if we can take a vote, or do a voting process, that would

[crosstalk 01:27:19.917] great.

- Absolutely. So...I think I'd already moved ahead on my pages. With respect to this topic, I call for a vote for the West RAC to insert teacher retention and recruitment, or recruitment and retention as a priority. Those in favor, please raise your hand.

- Screenshot taken.

- All right.

Now we're going to move to slide 13. Well, we'll hear who the winners are? Or do we already know?

- I'm sorry, can you repeat that one more time?

- Are we going to hear what the results of the voting are before we establish the subcommittees?

- Yes. I believe, just based off my notes, all of the priorities except for one, so all the priorities were established. I know we did not vote...or we ended up not taking one of the priorities, which Robert, do you know, by chance...

- School choice. School choice.

- School choice?

- Nobody voted for that.

- All right, so...

- Yeah.

- So then we were going to call for a vote to establish a subcommittee. Sorry, I can't read these... Or multiple subcommittees to summarize the committee's findings and recommendation in its needs-sensing assessment report.

And so this is where you all really can provide a lot of service. The work that's been done has been great, it's been very helpful, but... Thanks, Tiffany. But now we're going to have...we're going to talk about who's going to work on the committee, subcommittee for writing.

Multiple people may work on the subsections together to summarize the committee analysis in the report, and present to the Department. I move to establish multiple subcommittees to

write the report. I believe that...I think that one writing committee would be not sufficient, I think we need multiple subcommittees.

Because some people are very well-versed in the data, and they're kind of ahead of the game, rather than having to learn it all to begin with. A subcommittee can contain multiple members but must be less than a quorum. I can nominate the members, and then I can ask if anybody wants to self-nominate. So what I would like to do would be nominate the members who worked on the four sections that we elected to join the writing committee.

And I can also ask if anyone wants to self-nominate to join a writing committee. In other words, you worked on one thing, but you'd like to also work on another thing. So... Okay, thank you. Is there anyone who wants to self-nominate to work beyond the promise they already made to work on the committee they worked on?

Kathy does. And Kathy, what committee would you like to work on? Kathy Prather?

- Sorry about that, I had to unmute. I would like to serve on the teacher retention.

- Thank you.

- I'm not one of the leaders of providing the data, but I am interested in that, because I think that helps other...some of even the other issues, so...yeah.

- Absolutely. Anybody else self-nominate to work on a committee that they did not work on before. Meg?

- Yeah, since my group didn't get selected, could I join the opportunity gap?

- Absolutely. Happy to have you.

- Thank you.

- Anybody else? Brandy?

- Yes, could I join the SEL group?

- Absolutely. Anybody else? Vanessa?

- I would like to join the teacher retention group, as well as the other two that I'm already part of.

- And you have time to do all that? Do you have a life? Do you sleep at night?

- I don't sleep at night.

- Oh, okay. In that case, you're more than welcome. Okay, anybody else want to volunteer? Oh, I'm sorry.

- Katherine, is it... This is Kelly. Is it volunteer, or is it volunteer to be on a committee you haven't collected data on?

- Well, I'm going to self-nominate...not self-nominate. I'm going to nominate the people who have already started working on the committee to help with the writing of the report.

- Okay.

- And then I'm asking if anybody else wants to self-nominate, and I had four self-nominees that I have to ask do I have a second to nominate Kathy to the teacher retention and recruitment group writing team? Kelly seconded. Do I have a second to nominate Meg to the opportunity gap writing team?

Alexa seconded that. Do I have a second to nominate Brandy to the SEL writing team? Okay, Vanessa seconded that. And do I have a second to nominate Vanessa to join the writing committee for teacher retention and recruitment?

Kelly, okay. So we'll have four subcommittees to contribute to the writing of the different sections, and let's see, I'm going to have a... Now we'll have a vote to approve all members of the subcommittees and assignments.

Which means I'll have to be able to see all of you. So some reason... So I nominate...I have to list the members? Okay

[inaudible] All right, so I nominate... Oh, I can just list all the members. I'm going to list the members to lead, and I will name them after I finish talking.

To lead identified report sections on behalf of the West RAC, members please use the Raise Hand chat function if you approve these nominations to the report-writing subcommittee. Okay, the members that I'm nominating to work on the subcommittees are Tonia Holmes-Sutton, Kelly McQuaid, and Kathy Prather, and Vanessa, Vanessa...sorry, Matero, Marrero to work on teacher retention and recruitment.

I nominate Vanessa, Kelly, myself to work on chronic absenteeism. I nominate Vanessa, Michele Darchuk, Alexa Cunningham, myself, and Meg to work on the opportunity gap. And I nominate Gerry Petersen-Incorvaia, Stephanie Davis, and Tiffany Stanley to work on the...and Brandy to work on the socio-emotional learning writing assignment.

- Kathy, one second, just so I can catch up with you for note taking. Can you read off the names by committee one more time? So chronic absenteeism, I have Vanessa, Kelly, yourself...

- Chronic absenteeism, I have Vanessa, Kelly, myself and...that's it, three of us.

- Okay. All right. Then opportunity gap?

- Vanessa, Michele, Alexa, Kathy Hayes, and Meg.
  - Okay. And SEL is Brandy, Gerry, and Tiffany?
  - Brandy, Gerry...no, Stephanie Davis, Brandy, Gerry, and Tiffany.
  - So, one thing. Since Gerry is not here, I...we can't... Like, I would prefer if he was here so he could agree to write part of the report. And then Stephanie Davis is no longer with the committee.
  - Oh, so we only have Meg and Tiffany? So can I put myself on it, even though I already have two?
  - Sure.
  - Okay. I'll add myself, so at least it'll be three of us.
  - And then teacher recruitment is Kathy Prather, Vanessa, and Tonia?
  - Teacher recruitment...Tonia, Kelly, Kathy Prather. And...yes.
  - Got it. Thank you.
  - Thank you. So now we vote. Please use the Raise Hand chat function if you approve these nominations to the report-writing subcommittee. So the people who didn't vote meant that they didn't want to contribute? Is that what I'm to understand?
- Or you just didn't hear the call for the vote?
- I think folks who didn't vote are from my team. They're just in the background.
  - Well, there are some from our team, too, from the RAC members. [crosstalk]
  - Since it's a majority, the vote still passes.
  - Okay. Great. Then slide 14, review the accepted priorities, request committee members lead writing of accepted priorities.

The subcommittees will meet to determine how to complete the needs-assessment writing. The subcommittee may include additional educational issues that are not considered priorities at this time, but may warrant consideration from the Department. And the Liaison will support the assessment and conduct one voicing and final production. And as you all know, the subcommittees are, the priorities are teacher retention and recruitment, chronic absenteeism, the opportunity gap, and socio-emotional learning.

The timeline is as follows. From now until November 2nd, we will meet to draft our assessment reports. We will submit the draft assessment to the Liaison by November 3rd. We will release the assessment to the full committee for review by November 13th.

When we find out, we will meet again to have our full committee meeting and vote, and we will submit the assessment to the Secretary on November 17th. Are there any questions or comments?

Okay, well, that's our DFO.

- Awesome. Well, thank you all so much for your time and effort in today's meeting. I will go ahead with the adjourning of the meeting. So I move to adjourn the meeting for the Regional Advisory Committee meeting for the West Region. If you all agree, please take yourself off mute, and say aye.

- Aye.

- Thank you. The meeting is adjourned on October 11th, at 3:44 p.m. Thank you so much, everybody.