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RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
PUBLIC HEARING

February 9, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Barton Chapel Elementary School (Cafeteria)
2329 Barton Chapel Road
Augusta, Georgia 30906

Kimbely Griffin, CCR, CVR
5409-4423-1615-6928

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PROCEEDING

February 9, 2026

MS. STOVALL: Good evening, everyone.

THE AUDIENCE: Good evening.

MS. STOVALL: How are you? I hope you all had a great weekend where we got through the snowstorm pretty well and had a chance to play with some snowmen and snowballs and things of that nature.

Thank you for joining us this evening. We are here this evening to talk about our rightsizing plan.

Before we get started, I would like to recognize our board members that are here. Of course, my name is Shawnda Stovall. I am the board chairman. We have our vice chair, Mr. Ed Lowery. We have Mr. Walter Eubanks. We have Ms. Venus Cain. We have Ms. Mary Jane Abbott, Ms. Shontae Boyd, Ms. Samantha Valentine, and Ms. Monique Braswell.

We also have our senior team here. Of course, you know, we have Dr. Malinda Cobb. She is our superintendent. I saw Dr. Tommy Welch. He is our deputy superintendent. And Mr. Marcus Allen, who is also our deputy superintendent.

What our plans are tonight is we want to hear your ideas and input and also share with you the proposed plan of what's happening. I want to start by

1 expressing our sincere appreciation for showing up to
2 all of our meetings that we've held so far and for you
3 giving us the feedback, whether it was through a phone
4 call, whether it's through your emails, or whether it's
5 through your public comment at previous hearings. We
6 want you to know that we are listening. We hear you.
7 We are listening. You should have received --
8 especially our Josey alumni family, you should have
9 received a letter in the mail from me and the board --
10 on behalf of the board, and the Richmond County School
11 System addressing the concerns that you have.

12 But tonight, we are going to talk about Barton
13 Chapel and Jenkins-White. We are going to talk about
14 all of the schools that are in our proposed plan.

15 So the purpose of tonight's meeting is twofold.
16 First, we want to hear your vision. We want you to
17 hear the vision and the plan that is being presented by
18 the superintendent and the facilities masters. No
19 decision has been made. We have not voted on any
20 decision yet. Our next meeting for the decision will
21 be on February 23rd. We invite you all to come out to
22 the Board of Education at 864 Broad Street to be a part
23 of that board meeting.

24 Tomorrow afternoon, we will also have another
25 public rightsizing meeting at the Board of Education at

1 12 noon. Thursday, I'm sorry. I thought it was -- I'm
2 off. Today is Tuesday. Monday. Today is Monday. I
3 ain't had no sleep, y'all. I am my mother's caretaker.
4 I ain't had no sleep, y'all. It will be Thursday at
5 12:30, correct? At the Board of Education at 864 Broad
6 Street. It's 12:00? I don't know where I'm going to
7 be. It's 12:00, so get there at 11:00. Get there at
8 11:00. That way you know you won't miss it. Somebody
9 will help you get to your seat, and you will be there
10 whether we start at 12:00 or 12:30. But we invite you
11 to come out and to be a part of it.

12 Also, we are going to have a presentation here
13 tonight for you to see what the proposed plans are. At
14 the end, we are going to give you an opportunity to
15 come over and leave a comment about what you've heard,
16 what you've seen, and what you would like to share.
17 Because this is your community. And we want to make
18 sure that we align our students' facilities and their
19 buildings and their education with the 21st century,
20 and coming into the 22nd century, alignment for
21 education and what's available for them to go into. We
22 want to make sure that our students receive the best
23 education and the best facilities with the best
24 programming that we can offer.

25 So without further ado, I would like to turn this

1 over to -- and I would like to -- we have Commissioner
2 Clark. We would like to welcome Commissioner Clark to
3 our meeting here as well. If there are any other
4 elected officials in the building, please raise your
5 hand so that we can acknowledge you properly. All
6 right. Thank you, sir, Mr. Clark, for being here.

7 Without further ado, I would like to turn this
8 presentation over to Dr. Cobb. She will be giving you
9 the presentation and our step-by-step proposal. And
10 you will have an opportunity to ask questions and to
11 make your comments at the end at this mic over here
12 (indicating). Dr. Cobb?

13 DR. COBB: Thank you, President Stovall.

14 I want to thank everyone for coming out tonight as
15 we share our vision about the Richmond County School
16 System and what it can be, where we are right now, and
17 where we want to go in our future.

18 Tonight, I'll be going through our presentation.
19 We are going to begin with Barton Chapel, but we will
20 back up and repeat some of the information that we have
21 shared about all of the other schools as well. So, I
22 want to talk a little bit tonight about how we got
23 here.

24 So, before we get into it, I want to establish
25 some ground rules because I don't want anybody to feel

1 caught by surprise. So this is a public hearing, which
2 means that we're going to all listen to one another. We
3 are going to model for our students and our young
4 people what it looks like when adults have civil
5 discourse. We are going to listen to one another. We
6 are not going to shout at one another so that everyone
7 can remain in the room and become a part of the
8 conversation.

9 One of the things that you probably picked up as
10 you were coming in is a comment card. If you choose to
11 come and make a public comment at the end -- after my
12 presentation, you just need to fill out your
13 information, tell us who you are, and tell us your city
14 and state, and then state your comment.

15 We will have one opportunity for each person to be
16 able to come up, and we are going to follow our
17 three-minute time limit. So, we ask you to be mindful
18 about your thoughts and keep that inside of the
19 three-minute mark.

20 We do want to have no shouting, no personal
21 attacks, or disruptive behavior. Please remain
22 courteous to all participants. And I know that you
23 guys already know these things. I do want to ask you
24 to use the microphone. This is very important that
25 everyone is able to hear, including our court reporter.

1 So please speak directly into the microphone. If you
2 have a question, this is not the format for a
3 question-and-answer session. If you have a question,
4 there are several ways you can get those questions
5 answered.

6 You'll notice around the room these big blue
7 signs. We have members of each of these different
8 departments. So if you have a question, specifically,
9 about human resources as it relates to this plan, we'll
10 have our team here. We have team members, and they'll
11 be at each of these signs afterward.

12 There is also an opportunity for you to go to;
13 rcboe.org/masterplan. I'm going to show you a QR code
14 in just a second. You can, actually, enter your
15 questions right there. But I encourage you, before you
16 do that, to take a look at a very valuable resource on
17 that page, which is our Frequently Asked Questions,
18 because there's a good chance someone has already asked
19 that question and we have the answer posted.

20 We do want to remind you that when you come up to
21 the mic, that you comment on our plan. Off-topic
22 comments or remarks could be ended by our moderator.
23 Our moderator's role tonight is to help enforce these
24 rules and ensure that everyone has a fair chance to be
25 heard.

1 When we switch over to the public comment period,
2 we would like to make sure we are courteous and give
3 our Barton Chapel and Glenn Hills Elementary School
4 families an opportunity to come to the microphone
5 first, just as we did recently at our last public
6 hearing.

7 So this (indicating) is that page I was telling
8 you about at rcboe.org, and then put masterplan. There
9 are two blue boxes on there. One is called Frequently
10 Asked Questions. You can click right on that, and you
11 can see all of the questions people have been
12 submitting. We have been answering them as they come
13 in.

14 And then there's also a box for you to share your
15 feedback. That is a great place for you to be able to
16 type in specific questions because we want to make sure
17 that any question you have, gets answered. So if you
18 want, you can see this QR code in multiple places.
19 That is the QR code up there on the screen. If you
20 want to use your phone, it will take you to the
21 question and answer section. Or when you came in, you
22 may have picked up a card with a QR code. Or when you
23 came in, you may have picked up our one-pager that has
24 the QR code. All three of those take you to the exact
25 same place so that you can get to the information. I

1 wanted to, kind of, go over that before we get started
2 with everything so that everybody knows what we are
3 going to do.

4 What I am going to do next is really walk us
5 through our plan. This is the plan that the
6 administration has submitted for proposal for our board
7 members' consideration and for public review. This
8 plan was based on several task force meetings that were
9 held. You may remember that during the '23-'24 school
10 year, we were in full swing. We were out having
11 community-wide meetings. We had some virtual meetings,
12 six public hearings. We had additional meetings with
13 the impacted communities. So, overall, from our
14 surveys, 259 people completed the survey at that time.
15 When we sent out survey number two, we had 1,900 that
16 completed it. So, a lot of that information is what
17 was used in creating this plan that you are seeing here
18 tonight.

19 You may notice I'm not Tracy Richter. Tracy
20 Richter has been with us through these processes, but
21 we did have to reschedule our hearings due to the
22 weather, and so, you have me, which I'm happy to be
23 here tonight to be able to explain the plan for you.

24 So you have seen this slide before. It's been
25 shown. It is like, why are we doing this? Why do we

1 have to do this? One question I often get is, hey,
2 Columbia County is right next door to us. Why don't we
3 have the exact same things that they have? Well, there
4 is one part of that that is very different. They have
5 about the same number of students that we do, but they
6 have half the number of schools. So, when we get our
7 state funding, which is by the student, I'm trying to
8 spread it over 52 schools, and they're spreading it
9 over half that. So they are, actually, able to provide
10 more programming and more resources to their students.

11 So, if you look at the graphic there (indicating),
12 we are trying to take the pie and cut it up into such
13 tiny pieces. Sometimes, in my opinion, our students
14 don't get everything that they deserve. And we want to
15 help make sure that every student gets the most. So,
16 these are things we know.

17 We have some aging buildings that are away from
18 the students where they serve. Some of the students
19 are riding the bus for a while. We have declining
20 enrollment, which we'll take a look at. But birth
21 rates in general, not just here in Richmond County,
22 across the entire country, are decreasing. I can look
23 at my own home. Both of my parents had -- they came
24 from four siblings. I came from three. I have one.
25 So, that's just an example in my own life of where

1 enrollment is declining because birth rates are down.
2 But we want to make sure that we don't have inequitable
3 programs. We want to disrupt that so that no matter
4 which zip code you live in, you have the same resources
5 as other students.

6 We also want to -- the district is unable to
7 capture the maximum state funding, which is what I was
8 telling you earlier. I get the money, but I have to
9 spread it out over so many more schools. So, this is a
10 graphic (indicating) we've used before, and I want to
11 take a moment. This is completely symbolic. I want to
12 make sure you understand that. This is symbolic. The
13 state helps fund based on the number of students. If
14 you look at that first one, you'll see that if a school
15 is running less than 450 enrollment, what the state
16 gives you is a principal and a part-time nurse. And a
17 lot of those other positions are funded with the local
18 dollar.

19 When you look at that middle, if you have less
20 than 600 -- I want to make sure I show you what's here.
21 It says art teacher, band teacher, health science, and
22 CTAE. Those are examples. What that means is we can't
23 offer all of those same fine arts at every single
24 school without the local dollar trying to pay for all
25 of that.

1 So, in many of our schools, we don't even have all
2 of these places. Like, we don't even earn a part-time
3 guidance counselor in almost every elementary school.
4 But you need a full-time. So, all of the local dollars
5 are coming in on top of that.

6 If you look at the next one, when you have a high
7 school with less than 1,000, you get one principal and
8 about two APs, a media specialist and a nurse, and then
9 you get some of those connection classes. Our
10 colleague pointed out to us -- and I want to say he's
11 absolutely correct. We have to have two JROTC
12 instructors in order to have a program. But what we're
13 trying to make a point of is I can't offer a lot of
14 CTAE choices to all of our schools when we are
15 underfunded. Here is the difference (indicating). And
16 you've seen this shared by the group in the past.

17 When you have at least 450 at the elementary, you
18 begin earning all of those positions. So, at the
19 elementary level, we can have an art and music and a PE
20 teacher. You can have everybody. When you take a look
21 at middle schools, if they have at least 700, we can
22 have those connection classes as well as some CTAE
23 courses.

24 And if you look at our high schools, you have to
25 get all the way to 1,500 before you start really

1 earning all that. So, sometimes what we say is that
2 the sweet spot -- is that the elementary really needs
3 to have at least 450 or more, that middle schools need
4 to have at least 700, and high schools need to have at
5 least 1,500. You may know that the size of our high
6 schools, we are nowhere near that number right now.

7 So, when we look at a timeline on how we got here,
8 this process began with the company. They have been
9 coming out. We opened Belair Middle School. We've
10 opened the Richmond Hill. We closed Abrams and Merry.
11 We had boundary changes in 2024. We closed Spirit
12 Creek and had boundary changes. And then we also
13 worked in '25, which brings us to where we are now
14 around consolidating and combining Langford and Tutt.
15 If you'll recall, part of what we did was Langford
16 Middle School, a portion of it was rezoned to be a part
17 of Belair Middle School. And the other portion was
18 moved into the Tutt facility, where they were with
19 them. They are there with them right now until the new
20 facility is built right there on Walton Way, and then
21 they will come over to that new school. So, those are
22 all of the pieces that we have done together so far.

23 Tonight I'm going to talk a lot about Barton
24 Chapel. What is happening here with Barton Chapel in
25 our community? It's a lot of exciting work, but we do

1 have a bit of a transition ahead of us as we get ready.

2 This is a map (indicating), and we sometimes talk
3 about NPUs. That stands for Neighborhood Planning
4 Unit. So we have a map of the entire Richmond County,
5 and it's divided by neighborhoods. Each neighborhood
6 has a number. We are able to track how many school-age
7 children live in each of those neighborhoods. So
8 whenever you see this map, what we're looking at here
9 for Barton Chapel -- what's going to happen here? I'm
10 going to tell it to you in plain words, and we'll make
11 sure we have this -- there is a small piece of the
12 Barton Chapel neighborhood, which is what we know as
13 Belair Lakes. It's around the way on Gordon Highway.
14 It will be permanently rezoned to be a part of Belair
15 Elementary, Belair Middle, and Westside High School.
16 There are 14 students total, pre-K through 12, in that
17 Neighborhood Planning Unit. Part of the reason why is
18 because the bus is already traveling down Gordon
19 Highway taking the students to Belair.

20 All of the rest of Barton Chapel will go over to
21 Glenn Hills Elementary School for the next two years.
22 That means Glenn Hills Elementary School will be full,
23 and it means we're going to have to have 10 portables
24 on site to make sure that they all have room to fit.

25 What will happen here (indicating)? This building

1 will be, what we say, razed. It will be completely
2 torn down, and a brand-new elementary school that can
3 hold 800 students will be built here on this campus.
4 I'm going to show you pictures of it and kind of talk
5 to you a little bit about that. This is the way we
6 begin to maximize our resources. We need to build
7 schools that are closer to the size of 800 so that we
8 can consolidate two schools into one and help make sure
9 that those students have plenty of resources.

10 This is a part of what you see up here on the
11 board. I also want to acknowledge there are two pre-K
12 classes here at Barton Chapel that will be reassigned
13 to neighboring elementary schools. And we don't know
14 which one those will be yet. That's something we'll
15 work with right from the start to decide. But if you
16 apply for pre-K -- or if you do apply for pre-K when it
17 opens in March, you'll see that Barton Chapel is not
18 listed as one of the choices to apply to.

19 All right. Let's talk about a little bit over
20 here (indicating), the new Barton Chapel. So the new
21 school here at the Barton Chapel site will open in the
22 fall of 2028, assuming the weather is good and assuming
23 there are no delays. It will open right on time in the
24 fall of 2028. And all of the students together -- the
25 ones who have been housed together, who have been

1 becoming friends for two years over at Glenn Hills, all
2 of them will come over together to this new site. And
3 at that point, we will close Glenn Hills Elementary
4 School. Both Barton Chapel and Glenn Hills Elementary
5 feed today directly into Glenn Hills Middle, Glenn
6 Hills High, so there will be no change in their feeder
7 pattern. But what it does do is it allows the students
8 currently at Barton Chapel and the students currently
9 over at Glenn Hills Elementary to come together and
10 have all of those resources.

11 So this shows you that there are 700 of them.
12 When you put them all together, that's 700 students.
13 And I know you're like, exactly? I double-checked that
14 myself. It's 399 going from Barton Chapel, 301 at
15 Glenn Hills Elementary for 700. So when those 700
16 students come back into an 800-capacity building,
17 they'll be at an 87% utilization. That's a great
18 number for facilities, and it's a great number to help
19 make sure that they get all of those resources, like we
20 shared with you earlier.

21 What will it look like? So, this is the concept
22 design. I do want to say, don't hold me to it. You
23 said there would be a (unintelligible) strike, and that
24 might change. Okay? But a part of what we're building
25 here is a \$47.5 million investment that was voted on in

1 our last SPLOST. That's already approved. So, the new
2 facility would open in the '28-'29 school year. And
3 that's a part of it (indicating). You can see what it
4 would look like from the front.

5 Here (indicating) are some designs of the floor
6 plan. This is what I would encourage you to do. This
7 is what we call a site-adapt plan. What does that
8 mean? That means we've built this school three times
9 now. We built it the first time over at Wheeler Road.
10 We took all the things that didn't work, all the things
11 we wished we had, and then we built Richmond Hill
12 Elementary School. So, we are using the same design
13 but making it better each time. This is now going to
14 be the third time. So we really feel like we've lived
15 in this space, and we know what we need. So if you are
16 curious, you can go by Richmond Hill Elementary School
17 with an appointment, and you can see that facility and
18 see basically what's going to be built here at this
19 site.

20 The next thing I want to show you is an aerial
21 view. We are going to have to change the orientation.
22 Currently, Barton Chapel is, kind of, sitting this way
23 (indicating). We are going to change that angle, so
24 the angle and the footprint of the school will change
25 in order to be able to have everything that you see

1 here (indicating).

2 We are very excited about this plan. I know it's
3 going to be a state-of-the-art facility. I am
4 confident because we have built it now a couple of
5 times. We know what this site looks like, and it's
6 going to offer a lot of opportunities for our students.
7 That big open area in the middle is the nice
8 playground. So we are excited about all of those
9 different pieces. Keep in mind that during
10 construction, we have to sometimes make some small
11 changes, but this is, essentially, what it's going to
12 look like here at this school.

13 All right. What does it look like during
14 construction? The students from Barton Chapel will
15 transition to Glenn Hills Elementary. I think I lost
16 some words at the end of the picture. That's all
17 right. Additional staff resources would be provided
18 for the students that are going over there. What does
19 that mean? Now, over at Glenn Hills Elementary, they
20 have more students. Maybe they need an additional MTSS
21 facilitator. Maybe they need a different social
22 worker. So, what resources do they need? We'll be
23 working with them to help make sure they have that.
24 And then I mentioned to you about the 10 additional
25 portables being added for their enrollment.

1 What does this mean for faculty and staff
2 transition? First of all, let me tell you, we always
3 have a job for people at Richmond County. In fact, if
4 any of you are looking for a job, please see HR. We
5 are always looking for great quality people to work
6 with us here at Richmond County School System. So, no
7 one will be without a job. No one is without a job.
8 Anytime we do a merger, we try to get as many of the
9 staff and the faculty to go with the students to where
10 they are going. It's to our advantage, our students'
11 advantage, and our families' advantage. For the Barton
12 Chapel folks who want to go over to Glenn Hills, we
13 want to try to keep them together. That way, when the
14 families walk in, they say, Oh, I know this so-and-so.
15 I'm familiar with this person.

16 Our human resources team would work with every
17 single staff member here at Barton Chapel to help make
18 sure they know where they are going to go for the
19 upcoming school year if the board approves our plan.
20 In fact, we actually have our first staff meetings like
21 one to two days after the board votes so that we can
22 start to let our staff know exactly what to expect.

23 So after construction. After construction,
24 approximately, school year 2028, the consolidated Glenn
25 Hills Elementary staff and students would move

1 completely right out of Glenn Hills Elementary into
2 this space (indicating). That's how that works.
3 Because they've been becoming a family together for the
4 previous two years.

5 What does it look like on a timeline for
6 facilities? Well, demolition would start here this
7 summer. And we say immediately after the end of the
8 semester. As soon as our teachers box everything up,
9 they will know already where they're going. Our
10 maintenance facilities team will take it to their new
11 school. So we'll move them out and get ready to get
12 started with construction.

13 There would be a naming committee that is formed
14 because this would be a new consolidated school. If
15 you think with me for a minute on the example I used
16 with Langford-Tutt, at the time the students from
17 Langford went to Tutt. And then we had a naming
18 committee. The naming committee selected the name
19 Langford-Tutt. So when they move into their new
20 building along Walton Way, they're moving into
21 Langford-Tutt.

22 That same kind of process will happen here. I
23 don't know what name we'll pick. That's the job of the
24 naming committee. And I'll talk a little bit about how
25 that works. But our target is to move our staff in the

1 summer of 2028, and the target is to occupy this school
2 with the '28-'29 school year.

3 This is a little bit about the process for a
4 naming committee. So this is something that we do any
5 time we have a new school or a new program. We come
6 together, and we bring in folks from staff members,
7 from the district office, we have some board members if
8 it's their district, we have school staff, we have
9 parents, and we have community members. There is
10 always a local historian available. And we have alumni
11 who have close ties to the school. All of those people
12 come together, and we have a minimum of two meetings.
13 At the first meeting, it's usually our historian
14 telling us all about the area. And then we start
15 brainstorming. What's a good mascot? What are the
16 colors? What would be a good name? We walk away, and
17 we think about it. We ponder. And then we come back
18 together for that second meeting, and our committee
19 makes a recommendation to our board.

20 So far, we've done a good job. Our board has
21 approved the recommendations that we have brought
22 forward. And so that would be presented back to the
23 board by the cluster superintendent.

24 As soon as they vote, we try to get this work
25 going because we're picking out colors. You're picking

1 out mascots. It's all the different things that are
2 going to help make the school very special. So that
3 naming committee would get started pretty quickly.

4 All right. At this point, I'm going to transition
5 from talking about Barton Chapel and Glen Hills to talk
6 for just a moment about the next steps with our
7 Langford-Tutt transition.

8 So for the fall of 2026, at the end of this school
9 year, Tutt Middle School will close as a middle school.
10 So Tutt right now is called Tutt. It will close as a
11 middle school. And then the consolidated school, which
12 has already been named Langford-Tutt. That went
13 through a naming committee and, with board approval, is
14 going to open for the school year '26 through '27.

15 Unfortunately, construction is not quite done yet.
16 So they're going to remain there at the Tutt Middle
17 School facility for one more semester while we finish
18 construction. We estimate that we want to move in the
19 staff right before they go home for Christmas and that
20 when the children come back from the break, they start
21 school at the new facility. This is going to be voted
22 on. This has already, kind of, been approved. And
23 what the board still has to do, though, is vote to
24 officially close Tutt Middle School as a school so that
25 we can transition that site.

1 If you think back to what I was sharing with
2 Barton Chapel and Glenn Hills, it would be a very
3 similar thing. Because when they move out of Glenn
4 Hills Elementary, you have to officially close Glenn
5 Hills Elementary as a school so that they can come back
6 into the new space. That one is pretty
7 straightforward.

8 All right. I want to talk a bit about
9 Jenkins-White. So the rest of this presentation is
10 going to be information you've heard before as it
11 relates to Jenkins-White and Murphey. When we get to
12 the Josey section, we have new information. Some of
13 you may have already read that in our open letter to
14 the community, but we want to make sure we go over it
15 with all of you tonight.

16 So at Jenkins-White. At Jenkins-White, it will
17 close at the end of this school year. And each of
18 those students will be reassigned to a new elementary
19 school in their neighborhood or in their neighboring
20 area. We're going several places. Some of the
21 students will leave Jenkins-White and go to Hains
22 Elementary. Some will go to Wilkinson Gardens. And
23 you'll notice some are going from Jenkins-White to
24 Lamar-Milledge, and some are going to Hornsby
25 Elementary. So they will be reassigned to their new

1 school.

2 These are all of the NPUs (indicating). And these
3 are all of the numbers up here (indicating) that you
4 will be able to see on the board if you would like to
5 be able to go back and take a look at that.

6 But what does this mean for students? So our
7 students will receive a letter to their parents in
8 March notifying them of their zone change. In that
9 letter, they are invited to come to an open house at
10 the new school so they can go to one of those areas to
11 see their new school and meet their new teachers and
12 their principal.

13 Jenkins-White would close at the end of this
14 school year, and the students will begin attending
15 their new zone school in August of 2026.

16 What does it mean for the staff? Very similar to
17 what you heard me say about Barton Chapel. We have a
18 job for everyone, and we'll keep you in that
19 commercial, right? We are glad to hire. We will keep
20 great staff. But our students are going to try to
21 follow those -- our staff follows the students. So we
22 get as many of them as possible over to Wilkinson
23 Gardens, to Lamar-Milledge, and to Hornsby. And that's
24 the same thing for our staff and our faculty.

25 Some staff members have asked, Well, what if I

1 didn't want to go there? I want to apply to the school
2 next to my house. Of course, you are welcome to do
3 that during the transfer process. All of these
4 employees have the opportunity to participate in our
5 transfer process. We just try to prioritize in helping
6 to make sure that we can get as many of the previous
7 staff to go with the students as possible.

8 All right. Let's talk a little bit about Murphey
9 Middle School. We are proposing to close Murphey
10 Middle School. Murphey would be divided and would go
11 to three different middle schools. Some would go -- if
12 they live in the Bayvale theater attendance zone, they
13 would go to Langford-Tutt. If they lived in the
14 Wheeler Road area, they will go to Richmond Hill Middle
15 School. If they live in the Wilkinson Gardens area,
16 they will go to Hornsby Middle School. Here is each of
17 those NPUs. And you can, kind of, see it on the map,
18 where everybody is going in different directions.

19 What does this look like for students? The same
20 thing. They're going to get a letter this March,
21 letting them know their new zone school. The students
22 will be invited to come attend an open house at their
23 new middle school. Murphey will close at the end of
24 this school year, and students would begin attending
25 their new zone school in August of '26.

1 The staff. We have a job for everyone. Students
2 would predominantly -- our staff would follow our
3 students. So we try to get as many of them as possible
4 at Hornsby Middle School, Langford-Tutt Middle School,
5 and Richmond Hill Middle School.

6 I want to give you, kind of, an example. When we
7 dissolved the attendance zone there at Langford, they
8 had two APs. One went with the students to Belair, and
9 one went with the students to Tutt. That is the same
10 thing we are trying to do here. How can we get APs and
11 the counselors placed with these students at their new
12 schools so that families see familiar faces when they
13 get there?

14 That was a lot of NPUs. So this is a QR code.
15 It's available on our website, but what you can do when
16 you go here (indicating) -- because it allows a family
17 to type in their address, and it will tell you what is
18 your proposed elementary school, what's your proposed
19 middle school, what's your proposed high school. So
20 this QR code is what we call a student locator
21 dashboard.

22 Let's talk a little bit about T.W. Josey. I want
23 you to see that date at the very top. These are
24 proposed changes for 2029 through 2030 school year. So
25 I'm going to go over what some of these changes are and

1 then talk about what it looks like between now and
2 then. So the feeder -- the attendance zone for Thomas
3 Walter Josey High School would go away at the end of
4 the '28 through '29 school year. And those students
5 would be rezoned to a different high school. So
6 they'll follow the same place Murphey just went.

7 So if you live in the Bayvale, you would go to
8 Langford-Tutt Middle and ARC. If you live in the
9 Wheeler Road, you would go to Richmond Hill Middle or
10 Butler. And if you live in Wilkinson Gardens, you
11 would go to Hornsby Middle and Laney. So those are the
12 different areas where we have people being relocated.

13 So what does that look like in these three years?
14 So I don't want to assume people know. '26 through
15 '27, '27 through '28, and '28 through '29. Those three
16 years, our Josey family would stay together whole. The
17 staff and the 9th through 12th students. So they're
18 going to go to school in what we call the swing space.
19 They're going to go to school in the Murphey Building.
20 And, yes, it can hold all of them. It's not going to
21 be -- they're not going to have all of the luxuries
22 they had in their previous site, but we're going to
23 keep them together by request. So they stay together.
24 That means all sports, and all of the extracurricular
25 activities will continue while the students are housed

1 in the Murphey Building.

2 The students will continue to graduate with a
3 T.W. Josey Comprehensive High School Diploma at least
4 through '28 through '29. Because all they are doing --
5 and I don't want to downplay it, but all they are doing
6 is going to school in a different building. But it's
7 business as usual, otherwise.

8 The students would receive their letter in the
9 spring of 2029 notifying them of their new zone, which
10 would either be ARC, Butler, or Laney. And then the
11 students would attend their new zone high school
12 beginning in August of 2029. Unless -- unless they
13 choose the new school, which I'll talk about.

14 What does this mean for our staff? So, again, we
15 have a continued need for all faculty and staff. The
16 staff would remain with the Josey students in the
17 Murphey Building for those three years. The staff
18 would be offered positions within the school system for
19 the '29 through '30 school year. Any staff member who
20 would wish to interview for the new College and Career
21 Academy at the T.W. Josey site, we at least are
22 guaranteeing you an interview. That's what we can
23 guarantee. We can guarantee that you get an interview
24 to come have a seat at the table if you are a staff
25 member at Josey, and you want to apply to be at the

1 College and Career Academy.

2 So this is the part I get excited, and I think our
3 board members said they could hear my excitement.
4 We've been planning and working with this new College
5 and Career Academy concept for several years now. So
6 what I'm going to do is spend some time just telling
7 you about what is this thing that we're building.
8 Everybody is talking about it. What is it? Well, it
9 is a lot of concept right now, but I at least want to
10 share what those concepts are.

11 This is what we call a concept drawing. But we
12 have \$43 million that have already been set aside for
13 this investment. That was already approved by our
14 voters in our SPLOST. We don't need to collect any
15 additional money. We're looking at opening this in '29
16 through '30. It would include the current Marion
17 Barnes Career Center. And I want to show you some
18 thoughts we had on the arch and its preservation, and
19 also talk about, kind of, what we're doing with the
20 current competition gym. So if you'll allow me, I'm
21 going to walk through this graph.

22 So this is the current Murphey building
23 (indicating). This is where all of the core classes
24 would happen. ELA, math, science, social studies, and
25 world language. But we need to do a few changes to the

1 Murphey building. You may not be aware, but they have
2 what's called a satellite media center, which means
3 they have a tiny media center. Well, this school needs
4 a full-size media center, so we have to build that. We
5 need to build a space for the administration. So we're
6 going to go in and we will do that.

7 Currently, there is a gym here for Murphey. That
8 will become the Josey P.E. Gym. That's where --
9 currently, some of our students -- we talked about in
10 one of the meetings, what would you do to honor Tebow?
11 We have his name on the gym -- on the old gym. This
12 could easily be named after. We could do that here.
13 It doesn't currently have any naming. Those are some
14 things we could consider.

15 The performance gym, we're not planning to do
16 anything to it. Josey has a huge performance gym. You
17 leave it. Somebody started a rumor saying we're going
18 to tear up the football field. No, it's just the
19 opposite. We are, actually, working on the turf fields
20 for the area. So, the baseball fields, all of the
21 athletic facilities stay. All of them stay. They're
22 already there, and they're in good condition.

23 The cafeteria is currently shared by both Murphey
24 and Josey. And we need to do some cosmetic work in
25 there, and so that is going to be done.

1 Now, here is where the bulk of the work would
2 happen. The current Josey building minus the Marion
3 Barnes Career Center will be torn down. And what comes
4 back in its place is a state-of-the-art CTAE facility
5 to rival anything in the state. We've been studying
6 them and looking at them all across the state and the
7 whole southeast.

8 So, in 2023 and '24, we also had a group come in,
9 and it's the Carl Vinson Institute out of the
10 University of Georgia. They studied our economy. They
11 met with focus groups, and they gave us a prediction.
12 These are the careers that the Augusta area is going to
13 need. They look at how many jobs are available. They
14 look at how many people are applying for those jobs and
15 then how many remain open. It's really a basic
16 workforce development proposal that they gave us.

17 And so they gave us a list of what they call
18 high-demand career pathways. That means these are the
19 jobs that we're going to need here in our Augusta area,
20 and they pay enough that families won't have to work
21 two jobs. So Those are the two parts of the
22 consideration that we looked at. These are the ones
23 they recommended, and so we've mapped it out here
24 (indicating). But, remember, this is a concept, so
25 don't hold anyone to it. You said that health science

1 was going to be right here. All right. We said health
2 science is one of the pathways we want to add there.
3 Yes, we know we have A.R. Johnson. But guess what, we
4 need more people in the health profession? If you've
5 ever tried to get somebody to come do in-home health
6 care, they're hard to find. Like, there is a lot out
7 there. And so we want to have phlebotomy. We want to
8 have a CNA program. We want to have a health science
9 pathway right here at Josey, that whole cluster.

10 Then this one (indicating) is energy. It's kind
11 of hard for you to be able to see it there. The energy
12 pathway -- part of what they told us is that there is
13 growing -- you know, we have things like Plant Vogtle.
14 We have a lot of energy around us, and so they said we
15 need to have more students who are trained and are
16 ready to enter the field in the energy pathway.

17 This next one (indicating) is an agriculture
18 cluster. I'm going to tell you, at first I said,
19 Agriculture? Are you sure? And they said, yes, you do
20 not have enough in urban ag. And when they started
21 telling us, I started learning all about the things
22 that urban agriculture offers in hydroponics. Part of
23 what we've been able to do also is partner with the
24 Tiger Woods Learning Lab. You guys may have heard that
25 they are going to be opening in 2028. But we want to

1 partner with them and Augusta Tech over at the Patch,
2 if you may be familiar, but they're looking at
3 landscape management and how we can work together. So
4 These are some of the things that we'll be doing in
5 agriculture.

6 This one (indicating) is the IT cluster.
7 Currently, we are busing students over to the RCTCM to
8 participate in what we call the Cyber Academy. And so
9 we are looking at how can we incorporate the Cyber
10 Academy here in this facility. IT is just not going
11 away. I mean, I bet almost every one of us use some
12 kind of technology, maybe even AI today. So, how do we
13 get our students ready?

14 This piece here (indicating) is an early childhood
15 education. One of my friends was talking to me before
16 we started, and said, We need to bring back what we
17 used to have, a daycare site here at the school.
18 That's what we want to do. We want to be able to
19 have -- some of you might remember when schools used to
20 have those early childhood programs. Do y'all
21 remember? I was at Josey with Cheryl (unintelligible)
22 when we had the program. Okay. So, some of you might
23 remember that. We want to be able to bring some of
24 that back.

25 Within every one of these spaces (indicating),

1 what we're trying to do is create opportunities for
2 students to learn in the classroom and then apply it in
3 a lab setting.

4 So that takes us to this next one, which is
5 Culinary Arts. I'm really going to rely on you to come
6 help me with this. We want to open up a Culinary Arts
7 pathway that has back of the house, and front of the
8 house. What does that mean? They learn how to run the
9 kitchen and how to run a restaurant. But then this
10 front side (indicating) that's facing 15th Street will
11 be a restaurant. We have a vision that it will be open
12 every Friday for the public to come by -- please come,
13 and eat and let our students run a restaurant that day.

14 Then you'll notice also a CTAE administrative
15 office. That is because this part of the building
16 (indicating) will also be open to any student in the
17 county between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. It's almost like a
18 night school class. Any student from any high school
19 can come over to the facility and take some of these
20 CTAE classes.

21 This kind of beige color area (indicating) is
22 currently the Marion Barnes Career Center. And, so,
23 the high demand career pathways that they identified
24 was keeping welding, keeping carpentry, and keeping the
25 HVAC. But they said, you're missing something. They

1 need to be able to build the thing. So you'll see this
2 other little beige pad (indicating) where they'll build
3 a small home. So they'll actually build a home, and
4 then we will relocate that to another site whether we
5 work through Habitat for Humanity or Tiny Homes. We
6 have a lot of partners who raised their hand to try to
7 join us on that.

8 We also want to make sure that we do keep
9 barbering and cosmetology. Each of these pathways, I
10 want to let you know, has an entrepreneurship framework
11 while we work on this. So it's not just learning to be
12 a nail-tech, but how do you own your own business? How
13 do we help make sure that you don't need two jobs?

14 And then also there is a heavy machinery cluster.
15 So what this looks like -- I got into the simulator.
16 So there is a giant simulator machine, and you get in
17 it, and you learn how to drive a forklift. And you get
18 your hours, actually, on the simulator. And once you
19 get your certain number of hours, you get your
20 license -- you get your credential. One of them is a
21 backhoe. I accidentally tipped it over, so I got
22 kicked out. But the kids get to go in, and they get to
23 learn how to do these heavy machinery, so that they can
24 go straight to work.

25 What is happening here (indicating) in this whole

1 facility is that there is a desire for community jobs
2 and community business partners to partner with the
3 school system.

4 So, design-wise, we have little storefronts --
5 kind of a little fake storefronts, whenever you're in
6 the health science area. We have an idea -- what does
7 it look like if right here on the wall, they see Thomas
8 Walter Josey, and a quick history of who he was and how
9 he contributed to the health science field.

10 We have a vision that whenever I take a look at
11 the IT cluster, that there is a storefront that lets
12 you know, kind of, in the IT area. Maybe we'll
13 highlight Ben Chestnut. I don't know if you know him.
14 He graduated from Hephzibah High School and started a
15 billion dollar business called Chimpmail [sic], right
16 in IT, right?

17 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Mailchimp.

18 DR. COBB: MailChimp. Thank you. All right. And
19 so, how do we take -- and we would rely on our
20 community? How do we find those other legends?

21 Maybe we can honor Larry Jones and Universal
22 Plumbing. But in the design, in the pictures, or in
23 the names, so kids can see what they can be. And so,
24 that's something we really want the community to help
25 us with as we build.

1 This big open area here (indicating) is what we
2 call, like, the hall, the foyer, or the welcome.
3 Because we also want to bring our eighth-graders over
4 for field trips. So, CTAE would be working with each
5 of our students so that when they come in -- you'll see
6 we just, kind of, temporarily said, this is where maybe
7 the Josey Arch would go (indicating). But that's
8 still, obviously, very much up for where the group
9 decides we want it.

10 But they come in for these field trips where we
11 talk about your careers. We talk about your new
12 science test that you took. What careers did they say
13 would be great for you? We learn about it. We do all
14 kinds of great hands-on activity. And then the kids
15 are going to go into these classrooms and do hands-on
16 activity.

17 One of two things will happen that day. They
18 might say, Hey, look, I love this place. I want to
19 come to school here. Score. Or they might say, This
20 is something I know I don't want to do. Right? This
21 is not the career for me. Which I always say is just
22 as an invaluable opportunity for those eighth grade
23 students.

24 So when you look at this next slide (indicating),
25 those are all of the career pathways that I just talked

1 about. They're just listed out for you. And then
2 also, we want to let you know that the students that
3 come to school here, some will choose to do a
4 traditional 23 credit high school diploma. That's kind
5 of what we do at all of our high schools. But other
6 students are going to choose the accelerated career
7 diploma. Some will decide they want to get an
8 associate's degree because we want to have all of that
9 built into the programming as well.

10 And something I'm not sure if our community fully
11 understands is what does it mean to have an accelerated
12 career diploma? So the way that it works is it allows
13 our 10th through 11th grade students to go ahead and
14 earn their high school diploma while also earning their
15 technical college credential. So the post-secondary,
16 they've got to do one of these things. They've got to
17 either get an associate's of applied science degree or
18 they get a technical college diploma or they get two
19 technical certificates of credits, what we call TCCs,
20 in a specific approved pathway, like HVAC or welding.
21 So they're getting that and nine high school credits.
22 That's two English, two math, two science, two social
23 studies, one health, and PE. And they've got to take
24 any EOCs that go with them.

25 So that is something the state of Georgia has been

1 offering. Other school systems have been doing this
2 way ahead of us. We haven't been doing it. We haven't
3 had a facility. We haven't had the space and the way
4 to make it work. So this is going to require a tight
5 partnership with our technical schools. We've been in
6 communication with them once this is approved. But
7 some students might choose to graduate early. But to
8 be honest, that's not really our goal. Our goal is
9 that at the end of your four years, you don't just
10 graduate with a high school diploma, you graduate with
11 credentials ready for you to either go on to go to
12 college, if that's what you choose to do, or go
13 straight to work in the workforce.

14 So we think that what makes this, kind of,
15 special -- well, it's very community inclusive, like
16 the Early Learning Center, like working in the
17 restaurant and having the community come in and eat
18 here with us.

19 It's going to have athletics and clubs. It's
20 still a school. If you have not noticed in our vision
21 and mission, we talk about our beliefs that we think it
22 is important for every student to have an educational
23 experience. Well, guess what, that experience means
24 you get to participate in activities? We have some
25 examples. We had a football team this past fall that

1 played with their hearts out, with 22 people. If you
2 know football, that means you played offense and
3 defense, and you did not rest. You had an increased
4 opportunity for injury.

5 We had a high school that did not have enough
6 young ladies to have a softball team. They had to
7 forfeit the whole season because we couldn't make a
8 team.

9 I have a ninth grader who wanted to play soccer,
10 JV. We don't have enough kids to have a JV sport for
11 soccer. Right? So what happens is that we want our
12 students to have these experiences, and we want to
13 offer that.

14 The alumni group, when I met with them previously,
15 kind of said, Can you promise me you're going to have
16 this sport? I can't. I can promise you you're going
17 to have a facility. I can promise you we'll have a
18 team, if we have the students to have the team. So if
19 we have students here that want to play whatever that
20 sport is. We already have all the facilities. We want
21 to be able to offer that.

22 It is going to be a CTAB school, so they have to
23 participate in their CTSO. They have to participate in
24 FBLA, or whatever their group is. Or if it's DECA.
25 Whatever it is. You're coming here to be a part of

1 CTAB. It is, kind of, like you're going to Davidson,
2 but not to be in any kind of arts. This is going to be
3 a specialty program around CTAB.

4 We do want to make sure -- like I said, we used
5 the Carl Vinson Institute. This is additional
6 opportunities for community industry partnership. And
7 we do want to make sure you know transportation would
8 be provided. This would be considered specialized
9 programming. So think magnet schools. Think the IB
10 program at ARC. Think the Advanced Placement Program
11 at Laney. Transportation is still provided to these
12 students using that same concept.

13 The question we got a few times was, who is this
14 building really for? It's for our kids. It's for our
15 kids. This is going to open in 2029 for interested 9th
16 through 12th graders. So it will be interested 9th
17 through 12th. It will be a choice program. That means
18 you don't take a test. You go there because you want
19 to. Now, once you get here, you need to come, you need
20 to have good attendance, and you need to be paid.
21 Like, all of those things because you may have somebody
22 on the wait list trying to get in. Right?

23 Our programming would incorporate students from
24 the Performance Learning Center our Learn from Home
25 program, the current Marion Barnes Center, and the

1 current Cyber Academy. And currently we have 431
2 students that are traveling to be in these programs.
3 We want to pull all of that programming design into
4 this facility. You know as well as I do, all 431
5 aren't going to want to come. Some will say, No
6 thanks, I want to do something different. But even if
7 the majority come, that's a big chunk. Any current
8 T.W. Josey student who would like to participate. Sign
9 up. But we want you to come as well.

10 And then the comprehensive high school students
11 who want to come in the evenings from 4:00 until 6:00
12 p.m. We kind of talked about that as well.

13 So what happens there at that site? This
14 demolition to the current T.W. Josey facility would
15 begin this summer. Construction would go through the
16 summer of 2029. We would have a naming committee
17 formed to select the name, the mascot, and the color.
18 The target move-in is the summer of 2029. The target
19 occupancy will be starting the '29 through '30 school
20 year. That's when we would want to launch and be ready
21 to go.

22 This is the same slide (indicating) that I shared
23 with you about the naming committee. It's the same
24 process we used. We certainly would want to have our
25 alumni as a part of this, as well as any other

1 community members who are interested in workforce
2 development to become a part of this. We would meet
3 two times and make a recommendation to our board. Our
4 goal, it's only to our benefit, is that as soon as the
5 board approves this, if they do, we want to get the
6 naming committee started right away. Let's pick the
7 mascot, and the colors.

8 And I want to tell you -- I'm telling you this,
9 our board members have -- they have never talked about
10 any name other than T.W. Josey being represented in
11 there. There is no desire to take away that legacy or
12 their history. But we want to follow our process, and
13 we want to have that recommendation come from our
14 naming committee.

15 So, I'm going to back up for just a second and
16 talk about the naming committee of Josey because these
17 are some questions that I've gotten a lot. You didn't
18 do that to Laney when you moved them over to Tubman.
19 Well, I'll be honest with you, it's a totally different
20 scenario. Laney's attendance zone remained completely
21 intact. The Laney attendance zone was the same. All
22 they did was move into Tubman while we tore down their
23 building and put them back in there with the exact same
24 programming they had.

25 We did the same thing at Garrett Elementary.

1 Garrett Elementary left and went over to the Forest
2 Hills building, and they were in there while we tore
3 down their school, and we moved them back. What I just
4 shared with you, this is not the same thing. The
5 College and the Career Academy has a district-wide
6 attendance zone. That means anybody in the district
7 can choose to come here. The programming is different.
8 It's not the same thing. So, it is a new school. But
9 we've set a precedent. We used to have A.R. Johnson
10 Junior High School. Now we have A.R. Johnson Health
11 Science and Engineering Magnet.

12 I feel in our community, we can name some others.
13 We've, sort of, set a precedent. We can honor the name
14 of the person while also making sure that the name of
15 the school reflects what it is that the school is
16 doing, so that we can help market and make sure we get
17 students into the space.

18 All right. I'm going to walk you through three
19 quick scenarios now that I've told you all about it.
20 In our proposed plan, what does that look like? So,
21 I'm going to say scenario number one. You are a
22 sixth-grade student, and you live in the Wheeler Road
23 attendance zone, and you attend Murphey today. So, for
24 this year, you go to Murphey Middle School. Next year,
25 for seventh grade, you're going to go to Richmond Hill

1 Middle School. For eighth grade, Richmond Hill Middle
2 School. For ninth grade, you're going to go back over
3 to the Murphey campus where you will attend Josey as a
4 ninth grader. As a tenth grader, you would be zoned
5 for Butler High School, or you can choose to apply for
6 the College and Career Academy. In our original
7 proposal, we went ahead and moved all the students out.
8 We said, let's just go ahead and get them going to
9 their current school because we felt that there would
10 be a student who said, I'm going to make new friends at
11 Richmond Hill, seventh grade and eighth grade, and I'm
12 going to go back over to Josey, then I'm going to come
13 back to Butler for tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade.
14 It is very possible that this child might say, Hey mama
15 can I get a zone exemption and just go ahead and go to
16 Butler in my ninth grade year because I want to go to
17 Butler. They might.

18 But what about, and I think that's what really
19 came from our community, what about the student who
20 wants to go to Josey, who wants to stay there? And how
21 do we keep from accidentally gutting, kind of, that
22 Josey core to keep them here? And that's why we've
23 changed our proposal. That's why we've made these
24 changes. So that's a scenario for a student that lives
25 in Wheeler.

1 But the same thing will be true for Bayvale. They
2 would go to Murphey, Langford-Tutt, Langford-Tutt, come
3 back to ninth grade into Josey at the Murphey campus,
4 and then either go to the College and Career or go to
5 ARC, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth.

6 The same thing. A sixth grade student. But you
7 live in the Wilkinson Gardens area. Murphey this year,
8 Hornsby, Hornsby, Josey at the Murphey site, and then
9 Laney High School or the College and Career Academy.
10 Our hope is that this change does preserve some of that
11 community and keeps it from being empty for a couple of
12 years.

13 We were at a hearing and someone said -- and I
14 apologize, I don't remember who. Once they go they're
15 not coming back. He might be right. And the intent of
16 this is not to take people out of the Josey community.
17 We want to have them there. We want them to be a part
18 of this if that's what they want to do.

19 So for three years, Richmond Hill Middle will be
20 what we call a split theater. For three years some
21 students will leave there and go to Butler, some will
22 go back to Josey. Hornsby will be a split theater.
23 Some will go to Laney, and some will go back to Josey.
24 Langford-Tutt is already split. So some are going to
25 Westside, some are going to ARC, and some will go to

1 Josey for those three years.

2 Again, if you want to plug in your address to see
3 which high school you would be zoned for in '29 through
4 '30, you can click on this dashboard address locator.
5 It will take you to where your school is.

6 We are in our public hearing stage. Our board is
7 in review. Our board takes a vote on February 23rd.
8 We begin the next day implementing to make all of this
9 happen to ensure a smooth start to the school year.
10 Some people are like, well, I feel like we're rushing
11 this. If we don't get a vote in soon, we don't have
12 enough time to help make sure everybody is rerouted and
13 books and everything is in place. So we want to make
14 sure we are committed to quality.

15 You'll see up here (indicating) it says High
16 School Task Force. I left it on the slide because I
17 want to tell you that we're purposely pausing that
18 work. We are not going to move forward with the High
19 School Task Force at this time. I'm going to tell you
20 why. Because it's too soon. Let's wait until we get
21 the new College and Career Academy open. Let's see
22 where the students are. Let's see where they land,
23 where they come from. Then at that point, we'll have a
24 task force come back together and take a look at, do we
25 need to close a different -- another high school

1 somewhere in our district? But until then, it's really
2 a premature decision. So we are going to wait. But
3 we'll come back together in a couple years when this is
4 open and we know who is going where, and we'll make
5 some recommendations at that time. If the truth be
6 told, we still need to, probably, close a high school.
7 We have a lot of high schools with empty seats.

8 This one (indicating) holds all of our programs
9 together into one place and offers our students an
10 opportunity to do something they haven't had. It's my
11 hope that this is so successful that we can replicate
12 this in another part of the county.

13 I'm going to stop talking and then hand it over to
14 our moderator, Mr. Myers, who will quickly go back over
15 the guidelines because I know some of you did come in
16 after this point, and we will hear your input. I want
17 to remind everyone that my staff and I will be here
18 afterward with all of these different blue signs around
19 the room to take any specific questions.

20 You can use that QR code to type your question,
21 and I also encourage you to look at the Q&A before you
22 type yours because your question may already be in
23 there. Mr. Myers.

24 MR. MYERS: Thank you, Dr. Cobb. And thank you
25 for that presentation. That was a wonderful, bold

1 vision for our students. I would like to extend a
2 sincere thank you, again, to all of the board members
3 for being here and listening to the community.

4 We are now moving to our community listening
5 session. This is your time to share your thoughts,
6 your ideas, or your feedback on the plans presented
7 tonight.

8 Please remember this is a listening session. We
9 ask everyone to remain respectful and keep questions --
10 and keep questions referenced to the proposed plan.
11 Personal attacks, yelling, threats, or any type of
12 accusations will result in you being asked to stop
13 speaking and potentially leave the meeting. We are
14 here to maintain a productive environment for everyone.
15 (Unintelligible) everyone's time. We are following our
16 regular community comedy protocol. You must have
17 filled out one of those comment cards at the table. If
18 you haven't, please see a staff member, and they'll
19 take care of that.

20 We ask that you also keep your comments to three
21 minutes. We have many neighbors who will want to be
22 heard, and we want to ensure everyone gets their turn.

23 Our leadership, they are taking cards, if anyone
24 needs a card still. Our leadership is here tonight in
25 a listening mode again. We are recording all comments

1 for an official record to ensure the board has your
2 full perspective before the final vote and final action
3 will be taken on February 23rd. Please make your
4 comment, and then have a seat. We'll respond to
5 questions, if necessary, at the very end of the
6 session, and we will have several members of our
7 leadership team here to stay around and speak directly
8 to you.

9 If you have a long document, or a long list of
10 things that you would like to take note, please see one
11 of us, and we will take that into account, and we will
12 read those in full, and someone will get back to you to
13 respond.

14 We're ready to begin this part. We are going to
15 take up cards. Once again, the line will come
16 around -- listen to this part. The line will come on
17 this side (indicating), and the line will begin over
18 there where Mr. Allen is. If you would like to make a
19 comment, the line will be over where Mr. Allen is, and
20 someone will call you -- or I will call you up to the
21 microphone to speak.

22 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Can you make sure that you take
23 you card --

24 MR. MYERS: Take your card with you over to the
25 line. I'm just using the card to call you up. Take

1 your card over with you to the line. Thank you so
2 much.

3 Once again, real quick, a couple of things. One
4 of them is make sure when you come up to the mic, you
5 state your name and your zip code, and we also want to
6 make sure that anyone that has any questions for Barton
7 Chapel they have the opportunity to come and speak
8 first.

9 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: And Glenn Hills.

10 MR. MYERS: Excuse me. Barton Chapel Elementary
11 and Glenn Hills. If you have any comments or
12 questions, we ask that you come up and speak first.

13 MR. HANKERSON: Good afternoon. My name is Bobby
14 Hankerson. I'm a lifetime citizen of Augusta, Richmond
15 County. I live at 30906. I have property in both
16 District 3 -- District 4 and District 5, Barton Village
17 and Breeze Hill. I moved in this area around 19 -- the
18 late 60s. I bought my first house in Barton Village.
19 We created a program called Weed and Seed. The weed,
20 out all the negative activity. The drugs and all of
21 that. And seed in positive things.

22 I would like to commend the Board of Education and
23 Dr. Cobb for coming and educating us, the community.
24 Educating us on what's going on. Communication --
25 negative communication, or no communication at all, is

1 poison to the community. I see we have neighbors that
2 were moved here from Barton Village. I see some of
3 them here. We fought hard for this area. And I'm so
4 glad that the stepchild, Barton Chapel Road is now
5 coming to the top in 2028. I look forward for that.
6 For 2028.

7 I just wanted to say this, that I'm positive about
8 the change, and it's very good. The naming committee,
9 I just want to say this to the naming committee. When
10 we formed Weed and Seed with Augusta, Richmond County
11 Law Enforcement, working hand in hand together, we
12 voted not to change the name of Barton Village. They
13 changed the public housing down on 15th Street and all
14 of that. We said, when people come back that used to
15 live here, our family, they'll see Barton Village is
16 not the place that it -- with the negative name that it
17 has. So it's still Barton Village. So in the naming
18 committee, I'd like for you to consider Barton Chapel
19 Hills, Barton Chapel Road, Barton Village, and the new
20 school, Barton Chapel Elementary. That's all I have to
21 say.

22 MR. EDWARDS: Good evening.

23 THE AUDIENCE: Good evening.

24 MR. EDWARDS: Can you all hear me?

25 THE AUDIENCE: Yes.

1 MR. EDWARDS: Okay. The first thing I would like
2 to do -- my name is T.C. Edwards. I'm a 1980 record of
3 T.W. Josey High School. Those eagles that are here
4 tonight, would you just stand. Those that are here
5 tonight. I want to say to Dr. Cobb and her cabinet and
6 to the board members, we thank you for the changes and
7 the recommendations that are favorable to many of the
8 things that we asked for. We thank you for that.

9 I have a question. Well, you can answer it later,
10 I guess. I've worked at the VA. I've worked at --
11 I've been at the veteran site for 39 years. I've been
12 interpreting policies and federal laws and all of that
13 stuff. I looked at the naming facilities policy of the
14 board. And it seems like Josey is being presented as a
15 brand new school. A school that is not in existence.
16 But in your policy it says that it's been the practice
17 of the Board of Education subsequent to 1978 to name
18 new facilities after localities, communities,
19 neighborhoods, and cities within the county as well as
20 geographic features rather than after individuals
21 living or deceased. The question is if this new
22 facility is being looked at as a new school, would that
23 eliminate naming it Thomas Walter Josey based on your
24 policy? That it would not be named after an individual
25 that's living or dead? Thank you.

1 LIEUTENANT BERRY: Good evening.

2 THE AUDIENCE: Good evening.

3 LIEUTENANT BERRY: I'm Lieutenant Carl Berry, the
4 Air Force ROTC. I'm also known as Dr. Berry, or as the
5 kids call me Dr. Carl Berry.

6 It was a very good presentation. I do have a
7 question. There was no mention of JROTC in the
8 briefing. In the briefing where our proposed area
9 would be in the briefing there would be a heavy
10 machinery area. So I talked to my boss in Alabama this
11 morning and no one's contacted the Air Force on this.
12 And they said, Why haven't they talked to you? You are
13 our representative over there. And I said, No one has
14 talked to me. So my question is what about the Air
15 Force JROTC? It's an honest question.

16 We're a good program. We just passed our
17 inspection. All we need now is less than 150 hours of
18 community service and then we've got a distinguished
19 unit. All right? I'm really pushing our kids hard and
20 they're working harder too. In fact, we just competed
21 in the (unintelligible) playoffs for the first two
22 years in existence, and we went to the playoffs. It
23 was tight. It was tough. But we did that.

24 There are personnel requirements and there are
25 space requirements for JROTC. I just want to know are

1 they going to be moving us? If the plan is to move us,
2 then you've got to contact the Air Force because there
3 are things you've got to do. There are some
4 requirements according to the NDAA that have to be met.
5 Dedicated classrooms, dedicated offices, dedicated
6 storage, and dedicated drill pad. Those are the
7 requirements that have to be met.

8 Just so you know, I don't think this is a good
9 look on Richmond County if you potentially close down a
10 JROTC unit. And I say this with all honesty and all
11 due respect. Because recently this year, at the recent
12 conference, that I was let known, all the service
13 chiefs got together with the Secretary of War, Peter
14 Hegseth. Peter Hegseth was told by Congress, the House
15 Armed Services Committee, you will expand JROTC. It's
16 a tall order. He told all of the service chiefs you
17 will expand JROTC. So he gave them -- you will expand
18 by 100 units, and you've got two years to do it. Do
19 it. Yes, sir.

20 So, it wouldn't be a good look where all the
21 services are expanded. Now, probably here in Georgia
22 they won't expand as much, but in the other states they
23 will expand. But it wouldn't look good if the Air
24 Force is expanding JROTCs and all of a sudden, we're
25 closing. That's not a good look. So, that's the

1 question I have. What about JROTC? We can't go
2 anywhere else. We can't.

3 I'm the only -- I'm Air Force certified. Even
4 though I got a doctorate, you may put me as an AP
5 somewhere else or a principal somewhere else -- oh, my
6 God. My certification is in JROTC. There is no other
7 JROTC unit for 100 miles in any direction. So, I'm it.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. S. ROBINSON: Good evening, everyone. My name
10 is Sheffie Robinson. I am the current president of the
11 T.W. Josey Alumni Foundation. I am born and raised
12 here in Richmond County Schools by way of Terrence
13 Manor, Davidson, and then Josey. I even had a little
14 stint at Immaculate Conception. So, I am deeply rooted
15 in this, and I am deeply interested in how this new
16 school materializes. Because what I don't want to have
17 happen is, kind of, what happened with RCTCM. A bunch
18 of programs were promised that never came to fruition.
19 Part of that is when we are doing things that are
20 incredibly innovative, we have to think this all the
21 way through. If it is our intent to teach our students
22 at this level where they are having a more collegiate
23 experience you have to have collegiate processes.

24 I am a college professor. I've taught at Augusta
25 Tech. I've taught at Georgia Southern. I have taught

1 at East Georgia College. The same expectation for a
2 teacher to teach seven classes all day will not work in
3 this setting. There will have to be, for this to
4 work -- and, of course, you've seen the other college
5 and career academies across the state. There are about
6 64 of them, and all of them falling under TCSG,
7 Technical College System of Georgia. For this to work,
8 adjunct teaching has to be part of this process. A
9 teacher like me who is in workforce and economic
10 development with my specialty in business and sociology
11 can easily come in and teach a class a couple of days a
12 week. This is how we engage our community partners.
13 For this to work we have to engage our community
14 partners in a slightly different way than we have
15 probably ever seen in this city. At some point here in
16 Augusta, we have to stop resting on the laurels of what
17 it has always been, and take the history that we know
18 and bring it into the future.

19 I will never advocate for the history of Josey to
20 be demolished, but we do need to update. And the only
21 way this works is if we update how instruction happens
22 as well. Or else, we are setting our kids up for
23 failure. I am teaching students that are freshmen's in
24 college that don't even know how to add a document to
25 an email. I am teaching students that are freshmen in

1 college that can't read. If this is to work, it can't
2 be what we've always done.

3 Also, there are four E's in the post-secondary
4 process. Enrollment for students going off to college.
5 Enlistment for students who want to join our armed
6 forces. Employment for those going straight to the
7 workforce, and entrepreneurship for those who want to
8 start businesses. Entrepreneurship can't be
9 secondary -- a piece of the puzzle. It has to be
10 taught with the same rigor that we're teaching
11 everything else.

12 I appreciate what the board is trying to do to
13 make this work, but it can't just be a redux of RCTCM
14 again. Thank you.

15 MS. A. ROBINSON: Good evening.

16 THE AUDIENCE: Good evening.

17 MS. A. ROBINSON: I'm Avella Robinson. I'm
18 standing in the midst of Levi White. I am a product of
19 Levi White. And (unintelligible) Levi White
20 (unintelligible) because I told them, you know, first,
21 I was a student at Levi White. From Levi White to
22 T.W. Josey. And I stand strongly of Levi White because
23 I taught there for 13 years at Levi White. Plus, when
24 they (unintelligible) to rebuild Levi White, we went
25 from Agar and Hines, and some went to other schools.

1 But it came back to Levi White, the teachers did not
2 come back. Only four came back to Levi White. Because
3 of what? They got comfortable at those schools, and
4 they didn't want to come back. But from going back to
5 that time, I didn't go back. I went to another school.

6 But when we're closing down schools, and we're
7 sending these kids everywhere across the country, you
8 got to have bus service. If those kids miss the bus,
9 how are they going to get to school? They were walking
10 to Levi White, now they're going to Wilkinson Gardens.
11 They're going to Hornsby. Everywhere. The
12 transportation is going to be a problem because kids
13 are going to miss the bus because the mother's didn't
14 wake them up early enough.

15 And then we have a new complex will be coming to
16 the neighborhood. One hundred and fifty units are
17 supposed to be coming there right behind Levi White.
18 Now, what are you going to do with Levi White sitting
19 there for the next two years or three years? Because
20 in that neighborhood you start robbing the school,
21 breaking windows and stuff like that. And we don't
22 want to see that happen. That's a brand new school.
23 That school opened up in 2000 -- the year 2000. And
24 it's truly a new school. And I don't want to see Levi
25 White sitting there because I'm fighting myself now,

1 and my association of South Memorial Neighborhood
2 Association, fighting the reparations and
3 (unintelligible) about a complex that's coming into our
4 community. And I don't think it's coming in until
5 2028. What is Levi White going to be standing there?
6 What you're going to plan for Levi White?
7 (Unintelligible). It needs to be functioning, and not
8 sitting there. And I want to see something happen to
9 Levi White. And I would love to see the teachers stay
10 together. Meanwhile, they'll be done settled somewhere
11 and they're not coming back. It will always happen
12 like that. Thank you.

13 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you very much. I just want
14 to first of all say a couple of things about -- thank
15 you, Mike. First of all, there's a couple of things I
16 want to say about T.W. Josey. I went to T.W. Josey in
17 1964. In 1964 they just opened up T.W. Josey. In
18 1965, they did not have a class. There was no
19 graduating class of '65. I came out as the first class
20 of T.W. Josey in 1966 along with some of my other
21 colleagues here.

22 When we only had one high school, that was Lucy
23 Laney, we had so much pride and so much enjoyment in
24 being at that school with Dr. Reese and naming that
25 school after Dr. Thomas Walter Josey. We stood very

1 strong. We were very proud. We were very excited to
2 get to be there.

3 I heard some good conversation and I heard some
4 stuff I don't understand. It's like, what comes first,
5 the chicken or the egg. I heard about the training and
6 the different training they want to do, but when I was
7 at T.W. Josey, the same program we talked about here
8 was at T.W. Josey. They called it DCT. Diversified
9 Cooperative Training. We had that when we left the
10 school and went to these different shops. I've got
11 about 10 cars right now, but I'm stuck because I got
12 those cars back in those days, trying to learn how to
13 mechanic and work on cars. And I'm glad I did.

14 But I heard some of the same type of training, but
15 it's just a different name now. What I'm worried about
16 most of all is the history. Is going to be torn down?
17 When I was married -- but when I got married, my wife
18 changed her name. Her last name wasn't the same no
19 more. That's a new program. A new project. Am I
20 hearing we're going to keep T.W. Josey a part of that?
21 We've always been a comprehensive high school. We had
22 the diversified training and stuff going on. But what
23 really bothers me is that I heard the same spiel when I
24 went to Tutt. (Unintelligible.) The same scenario
25 happened up there, happened down at T.W. Josey. We

1 done closed so many elementary schools. And I heard
2 somebody say, Well there's no children coming. I don't
3 know who's going to (unintelligible) to see who's going
4 to get pregnant or not, but we wouldn't have any
5 problem with that.

6 All I'm saying is we can't predict what children
7 are coming or what children are not coming. We've got
8 to be prepared for them. We are the ones -- we are
9 still the least -- the population when it comes to
10 getting those things that we fought for to get in our
11 neighborhoods. The education -- when I heard years
12 ago, no child left behind. How many children have we
13 left now? That went out the window a long time ago.

14 Now, I said to a gentleman earlier that I wasn't
15 going to say a word, but I can't sit here and act like
16 I don't understand. I don't understand the whole
17 process, but I've got common sense. Now, I understand
18 what I'm saying -- and you can make a speech and say
19 anything you want to because you're writing them down.

20 So, I'm not against the program, I'm not against
21 the board, I just want them to be fair and do the same
22 thing across the board to everybody else. If you look
23 around in this community -- I said this the last time,
24 and I got to repeat it again. On Granite Boulevard,
25 they're supposed to be proposing Habitat for Humanity

1 home built over there. Okay. That's fine to help
2 somebody, but who else is going to build something else
3 beside Habitat when you build that? That mean you're
4 going to keep those people the same way they are in
5 that community from now on. Nobody else is going to
6 come and build something greater or better. So, you've
7 got to look at the big picture, now. And you've got to
8 look at what we're doing.

9 It ain't just the board doing it. I support the
10 city as well. We need to be talking about how we can
11 upgrade it. Who's going to move out of the project,
12 out of the hood, get an education, and move back in the
13 hood and raise their children? Nobody is going to do
14 that.

15 So, I heard some good and I heard some bad. And
16 some of you don't understand. My biggest problem is
17 keeping T.W. Josey name on this high school -- on this
18 facility. If you're going to add to it -- the program
19 is fine. You all just done explained something that
20 hit home with me too to have the training these
21 children are going to need you can't have it part-time.
22 It's got to be a full-time position. It's got to be
23 somebody that's going to be able to come in and teach
24 them what they need to have to make their life better.
25 Thank you.

1 MR. MYERS: I want to take a moment and thank
2 everybody for their comments. As we wrap up, again, we
3 will have leadership around. They will be around to
4 answer questions if you have any questions. We'll be
5 here to answer questions.

6 We have some paperwork -- we have some materials
7 that you can take with you. Don't forget there's a QR
8 code that's available that can answer any of your
9 frequently asked questions. If you would like to send
10 a question in, we have OnFlow as well that can help you
11 keep up with some of the things that are happening as
12 we come up with more questions as things going on.
13 That's pretty much it.

14 All right. I'm going to call Trustee, Stovall
15 back up. Again, give yourselves a round of applause.
16 Everything was wonderful tonight. And the presentation
17 was great.

18 MS. STOVALL: Thank you, Mr. Myers. Thank you
19 again for everyone that came out. I wanted to refer to
20 a question Mr. Hankerson asked. I'm going to answer
21 that really quick. When you asked about whether it
22 would go against our policy to name a new building,
23 living or dead, no, because the name was already there.
24 So, if the naming committee vote to keep the name that
25 is already upheld -- holding a name that was already in

1 place. It's not coming up with naming it T.C. Edwards
2 High School. We wouldn't be able to do that because
3 that is a new name that does not follow under the
4 policy. But the name is already T.W. Josey. So if the
5 naming committee submit to us T.W. Josey, we will vote
6 to keep it T.W. Josey. It does not go against our
7 policy.

8 I want to thank everyone who came up and left.
9 Mr. Hankerson, Mr. Edwards, Chief, Ms. Robinson,
10 Ms. Avella Robinson, Ms. Robinson, the older
11 Ms. Robinson. Thank you for also taking a jab at the
12 commissioner so we ain't the only one getting hit
13 around here. We appreciate that. And, also,
14 Mr. Marion Williams.

15 I wanted to address what Ms. Sheffie Robinson
16 talked about, the four E's. That is what we aim to do
17 with this program. Aid in the enrollment, enlistment,
18 employment, and entrepreneurship.

19 Out of my household, I have four children. Three
20 girls and one boy. The one boy is 14 years old, so he
21 don't count in this conversation. Two of them went to
22 college. My youngest daughter attempted to but we
23 recognized that she is not a college -- traditional
24 college student. So she went to trade school, and she
25 is now an entrepreneur. Her mother is an entrepreneur

1 because we recognize that there is value that we add to
2 our community by bringing in jobs and resources into
3 our community. The whole purpose of this is, again,
4 just proposed ideas. And as we found that when you
5 share your ideas -- most of us who sat over there
6 (indicating) took notes. When you share your ideas, we
7 come together as a board, talk about what we've heard,
8 and then we will decide, you know what, they had a good
9 idea let's go this way, or let's try this, or what
10 would this look like? We'll come back to Dr. Cobb and
11 her administration and say, if we were to try this,
12 what would that look like? How much would that -- and
13 we ask those questions about cost, we ask it about
14 personnel, we ask it about time, and we ask it about
15 impact. Because we want to make sure that when we make
16 these decisions -- I am proud of the board members that
17 we have. We all are passionate about our community and
18 our districts. Now, sometimes we go about it in a
19 little different way, but at the end of the day, when
20 the ten of us come together we are passionate about
21 making sure that Richmond County, first of all, stops
22 being compared to Columbia County, and we want to flip
23 the script to where everybody else is compared to us.
24 Ultimately, that's our goal. We want to make sure that
25 our students receive the best possible education and

1 education facilities that they can have.

2 We want to make sure -- which Dr. Cobb talked
3 about everyone -- we want everyone to apply. We want
4 certified and qualified individuals that's teaching our
5 students. What most people don't understand about CTAE
6 programs, you have to have experience in that program.
7 I can't just go in and teach welding just because I
8 once put a bike together in my garage. I have to be
9 certified in the area that I plan on teaching. So
10 we're not just going to stick just anybody in front of
11 our students.

12 We want to make sure that when our students leave
13 school, whether they decide to go to college, whether
14 they decide to go into the military, whether they
15 decide to go into the workforce, or open up their own
16 business -- I don't know if you caught when Dr. Cobb
17 talked about the culinary arts program, opening up a
18 restaurant people working the front of the house and
19 the back of the house, but also teaching them how to
20 run a business. It's not enough for us to give our
21 students an opportunity to always work for somebody.
22 We want to create opportunities for them to be the
23 employer and not just the employee.

24 So we thank everyone for your time tonight.
25 Again, we heard you. We're listening. I want you to

1 know that every board member that comes here is
2 listening. We want to know. It's going to take
3 community partnerships. It's going to take us working
4 with the industries that's in this community. It's
5 going to take us as parents. It's going to take us as
6 alumni, community members, and it's going to take us as
7 a community as a whole to come together to make sure
8 that we keep the integrity of the process and of our
9 community.

10 Mr. Williams, you are absolutely right. Nobody
11 wants to come out of the ghetto and then come back to
12 the ghetto to raise their children. So what we're
13 hoping to do that -- and I'm going to take a hit at you
14 (unintelligible). When we come back and create a
15 state-of-the-art school, that will put pressure on our
16 community and on our commissioners to make sure we have
17 state-of-the-art homes. That we have the right people
18 invested in our communities. And that is the goal of
19 us working with our commissioners and we have people
20 that sit on boards within the community so that we can
21 hear the Board of Education's point of view. So we can
22 hear the community's point of view. So that we can
23 work with our commissioners to make sure that our
24 communities are growing on every front.

25 So ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your time.

1 Again, we invite you out this Thursday to our board
2 meeting. We also -- if you see the blue signs all the
3 way around, please meet with the department heads
4 that's there to ask your questions about anything
5 dealing with those departments. Thank you so much for
6 your time, and y'all be safe getting home.

7 (The hearing concluded at 7:45 p.m.)

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D I S C L O S U R E

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF RICHMOND

Pursuant to Article 10.B. of the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Court Reporting of the Judicial Council of Georgia, I make the following disclosure:

I am a Georgia Certified Court Reporter. I am here as a representative of Veritext Legal Solutions.

Veritext Legal Solutions, was contacted by Fletcher, Harley & Fletcher, to provide court reporting services for this hearing. Veritext Legal Solutions, will not be taking this proceeding under any contract that is prohibited by O.C.G.A. Sec. 15-14-37(a) and (b).

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Date: February 9, 2026; Kimbely Griffin, CCR, CVR

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF GEORGIA:

COUNTY OF RICHMOND:

I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript was taken down, as stated in the caption, and the colloquy, questions, and answers thereto where reduced to typewriting under my direction; that the foregoing pages 1 through 69 represent a true, complete, and correct transcript of the evidence given.

The above certification is expressly withdrawn and denied upon the disassembly or photocopying of the foregoing transcript, unless said disassembly or photocopying is done under the auspices of Veritext Legal Solutions, and the signature and original seal is attached thereto.

I further certify that I am not related to or are of counsel to the parties in the case. I am not in the regular employ of counsel for any of said parties; nor am I in any way interested in the result of said case.

This, the 16th day of February, 2026.



Kimbely Griffin, CCR, CVR

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