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1	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT								
	EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA								
2	EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSTHVANIA								
3	KHADIDJA ISSA, ET AL ) 5:16-cv-03881-EGS								
	) PM SESSION								
4	VS.								
	) August 22, 2016								
5	THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ) Allentown, PA								
	LANCASTER ) 4:13 p.m5:45 p.m.								
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7	HEARING ON PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION								
	BEFORE THE HONORABLE EDWARD G. SMITH,								
8	UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE								
9	APPEARANCES:								
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2	WITNESS	DIRECT	CR	OSS	REDIRECT	RECROSS
3	Dr. Arthur Abrom					
	by Ms. O'Donnell	5				
4	by Ms. McInerney			25		
	by Ms. O'Donnell				37	
5						
6	Marianne Ortiz					
	by Ms. McInerney	42				
7	by Ms. O'Donnell			76		
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name is spelled A-B-R-O-M.

THE COURT: Thank you very much.

THE WITNESS: Sure.

THE COURT: Counsel, you may proceed.

MS. O'DONNELL: Thank you very much.

DIRECT EXAMINATION

## BY MS. O'DONNELL:

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- Q. Dr. Abrom, would you give us a brief description of your educational background?
- A. Sure. I graduated from Susquehanna
  University with a music education degree, taught music
  for several years. I then became a principal at a
  place not connected to this which is known as the
  Phoenix Academy, but a place called the Phoenix Center
  which was in New Jersey.

After that in 1998 I moved to Pennsylvania, Lancaster, Pennsylvania where I became the principal at Lafayette Elementary School. I was there through December of 2007, after which I became the coordinator for federal programs and school improvement for the entire district. And then in 2011-2012 I was asked to be the director of student services. I remained in that position until July of 2015, which was last summer.

At that point we had some shifting. I was also named the acting director for elementary

education. So beginning this last year I was not only the people services director, but the acting director for elementary. So I had 13 reports in my people services world and I had 12 elementary principals.

December 18th we lost our Special Ed coordinator. I then became the Special Ed coordinator of gifted and 504 plans. Luckily, we found someone to fill that position and this past July I'm no longer the people services director. I'm now the acting people services director as I've been pointed the elementary director full-time.

I have my bachelors, as I said, from Susquehanna --

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- A. -- in music. I have my masters degree from Arizona State. I have my principal's cert from Temple University. I have my doctorate from Widener University and I have my superintendents -- I'm sorry -- I have my superintendent's letter of eligibility from Temple. I got my principal certification while I was in Arizona.
  - Q. Thank you.

Dr. Abrom, as the overseer of 13 or 14 different directors now would Jack Blackman be one of your subordinates?

A. Jack was this past year as well as since 2011. Once we hired a new student services director Mr. Blackman would report to that person.

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- Q. Okay. So enrollment is or was one of the departments that you oversee?
- A. Yeah. Enrollment, same situation. Once we hire someone new, that department would also report to someone else. But Marsha Riddick would be my direct contact. She's in charge of child accounting.
- Q. Have you had any conversations with Dr. Rau since she's come aboard in terms of her mission?
- A. Yes. Truly her heart's passion is to ensure that all children graduate ready for either the workforce, the military or college. So she wants to make sure that we are enabling kids to have that choice.
- Q. And to your knowledge or do you have knowledge in terms of what the general purpose of public education is?
- A. To ensure students receive a high school diploma.
- Q. Okay. Any challenges specifically to you or your school district and carrying out that mission?
- A. Well, specifically, one of the things we've been talking about here are ELL students as well as

refugee students. I believe we currently have 39
different languages represented across our district.

That's a unique challenge. Our poverty rate for the district is 87 to 90 percent depending on what building you're in. So that also brings a certain set of difficulties that we need to work through.

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- Q. And what about this subset of refugees that are ages 17 to 21, any particular challenges with that group?
- A. The fact that they come to us either, one, not having any credits at all; two, maybe not having any school experience as well; and then, three, really just trying to determine as we look at them, you know, what's the best route for them. You know, as we've heard today and other days, you know, do we send them to the Phoenix Academy because they have the best chance to maintain -- to obtain those credits to graduate; do we send them to the regular middle school, where do they fall. Because enrollment falls to me we also have the same problems with is a student six and do we put him in first grade or do we put him in kindergarten or do we put him in second grade.

So we see that gamut across the entire range from kindergarten through twelfth when they're coming to us with very limited paperwork.

- Q. And are we placing them in first or second grade or ninth or tenth grade based upon their ability to speak English?
  - A. No.

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- Q. Are we placing them on the basis of where they come from, their national origin?
  - A. No.
  - Q. How are we placing them?
- A. We're trying to place them with -- let's go to the younger grades, so their age appropriate peers. And that's the best way that we know. Research says to put them in classes with their age appropriate peers.

When it comes to the 17 through 21 year olds, it's -- again, it's a transcript review. That transcript review is done by Mr. Blackman and he'll make that assignment decision after he reviews all the documents.

- Q. And is that because there are very little or no age appropriate peers for this group?
  - A. Correct.
- Q. Okay. You've heard a little bit of a discussion today about the disparity and maturity levels of students that are between the ages of 17 and 21 and those students that are between the ages of 13

1 and 17, did you not?

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- A. I did hear that. Yes.
- Q. And do you have, from your experience working with this School District and those particular challenges any observations that are relevant to this proceeding in terms of putting together in a cohort or otherwise those students who have that disparity in maturity?
- A. So I think Mr. Blackman spoke to it well as being a counselor. You know, kids are in different developmental stages if you look at Piaget's theory. So where they are in -- as an eight-year old is very different than where they are as an eighteen-year old. So there's that developmental process.

The other process he talked about is where are they in life. Many of our 17 through 21 year olds, as you've heard, are coming in. They may be the only breadwinner that's in the family. They may have a student who is pregnant. They also have arranged marriages at times. So all of those things play into the difficulties of them being able to fully concentrate on school.

Q. And so what -- what's the general practice in terms of greeting a student who is older, between the ages of 17 and 21 who is a refugee, who doesn't

speak the English language? How do we decide what the best placement for that person is?

- A. So you want me to kind of like walk through the enrollment process?
  - O. Yes.

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- A. Okay.
- Q. Because -- and, again, from your perspective on your place in the stratosphere. You don't need to go through the --
- A. Well, it's -- I'm just sitting here thinking. I mean, we enroll over 2,500 kids a year when you think of kindergarten and K3 and K4 and the amount of kids that come through our system. So I'm at this level I get involved when some of those situations come to me.

But specifically in this area the student would be brought through the enrollment center.

That's -- Ms. Riddick is in charge and there's five clerks there that they would bring the paperwork to.

Once they had all that paperwork in placement, if we're speaking specifically about a high school student, whether the student was a refugee student or not, the transcripts and that information would be sent to Jack. Mr. Blackman would review that and make a decision as to would they be assigned to either

1 | Phoenix or McCaskey.

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If the student is also a refugee student that's where Ms. Hilt would be involved because Ms. Hilt brings a different area of expertise than Mr. Blackman brings. So that's kind of the process that we've set forth.

- Q. And what's the difference in -- to your observation of the education and ESL supports, if any, to these refugee students regardless of their age?

  For example, a fifteen-year old being placed at McCaskey or a seventeen-year old being placed at Phoenix, what are the differences?
- A. So my understanding -- again, I'm not in charge of curriculum at all. I'm in charge of process and those type of things that would fall really to our assistant director, assistant superintendent who Amber reports to.

But my understanding is that they're very similar in the sense of not only the time, the minutes, but also the processes, the curriculum, all of those types of things are similar.

- Q. So the curriculum is the same; is that correct?
  - A. Correct.
    - O. But the actual time --

A. Might be slightly different depending on how it's worked out. One of the building was on a -- as we heard a semester based schedule. The other building was based on a year-long schedule.

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- Q. Now is socialization and English language, are they important -- are they more important to a particular student coming in than the actual content -- core curriculum that is taught and offered.
- A. Well, again, our goal to graduate students is how are we going to get them to those credits that they need to accumulate. So, yes, learning English is important. Yes, socialization is important. But they can be socialized in other areas such as whether they be a part of a team or part of a club or part of an after school. They don't get a credit for that. So it's important for us that we make sure they're in classes that they're going to obtain credits.

So for me the primary one is making sure they're in classes when they can obtain credits.

- Q. Are you familiar with -- personally with any of the plaintiffs in this case?
  - A. I have never met any of the six students.
  - Q. What about their resettlement agents?
- A. I have met with Elyse Chesson from Lutheran Refugee Services and I have met with Sheila and I

always say her last name wrong --

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- Q. Masterpiecho (ph).
- A. Masterpiecho as well as Valentina Ross.
- Q. And what conversations did you have with these three ladies?
- A. So I became aware that Ms. Chesson requested a meeting and the -- in that meeting was MR. Blackman, Ms. Hilt, myself, Ms. Chesson, Madap (ph) and there was someone else there and I don't remember their name. But we met at Reynolds Middle School. You've heard us talk about that.

The meeting started off a little nonamicable as we worked through that mistake, the inadvertent e-mail that Mr. Blackman talked about.

- Q. Okay. That was what drove the first conversation?
- A. That's where we kind of started. I think we had to get that out of the way to kind of clear the air. Ms. Chesson, though, really spoke about the need to get the students, all of the students into school because it impacted their TANF dollars --
  - Q. Okay.
- A. -- and that was the funding that they needed access to to ensure that the families would get their needs met.

- Q. And that's a family decision. That's not a School District decision?
  - A. Correct. I'm not involved with that at all.
  - 0. 0kay.

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- A. It then moved to the two specific students, which were Kason (ph) as well as Khadidja.
  - Q. Okay.
- A. We left that meeting and that was the thing -- those were some of the things that when Jack and I went out -- and you heard Jack say we kind of talk every day. We began to work on those things and we were able to get them back in school.
- Q. And you were worried that there was delays with their immunization records?
  - A. Not until I got at that meeting that day
  - Q. Okay.
- A. There was another meeting. I know the letter that Ms. Chesson brought to the meeting was February 17th. It was soon after that. Ms. Chesson, Sheila, Valentina myself and Dr. Rau, and that's when we met and we began to listen to some of their concerns that extended beyond just what I heard from that meeting.
  - Q. Okay.
  - A. In that meeting we talked about what are

some of the steps that we would take, but the big thing was Ms. Chesson was fairly -- I don't want to say confrontational, but just continued to push and continued to push and Dr. Rau was really new and she was just trying to learn, you know, what was working and what was not working. So we made them the promise that we would get back to them by year's end. And that's how we ended that meeting.

In between that meeting and the meeting which we held, I think it was July 13th that we've referenced --

O. Uh-huh.

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A. -- I met with Dr. Rau and Angel Colon who is the executive director and we discussed what were some of those changes and what would they look like. Dr. Rau shared some of them. Some of them we talked down changing the pat down, the entrance intake process. We talked about the orientation process. We talked about the homework concern. We talked about the backpack concern, cell phones.

So there was a variety of things. And with working with Mr. Colon we talked about having those things in place for the following -- this coming school year. And then we got back together with the resettlement agency, though, Elyse wasn't there

because at the time, July 13th, the agency was no longer an agency. So we only met with Sheila and Valentina.

O. Okay.

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- A. Also in that meeting was Amber Hilt to help address the ESL concerns because, again, those aren't -- that's not my area of expertise, and Dr. Powell, our assistant superintendent also joined us for that meeting.
- Q. Okay. And was the fact that some of these students are between the ages of 17 and 21 and should be treated with a little bit more sensitivity to their age?
  - A. Yeah. I think that was --
  - Q. And, in fact, that they're not children?
  - A. Uh-huh.
- Q. Is that yes?
- A. Yes.
- 19 0. Okay.
- 20 A. Sorry.
  - Q. Other than the TANF dollars, was there anything else that Ms. Chesson raised as being significant issues in order to place the children?
- A. So not necessarily in that first Reynolds
  meeting. Again, that was really focused on that and

the two students.

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- Q. Right.
- A. But as it began to move forward I was contacted again. There was going to be another meeting specifically to discuss Kason and that meeting was between Mr. Blackman, Ms. Hilt, Aura Heisey and Elyse, Kason and his mother. I did not attend that meeting. But they reported back to me that it was surprising to them that now there was this bullying concern.
  - Q. Because they hadn't heard about that before?
- A. Yeah. I don't know what the heard. I had not heard about that from the first meeting that we had to that second time that they contacted me.
  - O. All right.
- A. I then got involved and provided some responses after I asked Mr. Colon to conduct an investigation. And he spoke to me. He interviewed nine different teachers in the building, spoke to a variety of people. I then responded to Ms. Chesson that based on our investigation the bullying -- and at the time there were two things: One, that he had his hair pulled and, two, someone knocked on the bathroom door while he was in the restroom. Those were the two things that were discussed at that meeting as it was

related to me.

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So I responded and told them based on that, we described what bullying is. I mean, it's ongoing. It's persistent. It's not, you know, one or two type of things. I sent that letter to Ms. Chesson, encouraged her to encourage her student to get back to school. And she ended that last correspondence with me talking about how he was going to seek counsel at that point.

- Q. Counseling?
- A. No. Counsel as if lawyer counsel, not counseling.
- Q. Oh, legal counsel. So was the issue of transferring to McCaskey also raised?
- A. Yeah. They -- she expressed that, you know, he might do better, for example, if he was able to enroll in McCaskey. We explained that where he was with his credits at that time, that Phoenix would give him the best chance to graduate, and that he had the option if he spent some time at Phoenix to be able to then at some point, you know, recover enough credits to move back to McCaskey to get back on track with his age appropriate peers.
- Q. So that I'm not misunderstanding your testimony. The first meeting that you attended in

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February did not address bullying and did not address a transfer to McCaskey?

- A. So that was the meeting with Dr. Rau. The first meeting that I had with her was over at Reynolds.
  - Q. Okay.
- 7 A. So I'm referring to that meeting at 8 Reynolds.
  - O. Okay.

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- 10 A. In the meeting at -- with Dr. Rau, no,
  11 bullying was not an issue. Yes, we would like our
  12 students to go to McCaskey was brought up.
  - Q. Okay. So at each one of these meetings was there a common theme of we would like Kason to go to McCaskey?
  - A. No names were mentioned at the meeting with Dr. Rau. It was more just kind of in general that that one of the feelings or one of the concerns that both agencies had.
  - Q. So they --
- A. The April meeting was then with Kason at Phoenix.
- Q. So they wanted any refugee that was a member of their or a client of their resettlement agencies to be placed in McCaskey --

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A. McCaskey. They were --

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Q. -- as opposed to Phoenix.

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A. They were advocating for that at the time.

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Q. Okay. And had they done any personal walk arounds or observations of either school?

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A. In the meeting back in February when Elyse handed us that paperwork she had said in that

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paperwork that she had attended an orientation. When

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we asked Sheila had she ever been in the building she

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had said no. Valentina also has a daughter who

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attends McCaskey so, yes, she's probably been in the

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building under the guise of a parent, but not

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necessarily as someone from Church World Services.

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15 time you heard that Elyse Chesson or any of her

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coworkers, whether -- you know, regardless of which

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agency they were with, when did they start talking

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about the value of an education as opposed to bullying

And when did -- when was the first

Probably in the meeting with Dr. Rau, but it

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or TANF dollars or something else?

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wasn't really about that. They really just wanted to

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list their concerns and Elyse just kept going, this is

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a concern, this is a concern, and she wasn't allowing

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us to have time to respond which is why we had to end

- Q. Did you hear as a result of any of those discussions in any of the meetings these students referred to as SLIFE students?
  - A. No.

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- Q. Did anyone bring up the fact that -- well, let me just ask you this. Do you know if there's any federal regulations specifics to the education of a SLIFE student?
  - A. I don't believe there are.
- Q. Do you know whether or not there are any federal or state mandates for language development instructional strategies?
  - A. Not that I'm aware.
- Q. DO you know whether or not there's any federal or state mandates for the time for an L or an immigrant or a SLIFE student?
- A. So we know we have the beck, which we've talked about earlier today and that provides us some recommendations or guidelines.
  - Q. Okay. Is that it?
  - A. That's what I'm aware of.
- Q. Okay. Are there any state recommendations for the education of L's, immigrants or SLIFE students?
  - A. So we want to make sure that there are

certain things that, you know, they have equal, you know, opportunities --

Q. Okay

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- A. -- no matter, you know, where they are. We want to make sure they have equitable staff like high quality teaching staff. We want to make sure they have exposure to core curriculum standards, and we want to make sure they have the same graduation requirements.
- Q. And is that something that the state requires or they allow it at a local level, like allow the decisions for those things to be made at the local level?
- A. I would say beyond graduation requirements itself, everything is more allowable at the local decision level.
- Q. Okay. Do you know whether or not Phoenix has been identified by PDE as an alternative school or a magnet school?
- A. So I was actually part of that whole conversation probably three years ago and it was determined -- we were working with Steve Fisher who was in charge of student services up at PDE and was determined that they would be called a magnet school because they didn't quite fit into, which would be a

total separate school. So -- but it still makes the most sense because they get their own SPP, which we've talked about today, which is the student performance profile.

- Q. And is it -- do you know whether or not, based on your conversations with those folks if it's permissible to educate English language learners at the magnet school?
- A. It is permissible, but there's certain things you have to kind of keep in mind. For example, like we couldn't assign the student there differently than we would assign other students. We have to treat all kids the same, whether they be refugee, ELL, so that's why we just look at transcripts because that's the cleanest way to make that happen. And, again, we want to make sure there's equitable opportunities for the kids when they're assigned there. So --
- Q. What about the segregation and the cohort? Is that something PDE cares about?
- A. Well, yeah. They don't want them to be segregated completely or segregated for too long.
  - Q. Okay.

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MS. O'DONNELL: Those are all the questions I have. Thank you.

THE WITNESS: Okay. Thank you.

ensuring that students are promptly enrolled in school
as part of those duties of overseeing Mr. Blackman?

- A. Both Mr. Blackman and Ms. Riddick. Yes They work together.
- Q. Okay. And were you aware of any problems with regard to the enrollment of students who were refugees?
- A. Not until I was asked to come to that meeting with Elyse. I was notified by Mr. Blackman and Ms. Hilt that they wanted to meet.
  - O. And what month was that?
  - A. Like I said that had to be December.
  - O. December?
- A. Was when the -- yeah. I would have to -- I don't have my calendar, but it was probably December.
- Q. So December is the first time you became aware of the --
  - A. Yes.
- O. -- this issue?
- 20 A. Yeah.

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- Q. Had this issue ever been raised before by anyone with respect to students who were experiencing delays in being enrolled in school?
- A. I know that certain students come to enrollment who don't have all of their paperwork,

their immunizations. I've seen students come with leaving certificates that we then need to examine, are they a true leaving certificate, is that -- are we going to qualify that as a diploma or not. So there's been different things that can cause a delay.

In this case, this is the first time I had heard refugee students had been delayed.

- Q. Were you aware of a state complaint that was filed in 2013 regarding a nineteen-year old Napoli student who was denied enrollment in the School District of Lancaster beginning in January of 2013?
  - A. Was the name -- I'm going to say it wrong.
  - O. Nerhanin --
  - A. Butahoki (ph).
  - O. -- Butahoki.

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- A. Yes. Okay. Thank you. The complaint was filed through, I want to say Penn Law Center, if I remember correctly. And the issue was he had a school leaving certificate.
- Q. And in that case didn't the district have to enroll that student and he did end up attending Phoenix Academy, isn't that right?
- A. In the end, yes, that was the decision that we agreed upon.
  - Q. And you stated during your deposition that

- you met in February concerning the enrollment delay regarding Khadidja Issa?
  - A. No. I was saying I think I became aware of that --
    - Q. Oh, December.
    - A. -- at the meeting in December.
- 7 Q. Okay.

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- A. The meeting in February was with Elyse, Sheila, Valentina and Dr. Rau. And I know it was after February 17th because I know that was the letter that Elyse presented to us and that was when she had gone through the orientation process at Phoenix. So it has to be sometime after February 17th.
- Q. Okay. And that particular meeting concerned both the enrollment of students and the assignment to Phoenix, correct?
- A. There was a variety of things in that letter.
- Q. When you were attending that meeting at that point were you aware that Kason had been enrolled in November, on November the 2nd, 2015, but he didn't start attending school until January 20th, 2016?
- A. So, again, I became aware of that in December and my instructions were ensuring that we can get him enrolled as soon as possible.

Q. And with respect to Khadidja she had an enrollment date of November the 18th, but she wasn't placed into a classroom until February 17th, after that meeting?

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- A. Right. And, again, the first time I became aware of it was in December.
- Q. And were you aware that Sui Hnem had experienced a similar delay. She was enrolled on November 18th. She did not start school until February the 26th, 2016? Were you aware of that at that time?
- A. I was not aware of any of the four other students. In fact, it was a surprise to me that when we were served the lawsuit that there were four other students named.
- Q. And were you surprised that Van Li also experienced a delay of five weeks?
  - A. Again, I didn't know those things.
- Q. So what in response did you do in terms of investigating this issue?
- A. So part of what we're doing, we started to talk about what were the changes we were going to make at Phoenix. I shared some of those. And then Mr. Blackman and I, as he said, we spoke. We started talking about developing a new forum and a new process

in the enrollment office.

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Part of this transition has caused me to kind of step back a little bit in the sense that I'm now transitioning to a new job and I'm trying to ensure that the new director of student services can make some of those decisions. Child accounting, Marsha Riddick, actually now reports to our new chief financial officer and that's Matt Perzuara (ph). So those are some of the things that I will inform them of. But they have to work those things out --

- O. So --
- A. -- as I'm no longer their direct supervisor.
- Q. So you're no longer in this position so you won't be making any changes at this point? That would be --
- A. I'll be supporting whatever changes we decide to make, but I can't direct those changes. So some of the last things that Mr. Blackman talked about is developing that form, trying to move those kids through faster. We even talked about moving Mr. Blackman's office directly down to the enrollment office, trying to speed up that process.
- Q. And that's essentially with regard to communication as he testified, not with regard to changes in written policy; is that correct?

A. Communication is one aspect. What are you referring to when you say written policy?

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- Q. Whether there would be any policies that would go into effect regarding this issue? He did not testify about anything in that regard.
- A. I've heard policy used a lot and I'm -policy can only be written by the board. We, as
  directors, can implement practices. So, yes, we'll be
  implementing different practices, but I can't
  institute a policy without having that go through
  board approval.
- MS. MCINERNEY: That's all the questions I have at this time.
- THE COURT: Thank you very much,

  Counselor.
- 16 Attorney O'Donnell, do you have any redirect?
- MS. O'DONNELL: Nothing further.
- 19 THE COURT: Very well.
- And, sir, were there any efforts to try
  to resolve this matter with the refugee organizations
  or with the attorneys once the lawsuit was filed or
  did it all stop?
- 24 THE WITNESS: So we received -- I'll 25 address the first part first about the agencies. It

was truly my understanding when we left that meeting in February that we made a promise -- I was there with Dr. Rau myself. We will look into these things. We will institute changes, and at the end of the year we'll get back to you and let you know what these changes are.

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As you heard Dr. Rau say it was disappointing that we weren't afforded that opportunity to allow us the time to really look into it, do some discovery ourselves and then, here are the suggested changes.

But Mr. Colon has been working with us the whole time, was very open to these changes. We have a great relationship with the Phoenix Center and they've always been willing to work on that relationship with us.

Now the second piece when you mentioned the lawyers, upon receipt of the letter, the -- let me back up. In March we received an -- I'm going to use the term an OOR or an OCR complaint. Okay. We then received a letter on April 26th. That was the letter that was addressed to Ms. Heisey, Dr. Rau and myself. At that point inferring where we were heading and in light of the fact that Ms. Chesson had sent me an e-mail in April saying, my client is now seeking

counsel, meaning legal counsel, once that letter came to me on April 26th I turned that over to our general solicitor at the time and he was the person who then becomes involved. I'm not a lawyer, don't want to be a lawyer. I've learned a lot about that the last few days here. But then it becomes lawyer to lawyer conversation.

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THE COURT: Yes. And you can understand why the employees or the case managers of these refugee organizations are very sensitive to any signs or indications of discrimination against these refugees that we are giving asylum to.

And so when a refugee caseworker sees that refugees are not being enrolled in accordance with Pennsylvania law and in fact there are significant delays, and then a category of them, those 17 to 21, are being sent to what could possibly be deemed an alternative school or a magnet school, it's not even -- it's an academy run by a private organization that seems to specialize in children that have challenges, but those challenges generally seem to be behavioral challenges, emotional challenges, a lot of IEP issues, things along those sort.

THE WITNESS: Yeah, I --

THE COURT: And the only reason I say

1 | that -- I could be wrong about that, that's --

THE WITNESS: Yeah, I disagree --

THE COURT: -- what I'm getting to --

THE WITNESS: -- with a lot of that,

but that's okay.

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THE COURT: -- the reason I get that impression is why would the entrance procedures be so much different at Phoenix than they are at McCaskey if the child that you're dealing with you weren't more concerned that they were going to be a behavioral problem?

THE WITNESS: Well, again, my perspective being up here --

THE COURT: Right.

THE WITNESS: -- I learned a lot, I need to be down a little more in some of the decision making in those issues; that's my mistake and my lesson. But to assume that Phoenix is not a good place for kids when it exists to help kids get credits, when the goal is to ensure that that student gets a high school diploma, the key to that is and you've heard us talk about, more money over their lifetime: able to do better with healthcare, able to access college. There's so many things that are opened up to students once you get that high school

diploma.

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My concern is if you put that 20-yearold -- I know you've heard from others and different
theories and, you know, researches -- that 20-yearold, something is going to happen with their life or
they're not going to be able to progress to
graduation. So then you send that student out in the
world, they have to go, what, pursue a GED, which is
now harder than it is to get the high school diploma.
I wouldn't characterize Phoenix as a school for
maladjusted or behavior problems, that's not what they
exist to do. They exist to help students who need to
accumulate credits.

THE COURT: Well, what type of student typically would have fallen so far behind in credits that they have to go to a school has accelerated learning to gain credits but these children with challenges?

THE WITNESS: Students with those life experiences, but that doesn't mean they're discipline problems. I mean, there's a difference between Phoenix and Buehrle. Buehrle, which is also run by Camelot, which we haven't discussed a lot, is an AEDY program, so Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth. Students are placed there because they brought

a weapon, drugs, second fight, terroristic threats, all of those type of things. Those students are placed there because of a discipline issue. We do not place students at Phoenix because they're a discipline issue and there's a reason there's the distinction between the two.

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THE COURT: Now, the plaintiffs have introduced evidence to suggest that the opportunities available at McCaskey are significantly greater than the opportunities available at Phoenix, or at least even if they're available at Phoenix, they're really unattainable because of the difficulties involved in taking advantage of them.

And I think the response from the defense has been, yes, but they don't have the time to take advantage of all those opportunities because we have to get them these accelerated credits to get them this diploma so that they can move on with their life. Is that a fair way this is all developing?

THE WITNESS: I agree. I think it's a difficult choice, but again we exist to ensure that students leave us and leave us with a diploma.

THE COURT: Now, wouldn't your -- not to interrupt you, but wouldn't your goal in achieving that be a lot easier if you weren't so concerned that

they graduate when they're 17 or 18 with their age
peers and were willing to use the state law maximum of
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Well, the state law THE WITNESS: maximum of 21 was really put into place originally for students that had special needs. It was, you know, for students who had a modified curriculum. of these students, for example, it's not that they don't need that time, the question is will a 20-yearold and a 21-year-old want to go to high school every day when they're working, they're taking care of babies, and they're in a class with a 13-or-14-yearold. It's, one, it can be viewed as just not appropriate, but, two, I mean, all of us have kids and, you know, we try to put ourselves in the position and say, if I had a 21-year-old, would I want that 21year-old -- would they go to school every day with a 13-year-old? It's too much of an age disparity.

THE COURT: Okay, thank you very much.

Attorney O'Donnell, do you have any questions in light of the Court's questions?

MS. O'DONNELL: Just one qualification.

REDIRECT EXAMINATION

24 BY MS. O'DONNELL:

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Q. Is it so much an age disparity as maturity

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- A. Yeah, as we talked earlier about the social, emotional, the development stages where kids are, they're just in very, very different places.
- Q. A 21-year-old is old enough to purchase alcohol?
  - A. Purchase alcohol, drive a car --
- Q. Eighteen-year-olds are old enough to die for their country and vote?
- A. Well, and can I add something to what we kind of discussed? I can't force an 18-year-old to come to school.
  - Q. Because of the compulsory and --
  - A. Correct.
- 15 | Q. -- mandatory --
- A. They're their own -- they have their own
  FERPA rights at that point. So you can put them
  there --
  - Q. What's a FERPA right?
    - A. They own their own rights to their own records. So under -- from 17 down, you have to get parent permission; from 18 and above, they own their own rights. So they can even --
      - Q. You don't send the grades to Mom and Dad?
      - A. Correct. And believe me, at college I get

the bill, but not the grades. So you asked earlier
about an unintended consequence: my concern would be
that you have more kids that wind up dropping out, not
leaving with their diploma, because that's what we've
seen.

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THE COURT: Thank you very much, sir.

Attorney McInerney, do you have any
questions in light of the Court's questions?

MS. MCINERNEY: No, I don't, Your
Honor.

THE COURT: Sir, thank you very much.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

THE COURT: You may step down.

And, Attorney O'Donnell, do you have any further evidence to present at this time?

MS. O'DONNELL: We have no further, we're going to rest. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you, Counselor.

MR. WALCZAK: Your Honor, we have two exhibits we would move into evidence.

THE COURT: Certainly, sir.

MR. WALCZAK: One is actually an oversight from before. It's Exhibit 1, which is just a 30(b)(6) notice which sets out the topics for the witnesses. It's kind of a housekeeping, there

So

1 | shouldn't be an objection to the exhibit.

THE COURT: Attorney O'Donnell, is

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4 MS. O'DONNELL: No.

5 THE COURT: Very well.

MR. WALCZAK: And the other would be 94, which is the Phoenix and McCaskey school profiles that we viewed with Ms. Heisey.

THE COURT: And I know, Attorney

O'Donnell, you raised an issue that those were downloaded off of the Internet, I guess yesterday?

MR. WALCZAK: Just part of it. 2013

and '14 was actually identified as an exhibit, 87. it's -- what was added to 94 was data that was downloaded actually yesterday.

THE COURT: Attorney O'Donnell?

MS. O'DONNELL: My concern with this exhibit is that it reflects information, as the witness testified, as Ms. Heisey testified, that's from the year prior to what's being reflected in these reports and I'm not sure if the Court took notice of that, and apparently was being cross-examined on information that's not current.

So to the extent that it's useful to you, I have no objection, I just don't think it's

- A. Last week was the first week -- actually -yeah, last week was the first week of professional
  development.
  - Q. And prior to your current position, where did you work?
    - A. I worked at Phoenix Academy.
  - Q. And how long were you employed at Phoenix Academy?
    - A. I was there for six years.
- 10 Q. And who was your employer during those six 11 years?
  - A. Phoenix Academy.
    - Q. What is your educational background?
  - A. I got my Bachelor's from Millersville
    University, elementary education, with an ESL
    certification.
    - Q. So you have a Bachelor's in elementary education; do you have a Bachelor's in secondary education?
- 20 A. I do not.

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- Q. Do you have any certification or degree in secondary education?
- 23 A. I do not.
- Q. And when you worked at Phoenix, were they aware of this fact?

- 1 A. Yes, they were.
  - Q. And do you have any specialized certifications?
    - A. My ESL certification.
    - Q. How long have you had that?
    - A. I've had that since 2009.
    - Q. And during the time that you worked at Phoenix, did Camelot manage the school on a day-to-day basis?
- 10 A. Yes.

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- Q. And did you have any prior teaching experience before coming to Phoenix Academy?
- A. No, I did not. It was a part-time position at an elementary school as a teacher's aide/ESL assistant.
  - Q. And so was working at Phoenix as an ESL teacher your first full-time position?
    - A. Yes, it was.
  - Q. Now, at Phoenix Academy are there any nonrefugee immigrant students who have limited or interrupted schooling --
    - A. Yes.
- Q. -- that you're aware of?
- 24 A. Yes.
- Q. And what countries would they be from?

- A. I believe we had one from Ethiopia, we've had children from Dominican Republic and Haitian children.
  - Q. And those are students who would be at the entering level of English proficiency?
    - A. Yes.

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- Q. And is the ESL program at Phoenix the same as the ESL program at McCaskey?
- A. I don't feel it as the same, that's just my opinion. I feel that the international school is a better placement for the entering students.
- Q. In what ways are the ESL programs at McCaskey and at Phoenix different?
- A. My understanding of the international school is that, first of all, they don't have an accelerated program. Phoenix has an accelerated program --
  - Q. And McCaskey is not?
- A. My understanding, no, it's not. As well as I was always under the impression that at the international school the entering students were in sheltered classes, as opposed to Phoenix they are not in sheltered-content classes. I also feel that I always thought that the teachers at the international school were certified in their content area, as well as they all had ESL certifications, and at Phoenix

there are just a few teachers who have ESL certifications.

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- Q. And do you know anything about the English proficiency level of the students in the international school at McCaskey? Do you know what level they are, whether they're entering or emergent or developing?
- A. I'm not quite sure of the levels. I was always -- I just thought they were all entering and possibly emerging students, but I'm not 100-percent sure.
- Q. Do you have any information about what their day is like at McCaskey in terms of whether those -- the entering-level students stay together in that model?
- A. I always thought it was a little small -- like considered a small learning community and that they did stay together, which made them feel more comfortable, that's what I understood.
- Q. Now, at Phoenix are the students grouped in -- as entering-level students in their content classes? Are they only entering students or is it a range of English -- of --
- A. No, it's a variety. There are various levels in their content classes and they're in there with students who are native speakers.

- 1 Q. That's in their content classes?
  - A. Yes.

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- Q. And what about in their ESL classes?
- A. They are pretty much -- as far as what I did was I would have the entering and emerging students.
  - Q. So you had two levels --
  - A. Yes, I did.
  - Q. -- of students --
  - A. Yes.
- Q. -- of English language learners at Phoenix.

And how much ESL instruction is provided at Phoenix?

- A. Well, direct instruction, that would -- I guess that came from me, obviously; that was basically 80 minutes.
- Q. Okay. And are there other differences with respect to staffing or coordination or services between the ESL program at McCaskey for entering-level students and the ESL program at Phoenix?
- A. I think as far as the staffing, I believe at the international school they have a para-educator on a regular basis, whereas at Phoenix they would only have the para-educator once a week.
- Q. And is there any -- are there any differences with regard to the coordination of

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- A. Well, we don't have a coordinator at Phoenix.
- Q. Aren't you the ESL coordinator at Phoenix?
- A. No. I'm the building contact person. I simply refer to myself as the ESL teacher, I was not the coordinator.
- Q. So you didn't have any supervisory functions over --
- A. No.
- Q. -- the other teachers?
- 12 A. No, I did not, no.
  - Q. And you weren't responsible in any way for programming at Phoenix --
- 15 | A. I --
- 16 Q. -- you were just a teacher?
  - A. I always saw myself as just a teacher. The School District of Lancaster has building contacts, so I was the building contact.
    - O. And what did that mean?
  - A. That pretty much meant that if Amber Hilt wanted something, if she wanted PINS (ph) report to be done, that would come to me and it would not go to Ms. Weathers. I was responsible for doing that, that's just an example. So she wouldn't send both of us or,

if you're counting Kelleher, she would not send information to all three of us, it would come to me.

- Q. Okay. And are there any other differences between McCaskey and Phoenix at schools that would impact immigrant entering-level students?
- A. Well, at international school it's less restrictive because they don't have the pat-down.
- Q. Okay. Are there any differences in teaching staff?
- A. As far as the teaching staff, as I stated, I believe at the international school all those teachers are certified in ESL as well as their content area.
- Q. Are there any other qualifications that they would have that wouldn't be -- for example, would you be able to teach at McCaskey?
  - A. No, I would not.

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- Q. And why is that?
- A. Because I am not -- I do not have a degree in high school communication arts.
- Q. And do all the teachers at McCaskey have -- are they certified in secondary education?
- A. I believe they would have to be, yes, or they would not be able to be teaching there.
- Q. Are there any other differences between McCaskey and Phoenix that would impact this particular

- group of students with regard to resources or technology?
  - A. Well, as far as resources, at international school they would definitely have more resources.

    They have laptop carts, which is a lot of laptops on a cart which can be taken from classroom to classroom, and at Phoenix Academy they do not have that.
    - Q. And are there small learning communities at Phoenix?
      - A. No.

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- Q. But there are at McCaskey?
- A. My understanding, yes.
- Q. At this past year was there any co-teaching at Phoenix?
  - A. Not that I -- not that I did, no.
  - Q. You mentioned at the international school is a sheltered instruction; is that correct?
    - A. That's my understanding, yes.
  - Q. And what would the Phoenix ESL program be if the students are in with a range of students, including native speakers, in content classes.
    - A. Well, I do direct instruction.
- 23 O. Okay, but what --
- 24 A. And --
- $25 \mid Q$ . -- about -- are they also -- are their

1 | content classes sheltered at Phoenix?

A. No.

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- Q. Okay. So why don't we talk about your particular responsibilities?
- 5 A. Okay.
  - Q. How many ESL classes did you teach at Phoenix?
    - A. I did two high school classes in the morning --
      - Q. And what level of English proficiency?
- 11 A. Entering -- they were entering and emerging 12 classes.
  - Q. And they were grouped together, both entering --
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 O. -- and emergent together --
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. -- in the same class? Okay.
  - A. And my third period consisted of resource for middle school, but I also did direct instruction because we were trying to make sure that the middle school kids were serviced as well, and then sixth period was a resource.
- Q. Okay. Can you explain what a resource period is?

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- A. Yes. A resource period for the sixth period, that was used with -- when there were ESL students who needed assistance in their classes. For instance, if somebody was struggling in science, they were allowed -- if they had science that period, they could come to my class and I could try and help them understand what they had to do.
- Q. And so you had one period for high school of that -- of the resource period, correct?
  - A. That's correct.
- Q. Okay. And during that period class, did you coordinate with the content teachers so that you were teaching them the curriculum -- you know, coordinating to teach the curriculum of that particular class, or would they just come to you?
- A. They would just come to me, because they were -- at times I might have a couple students who needed help in science and maybe I had other students that might need help in social studies, so they would just come to me. It was pretty much just like an open-door policy for sixth period resource.
- Q. Was there any formalized, you know, sort of protocol with the content teachers so that you would know what they were teaching that day, was there anything like that?

No, no. Α.

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- Q. Okay. And about approximately how many students would come to you in your high school resource period?
- It really varied on the semester. The first semester -- I'm referring to the year that just finished -- probably sixth period, sometimes seven to eight students, but then the second semester I probably would have like one or two. And it really varied on the day as well.
- And how would you know how many students you would have or how would you have those students -- how would those students be identified to you that would come to you?
- Α. They would just come. I mean, I didn't have a sign-in sheet, they would just come.
- O. Was there anyone that you contacted to let them know that you were available?
- Oh, that would be discussed with the team Α. The team leader would know what period I was leader. available for resource.
- O. And would this be called pull-out, what you're describing?
  - I guess it can be seen as pull-out, yes.
  - Ο. And did you provide any push-in?

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- 1 A. I did not, no.
  - Q. Okay.

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- A. I had -- for the first marking period, I think I was pushing in for math, and then that switched to my third-period resource and then I was also teaching. So it really depends on what semester we are referring to.
  - Q. So you had two periods where you provide direct ESL instruction and then you had one period where you were available if students wanted to come to you?
    - A. Yes, that's correct.
- Q. Okay. And were there other ESL teachers at Phoenix?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 O. And who were they?
- 17 A. Ms. Weathers is an ESL teacher and Mr.
- 18 | Kelleher is also an ESL teacher.
- 19 Q. Do you know when they were certified?
- 20 A. I think it was 2013, I think.
- 21 O. Both of them?
- A. I believe -- yes, because I believe they took classes together.
- Q. So prior to that you were the only ESL --
- 25 A. Yes.

Q. -- certified person? Okay.

And what were their responsibilities?
What did Ms. Weathers do?

- A. Ms. Weathers was -- pretty much she had some of her own classes that she was teaching and she would also push into various classes.
  - O. And what class did she teach?
- A. She did develop -- primarily she was able to teach the developing students.
  - Q. When you say developing students --
- 11 | A. That's the third --
- 12 Q. -- what is that in terms --
- 13 A. -- level --
- 14 O. -- of the levels?
- 15 A. That would be the third level of students.
- 16 O. So that's Level 3?
- 17 A. Yes.

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- Q. Okay. And did she teach a content course?
- A. Well, it's -- from what I understand here today, it's communication arts.
- Q. Okay. And that would include -- that would be Level 3 or all different levels?
  - A. No, it was Level 3 one of her periods.
- Q. And did she also -- did she do any push-in or pull-out?

A. She did push-in.

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Q. And do you know when she provided that?

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A. I believe it was her first period, as well as her fifth period, that she did push-in.

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Q. And for which students did she provide that, any level of English language learner?

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A. Yes.

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Q. So her first period would have been a period where you were teaching ESL instruction --

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A. Yes.

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Q. -- that you were providing that?

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A. That's correct.

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Q. Okay. And how did that work, how did the push-in work? Did students approach her; was that formalized?

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out who needed help, there were times that teachers
would speak to me or Ms. Weathers, and then we would

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would speak to me or Ms. Weathers, and then we would pretty much determine who needed the most help and

Well, it was something that if we would find

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that's how Ms. Weathers would go in. For instance,

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she was helping out in the math class because there was a student who wanted to graduate, was going to be

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graduating, but he was struggling in math class. So Ms. Weathers -- that was towards the end, that pretty

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much was probably the second semester -- she was

1 helping him on a regular basis.

- Q. Okay. So she had the two periods as well as she taught communication arts?
  - A. Yes.

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- Q. Okay. And so with regard to Ms. Weathers, do you know how many students she provided push-in for; do you know which classes she covered?
  - A. No, I'm really not sure.
  - O. And what about Mr. Kelleher?
- A. Mr. Kelleher was teaching social studies.
- 11 Q. Did he provide any direct ESL instruction to 12 students?
  - A. No.
  - Q. Okay. And in his class, was that a range of students in his class in terms of their level, their English proficiency level in social studies class?
    - A. Yes, that's my understanding.
  - Q. Okay. And how many English language learners are at Phoenix this past school year?
    - A. Pretty much it varied from 90 to 101.
  - Q. Okay. And when you talk about a caseload for English language learners, what was the caseload ratio of teachers to students at Phoenix?
- A. I always saw it as 50-50, Ms. Weathers and I.

- 1 Q. So 1 to 50?
  - A. Yes --
  - Q. Okay.

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- A. -- yes.
- Q. And what about the skills prep class, did you provide services in that skills prep class --
  - A. No.
    - Q. -- at Phoenix?
      - A. I'm not familiar with skills prep.
- 10 Q. Do you know what it is?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 Q. Do you know if it's --
- A. I think it has to do with math and CA

  classes to try and help the students, but I've never

  seen the program, so no.
  - O. Is that an ESL class?
- 17 A. Not that I know, no.
- 18 Q. Is that computer-based?
- A. I believe so, yes. It is held in the computer lab, so I would have to say yes.
  - Q. Several students have testified through this hearing that they were sitting in class with native speakers, they didn't understand anything that was going on and they were not receiving accommodations.
- 25 Would that surprise you?

A. As far as the accommodations, teachers were supposed to be doing accommodations. So it really varies on what type of accommodations we're discussing. Like exactly what are you referring to as far as accommodations?

Q. To ensure that the English language learners, the entering-level students in particular, were able to access the curriculum and the content?

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- A. I think it would be difficult at times for the teachers to remember best ESL practices because they weren't certified in ESL. So I guess it wouldn't surprise me.
- Q. And do you think it was at all difficult for the teachers to the accelerated program to make accommodations for entering-level English language learners?
- A. I think it was difficult for them to actually remember exactly, you know, an accommodation isn't speaking louder; that's not an accommodation, just slow it down. I think there were certain things that possibly some teachers that aren't familiar with ESL would forget. There are things that I just do naturally, I don't even realize that I'm doing them; it just comes naturally from experience. So I think it would be difficult for some teachers, yes.

- Q. Do you have any opinion about providing this

  -- these accommodations and providing enough support

  for students who are entering-level limited -- who

  have limited schooling, these entering-level students

  in content classes?
  - A. Do I have an opinion on that?
  - O. Yes.

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- A. It's difficult. It's difficult to work with students who have limited formal schooling, it is a challenge.
- Q. And do you think it's more difficult in an accelerated model --
  - A. Yes.
  - O. -- to provide that?
- 15 A. Yes.
- Q. And why is that?
  - A. I think just because it seems to -- I don't know, possibly you think accelerated, you think, oh, my gosh, this is going faster, for them you would want them to be in an extended program and things would have to be slowed down. That's how I view it. So, yes, it is difficult.
    - Q. What do you think are the particular needs of students who are entering-level, limited-schooling English language learners that we've been talking

about here in this court?

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A. I think they need things. I think they need more assistance, more time to learn things, possibly have not just one teacher would be wonderful. There could be an aide in the classroom as well, and not to be in with various levels. I think it's so much -- their anxiety level is lower when they're amongst students that they feel comfortable with.

For example, Ms. Heisey spoke earlier Anyemu had attended summer school, I about Anyemu. believe the refugee program, I believe it was twice, but he really did not attend the after-school program; he had the opportunity, but he did not attend the after-school program. And it just makes me wonder, did he not attend the after-school program because he realized it wasn't just for refugee students? that's just me wondering. I'm not sure why he didn't attend the after-school program, but he did always come to the refugee program. So is it because he felt more comfortable that he knew it was a refugee program and he felt that he was like the peers in the refugee I'm not sure, that's just something I program? wondered.

Q. With respect to ESL instruction, do you believe that these entering-level students who have

limited or interrupted schooling need more support, need more ESL instruction than 80 minutes?

- A. Oh, my gosh, yes. Yes, definitely.
- O. And why is that?

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- A. Because if they're limited even in their own language, if they've had interrupted schooling in their own country, then they haven't developed a strong foundation in their own language. So it's going to be that much harder for them to try and develop a foundation in the English language.
- Q. And while you were at Phoenix over the sixyear period, did you provide accommodations during testing of English language learners in their subject or content classes?
- A. Only if the teacher would ask if they could send a student down, but it wasn't always feasible for me because I did teach classes as well.
- Q. And were there any accommodation -- any translation with respect to standardized tests that you were aware of?
  - A. Yes.
  - Q. And what languages would those be?
- A. Definitely Spanish and Nepali, and I believe at one time there was another one, but I'm not quite sure of what it was.

- Q. So it would only be limited to those languages.
  - A. Yes.
  - O. And --

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- A. That have occurred, yes.
- Q. And were interpretation and translation services provided to English language learners at Phoenix?
- A. If we have to call the language line, yes. I've only used the language time -- probably in the six years I was there, I probably only used it three times. I made sure that I would call Churchwill (ph) services when I had the business card if I felt that they needed translation. And sometimes I used their peers. And often enough, I did use Google translator.
  - Q. And how often did you use Google Translate?
- A. I would say I would use it probably every day. There were times that I wanted to -- for Khadidja, for example. If I had to communicate with Khadidja, I would use it on a regular basis with her.
  - Q. Did you use it with every student?
- A. If I had to, sure. But it wasn't on a regular basis with every student.
- Q. How often did other teachers use any of those resources?

- A. I'm not sure. But I -- I mean, I wasn't in their classroom, but I remember other teachers mentioning that they've used it.
  - Q. And to your knowledge, did the district translate any documents for English language learners?
  - A. Yes. I recall seeing the parent form that goes home. That would come to me directly. And that was translated in whatever language was needed.
  - Q. And were report cards translated? Were notices about parent activities translated, to your knowledge?
    - A. No, not to my knowledge.
  - Q. And what about electronic dictionaries?
    Were they provided in all classes at Phoenix?
  - A. I'm not familiar about electronic dictionaries. I was provided various dictionaries in various languages but I don't know anything about electronic dictionaries.
  - Q. To your knowledge, how often were communications to parents translated?
    - A. I've --

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- O. Just the notification letter?
- A. Yes. Yeah. So I'm not quite sure.
- Q. Okay. And were there any other parent academies, anything that you're aware of that took

place at Phoenix?

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- A. Well, at Phoenix, they would have -- they do hold several functions. I think the beginning of the school year, they have something called fall fest.

  And they've had several other ones. I'm not quite sure what they were, but, yes, they have held them.
- Q. And would those documents be provided in a native language for a parent?
  - A. I don't believe so.
- Q. And with respect to extracurriculars, based on your observations, did most immigrant English language learners who attended Phoenix participate in any clubs or extracurricular activity?
  - A. No.
  - Q. And why was that?
- A. I don't think they knew that they could possibly participate in any activity. So, no, not at all. If -- I can recall one student who happens to be an immigrant. He played baseball but that's because he came to us directly from McCaskey. So he already knew the system. He knew what his choices were.
- Q. And with respect to your being an ESL teacher, was someone in the ESL department overseeing you? Did --
  - A. Yes.

- Q. And who would that be?
- A. Amber Hilt.
- Q. And how often were you observed by her or by any member of the ESL department of the school
- 5 district of Lancaster? How often in a year were
- 6 you --
- 7 A. Once --
- 8 Q. -- observed?
- 9 A. -- by Kaitlin Bartlett and possibly twice in 10 the summer refugee program by Amber Hilt.
- 11 Q. When you say once, was that over the six 12 year period?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 O. And that was in 2014?
- 15 A. Yes. I believe that's when it was.
- Q. Okay. And did that result in any formal documentation?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. She provided you with feedback --
- 20 A. Yeah. She did.
- 21 Q. -- concerning her observation?
- 22 A. She did, yes.
- Q. And did you receive any other feedback with regard to classroom observation?
- 25 A. Other feedback from --

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- A. Yes.
- Q. And what were those trainings?
- A. The trainings came from the district. So it pretty much involved best practices, demographics and a variety of other things.
- Q. And did you provide those in 2011 when you first got there?
- A. No. No, not that I can recall. There wasn't -- when we first got there, I don't really remember being guided very well. I think there was a disconnect between the district and Phoenix. At least that's my opinion. And I don't remember speaking to anyone from the ESL department back then.
- Q. And how long were the trainings that you provided?
- A. They really varied. They could range from 20 to 30 minutes.
- Q. Okay. And who would decide what the content would be of those trainings? Did you develop a PowerPoint for --
- A. No. I did not develop a PowerPoint. That came to me directly from the district. And I was allowed to tweak it as I felt the need.
  - O. And do you --
    - A. And that's something Ms. Weathers and I

1 | would work on as well.

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- Q. And did you believe that those trainings were sufficient to ensure that content teachers were able to make effective accommodations in the classroom?
- A. No, not sufficient because it's difficult for a content teacher to actually remember best practices like I stated earlier. For me, best practices usually -- it just comes naturally. And I feel that I learn more and more every single year that I'm teaching and that I'm working with ESL students.
- Q. And with regard to your particular position, were you in the content classroom very often? Were you in -- over the past year, for example, were you in many of the classes that the children would take who were entering level students?
  - A. No. I didn't have time, no.
- Q. Okay. Did you give any homework while you were at Phoenix?
  - A. No, I did not.
- Q. Okay. Did you know, did students receive homework from their content teachers --
  - A. That I'm not sure of.
- Q. -- (indiscernible) classes? And how was the ESL program at Phoenix assessed to your knowledge?

- A. To my knowledge, I don't know. I don't even know -- I don't know that it was assessed. I have no clue. I don't know.
  - Q. Are you familiar with the ESL department internal review surveys --
    - A. Yes, I am --
  - Q. -- were done? Can you explain what that was and how that was used?
  - A. Okay. I think basically that is a form that I had to fill out and I would put the positive of the program as well as things that needed to be worked on.
    - Q. And did you yourself fill that out?
    - A. Yes.

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- Q. And how often did you do that?
- A. I think that was always at the beginning of the school year. So it would have been once.
- Q. And what did you do in completing that survey? What did you consider when you sat there to fill out the survey?
- A. I think I pretty much analyzed. I really reflected and considered the needs overall of the program. Like, for instance, more staffing. That's something that I had listed there before. And as well as technology. Like, we needed more technology.
  - Q. And what, if anything, happened to the

information that you would provide? You did it on an annual basis beginning in 2011? Did you do it every year?

- A. You know, I really don't remember 2011. I'm not sure if that was ever even provided for me. I'm not -- I don't remember filling one out.
  - O. So you don't remember when you started --
  - A. No, I don't.
  - Q. -- doing the surveys.
- A. I don't.

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- Q. Okay. And in completing the surveys, did you look at any access scores?
- A. Yes. I would analyze the access scores usually at the very beginning because I like to discuss the scores with the students. I tried -- if time permitted, I would try to bring in individual students to quickly show them what their scores were. I wanted to make them aware, fully aware of their scores so that they would know what they scored and what they needed to work on. So it was something as far as I think when I would look at the scores, as far as the grows and glows, I pretty -- the internal review, I pretty much just would always analyze it as -- like, what would -- if we had a magic wand, what would Phoenix Academy need to make the program better.

And that was pretty much like I already stated was the technology aspect of it as well as more staffing.

That would have been wonderful.

- Q. And when you say that you looked at the access scores, you're saying on an individual basis for the students? You would look at the 90 -- you know, at raw data of the access scores?
- A. Yes. The raw data. I pretty much tried to -- I would try and call them up during my GGI or my prep time and show them quickly what the scores were.
  - Q. So you did this on an individual basis --
  - A. Yes. I --

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- Q. -- not on a building basis?
- A. No. I did it on an individual basis when I would discuss the scores with the students once I got the hard copies of them.
- Q. Okay. And once you completed that survey, was there a meeting to discuss the review, the survey?
- A. Yes. I think there was a meeting between myself, Ms. Hilt and Ms. Heisey.
- Q. And when would that occur? After you completed it or --
- A. I don't know how much after. I think I had to submit that first thing in October. I don't know how long it took for us to meet and discuss it. I

1 really don't know. I don't remember.

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- Q. And how long were those meetings?
- A. I don't remember them being too long. Maybe 20 minutes or so. Not that long.
- Q. And at that point, did you do any analysis or talk about building level analysis of access scores or anything like that?
- A. I think just pretty much that the writing scores and reading scores were low. Try and work on that.
- Q. And what, if anything, happened as a result of the annual internal survey that was done, this process? Did anything change? Was there -- as a result of the survey, were there ever any changes?
  - A. No, not that I recall, no.
- Q. And they didn't provide you with any disaggregated data from the district that -- right?
  - A. No.
  - Q. They just gave you the access scores.
  - A. Access scores. Just the access scores, yes.
- Q. Okay. Now based on your experience, do you think that the international school is a better placement for entering level ELL immigrant students with limited schooling?
  - A. I do for the reasons that I already stated.

But then again, I have never worked at the international school. This is all based on my impression and my thought of what the international school consists of.

- Q. And where does that impression come from? How do you know it?
- A. You know, I think there's some type of miscommunication. It's very interesting because I've spoken to teachers to ask is every teacher at the international school ESL certified. And I've gotten different responses. So I think there's a misunderstanding going on as far as the international school whether every teacher there is ESL certified or not. I thought they were.
- Q. Are you clear that the students at the international school, though, are all entering level students? Because that's -- are you clear on that --
  - A. I've --

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- Q. -- rather than a range of students?
- A. Yes. I did -- because I've had students before and I've asked them were you in the international school and they'll say, yes, Miss, I was there. But -- so I thought that they were, yes. I thought they were all basically one -- level one and two.

- Q. And are you clear that they were in sheltered instruction? Was that also clear? As opposed to immersion where you had a range of English language learners in the content classes where you're in with native speakers?
  - A. Right. That was my understanding that it was a sheltered instruction type model.
  - Q. And you're familiar -- so that was more of a sheltered instruction and Phoenix is more the immersion. Is that right?
  - A. Primarily for content, yes. Except for when they were working with Mr. Kelleher (ph). But in Mr. Kelleher's class, there were a variety of levels and native speakers as well.
    - O. So it still wasn't sheltered in his class?
    - A. No. Guess not.

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- Q. Okay. Do you think that the program at Phoenix as you know it where you worked for the last six years is effective for immigrant students in ensuring that they can overcome language barriers and access the curriculum, the subject matter.
- A. Not the first year students, no. I do not believe that they should be in there simply because I feel that if they're in sheltered classes, they would gain more from them.

- Q. And do you think that they would benefit from being only with entering level students rather than a mix of levels?
  - A. I do, because I feel that their anxiety level would be lowered when they are with students that are at their same level at least for the first year.
  - Q. And do you believe they would benefit from additional ESL instruction, direct instruction?
    - A. Yes, definitely.
- MS. MCINERNEY: That's all the questions that I have at this time.
- THE COURT: Thank you very much, counselor.
- 15 Attorney O'Donnell, you may cross-
- MS. O'DONNELL: Thank you very much.
- 18 CROSS-EXAMINATION
- 19 BY MS. O'DONNELL:
  - Q. Good afternoon. How are you?
- 21 A. Hello. I'm doing well.
- 22 Q. I understand you've taken a new job.
- 23 A. Yes, I have.

examine the witness.

- Q. Where -- and you're in elementary education
- 25 now?

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1 A. Yes, I am.

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- Q. Are you an ESL teacher?
- A. It is ESL sheltered. And once again, there
  seems to be a miscommunication with sheltered at York
  City. My understanding --
  - Q. Well, let's just get there --
  - A. Okay. That's wonderful, yes.
    - Q. -- because --
    - A. That's fine.
- Q. So you're -- when do you start your York
  City employment?
- 12 A. Today is my first day. My students are there today.
- Q. Oh, that's nice. And what grades do you teach in?
- 16 A. First.
  - Q. Okay. And then -- just the first grade?
- 18 A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. Were you ever asked to get your secondary certification while you --
- 21 A. No.
- 22 | Q. -- were at Phoenix?
- A. I was not. No, I was not.
- Q. Okay. And just to -- I don't know. I guess pound a dead horse. You've never taught at McCaskey

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- 19 O.
- 20 21
- 2.2 certification?
- 23 I -- yes. I believe it was 2013. Α.
- 24 O. Okay. So before then, you were alone. Two
- 25 more came on?

In what sense?

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- Α. Yes.
- And is that because there was an Q. Okay. influx of students with a need for ESL?

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- Α. Probably yes.
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- Ο. Okay. And how was your performance rated over time? Were folks generally happy with the work that you were doing at Phoenix?
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- Α. I believe so, yes.
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- Ο. Okay. Was it your job as the ESL lead to evaluate your students' needs in regard to translation for standard testing?

revamp the ESL program each year and try to make it --

testing Ms. Heisey and I would discuss, yes.

to make sure that it met the students' needs?

To revamp the ESL --

work together with Ms. Heisey?

That's something that for standardized

Okay. And did you work with Ms. Heisey to

Work with her and have -- how? In what

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- I've met with Ms. Heisey several times, yes. Α.

Well, let me -- you tell me. Did you ever

- Okay. And would you consider your meetings 0.
- to be a joint effort to -- at any point to improve the

But work with her how?

- 1 students' needs and, in particular, with respect to 2 ESL?
  - A. Possibly, yeah. I guess you could say that.
  - Q. Okay. Do you know whether or not coteaching at Phoenix is available?
    - A. It has been in years past.
    - Q. And would students necessarily know that they were being co-taught?
      - A. I can't answer that. I have no idea.
- Q. Did you explain it to them if you needed to co-teach with someone?
- 12 A. I've never co-taught. No. That's something
  13 Ms. Weathers has done. I've never done it.
  - Q. Incidentally, you indicated that your student to teacher ratio was split with Ms. Weathers?
  - A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Okay. And that was 50/50?
- 18 A. Yes.

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- 19 Q. And did you prepare her schedule?
- 20 A. No.
  - Q. Okay. Did you ever have a occasion to go out to Kesung's home?
- 23 A. Yes.
- Q. Okay. And what did he express to you at that time, if anything?

- A. He said. These are his words. "No school.

  No school." And he said "Work. Work."
  - Q. All right.

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- A. That's it.
- Q. And then you just walked away?
- A. We pretty much gave him the letter. I went along with the home visitor. We gave him the letter and I told him, "Give this to case worker, Kesung, your case worker" because we wanted her to call.
- Q. Right. Would you say that you were the lead person deciding ESL hours at Phoenix?
  - A. Deciding what? Hours?
  - Q. Deciding the hours, yes.
- A. Deciding the hours? Of who?
- 15 0. The students.
- 16 A. Oh, no. The counselor pretty much schedule the students.
  - Q. Okay. Did you ever speak with your students about their opportunity to join clubs and other activities at McCaskey?
    - A. No.
    - Q. Okay. Why not?
- A. Because I wasn't aware of the opportunities.
- Q. Had you ever looked at a McCaskey curriculum quide?

1 A. No.

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- Q. No? Okay. And with respect to the professional development information that was provided to you by McCaskey, you said that they were already prepared lessons, that you just needed to deliver?
  - A. Yes. PowerPoint --
- Q. And do you have a recollection of whether they were delivered to you in hour long segments?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And you signed off on them that you delivered --
- 12 A. Yes.
- Q. -- the entire hour?
- A. But once again, it's like I said, I was allowed to tweak them.
- 16 Q. So you tweaked them down to 20 minutes?
- A. We didn't play the games, the Bingo games.

  I didn't feel the need. Yes.
- 19 Q. Okay.
- MS. O'DONNELL: All right. Thank you.
- THE WITNESS: You're welcome.
- 22 THE COURT: Thank you very much,
- 23 counselor.
- 24 Attorney McInerney, do you have any
- 25 redirect?

Page 83 1 MS. MCINERNEY: Two quick questions. 2 REDIRECT EXAMINATION BY MS. MCINERNEY: 3 Ο. Ms. Ortiz --5 Α. Yes. -- students would know whether you were in 6 Ο. 7 the classroom, correct? 8 Α. They would know me, yes. Yes. 9 Ο. And with regard to the international school, 10 were there experience of any of the siblings of your 11 students who went to McCaskey so that you knew a 12 little bit about it --13 Α. Yes. -- because --14 Ο. 15 Α. Yes. They had siblings there. MS. MCINERNEY: That's all that I have. 16 17 Thank you. 18 THE COURT: Does --19 MS. O'DONNELL: Nothing further, Your 2.0 Honor. 21 And there's been some THE COURT: 2.2 representation that if you were walking down the 23 street in Lancaster and you told somebody you went to

Phoenix Academy, that would be looked down on as

opposed to McCaskey, that there was a general

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reputation in the community. Is that your understanding?

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THE WITNESS: Yes. That would be my understanding. I think a lot of times people think of Phoenix and possibly because it used to be -- years ago, before Camelot came, that's where a lot of the school district kids who were struggling, pretty much they went to Phoenix. I think there is a misunderstanding in the community.

THE COURT: So you think it's actually
-- Phoenix school is much better than what the
community believes it to be.

THE WITNESS: I think the community sees it as where a lot of the bad kids tend to go to even though it's not a burly. But I think the community does have a misunderstanding of what Phoenix really is.

THE COURT: And how would you describe what Phoenix really is?

THE WITNESS: I think Phoenix is a place -- there's definitely a place for Phoenix for students who are overage, under credit, who have tried McCaskey and it hasn't worked for them, then I think it's wonderful for them to have an opportunity to try and catch up on their credits and have a possibility

School starts Monday a week. And I'm not sure whether counsel with their written submissions are also going to want the opportunity to argue. If you do, we could have the submissions due on -- by Thursday morning and we could argue this case at 9:30 on Thursday morning. That's completely up to counsel. I'd be glad to hear argument together with your submissions. The problem with that scheduling is I wouldn't have much of an opportunity to review your submissions before the argument.

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MS. O'DONNELL: I -- may I --

THE COURT: Certainly.

MS. O'DONNELL: So I think I would prefer to have you have as much time as possible to review everything you think you need to review in order to make a most reasoned decision possible. And if that means skipping oral argument, I'll accept that.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. WALCZAK: Actually, Judge, I didn't hear what Ms. O'Donnell said. It's our fault but -THE COURT: She does not want the presentation of oral argument to interfere with me having sufficient time to review everything that's been submitted and prepare a reasoned and scholarly

- and right decision. I'm (indiscernible) humor.
- MR. WALCZAK: Your Honor, I don't think
- 3 | we feel like we need argument after the submissions.
- 4 But it might be helpful if we could do closings
- 5 | tonight. And that might be helpful in helping the
- 6 Court understand how or at least each side used the
- 7 | evidence that has (indiscernible).
- 8 THE COURT: How would that aid me
- 9 beyond your written submissions?
- 10 MR. WALCZAK: Because our written
- 11 submissions are not going to come in, I guess, for at
- 12 least a few days. And that would give Your Honor a
- couple of days to ponder at least how we have used the
- 14 evidence.
- 15 THE COURT: Okay. And how long did you
- 16 | wish for closing arguments?
- MR. WALCZAK: Fifteen minutes.
- 18 THE COURT: Very well. Attorney
- 19 | O'Donnell?
- 20 MS. O'DONNELL: I actually don't wish
- 21 | to present a closing. I'll waive mine because I'd
- 22 | rather have my argument.
- THE COURT: But you don't want to give
- 24 your 15 minutes over to Mr. Walczak here.
- MS. O'DONNELL: No. I definitely don't

(Recessed at 5:38 p.m.; reconvened at 5:43 p.m.)

1 THE CLERK: All rise. The United 2 States District Court began its session, the Honorable Edward P. Smith. 3 THE COURT: You may be seated. Thank 5 you. The Court is called to order. All parties 6 previously present are once again present. 7 Counsel, I don't know what your 8 discussion was about but do you wish to make closing argument? 10 MR. WALCZAK: Your Honor, we, like 11 college soccer coach used to say that I have a 12 profound insight into the obvious. And it's quite 13 obvious to me that (indiscernible). So we will waive 14 our (indiscernible) closing --15 THE COURT: Oh, and I didn't mean it to 16 be that way. But I just assumed that the written 17 submissions will be so excellent that anything you 18 might have been able to say orally here will be 19 forever --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You may have been referring to us, Your Honor, as -- of not discouraging --

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MR. WALCZAK: So we will waive our closing today and focus our attention on the written submissions. We do not believe that we need oral

.	argument but, of course, if Your Honor would find it
	helpful, we would certainly be happy to come up here
	and present oral argument. Our proposal would be that
	we would get you written submissions by 9 o'clock on
	Thursday morning. Is that fine?

THE COURT: Attorney O'Donnell, do you believe you can make 9 o'clock Thursday morning?

MS. O'DONNELL: Yes. I just -- I have an issue with transcripts. I need to get them delivered. But I can order those, I suppose -- I haven't been getting them on a daily basis. So I'll need to have that in order --

THE COURT: Yes. 'Cause we do know --

MS. O'DONNELL: -- that I could --

THE COURT: -- they're available.

MS. O'DONNELL: -- prepare my

submission, yes.

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THE COURT: Very well. Yeah. That shouldn't be any issue at all, correct.

All right. Is there anything else before we adjourn?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you for holding this hearing on this expedited schedule.

24 THE COURT: Well, I do want to commend 25 all of you for an outstanding job. It's a very

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1	interesting issue. I look forward to your written
2	submissions.
3	Have safe trips home and have a good
4	night.
5	MS. O'DONNELL: Thank you very much,
6	Your Honor.
7	MS. MCINERNEY: Thank you.
8	MR. WALCZAK: Thank you, Your Honor.
9	THE CLERK: All rise.
10	(Court is adjourned)
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1	1	CERTIFICATIONS
2	2	
3	3	We, Sherri L. Breach, Tracey Williams and Lisa
4	4	Beck, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true
5	5	and accurate record of the proceedings.
6	6	
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		Sherri L. Breach
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12		AAERT Certified Electronic Reporter & Transcriber
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		TRACEY WILLIAMS
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22	20	Lisa Beck (CET**D-486)
23	21	AAERT Certified Electronic Transcriber
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	23	Date: August 23, 2016
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