

RAC – Northeast and Islands Region
Meeting #3
November 16, 2023

- [Sarah] Welcome, everyone. This meeting is officially open to members of the public and will be recorded for the public record. And I'd like to officially call the Northeast and Islands RAC meeting to order. I'm going to do a quick roll call, so just take off your mics and say, "Here." I'm going to point at my list.

Karen Brown.

- [Karen] Here.

- Daniel Chuhta. Danielle Colterman. Lauren Goldenberg.

- [Lauren] Here.

- Carolyn Kielma.

- [Carolyn] Yes, I am here.

- Ed Lambert.

- [Ed] Here.

- David Little.

- [David] Here.

- Charles Lloyd. Kevin McGowan. Robert Powers.

- [Robert] Present.

- Kelvin Roldan.

- [Kelvin] Here.

- Great. Dr. Nelson Soto.

- [Dr. Soto] Here.

- And last but not least, Donna Thompson-Bennett. [Donna] Here.

- Great. So, we have a verification of quorum. Yay. So, I'm going to provide a little outline for our agenda. So, we did our call to order, we're going to look at the objectives, review recommended priorities. Thank you, again, everyone on this group, for all of your hard work. We're going to review the draft report by section, deliberate on the report draft, and then vote to approve report recommendations.

And as you can see, adjourn. So, this is exciting, yay. So, just a quick review of the meeting objectives. Review the report draft, the full committee deliberates and comments on the drafts, and then we vote for approval of the report to be submitted to the Secretary of Education.

- Sarah, are you switching over to me?

- I believe it is. I was going to hand it over to you.

- Hi, my name is Lauren Goldenberg and I am the chair of the Northeast and Islands Regional Advisory Committee. And I am now going to summarize the Regional Advisory Committee needs-sensing activities. RAC members reviewed a regional profile comprised of education statistics and other relevant data to inform our individual assessments of the challenges and educational needs in the region, as well as our next steps as a whole group.

We sought input from stakeholders in our region through data collection that included two online surveys and three focus groups. We contributed additional materials such as memos and reports from our states and local education agencies and various intermediary organizations. And we provided information about the public comment solicitation to our networks.

Our region received 74 public comments. Comments were also received...they were also collected from chief state school officers, governors, and the REL governing board for our region. And that is a very quick summary of the needs-sensing activities.

So, I think we can go on to the next part of the agenda. Now I'm going to review the priorities during Meeting 2 that RAC voted to approve the following recommended priorities.

I don't know if they're going to now appear. Okay, one by one. Priority 1 is mental health and supports for students and educators. Priority 2 is addressing educator shortages and diversifying the education profession at all levels.

Priority 3 is improving literacy through evidence-based literacy instruction and materials, both generally and across content areas and for student groups that need it.

Priority number 4 is authentic parent and family engagement and partnerships. And finally, priority 5 is high-quality early childhood education. For each priority, the committee summarized the needs and generated strategies to meet those needs through technical assistance.

In addition, our region's committee identified several emergent needs that we would like to bring forward to the Department and we will share those at the next part of the agenda. So, now is the time to review the draft report. The RAC members were nominated to serve on writing subcommittees to draft sections of the report during Meeting 2.

Their names and assignments are on this slide. Now, Subcommittee members will briefly review the data collection activities section...sorry, the recommended priority section, including any identified needs. So now, subcommittee members will begin summarizing each priority. The first priority, Mental Health and Supports for students and educators, Dr. Nelson Soto.

- Good afternoon, everyone. Can you give me an idea on timeframe for sharing?

- Two minutes.

- Two minutes?

- Two minutes.

- All right, 12:07.

- And then, sorry, before you begin, Nelson, we have a correction. There's a typo. Karen's last name is Powers, not Bowen. And we will correct that for the record. Oh, Brown, sorry. Getting confused with Rob. Karen Brown, Rob Powers, and David Little were part of the Early Childhood Education Subcommittee.

Sorry about that, Nelson. It's all yours. Two minutes.

- Two minutes. All right.

- I'm sorry to interrupt also. I'm on the Mental Health, not on the Educator Shortages Committee too. Kevin McGowan. Sorry.

- Thanks, Kevin. Noted.

- We'll make these edits as soon as we're done with this meeting.

- Thanks.

- And Kevin, in those two minutes, feel free to add anything that you feel like I left off. We'll give you 30 seconds or so. In the two minutes, what I really want to stress is the idea that we are finally seeing that mental health has emerged from post-pandemic COVID-19 and that we're no longer looking at mental health as an acute issue, but as a long-term strategy to creating an environment to support educational well-being and psychological well-being.

In these outcomes and findings, what you'll notice is that in K-12, we are recognizing that there's an interplay between psychological well-being of educators and students. The notion there is that if faculty teachers have a strong well-being, there will be more likely favorable student outcomes. This is supported by the literature.

The other piece that we noticed in the outcomes and findings was that there's a strong indication of teacher stress, and there needs to be a mental and emotional equilibrium of teachers, and again, how that stress of teachers has an impact on the well-being of their students. I also want to point out that throughout the literature and the conversations we have, it was noticed that half a million children are grappling with mental health and behavioral conditions.

This was a major concern for this group. So, the priority needs, we need to build more of a morale-building system and structure, a system that focuses on belonging, and purpose in the educational environment. We need to enhance our understanding of teachers' wellness, and we need to connect that to any type of burnout that we're seeing.

We need to look at this whole notion of what does it mean to have a comprehensive approach in trauma counseling guided by principles, even by the American School Counselors Association and other leaders in this area. We made four critical recommendations, and that is to disseminate information and resources at the state, regional, and local levels, implementing more of a comprehensive system for school counseling.

We made recommendations regarding social-emotional learning, and how do we include that and incorporate it into multi-tiered systems of support for students. The other recommendation was establishing counseling clinical laboratories, again, within these separate region areas to support mental health for both students and educators. And then finally, the notion of training, what this training looked like to improve mental health for educators and students.

I'm sorry, there was one more, a repository of information to help these educators to access mental health services also during crucial moments. I don't know if I have 30 seconds, but I will share if Kevin wants to add anything else, but that's really where we are.

- I would only add my thanks. That was excellent, Nelson. Thank you.

- I yield my time.

- Nelson, you modeled for us perfectly, and you also intimidated us. Next is Carolyn...I don't know if I'm saying your last name right, Carolyn, Kielma. Carolyn is a teacher in, I believe, upstate New York and she is in a classroom right now and she's going to do her best to summarize the Educator Shortages Subcommittee priorities.

And if she is unable to or needs to cut off for an emergency, I'll step in. So, Carolyn, I welcome you. Carolyn, your sound is not...

- Thank you, my sixth grade...

- There you go. It's working now Carolyn, your sound is cutting out. I heard you say, "Sixth graders," and then that was it. I don't know if other committee members can hear Carolyn. No, people are shaking their heads.

Do you want to try again, Carolyn? Do you want to mute and come back on? Carolyn, we can't hear you, so I'm going to do my best to summarize the educator shortages priority. And I thank you for everything you're doing for being here, even though at the same time that you're teaching a sixth-grade class, which is kind of both fitting and ironic, as we talked about before the meeting, that Carolyn was not able to get a substitute teacher because there are no substitute teachers to be had.

So, that's why she is with her class right now. Okay. So, like I said, I'll do my best. It should come as no surprise in the field of education that the field of education is facing shortages of qualified and willing staff in all of its roles.

In addition, schools are struggling to diversify the educator workforce, which is compounding the issue. Addressing the diversity and the shortages in the educator workforce within our region is exacerbated by the mental health concerns, which we just heard about, pay disparity, geography, and also the many rural areas of the region.

We need teachers of all races, religious groups, cultures, gender identities, physical abilities, and all groups, marginalized groups, and others, leading our schools. Students need to feel that they are represented in education and that the career is vital and a valuable one so that we can continue to serve all Americans equitably.

To support the recruitment, hiring, and development of a more diverse educator workforce requires the establishment of educator pipelines. These pipelines can include teacher apprenticeship programs, grow-your-own programs, and more delineated leadership tracks for current educators. Effectively building educator pipelines, though, depends on increasing interest in the education profession through better pay and improved working conditions and living conditions.

So, among the TA recommendations, there are several. I will highlight a couple of them. One is to provide resources, tools, and training on how state, regional, and local education agencies, and schools themselves can effectively launch and maintain grow-your-own programs. Again, provide resources tools, training, and models of effective teacher apprenticeship programs.

And provide resources, tools, and training on how school systems can implement more equitable recruitment and hiring practices through the use of local data. So, using data is also a feature. The Committee found that finding the necessary data was problematic, so workforce and labor data for the education workforce is very important to this priority.

I am going to pause to see if, Carolyn, you come back on if you want to add anything about this priority.

- I'm not sure if you can hear me okay?

- Yes, we can now.

- Of course, you can. Good. I'm so sorry, I appreciate that. I am currently teaching right now as was mentioned, and it's just...the shortage is real. It's something that we really...I almost feel should be the highest priority because we just can't get educators to help our needs. And again, they need to look more like the students in my room because currently, they do not. And the best way to represent students is in front of the room leading our classrooms.

Thank you so much.

- Thank you, Carolyn. I'm so glad we could hear you close out that priority. So, priority three is using evidence-based literacy practices to improve reading and literacy. Ed, please take it away.

- Thanks, Lauren. And let me just start these comments by making sure that everyone understands that it was Lauren's deep expertise and passion for this subject that really frames most of this. So, I am just a vessel for communicating the great work that she did on this section, but happy to do so. And understanding the prioritization that should come with fostering student literacy is a cornerstone for student achievement across all levels.

This section details and includes some of the data that shows, in particular, the recent most often pandemic-related decline in fourth and eighth-grade reading scores with some specific details with regard to what's happening in New York City and the Boston Public Schools. But the emphasis throughout this section is really on evidence-based literacy instruction and how do we foster that and how can USDOE be a resource for both state education officials and local districts.

The comments really align and lead to the recommendations, the need for high-quality curriculum materials, coherence with regard to implementation of those materials. Evidence-based, if I haven't said so already, is the keyword to much of what we believe needs to happen here, and the technical assistance that the Department can provide in reading, writing, and literacy.

So, that all leads to six recommendations that are in this section, beginning with the need for a clearinghouse of evidence-based literacy instructional models, ensuring that those models allow for implementation across grade levels and tiers of instruction. Asking the regional center to provide technical assistance with a range of implementation supports, including the hiring and deployment of literacy coaches, professional learning communities.

How can districts and states utilize assessment data in important ways to support students? There's a role for higher ed in pre-service instruction and what that looks like and ensuring that evidence-based instruction is available. And also the last two recommendations, technical support in terms of how to incentivize the adoption of these practices across districts.

And then how do you manage the change that needs to take place both with staff, supporting staff, supporting vulnerable students and parents, engaging them authentically in their children's literacy learning? So, that's the section. It's strong, I think, and almost entirely due to Lauren's great expertise in this area.

- Thank you, Ed. I appreciated working with you and I appreciated your perspectives and input. Donna, my other partner, is going to lead us in the Parent and Family Engagement priority section.

- Thank you, Lauren. The authentic parent-caregiver family engagement partnership ranked as one of our top priorities. In an effort to engage family educators and community partners in exploring this priority, we as Northeast and Island RAC conducted parent-caregiver, educator, and community partner surveys, as well as a parent focus group.

Findings from our data collection reveal that the value and priority need for additional opportunities for parent-caregiver engagement and community partnership and to increase diversity amongst educators and curricula to create an inclusive learning environment and greater sense of belonging for students. That was the priority need.

The survey data shared also highlights what schools in this region are doing well and recommendations for what they could do to improve authentic parent-caregiver engagement and family and community partnerships. When parents see opportunity gaps, they know the consequences to their children and take action, forming networks and joining forces with other groups. Using their own stories backed by data and told in their authentic voices, they offer ideas that lead to more equitable policies and practices.

That is from a parent leader from an Annenberg study that was done around the ripple effect back in 2016. What we found in doing our research to be true is that parents in the focus group discussed the importance of authentic parent and family engagement for student success. One parent leader from New York

highlighted the importance of parents being involved in the school system and being equipped to support their children's learning at home.

Parents and caregivers also offered their concerns for the mental well-being of students and educators, educator shortages, the need for more diverse education staff, improvement of literacy, and access to high-quality early education. They recommended seven different things; I'm going to highlight a few of them. The first one, a clearinghouse of two-way culturally relevant communication strategies and tools between school educators and parents that school systems can easily put in place that include information on community partners, resources, and sources of support, so that educator schools can network effectively.

Multilingual resources that include tools for family members to support their students at home in various subjects, including information for those who have different learning styles or disabilities. Structures for engaging and developing parent leaders with districts and regions. They also recommended the development and dissemination of training and resources that support the well-being of students, family, and educators.

And the final one that I will highlight is a series of virtual trainings, convenings, on authentic family engagement and partnerships that bring together all stakeholders, such as parents, caregivers, students, educators, and community partners. These can be theme-focused, for example, on creating welcoming environments for all students and families from pre-K to 12th grade.

I will close by saying there has been research for over 20 years that has said that students are more successful when students, parents, and educators collaborate to understand and implement what works best for students to achieve in learning. And we hope that this priority can be realized with all seven of the recommendations that have been authored by parents and also educators and some community partners.

Thank you, Lauren.

- Thank you, Donna. Rob, over to you, for our final priority, early childhood education. Two minutes.

- Great, thank you. And I'd like to thank Dr. Brown for being an amazing partner on this section as well. So, the need-sensing activities surfaced some

really important priority needs for early childhood education. First and foremost, early childhood education has not traditionally been a focus area for comprehensive center support in recent history.

So, we've seen through the need-sensing activities in the literature that early childhood education really connects with all of the other priority areas identified in this report and thus should be included in that work. So, in addition to that, we found that there are substantial needs regarding the use of data and collection of data related to early childhood education, how to provide access to all students in mixed delivery models, which seems to be the standard model across the region, and then also needs regarding the quality of programming within early childhood education.

So, we provided quite a few technical assistance recommendations. The first was to provide technical assistance regarding data collection and the use to inform the design of early childhood education systems, evaluation systems, educator training programs, and parent and family outreach, particularly through either collecting data where there are gaps in the data.

We found a lot of data gaps when it comes to the territories, for example, and there could be a lot more support in that area so that they can make some really great informed decisions. But also around data ecosystems, helping departments within states and across states connect data points to glean insights into best practices. We also recommend that there be a broadening of the portfolio of comprehensive centers to include more early childhood care and education projects, particularly a content center that would focus exclusively on early childhood education that can inform comprehensive center work.

We also recommend providing technical assistance focused on sustaining funding and delivery models, particularly in a mixed delivery service model. Our research showed that a lot of the funding efforts in recent history have gone through for pure stabilization purposes. And we recommend some technical assistance around how to grow these systems, rather than just sustaining them, which obviously is important, but we need help moving forward.

And then lastly, providing technical support regarding increasing program quality through workforce and program development. So, hiring, retaining, and supporting a pipeline of early educators, and also providing high-quality curriculum opportunities for, once again, mixed delivery model systems.

- Thank you, Rob, Karen, and the entire RAC for all your hard work and the great summary. Before we move to deliberating on the report, I am going to mention a couple of emerging needs that didn't rise to the level of a priority because we were limited in the number of priorities. But these are important to committee members, and we want the Secretary of Education to consider them.

One important one is the impact of climate change on infrastructure and the continuity of education in emergencies. Another emergent need is technical assistance on supporting asylum seekers and newly arrived immigrant students and their families. And finally, addressing key challenges specific to rural education is important. We also had four general recommendations that we would like the Secretary to consider.

I'll highlight just a couple of them. One is that comprehensive center staff should be skilled with deep content expertise. Another is that there should be a funding set aside to modify initial work scopes for emergent needs and there should be a mechanism to facilitate collaboration across regional education labs and comprehensive centers, states, and territories that they serve, to address common challenges and interests to not be siloed within states and local education agencies and regions.

So, now we're going to move to deliberate on the draft report. Now that the report has been summarized, the committee is asked to verify the accuracy of the report with respect to our findings and recommendations. We have the opportunity to ask targeted and concise clarifying questions, propose specific changes in the report to address its accuracy of the committee findings and recommendations.

We're not looking at writing style, grammar, or formatting preferences, we are focusing on the accuracy of the report contents. Do we have any clarifying questions about the report from committee members or proposals for specific alternate language?

I hope you all had a chance to review the report that we received on Tuesday afternoon. So, please raise your hand and I'll call on you in the order that your hands are raised. Donna.

- Lauren, I just wanted to clarify what you said about grammar and structure, all of that. That will be reviewed...there were a few things I saw, but that will be reviewed by the team to make those types of corrections. Is that correct?

- Correct, correct. Manhattan Strategy Group is working on the copy editing and formatting as we speak. Yeah.

- Great. Thank you.

- And I'm sure if you wanted to email Adrian, he would appreciate that.

- And I will definitely do that. Thank you.

- Okay, thanks. Thanks for that question.

- I have...

- Go for it, Nelson.

- I have a selfish question, and that is, you know, am I allowed to cite this on a CV saying that I was part of this group? That I was part of the study? What's the policy behind that? Or is there any practice against...?

- I think that that's an excellent question and I would ask that Adrienne and Sarah and the U.S. ED team maybe communicate with us because I didn't have that question, Nelson. I just added it. So, I would love to know what the correct...I can share with you what I did and we can get guidance from our U.S. ED colleagues. Other requests, clarifying questions, or suggestions? Donna.

- I see an acknowledgment section and I wondered, one of the greatest joys of this work where we were able to actually have parents gather and I didn't know if they would be included in the acknowledgment for that focus group. And also, one of our state partners for the region, Connecticut, the Commissioner's Roundtable, did reach out in terms of surveys.

And so, in that acknowledgment, would they be included in that section of this report? Because it wasn't just in a vacuum, but there were actual real people who made things happen.

- That's an excellent point. So, U.S. ED colleagues and Manhattan Strategy Group, I don't know if you have a quick answer and maybe this is more of a recommendation that they should be. "Thank you to all the people who took our surveys and participated in our focus groups and helped recruit people to them and stand them up." Before we go to Dave, I'm just going to pause for a second to see if anybody from U.S.

ED or Manhattan Strategy Group has a response to that question about acknowledgments.

- I think just generally, so stakeholders are generally acknowledged. If there are specific groups that you guys want, you know, please propose them, that you don't...you know, and you want the committee...and we can vote to concur with that conclusion.

That's the ED response.

- Thanks, Sarah. Dave, did you want to add something?

- A two-part question. The first is just when we might expect the timeline for the completed draft to be ready to present. And then second of all, what's the expectation? I have a summer conference, for instance, and this just might be good to have folks from the RAC appear and present on the work that's been done.

It's an important work and this would give it kind of a wide-ranging forum. So, I'm wondering whether there are policies about that or whether or not we just generally have an idea about whether people might be available to do that?

- While our U.S. ED and Manhattan Strategy... well, maybe it's more of a U.S. ED question, while they ponder that, I am going to read the comment that Danielle Smith from the U.S.

Department of Education put in the chat regarding Donna's question. "So, Donna, stakeholders are generally acknowledged. If there are specific groups you want to acknowledge, you can propose and the committee can vote to concur with their inclusion." So, Donna, if you could type, like, kind of what I said off the cuff, if you could type that into the chat, we could vote on it and... vote on its inclusion right now while people are addressing Dave's question.

Is that okay, Donna? Yeah. Okay, great. So, U.S. ED colleagues, do you have information for Dave on this topic?

- Yeah, and just summarizing, first about a timeline, and then secondly, about the availability of people to speak about the report when it's going live.

- So, David is asking whether...so when the report is going to be finished, and if he can use this report to present it at a meeting or a conference as a kind of, I don't know, a reference or tool. Am I understanding that, Dave?

- I really was thinking that members who put the report together might come to the conference and talk about the specifics of what's in it, the recommendations, and how they might be able to use the Department as a resource to carry out some of the priorities.

- We might have to work on some of that, but I think we can probably come up with a general date. I think MSG is helping us finish it up. Do we have a pretty strong date as to when it's going to be finished? Does MSG people know exactly the date?

I don't have a calendar in front of me, I'm sorry.

- I don't know when, you know, finished, but then I don't know when they're going to the Secretary, so I would defer to the Department on that.

- Yeah, we'll get back to you on that, Dave, about, you know, all the different timing, because it has to be, like, submitted and the Secretary looks at it, you know, it takes a little...there's a process, as you can imagine.

- Sounds good.

- We will get back to you on all that information. But good question.

- So, Donna, I think that we're waiting on your [inaudible] and it doesn't need to be perfect. I think we can vote in general once we see it. So, if you could press send?

Because I think that we are looking towards the final vote to approve the report but we want to do this first.

- It will be probably quicker for me to say it. The first group is the Connecticut State Department of Education Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement.

- Hang on, I'm going to type that as you say it. Connecticut Department of Education...

- I'm almost done, I'll do it.

- Oh, okay.

- [Alison] And you can just put it in the chat. That's really fine.

- Yes, that's what she's...she's typing it into the chat. So, we'll just be patient and see if anybody else has other questions, my dear committee members.

- [Danielle] We'll give Donna a little more time. Hi, everyone, Danielle Smith from the U.S. Department of Education, just to provide a little clarity on the timeline. So, any revisions that are voted on by the committee today will be implemented in the report. And once the report has been voted on to be submitted to the Department, it will be submitted to the Secretary.

The Department will review the report and we will also post the report on our website, so it's available to the public. We hope and anticipate that that will happen next month or by the end of the calendar year. And we will notify all committee members as soon as the final report is posted and available so that you can share it with all of your stakeholders, and all of your communities and organizations.

We will also be using the reports internally at the Department to review all of your findings and recommendations and consider how we can take those into account in planning for our technical assistance programs.

- Thank you, Danielle, for that. I am going to...let's see. Donna, I'm going to make a recommendation.

- Lauren, before you make the recommendation, the Commissioner's Roundtable, I didn't...it's so long. It's Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education.

- Okay, I'm adding that. Committee members...

- And the Connecticut State Department of Education.

- Committee members, if you could take a look at the comments that I put, if we can vote on adding that to the report to the acknowledgment section? "It's an acknowledgment to people who took the time to take our surveys, participate in our focus groups, and provide public comments. Special thanks to the Connecticut State Department of Education Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education and the National Parent Leadership Institute parent focus group."

Donna, does that encapsulate...?

- Yes, that's great. Because the only thing...and I didn't think it was possible, but I did wonder in asking the question, could names and states of the parents be listed because they were diverse and throughout the region? The only thing I felt bad about is that the timing didn't allow us to include Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

- So, I think for the purposes of voting right now, we can maybe say, "From the states in our region." From the states and...well, we don't have the territories. "From the states in our region." Okay, can I see a show of...how did we do it before, physical hands or thumbs up? What did we do for voting to include this?

- Use the little "Raise Hand" function.

- Thank you, Alison.

- And we'll take a screenshot. So, that is for people who...I am not seeing that. Oh, just the "Raise Hand." Okay. I wasn't seeing the emojis. So, if people were voting to include this in the acknowledgments, and we have... if our Manhattan Strategy Group colleagues can take a screenshot, we have, I think, nine people agreeing.

Thank you.

- I would like to agree as well, but I can't raise my hand if that makes sense.

- So, that's 10. Thank you, Carolyn. Okay, are we good, Allison and Dave?

- I don't know, just leave your hands up until we hear from Dave.

- Okay, Dave.

- [Dave] Yes, screenshot has been taken.

- Okay, thank you. Okay, everybody can lower their hands. And now we are going to conduct the final vote to approve the report, if that's okay with everybody. You can lower your hands. So, I'm now going to call for a vote for the RAC members to approve the final report. I have an official script here.

"Members, as I call to 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 Northeast and Islands Regional Advisory Committee to approve the report

to be submitted to the Secretary of Education. If you are in agreement, please raise your hand using the "Raise Hand" function."

And Carolyn, if you want to verbally give your agreement, I think now's a good time.

- Yes, I agree. Thank you.

- The report has been accepted by the RAC. And please Tech Support Dave if you let us know when we can lower our hands?

- Yes, the screenshot has been taken.

- Great. The duration of the committee is from the date of our establishment until the committee report is submitted to the Secretary. So, I think that this is a little bit about Dave's question. It's in the script here. "Therefore, the Committee will be required to meet again..." Oh, this is news to me, I didn't read through the agenda to the end.

"Therefore, the Committee will be required to meet again at a date to be announced to conclude its work and submit its report to the Secretary." Oh, wait, Adrienne put something in the chat. "Any changes approved by the RAC will be implemented and the report will be submitted to the Department. The Committee will be terminated by the Secretary after submission. The Committee may be reconvened at the discretion of the Secretary."

Okay, somebody had their hand up but is not up anymore. So, I will call the meeting to be adjourned at the precise date and time, November 16th, 2023, at 11:41 a.m.

Eastern time. Thank you for your service.

- Thank you, Lauren, for your leadership.

- Thank you, everybody. We so appreciate all the work and effort of this group and getting to know all of you in this kind of weird virtual world has been wonderful and learning from all of you. So, thank you, the Department thanks you, MSG, all of us really appreciated it. I think I need everyone to say, "Aye," that the committee meeting is over. Everyone ready?

- Oh, I am so sorry. The reason why I didn't read through to the end is because that was Sarah's part of the agenda.

- It's okay, we're a tag team here.
- Sorry for co-opting you, Sarah.
- It's okay.
- Aye.
- Everyone ready? Aye.
- [Together] Aye.
- Aye and bye.
- Have a good rest of the week, everybody. Thank you again. Take care.