

over the years, then court documents signaling he would now represent Hunter Biden.

Later Tuesday, prosecutors filed a response insisting they hadn't reneged on the terms of the plea agreement. They said defense attorneys fumbled when they said in court that the younger Biden at first intended to plead guilty because the diversion agreement on the gun charge included a provision granting him immunity from future prosecution on any crimes resulting from his activities during that time. But that clause wasn't in the separate plea agreement, prompting questions from the judge, who refused to sign off on it.

"This was a problem entirely of their own making and not one that resulted from the drafting of the proposed plea or diversion agreements," assistant special counsels Leo Wise and Derek Hines wrote in the filing.

The back-and-forth Tuesday was an extension of disagreements between prosecutors and defense lawyers that spilled into public view at a hearing last month, when Hunter Biden had been expected to plead guilty to two misdemeanor tax counts. Under questions from the judge about both sides' understanding of the agreements—including whether the government expected to bring any further charges against him—Hunter Biden reversed course, pleaded not guilty, and left the deal in limbo.

Weiss's team and defense lawyers kept trying to shore up the agreement during the weeks after the July 26 hearing, but they couldn't overcome differences about the extent of the immunity from potential future prosecution Hunter Biden would receive, a person familiar with the talks said. Weiss regarded the plea agreement as a draft that could be changed, even though it had been signed by one of his top prosecutors, the person said.

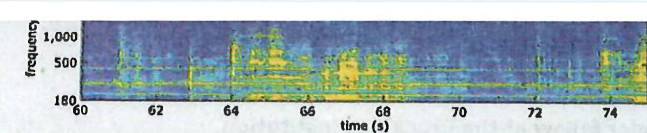
In Tuesday's filing, prosecutors considered defense proposals "but did not believe they were in the best interests of the United States" and submitted counteroffers that Hunter Biden's team rejected.

ing brain surgery. Though less polished than the band's version, the reconstructed tune was recognizable.

The study was published Tuesday in the journal PLOS Biology.

The ability to re-create complex musical elements from brain-activity patterns advances the development of therapeutic technologies to help patients regain the ability to communicate.

"It's very exciting. What they're showing is that they can get pretty high performance with a relatively low



The reconstructions from neural activity (bottom three panels) are visually similar to the original song (top panel).

amount of data," said Dr. Edward Chang, a neurosurgeon at the University of California, San Francisco's Weill Institute for Neurosciences who studies music and language perception. Chang wasn't involved in the study but has previously worked with the study authors.

As computer models and artificial intelligence have become more sophisticated, similar studies using brain-computer interfaces—devices that interact with the brain—have re-created images and produced simple language from neural data.

Last year, Elon Musk's

## Missouri Court Upholds Truancy Law

By SHANNON NAJMABADI

The Missouri Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld a law that allows parents to be jailed if their children don't attend school regularly, which the court defined as every day class is in session.

The litigation centered on two single mothers in Lebanon, Mo., who were sentenced to jail after their elementary-school-age children each missed about 15 days of class in the 2021-22 school year. The mothers called in to explain some of the absences, but officials at the Lebanon R-III School District, a southwestern Missouri district with about 4,500 students, referred both to prosecutors.

The district's handbook, which parents must acknowledge reading, says students should maintain an attendance rate of at least 90% to prepare children for adulthood and professional life and ensure continuity of learning.

State law, however, is more vague.

Missouri's compulsory education statute requires children to attend school on a "regular basis," which attorneys for the Lebanon mothers

argued is unconstitutionally vague.

The mothers weren't told that illnesses, even when called in by a parent, were counted as unverified absences unless a doctor's note was presented, their attorneys argued.

"Lot of you all have had kids in school. Nobody thinks that they are going to be prosecuted for this," said Ellen Flottman, the appellate public defender who argued the two mothers' cases before the state Supreme Court.

The Missouri Attorney General's office said that even minor offenses are violations of the law, and that the school district followed up with the parents as absences accrued.

In its decision, written by Judge Robin Ransom, the court said that based on common understanding, "no Missouri parent would conclude attendance 'on a regular basis' means anything less than having their child go to school on those days the school is in session."

The court acknowledged the implication of its decision "if taken to the extreme" but said prosecutors and school officials have discretion not to

enforce marginal cases.

"This Court is bound by its duty 'to ascertain the intent of the legislature from the language used and to consider the words used in their plain and ordinary meaning,'" Ransom wrote.

Five Supreme Court judges concurred with Ransom. A final judge didn't participate.

The decision comes as school attendance rates have plummeted since the pandemic. Chronic absenteeism—which most education experts equate to missing about 18 days in a 180-day school year—disrupts learning for students and their peers, if teachers frequently need to revisit past material.

More than 40 states have some kind of truancy statute that penalizes parents or students for chronic absenteeism, through penalties that can include fines, jail time, taking driver's licenses or referrals to child-welfare agencies.

Madeline Sieren, a spokeswoman for the attorney general's office, said, "We're pleased with the court's decision, as it recognized the importance of education for Missouri's children."

Jacy Overstreet, a district spokeswoman, previously said the district involves the court system as a last resort. She didn't respond to a request for comment Tuesday.

Flottman declined to comment.

### Parents can be jailed if their children don't attend school regularly.