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BEFORE THE
PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING
Sh'eh Wheef Shu-Neen
August 20, 2014
11:00 a.m.
Isleta Youth Recreation Center
Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico

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APPEARANCES

COMMISSIONERS:

- MS. CAROLYN SHEARMAN, Chair
- MR. EUGENE GANT, Vice Chair
- MR. VINCE BERGMAN, Secretary
- MS. MILLIE POGNA
- MR. J. TYSON PARKER
- MS. CARMIE TOULOUSE

STAFF:

- MR. MATT PAHL, Interim Director, Charter Schools Division
- MR. ED WOODD, Education Administrator, Charter Schools Division

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1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Ladies and
2 gentlemen, it's 11:00, and we need to begin. I call
3 back into session this hearing before the Public
4 Education Commission. I want to be sure that
5 everyone can hear. Our reporter -- can you hear all
6 right?

7 THE REPORTER: So far.

8 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Please, if we
9 could ask everyone to be very careful about rattling
10 papers and that sort of thing so that we can hear
11 everything that's said.

12 Let me begin with a general description of
13 the proceedings. This meeting is being conducted
14 pursuant to New Mexico Statutes Annotated, Title 22,
15 Section 8B6J2009. The purpose of the community
16 input hearings that will be held from August 18th
17 through August 21st, 2014, is to obtain information
18 from the applicants and to receive community input
19 to assist the Public Education Commission in its
20 decision whether to grant the proposed charter
21 applications. According to this section of the law,
22 the Commission may appoint a subcommittee of no
23 fewer than three members to hold a public hearing.
24 According to law, these hearings are being
25 transcribed by a professional court reporter, who is

1 here.

2 At this point, I will ask our Secretary to
3 have a roll call to be sure we have enough members
4 for this hearing.

5 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner Pogna?

6 COMMISSIONER POGNA: Here.

7 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner

8 Toulouse?

9 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Present.

10 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner Gant?

11 COMMISSIONER GANT: Here.

12 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner

13 Shearman?

14 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Here.

15 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner

16 Parker?

17 COMMISSIONER PARKER: Here.

18 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner

19 Bergman is here. We have six members present.

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: The total time
21 allocated to each application is 90 minutes, which
22 shall be timed to ensure an equitable opportunity to
23 present applications. And I have asked Vice Chair
24 Gant to be our official timekeeper.

25 During the hearing, the Commission will

1 allow community input about the charter application.
2 The time for public comments will be limited to 20
3 minutes. If you wish to speak regarding the
4 application, please sign in before the presentation
5 begins. I will just remind you the sign-in sheet is
6 there by the door. If you wish to speak, please
7 indicate on that sign-in sheet. The Commission
8 Chair, based on the number of requests to comment,
9 will allocate time to those wishing to speak. If
10 there are a large number of supporters or opponents,
11 they are asked to select a speaker to represent the
12 common interest. We will try to allocate an
13 equitable amount of time to represent the community
14 accurately.

15 The Commission will follow the following
16 process for each community input hearing. The
17 Commission will ask each applicant or group to
18 present at the table in front. They will be given
19 20 minutes to present their application in the
20 manner they deem appropriate. The Commission will
21 not accept written documentation from the applicants
22 at this time, but the applicant may use exhibits to
23 describe their school, if necessary. However, the
24 setup time -- which is not applicable, because you
25 have already set up.

1 Following the applicant's presentation,
2 the local school district representatives, which
3 includes the superintendent, administrators, and
4 board members, will be given ten minutes to present.

5 Subsequently, the Commission will allow 20
6 minutes for public comment as was described above.

7 Finally, the Commission will be given 40
8 minutes to ask questions of the applicant.

9 If we are ready, Commissioners, we'll ask
10 the applicant -- who are already at the table, thank
11 you very much -- to please, for the record, state
12 the name of your school, the name of the founders of
13 the school, and any other person who is here today
14 on behalf of the school. You will have 20 minutes
15 after your introductions. And I ask that you please
16 introduce yourselves so that the reporter can hear
17 you, and spell your name if it has a unique
18 spelling, please. Thank you.

19 MR. LUCERO: Good morning, and welcome
20 this morning to Isleta Pueblo. The name of our
21 charter school is Sh'eh Wheef Shu-need Charter
22 School. My name is Joseph Lucero, last name
23 L-U-C-E-R-O. And I'm part of the founding board
24 here, and I'll let the rest introduce themselves.

25 MS. LUCERO: Hi. My name is Charlene

1 Lucero. Good morning.

2 MS. ZUNI: Good morning. My name is
3 Denise Zuni. I am a founding member of Sh'eh Wheef
4 Shu-need Charter School.

5 MR. LUCERO: At this point I'd like to
6 introduce our administrative staff, our Lieutenant
7 Governor Antonio Chewiwi, and Lieutenant Governor
8 Isidor Abeita. At this time I'd like to have the
9 lieutenant governor please open up with an opening
10 prayer. Is that fine with the Commission?

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I'm sorry, I
12 cannot hear you. Could you come right here, please?
13 I'm sorry if your back is to the audience, but we've
14 got to hear what you have to say.

15 MR. LUCERO: I want to ask if it's okay
16 for the governor to give us an opening prayer this
17 morning.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Prayer?

19 MR. LUCERO: And to open on behalf of --

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: When you said
21 prayer, this is a governmental body, and we have --

22 MS. ZUNI: It's not a prayer. It's how we
23 traditionally open all our meetings.

24 COMMISSIONER GANT: If it's not a prayer,
25 we're fine.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: A welcome.

2 MR. LUCERO: A welcome in terms -- okay.

3 LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR CHEWIWI: Good

4 morning. Welcome to the Pueblo of Isleta.

5 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Are you asking us
6 to stand?

7 LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR CHEWIWI: Yes, please.

8 This is not a prayer. It's a welcoming, opening
9 remarks in our language that is traditional here to
10 open any meeting, any gathering. We are allowed to
11 do an opening speech, and we do an opening speech in
12 our own language. So you know, no harm, no --

13 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Please go ahead.

14 Thank you for that explanation.

15 (In Tiwa.)

16 LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR CHEWIWI: Thank you
17 very much.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

19 MR. LUCERO: (In Tiwa.) Thank you. Thank
20 you all. Welcome to Isleta Pueblo, and as we had
21 our introductions here, and so on, in terms of -- I
22 want to go ahead and allow member Charlene Lucero to
23 provide some of the background here.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I think what we're
25 going to have to do is maybe bring your display a

1 little closer and bring you closer. And just
2 everyone speak really loudly, because it is echoing
3 so bad.

4 MS. LUCERO: I'm ready for the
5 presentation. Okay.

6 Thank you for joining us today. We're
7 grateful that you were able to join us within our
8 community for our proposed school, Sh'eh Wheef
9 Shu-noon. We, the steering committee members, are
10 just the people who are setting forth ideas that
11 have been long in place from our community. The
12 idea for this school is not new. It's been a long
13 time coming from youth, young adults, middle age
14 adults, traditional leaders, tribal administration,
15 community friends, and people of the past who are no
16 longer with us.

17 The desire for a school to intertwine
18 language and culture into a rigorous academic
19 program is necessary for our students. Our efforts
20 can be seen, and it stems from the establishment --
21 our tribe has established a language program, with
22 language teachers who go out and I can share that
23 they have a memorandum of agreement with APS Schools
24 where they go out and they help with the language
25 outside of the regular classroom. Okay? We'd like

1 to bring that language into the classroom and
2 incorporate it with the academic piece, developing
3 culturally relevant lessons and curriculum aligned
4 with state standards.

5 No idea can come to fruition without
6 action. We had an idea, and it's been seeded in us
7 for many years now, with the opportunity to open up
8 a charter school many years ago. We've been talking
9 about this idea. We decided to put our idea into
10 action when we submitted our notice of intent on
11 January 13th.

12 Historically, we have had access to
13 education. Our native people have always had access
14 to education. But the education provided has not
15 embraced our culture and our language. Most
16 recently, the New Mexico Indian Education Act of
17 2003 provided the words to say that it's the state's
18 responsibility and understanding to ensure equitable
19 and culturally relevant learning in the classroom,
20 to provide culturally relevant structural materials,
21 learning environment, and a place that native
22 language can be taught.

23 So the Department of Education has made a
24 commitment to partner with tribes to increase tribal
25 involvement and control of our schools and the

1 education of students located in tribal communities,
2 ensuring the maintenance of native languages.

3 Our school, Sh'eh Wheef Shu-need, hopes to
4 do this, along with the support of the State and
5 following the state requirements.

6 The mission of our school is to provide
7 students with an educational opportunity cultivated
8 with a focus on the environment, pueblo culture, and
9 language through a curriculum that is sensitive and
10 responsive to the community, which will allow our
11 students to excel academically while strengthening
12 the students' sense of identity. Currently on the
13 reservation, within the Pueblo of Isleta, we do not
14 have a school that serves students seven through
15 twelve. Our students have a school, a Bureau
16 school, for grades K through six. After sixth
17 grade, they must choose to go to a school in Los
18 Lunas, APS, charter schools, private schools, or
19 home schools. The schools that they attend do not
20 have an emphasis on culture or language of the
21 Isleta people.

22 Looking at scores, state test scores, the
23 NM SBA --

24 COMMISSIONER GANT: Fifteen minutes.

25 MS. LUCERO: Looking at our scores,

1 students' academic scores have not demonstrated
2 proficiency. The last scores looked at as far as
3 from grades K through twelve were between 27 to 35
4 percent across the board. It's these test scores
5 and this data has shown basically a straight line
6 for the past years, I want to say past ten years.
7 We want to implement this school here in Isleta to
8 provide that intimate educational piece that will
9 allow our students to feel comfortable in an
10 environment where they can embrace their culture and
11 their language in the classroom setting.

12 We have a need for a year-long language
13 and cultural and academic program, which has been
14 demonstrated by the large number of students who
15 sign up for our summer language programs each year.
16 This year they had a capacity of 90 and they had
17 students on a waiting list. So there's a strong
18 desire to have language incorporated into a daily
19 educational program.

20 We look to enforce learning from multiple
21 generations, focusing on real-world issues that are
22 happening here within our tribe, and happening in
23 the relationships between our tribe and state and
24 federal and global issues around the country.
25 Students who choose to attend our school will

1 receive individualized instruction and attention
2 that they do not experience in the large-school
3 setting, and we see the positive impact a charter
4 school can have on students. We've seen some
5 successful charter schools where students have been
6 able to succeed, looking at the focus points of
7 those schools, students who choose to go to a school
8 with a specific unique mission, so students have
9 demonstrated success.

10 We want you to know that we are speaking
11 for our community here today. And we brought these
12 ideas which have stemmed historically throughout the
13 past years about having a school. This would be the
14 first school, high school, here on the reservation
15 that we can remember. Middle and high school.

16 MS. ZUNI: My name is Denise Zuni. If you
17 want me to use the microphone, I will. So until you
18 tell me to do so, I'll just talk like this.

19 Since the submittal of our application and
20 our preliminary qualification -- or rather
21 interview, we continue working on our business plan
22 that is contained within our charter application.
23 And we continued working on our plan using the
24 preliminary analysis that we have received from the
25 State, and we've developed an action plan with

1 strict timelines to ensure that we have a viable
2 organization prior to the opening of our school.

3 We've broken down our action plan into
4 five major components. One, fiscal management and
5 budgeting. Two, governance and leadership. Three,
6 the curriculum. Four, facilities. And five,
7 community involvement. Today we want to talk to you
8 about four of those components. So it will be all
9 those components excepting curriculum, and talk
10 about the action plan that we have developed.

11 So first, with respect to fiscal
12 management and budgeting, we are working with the
13 Vigil Group out of Albuquerque who has experience in
14 accounting, an accounting firm.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We'd like to hear, too.
16 We can't hear you.

17 (A discussion was held off the record.)

18 MS. ZUNI: So let me just repeat what I
19 was saying. We have contacted and entered into an
20 informal --

21 COMMISSIONER GANT: Ten minutes.

22 MS. ZUNI: -- relationship with the Vigil
23 Group, an accounting firm out of Albuquerque, to
24 review and revise our budget and to look at our
25 fiscal management policies to ensure that they are

1 in alignment with the Public School Finance path and
2 their requirements. They will be looking at and
3 working with us in revising our fiscal management
4 policies.

5 We are working on identifying the
6 appropriate required governance training for board
7 members. We are working on revising our bylaws and
8 governing board policies and personnel policies to
9 clearly reflect lines of authority. We will be
10 reviewing and revising, as I stated earlier, our
11 budget in accordance with the state requirements.

12 Within our fiscal management policies, we
13 will be separating the finance committee from the
14 audit committee, and basically what we've done is,
15 since our interview and since the submittal of our
16 application, we've continued to educate ourselves on
17 the Public School Finance Act audit requirements,
18 the state personnel law, and the New Mexico
19 administrative code that -- the regulations that
20 implement the law.

21 We will revise our procurement policy to
22 include travel and the use of gas cards, and include
23 procedures to monitor, control, and record our
24 expenditures.

25 And the last item under our action plan

1 for fiscal management and budgeting is, as I stated,
2 we will be taking a more conservative look at our
3 budget and making sure that it aligns with the
4 revenues that we expect to receive for the school
5 year.

6 And Charlene will be talking about
7 governance and the leadership component.

8 COMMISSIONER GANT: Eight minutes.

9 MS. LUCERO: As far as the governance and
10 leadership, we will work with our authorized
11 authorizer and enter into a contract with the
12 governing body within the first 30 days of approval.
13 Our action plan also includes to plan to develop our
14 governing body's qualifications so that we can have
15 our board of finance, review the bylaws, and
16 governing body policies, and align them with state
17 requirements; revise and develop a special
18 development plan for all staff members; review and
19 revise the job descriptions, and our business
20 official to ensure compliance with New Mexico
21 Administrative Code. Review and revise our
22 organizational charts to show clearly the
23 delineation of roles and authorities of the
24 governing counsel and head of school. We plan to
25 clearly establish an organizational, financial, and

1 academic outcomes that will be monitored on an
2 ongoing basis. Revise our personnel policies to
3 clearly state the head of school will hire all
4 employees. Develop our advisory school counsel to
5 involve meaningful parental/educator/community
6 development involvement and governance in the
7 operation of our school.

8 We plan to revise to receive and process
9 concerns and complaints by adding processes and
10 timelines at each step of the process. We want to
11 amend the student recruitment plan to include
12 committee meetings, revise our lottery process to
13 clearly set forth policies, and Joey will proceed
14 with community involvement.

15 MR. LUCERO: In reference to the
16 facilities, the facilities that we have identified,
17 we have worked with our tribal governor's office,
18 administration, and also in communication with our
19 tribal counsel here, because the ideal location
20 would be within our Isleta Pueblo community in terms
21 of looking at what our mission statement is,
22 including the community, having involvement with the
23 community, having the liaison between the different
24 programs that we have available here that we're
25 fortunate to have in terms of with our elderly

1 centers, libraries, and resources. And so
2 yesterday, we were fortunate that we did have the
3 state assessor come down with a facilities part --

4 COMMISSIONER GANT: Five minutes.

5 MR. LUCERO: -- and with Brad, and so we
6 did look at some locations in terms of the Isleta
7 Elementary School as being one location, being
8 looked at, due to the fact that they are going from
9 BIE, federally controlled, to contract. The tribe
10 is taking responsibility for that. And initially,
11 it looks like it will be a green light in terms of
12 that; it's a relatively new school there, and the
13 classrooms are not all being utilized there. So
14 that was one location.

15 The other location was our current Isleta
16 Elderly Center, along with our housing office.
17 They're in two separate buildings, and one was being
18 looked at in terms of to have administration, the
19 head of school there, along with the business
20 operations there; and the other was to have the
21 actual elderly center to provide the classrooms
22 setting there. That may need some work and so we're
23 looking forward to those types of responses from the
24 assessor to see what we need to bring it into
25 compliance.

1 And the other location is where our tribal
2 language program is currently. Those are portable
3 buildings there, and so that's another location.

4 Also, we've been in communication in terms
5 of looking at a location called Cottonwood, which is
6 down south, by Los Lunas. And in terms of that
7 location, it may be that we look at maybe portable
8 buildings and so on.

9 And in understanding the facilities and
10 meeting the code requirements and the ADA
11 requirements, and so on, we also realize that
12 technology needs to be there, too, because that's
13 what we want to have also incorporated with our
14 cultural language, and so on, to make sure that we
15 have our students being in with technology and what
16 they're going to have to face when they go on to
17 higher education and so on.

18 So those things have really been
19 considered in terms of being able to look at
20 bringing in the types of circuits, having the
21 technology there, so the students can use them as
22 tools and so on, and in terms of communicating with
23 not only the state peers and so on, but also
24 national and into other geographic locations of the
25 world.

1 And in terms of partners and so on, or
2 community involvement, we would have public meetings
3 such as this and encourage this type of input, given
4 in terms of having the parents come in on a regular
5 basis, and so on, to make sure that we're in line
6 with what our mission is, and in terms of what their
7 ideas may also be to help with.

8 Also, looking at including with the UNM
9 Language Institute, the Indian Pueblo Cultural
10 Center curriculum team, and also so that we can
11 identify some of the key issues not only with the
12 pueblo --

13 COMMISSIONER GANT: Two minutes.

14 MR. LUCERO: -- in Isleta, but also our
15 sister pueblos, too, and communities.

16 MS. ZUNI: Do we have a minute? Okay.

17 COMMISSIONER GANT: A minute and a half.

18 MS. ZUNI: So what we want to add under
19 our fiscal management and our budgetary component is
20 that we also, within our action plan, have included
21 an item to work out the details with the tribal
22 attorney and tribal treasurer to work out a funding
23 agreement for their share of funds.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you. Is
25 that it?

1 MS. ZUNI: Do we have time for closing?

2 COMMISSIONER GANT: You have got a minute.

3 MS. LUCERO: In closing, we really want
4 you to consider our school for approval because
5 there's no school out there right now that addresses
6 the unique and specific issues within our community.
7 There's nothing out there that involves tribal
8 programs, bringing in those ideas, the current
9 situation that our tribe deals with, into the
10 classroom. So we are hoping to incorporate
11 community-based education within the classroom
12 partnering with our tribal programs, our community
13 programs, our language programs, our culture, and
14 intertwining them all together into a quality
15 education so that we can groom students to graduate
16 from high school, to attain their college degrees,
17 to come back and to be able to speak on behalf of
18 our tribal people. That's the goal of our school.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you. May I
21 ask you, because the next section is going to be
22 some community input, perhaps we need to move this.
23 And I don't know if the podium is going to be where
24 we can hear or not, but all we can do is try.

25 (A discussion was held off the record.)

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: The next section
2 of the program is local district input. Do we have
3 anyone here from either Los Lunas or Albuquerque
4 that would care to speak on behalf of the district?
5 No? All right. Then let's go ahead to public
6 comment. We have the sheet. How many speakers have
7 asked?

8 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Five.

9 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: We have five
10 speakers. Dividing that into 20 minutes, we'll have
11 four minutes per speaker. When you come to the
12 podium, please give your name to the reporter, and
13 spell it if you have a unique spelling to your name,
14 please.

15 And I know that it's hard to hear in here,
16 but we really, really want to hear every word you
17 say, and I don't hear well, so I'm going to be
18 looking at you very closely, reading your lips a
19 little bit. So please be sure that the Commission
20 can hear you. And if you use the mic, let's be sure
21 our reporter can get it without the distortion.

22 All right. Commissioner Toulouse, our
23 first speaker.

24 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Beverly Piro.

25 MS. PIRO: My name is Beverly Piro.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Would you please
2 spell it?

3 MS. PIRO: B-E-V-E-R-L-Y, P-I-R-O. And on
4 your basis for this school that is going to be
5 incorporating language and culture, with respect to
6 protecting the Tiwa language and culture, how are
7 you going to ensure that those students identified
8 at Isleta will benefit from the aspect of education?

9 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Ma'am, this is not
10 a question-and-answer session. Just comments.

11 MS. PIRO: Okay.

12 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: We would like to
13 hear what you have to say. No questions.

14 MS. PIRO: Just comment.

15 MS. ZUNI: State all your questions, not
16 your --

17 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Comments. We
18 can't do questions and answers, but if you have
19 information you'd like to give us, or comments, we'd
20 appreciate it.

21 MS. PIRO: That's the only one I have.
22 Okay. These are all questions. They're all
23 questions.

24 COMMISSIONER PARKER: Just say your
25 questions.

1 COMMISSIONER GANT: You have three
2 minutes.

3 MS. PIRO: Okay. Will other students be
4 afforded other language and culture options? Has a
5 survey been implemented within the community to
6 determine how many parents support this endeavor?
7 Do you have data to share with the community? How
8 many parents were surveyed? What are their
9 responses? The number of our participants in favor
10 and opposed. School choice. A statement was made
11 in regard to school choices. What did you mean when
12 you stated the students within our community did not
13 have school choice?

14 COMMISSIONER GANT: Two minutes.

15 MS. PIRO: For the most part, our students
16 are afforded more choice compared to other Native
17 American counterparts simply because we have access
18 to two major school districts as well as private
19 schools and other charter school options.

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Erica Montoya.

22 MS. MONTOYA: It was all part of this.

23 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Bernadette Cotten.

24 MS. COTTEN: Good morning. I have to say
25 that I was not aware that I was supposed to speak.

1 I have just been advised that my name has been
2 checked.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: You don't have to.
4 You don't have to if you don't want to.

5 MS. COTTEN: I do have a couple of
6 comments that I'd like to make. I just wanted to
7 say that I'm really concerned about the community
8 being aware of what is going on here, because I know
9 that there was a notice in our local newsletter but
10 I don't think that any other form of advertisement,
11 for lack of a better word, has been sent out to our
12 community, making them aware of exactly what is
13 going on here.

14 I'm sure that people my age would like to
15 have some sort of -- I'm sure they have concerns. I
16 don't have children here, nor do my grandchildren
17 attend these schools, but I have family, and I'm
18 also very much involved with my community. And I
19 want to make sure that our people, our community,
20 truly understand what is going to be going on here
21 and what kind of impact it will have in this pueblo.
22 I would like to see some sort of survey conducted
23 involving the community, even if it means a
24 house-to-house kind of survey to see what the people
25 have to say. Do they know exactly what's happening?

1 What effect will it have on our community? Can we
2 do it? Are we able to set standards and give our
3 community, our children, and our grandchildren the
4 kind of education that we hope they will have? And
5 my only concern, again, is that our community has
6 not really been made aware, completely, of what is
7 going to happen. Thank you very much.

8 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Ulysses Abeita.

10 MR. ABEITA: Good morning. I'm Ulysses
11 Abeita. I'm the adult basic education instructor
12 for the Pueblo of Isleta, and my concern is our
13 Native Americans overall losing -- our Native
14 Americans from Isleta have a low level of
15 achievement, academic achievement in the public
16 schools. And I'm just concerned if Isleta is ready
17 for a charter school at this time, or we should be
18 concentrating our efforts on working with our local
19 public schools like Los Lunas and APS, and also with
20 our elementary school, which is hurting right now,
21 and maybe we should be concentrating more on working
22 with the school systems now in improving the
23 academic achievements of our students at these
24 public schools. The question is, is Isleta really
25 ready for a charter school? Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Cheryl Hunt.

3 MS. HUNT: Good morning. Cheryl,
4 C-H-E-R-Y-L, Hunt, H-U-N-T. Born and raised here in
5 Pueblo of Isleta. And I went to school here,
6 elementary school. You don't even see the building
7 anymore. It was constructed before my time. And
8 I'm a product of this educational system, a one-room
9 schoolhouse in the community, as well as public high
10 school, as well as state universities. Currently
11 I'm a student at UNM in the graduate program,
12 seeking my Ph.D. there, being a teacher and mentor
13 and committee member and advocate for seniors, as
14 well as education, employment, but I'd like to share
15 with you one of my concerns, one of my concepts of
16 what education and knowledge really means.
17 Education and knowledge is for me a product of
18 pipeline education.

19 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I'm sorry, I
20 cannot hear you.

21 MS. HUNT: I'm an advocate of the pipeline
22 education, which means that we need to look at our
23 children from infancy, elementary, middle school,
24 high school, on to graduate programs. This not only
25 sustains our way of life, our culture, which has

1 been pointed out a lot here, but it maintains this
2 foundation that we are where we live and what we
3 live, and that's basic knowledge. Once you get this
4 basic concept of sustaining your culture, your
5 language, and your identity in your community, if
6 you choose to live and die here in this community,
7 many of our students have gone off to other parts of
8 the United States, but because Isleta Pueblo is in a
9 unique area, we're in between Los Lunas, which has
10 job opportunities, Albuquerque which has job
11 students, Santa Fe.

12 COMMISSIONER GANT: Two minutes.

13 MS. HUNT: Thank you. We have to
14 cultivate those experiences, as well as the
15 knowledge and education. So I support the charter
16 school initiative because it gives our people that
17 opportunity to sustain not only our culture and
18 language, but the higher education, so we can have
19 better jobs, better families, better community.
20 This is what pipeline education should be all about.
21 Technology is not going to wait for us. It's not
22 going to slow down, either. So we need to keep up
23 with that momentum that's going on. Thank you very
24 much, and I appreciate you being in our community.

25 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

1 Everyone has had the opportunity to speak that
2 wanted to speak?

3 MS. YARA: Can I have a comment?

4 MS. ZUNI: She wasn't on the list but she
5 wants to know if she can comment.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: One minute.

7 MS. YARA: Good morning. My name is
8 Audrey Yara, Y-A-R-A. I just want to make a brief
9 comment. I personally have children. I believe the
10 charter school is a good thing for our community. I
11 do have children that are in charter school right
12 now in Albuquerque. They go to school and the best
13 thing is the best option. It's an option. It's not
14 a choice. It's giving the tribe another option,
15 rather, to where they want to send their children.
16 I'm sorry. I'm kind of tearing up.

17 My kids, like I say -- there's a
18 tremendous change from a public school. It gives
19 them that option, they have a teacher ratio of ten
20 to one. In a public school, they're going to school
21 25 to one, 20 to one. This gives them the
22 opportunity to excel. By the time my kids graduate
23 from high school, they will be leaving with an
24 associate's degree. Those are what charter schools
25 are good for. They're good to give people options

1 on the education. My children, if they need special
2 education, that's what they need. I mean, my kids
3 don't need that, but there are those options in
4 those kind of schools. So I just wanted to make a
5 statement that, you know, I feel it's a good thing.
6 Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you. That
8 ends our public comment segment. Before we go into
9 the next section, which is questions from
10 Commissioners for the applicants, I want to make one
11 comment. We appreciate the things that we've heard
12 here and will hear today from the community. It's
13 very important to this Commission to know what the
14 community wants and what the community feels is
15 important. I also want you to know that what we
16 consider by law when we make the decision to either
17 approve a charter school or to deny an application
18 is what is in the application. What was turned in
19 officially with this application is what we may
20 consider.

21 I know you're working on an action plan.
22 You have said you're taking very seriously the
23 recommendations and the comments that were made in
24 the preliminary review of your application. That's
25 wonderful. That action plan will not be part of our

1 consideration. Our consideration is only what's in
2 this application right now. You and the community
3 will have the opportunity to send in written
4 comment, any clarification that you make, and we'll
5 talk about that more towards the end of the meeting,
6 how you send in that information and those comments.
7 But please remember our main focus has to be the
8 application as it was submitted. Okay?

9 Thank you. The next section, please, will
10 be comments and questions from Commissioners to the
11 founders. And if we have a problem hearing, we'll
12 work on that one, too.

13 So Commissioners, do you have questions?
14 Commissioner Bergman.

15 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Thank you, Madam
16 Chair. I wanted to just explore something. I
17 understand that you're concerned that your young
18 people particularly may be losing some of their
19 attachment to their language and their culture, but
20 I want to be sure that you understood that as a
21 public charter school in New Mexico, I know you have
22 said a lot of your instruction will be in Tiwa; you
23 will be having an open school. You are going to get
24 students that will apply that do not speak Tiwa. I
25 understand why you want to do that. But you're

1 going to have to be able to accommodate non-Tiwa
2 speaking students, because anybody can apply to any
3 public school in New Mexico, including charter
4 schools. Do you have a plan for that? How you
5 address that?

6 MS. LUCERO: Part of that plan is to
7 incorporate another language choice, such as
8 Spanish, into our options for the language piece.
9 So there is a plan for that. We realize that not
10 all students who attend our school will be able to
11 have access to the Tiwa language. However, we will
12 have the option for Spanish class, and also, so long
13 as the students know the mission of the school,
14 embrace the idea that we will incorporate the
15 culturally sensitive things, whether it be water
16 rights, maybe it will be dealing with the issues of
17 today, of community issues that we deal with, maybe
18 it's farming, water, those things will be
19 entertained and it will be accessible for all
20 students. We won't discriminate against any of our
21 students attending the school.

22 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Thank you. You
23 can't. You can't do it. Yeah. If I think of
24 something else, I will come back.

25 Thank you, Madam Chair.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Commissioner Gant.

2 COMMISSIONER GANT: Madam Chair, members,
3 I'll try to speak up. They tell me I don't, but I
4 do. On page 21 of your application, please.

5 MS. ZUNI: Could you give us a number
6 also?

7 COMMISSIONER GANT: It deals with section
8 G(2), students with section 504 accommodation plans.
9 Okay? On that page of the application, you say that
10 the following members will be part of the planning
11 team: Parents, principals, schoolteachers, school
12 nurses, social workers, counselors, et cetera. But
13 I do not find in your budget any funding for a
14 nurse. Can you explain, please?

15 MS. LUCERO: Part of that, we didn't
16 budget for a nurse. Part of that would be through
17 collaboration and partnership with the local
18 community health center to create a partnership
19 where they would provide services for the school.

20 COMMISSIONER GANT: All right. Then may I
21 ask, Madam Chair, even with a partnership, I
22 would -- maybe not -- but I would assume they would
23 need some kind of financial support for what they're
24 doing, which, again, is not in the budget. Is that
25 correct?

1 MR. LUCERO: And in reference to our
2 community here, like our school here, too, that will
3 be a part of our ongoing communication and
4 partnership and that's why we've been in
5 communication with our tribal administration and so
6 on, because there's quite a few services that are
7 available within our community. And in terms of
8 proceeding forward, these are the types of
9 understandings and agreements that the committee and
10 the head of school would communicate with, so that
11 we make sure that all aspects of what is required
12 within our school, such as the nurse and even in
13 terms of looking in the future of our students -- if
14 they need to have behavioral health support, that's
15 part of the items that we have in there in terms of
16 the technology, being able to have televideo
17 availability so that maybe not only within the
18 community here, but if there's partners with UNM,
19 some of the providers and so on, that that would be
20 in place there.

21 MS. LUCERO: Also, we have that option for
22 the Indian Health Service and the community-based
23 health nurse to do outreach activities with the
24 school, and though it was not in the budget, that is
25 something that perhaps may be at a .25 or

1 identifying money that we could move over to that as
2 well.

3 MS. ZUNI: And I want to expand on that.
4 There already are relationships between the health
5 facility here in the pueblo with the existing
6 schools. And so we know that that type of
7 relationship just needs to be put into plan.

8 COMMISSIONER GANT: And are those
9 relationships free?

10 MS. ZUNI: Yes, for community members, and
11 yes, for native people. And they're open. They
12 can't discriminate. It's a health facility.

13 COMMISSIONER GANT: When you say they
14 can't discriminate, you said native people.

15 MS. ZUNI: Right. And so what I meant by
16 that is that if there is a student that is not
17 native that requires services, that's where, you
18 know, the services will come from the facility.

19 COMMISSIONER GANT: All right.

20 MS. ZUNI: And payment arrangements will
21 be worked out.

22 COMMISSIONER GANT: Section 6.12.6.8(9)
23 requires public schools to have a plan addressing
24 the health services needed for students in an
25 educational process. Health services include by

1 code to provide emergency care for illnesses and
2 injuries to students. So how are you going to cover
3 this if you don't have a nurse as part of the
4 school?

5 MS. ZUNI: Let me just start by saying
6 that there are many charter schools in the state
7 that don't have a nurse onsite, and they contract
8 out their services, and that is the same concept
9 that we would utilize and we would look at and
10 explore in our action plan is to contract the
11 services for nursing care. And too, the facility
12 here in Isleta is actually located in our primary --
13 in our number one choice for a facility. It's
14 located within a half-mile of the area.

15 MS. LUCERO: Established agreements exist
16 between First Nations, who provide services to our
17 other charter schools, such as the Native American
18 Community Academy. The entire body of the Native
19 American Community Academy is not -- there's a
20 percentage of nonnatives in that community, but
21 students are served. So we look at that plan and
22 identify how can we adapt it to our school to ensure
23 that. Also, we have a health facility that is
24 located within five minutes of our proposed school
25 with emergency ambulance and services that they can

1 provide from a local level. So we'll need to
2 develop that in the plan as we look at what's
3 already there.

4 COMMISSIONER GANT: Madam Chair, the job
5 description for the principal, page 41. The job
6 description, if I may, by the founders states that
7 the pay rate will be from \$70,000 to \$75,000, but in
8 your budget you're listing \$80,000. Which is it?

9 MS. ZUNI: Clearly, that's a discrepancy,
10 and one of the issues that we identified when we did
11 look at our budget -- and it's really a result of
12 several people working on the budget and the
13 narrative piece, and just not being able to come
14 together at the last minute. But a large part of
15 our action plan includes correcting and actually
16 really doing a full analysis of all our budgetary
17 items and making sure that they align with the
18 narrative. And we've started rewriting the
19 narrative and started looking at all the budgetary
20 line items with a conservative view.

21 MS. LUCERO: And definitely we were
22 thinking the cap of a range between \$70,000 to
23 \$80,000, depending on experience and expertise that
24 the head of school brings in. And we need to
25 clarify what the salary pay range that we will --

1 that a person may acquire applying for the head of
2 school position, depending on the experience. That
3 would be the range, according to state requirements,
4 looking back at those, making sure that we don't
5 exceed or go under the required pay scale for that
6 administrator.

7 COMMISSIONER GANT: On page 42, it is
8 stated that the fiscal year be 1 January to 31
9 December. Please explain. Maybe you had another
10 idea that nobody knows about.

11 MR. LUCERO: And we understand that it's
12 July 1 in terms of the fiscal year, and so on. And
13 in terms of that, that's how the planning would be
14 for the operation and so on.

15 MS. LUCERO: July 1 through June 30. And
16 as far as additional supplemental budgets, our
17 tribal programs operate on a budget of January
18 through December. So we'd need to clearly get those
19 dates set forth and follow the different budgeting
20 years, fiscal years.

21 COMMISSIONER GANT: As you know, you're
22 well aware of Common Core, PARCC, which is the
23 evaluation system, and all the data requirements
24 like STARS, you name it. But I could not seem to
25 find anybody identified in the budget or a line

1 number or amount of money for information
2 specialist, IT-type people, data processing, and all
3 that. And I'll tell you, there are schools,
4 including traditionals, that are definitely behind
5 the power curve on that, and when Common Core
6 starts, along with PARCC, full up, if you don't have
7 somebody --

8 MS. LUCERO: Right. And I have seen it
9 where the registrar takes part of that reporting,
10 helping with that reporting accountability, and the
11 business technician or business administrator
12 assisting with the reporting dates, working with the
13 team of the leads, especially the special ed.
14 coordinator, the head of school. So our job would
15 be to ensure that we have that recording criteria
16 fall under a specific position, make them
17 accountable for those reporting dates using the
18 STARS and stuff.

19 COMMISSIONER GANT: That will be all for
20 right now.

21 MS. ZUNI: And to expand on that, if I
22 could, we've added that budgetary line item in our
23 draft revision of our budget.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you. Let me
25 ask, on page 70 of your application, item number 4,

1 it says, "With respect to facilities, the school
2 plans to lease facilities from the Pueblo of Isleta
3 at an annual cost of \$12,000 with an anticipated 10
4 percent increase annually. Costs for maintenance
5 and repair facilities, costs of utilities and
6 property insurance are included within the leasing
7 costs of the facility." Then you go on to say, "We
8 expect the cost to be zero as a result of our
9 planned partnership with the pueblo. However for
10 now, we budgeted \$12,000."

11 So let me just ask first, are any of these
12 partnerships that you all have been talking about --
13 do you have a written partnership agreement with any
14 of these entities?

15 MS. ZUNI: No, we don't, but we continue
16 discussions with the pueblo and as recently with the
17 tribal council as recently as yesterday. We do want
18 to clarify that our budget does say \$55,700 for this
19 line item, and this is just one of those instances
20 where our narrative didn't come together with the
21 budget that we've started revising. And so we don't
22 have anything in writing yet with the pueblo, but we
23 have and we continue to work with both the tribal
24 council and the governor's office to continue our
25 discussion with respect to the facilities.

1 As Mr. Lucero talked about earlier, we've
2 identified four potential sites for the facility,
3 and depending on which site is most feasible and
4 approved by the tribal council -- because they get
5 final approval -- it will shape the type of
6 memorandum of understanding that we will enter into
7 with the pueblo, and it will also impact the type of
8 funding agreement that we will enter into with the
9 pueblo.

10 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: My question,
11 though, was, in addition to the pueblo -- because
12 you talked about partnering with the medical
13 facilities, and so on and so forth. You realize
14 that we have to have a written partnership agreement
15 submitted with this application before it becomes
16 real. We cannot consider the money that you have
17 proposed to receive as actually part of this budget
18 unless we see that as a written agreed-to amount,
19 because some of these amounts are substantial that
20 have been input into your budget that you are
21 spending as part of your budget, and there's really
22 no assurance that those monies will be coming
23 forward.

24 So let me just go to your budget real
25 quick and look at the very bottom items on your

1 expenditure budget. You're talking about
2 operational money, primarily SEG funding received
3 from the State in year one of \$67,000 -- no. I
4 haven't gotten to the right place.

5 MS. LUCERO: In reference to the facility,
6 we also received a --

7 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I'll look for the
8 part that shows where the contributions are. And
9 can you help me find that real quick in your budget?
10 There's one line that shows that.

11 MS. LUCERO: Right here.

12 MS. ZUNI: It's in the document identified
13 as --

14 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Under revenues,
15 yes, if you'll go to your revenue spreadsheet.
16 State equalization guarantee in year one is
17 \$662,000. \$663,000 rounded up. Then you have
18 contributions and donations from private sources at
19 \$590,000. Now, is that all coming from one source,
20 or is that multiple sources for those donations and
21 contributions?

22 MS. ZUNI: Our initial plan is that we
23 would initially get that funding from the Pueblo of
24 Isleta and repay it when we obtain our 501(c)(3)
25 status and are able to bring in other types of

1 funding from other donors. And you're correct, that
2 we do not have any MOUs in place, but we've
3 identified it as one of our action plans to be
4 conducted within -- and our time frame for that is
5 within the next 60 days after our charter
6 application is approved.

7 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: But my other
8 concern is, you plugged that into your budget to
9 spend. I don't think you can spend donated money,
10 just blanket into your budget. I don't think it can
11 be handled that way. Have you had legal advice on
12 how to handle this?

13 MS. ZUNI: We've had discussions with the
14 Vigil Group about that issue, and it's something
15 that we're given to work on with them. As we stated
16 earlier, we will receive assistance from that
17 accounting firm to address the budgetary items
18 basically with respect to that line item.

19 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I hope you do,
20 because this concerns me greatly, because at least
21 in the beginning your contributions and donations
22 make up almost half of your budget, and it continues
23 as a very large two and a half million dollars over
24 the five years, and I think you could get in great
25 trouble if you spend it the way that you have it

1 budgeted in here.

2 MS. LUCERO: There's definitely some
3 inflation and cushion on that budget that we first
4 turned in, because ideally, the technology we were
5 looking at in order to get the school going at
6 the -- at providing a top-of-the-line technology in
7 all the classrooms and desks and everything. So
8 when we budgeted for that, we went on the high end,
9 and there's definitely room for that to be reduced.

10 Alongside of that, as far as the first
11 year of teaching staff, we also added additional
12 teaching instructors like to have two in the
13 classroom. However, that's going to be relooked at,
14 depending on the amount of financial assistance we
15 receive. When we did the budget, we were thinking
16 of optimal classroom experience, optimal teaching
17 experience, and we went on the high end. This is
18 inflated and it's cushioned, and there's definitely
19 room to look -- working with the Vigil Group, to
20 amend and to correct some of the line items that
21 you're pointing out now.

22 MS. ZUNI: And that we've caught in our
23 review and initial budgetary discussions.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

25 Commissioner Gant.

1 COMMISSIONER GANT: Madam Chair, members,
2 just be advised, in my view, you need a legal
3 opinion. That \$590,000, the way you mentioned it,
4 was, "We'll get the loan, we'll get the money from
5 the tribe and then we'll get a 503."

6 But what you have done, you have taken an
7 illegal loan, in my opinion. Schools cannot have a
8 loan. You can go through a 503. That's fine. But
9 you cannot have a loan from a bank or any other
10 institution of finance. Okay? I just don't want
11 you --

12 MS. LUCERO: Get into any --

13 COMMISSIONER GANT: You know, you can talk
14 about going to jail, if you want.

15 MS. ZUNI: The discussions we've had with
16 the tribal council yesterday, you know -- those are
17 some of their questions that they had as to how do
18 we -- were we anticipating a grant or a loan, and in
19 the end, the final deliberations ended in a
20 directive that we meet with the tribal attorney and
21 the tribal treasurer to talk about the funding
22 arrangements.

23 COMMISSIONER GANT: Madam Chair, just be
24 advised also the 503 is not necessarily an overnight
25 thing. It takes months. And I don't want you in

1 trouble. That's all.

2 MS. LUCERO: Thank you. We appreciate
3 that.

4 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Let me finish up
5 with another question. I notice in your budget you
6 have no money allocated for auditing. That is a
7 requirement. You must pay for an audit every year.
8 You have no funds allocated for legal. That's a
9 tenuous position to be in for a school. Schools are
10 seen to have deep pockets and they get sued a lot.
11 And you do need professional legal advice to be sure
12 that what you are doing is correct and legal. So
13 someone with school law and school finance
14 experience.

15 And your other professional services. I
16 notice it's item function 3100, 53414, under "Other
17 professional services," year one starts out at
18 \$67,000, three is \$112,000, and then \$135,000. Is
19 that food service?

20 MS. LUCERO: Professional services? Let
21 me just see.

22 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I have that
23 written down as food services with a question mark.

24 MS. LUCERO: I don't believe that's food
25 services, but let me get to that line item. Can you

1 give me that line item again?

2 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: If you're looking
3 at the line numbers in your Excel spreadsheet, it's
4 475. But it's function 3100, item 53414. It's
5 under food service operations, other professional
6 services.

7 MS. LUCERO: I believe what we're talking
8 about is -- I'm not too sure, but I believe what
9 we're talking about is the ancillary services, and
10 those types of services that -- it was 53414.

11 MS. ZUNI: What's the dollar amount? Our
12 version looks different.

13 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: \$67,500 in year
14 one.

15 MS. LUCERO: \$67,500.

16 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: \$90,000 in year
17 two. \$112,500 in year three, and then it goes to
18 \$135,000. It's under function 3100, food service
19 operations.

20 MS. LUCERO: Food services. Okay, let me
21 just make sure we're at the right --

22 MS. ZUNI: And what we're looking for, we
23 also did budget \$8,000 for audit services and it's
24 in our assumptions.

25 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Am I looking in

1 the wrong line?

2 MS. ZUNI: I don't know. I'm looking for
3 it now, but it's in our internal list of assumptions
4 that we prepared, and so is legal services.

5 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Maybe I just
6 looked on the wrong line. How much do you have for
7 each of those?

8 MS. ZUNI: We have \$8,000 for auditing.

9 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Let's move on,
10 because our time is -- we've got another of these
11 hearings today, and I don't want to take much time.
12 If you find that, please let me know.

13 MS. LUCERO: It's on page 20.

14 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Other questions,
15 Commissioners?

16 Commissioner Toulouse.

17 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: I know that your
18 application shows that you surveyed students and
19 gave us where they went to school now, where they
20 would like to go to school. There is information
21 who you're partnering with and all, but I note that
22 four of the six people who spoke against you -- and
23 I'd like you to give me an answer on what kind of
24 outreach have you done and, you know, to answer that
25 question they were asking, since you do show in here

1 that you surveyed -- that you talked to people.

2 MS. ZUNI: Let me start with the most
3 recent community outreach we did. And this was done
4 this past Saturday, August 16th. So I'm just
5 starting with the most recent and then going back.
6 And so it was a community meeting. The Pueblo of
7 Isleta governor's office and tribal council hold
8 periodic community meetings, and we asked that they
9 put us on the agenda for that community meeting. So
10 that was our most recent outreach, and although we
11 were allotted 20 minutes, I believe we were given 30
12 minutes to talk to the community. So the community
13 actually -- it's invited to the public meeting.

14 And the one before then --

15 MS. LUCERO: The surveys were also given
16 to the summer program parents and students,
17 including our recreation program, to reach out to
18 parents and students within the community here at
19 this location, and they had well over 100 students
20 and parents. Parents who had their students here,
21 and some students came from the same family. So we
22 had an outreach with them and we were able to speak
23 with some of the parents and the students here at
24 the recreation center.

25 We also did an online survey and sent it

1 to our tribal departments, as far as Survey
2 Monkey -- I don't know if you're familiar with
3 that -- to share out and to receive feedback. We
4 prepared an informational sheet to include in our
5 tribal newsletter with questions and answers in
6 reference to the charter school that was shared out
7 in the tribal newsletter.

8 We also advertised our planning meetings
9 for people to come to through the tribal department,
10 the tribal administrative office, to share out with
11 the community.

12 MR. LUCERO: And in reference to like some
13 of the programs that mentioned that, the information
14 was provided to the director there, and in terms of
15 that communication, that did go on during the
16 summertime, and at those times where the programs
17 were being supported from that department, the
18 students there were given that, along with the
19 instructors. Like our language program that was
20 there. So these are the type of things that go out
21 and in person, in providing that.

22 MS. LUCERO: We went with the elementary
23 school, as well, the Isleta Elementary School. We
24 provided information through their program, and
25 through the Head Start and the language program.

1 MS. ZUNI: And to expand on that, the
2 comments that were made today were really helpful
3 because, you know, sometimes when we're initiating a
4 project and you're very into the project, and you're
5 very excited about it, you forget that, you know,
6 for the community sometimes there's this fear of the
7 unknown and the fear that, "Oh, my gosh, this might
8 take over my language program," and so that really
9 tells us that we really need to do a better job in
10 partnering with our potential partners. These
11 people are going to be our partners. And so they
12 were very helpful in that sense, in that we really
13 need to work closer with them. And sometimes it's
14 not enough to do, you know, just the community, you
15 know, go to the community meetings. I think we need
16 to develop more avenues of getting the word out and
17 working with our potential partners.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

19 Commissioner Parker.

20 COMMISSIONER PARKER: Madam Chair,
21 Commissioners.

22 Thank you for elaborating on that because
23 I think that what you're trying to do with the
24 school is represent the community to the young ones
25 growing up, and you don't have that community

1 support and what you're trying to do -- I think
2 there's a big disconnect that can sabotage
3 everything.

4 I wanted to ask -- I guess not ask. I
5 wanted to give you an opportunity to just maybe
6 explain in your thoughts or own words, there's a lot
7 of points that were not awarded in this preliminary
8 evaluation. If you want to expand on why you think
9 maybe that was. Not specific areas, but just in
10 general.

11 MS. LUCERO: Give me a moment.

12 COMMISSIONER PARKER: I know. That's a
13 hard one. Sorry.

14 MS. ZUNI: If I could, let me start by
15 saying that we have five people on our steering
16 committee. And in addition to that, we had other
17 people that we were working with who provided input
18 into the application, including a person that worked
19 on our budget. And so when we were working -- we
20 all worked on different aspects of the project, of
21 the application, and although the intent was that at
22 some point we're all going to come together, we're
23 all going to review the application, in the end it
24 turned out that we spent a lot of time on specific
25 areas of the application, and came to realize that

1 we didn't have the time to bring everything
2 together.

3 And so that's one of the biggest, you
4 know, discussions we had after we submitted the
5 application, and that is, you know, how do we bring
6 all aspects of all the work people did together?
7 And so it's one of the first things that we started
8 working on when our application was turned in, is,
9 you know, even though it's what was turned in, this
10 is our business plan and we know that we have to
11 work from this business plan to make the school
12 successful. And so that's what we started doing, is
13 bringing it together.

14 MS. LUCERO: And even though we have this
15 technology, our Google Docs and putting stuff into a
16 shared folder, trying to review stuff together, you
17 feel like, okay, great, we have this resource, this
18 tool where we don't have to be all together, but I
19 don't think anything beats coming together and
20 sitting at the table and reviewing that.

21 And in actuality, you know, we're
22 committed and we're dedicated, and just the time
23 factor, as well as bringing it all together and
24 having that time to line things up accordingly. And
25 too, to make sure to recheck, to recheck, to access

1 documents available as far as like the budgeting and
2 accounting manual that the State provides and kind
3 of cross-referencing those things. That kind of --
4 that time got cut.

5 MS. ZUNI: And since the time that our
6 application has been turned in, we have sat down at
7 length with our budgetary person, like Charlene
8 stated, along with the accounting manual, and have
9 looked at the line items, have started writing -- or
10 revising the narrative, and if one were to look at
11 our application as it looks today, you wouldn't
12 think it's the same application, because we continue
13 to refine the application and we continue to work on
14 our action plans. We do it in the evenings, we do
15 it at night, we do it on our weekends. And so we're
16 committed to our business plan. That's what we
17 prefer to call it, because our application is what
18 you have, but our business plan is what we will work
19 from, and what will eventually result in the school.

20 MS. LUCERO: And it's driving us to
21 identify places where -- especially with reference
22 to getting some legal advice and making sure that we
23 are in compliance. I mean, that's the goal. We
24 want to have a smooth transition to opening up a
25 school. The more stuff we have in place, the better

1 off we'll be to opening the school and making sure
2 that we are in compliance and we are not one of
3 those schools that has been closed down for fiscal
4 mismanagement. We do not want to be in that boat.
5 We want to succeed for the students.

6 COMMISSIONER PARKER: We don't want you to
7 be in that boat, either.

8 MR. LUCERO: And in reference to the
9 feedback that we see, you know, we know what we need
10 to work on in terms of any type of deficiencies now,
11 in terms that we're putting that plan of action and
12 milestones -- that we can address it, and in terms
13 of with charter schools, this being a brand-new
14 concept, and so on, and we have the ability and we
15 have the motivation in terms of being able to make
16 the corrective action and also to then polish it in
17 terms of going to enhance it so that this type of
18 school -- and this school here is representative of
19 a charter school that will be a model, and in terms
20 of with the feedback that we have here today, too,
21 and also with the community, that's what we want.
22 We want this to be comprehensive and in terms of
23 being with the community and surrounding communities
24 and so on, so that we can state at the beginning
25 date, they saw there may have been some items that

1 needed to be polished and so on, but it was done,
2 and that's the commitment that we have here.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you. Thank
4 you very much.

5 Commissioner Bergman.

6 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: One final point,
7 and it's a minor point. At the start of your
8 application, you projected your first year
9 enrollment cap as 75 students. Now, in the body of
10 your application under "Projected facility needs,"
11 you state that in year one, the facility must be
12 capable of carrying 60 students. Now, you're
13 entitled to carry as many students as you want. But
14 if you're going to set a cap --

15 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: With our cap.
16 With our cap they can carry as many as they want.

17 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: What am I missing
18 here?

19 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: They can't have
20 100 students if they have a cap of 75.

21 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: But up to the cap.
22 And that's just a disconnect to me, what you said
23 there.

24 MS. LUCERO: And that is the disconnect
25 from the initial -- I believe the whole thing of

1 coming together, the initial facilities management
2 plan was -- we played with it and it was 20 and then
3 we thought, Okay, well, we want to make sure that we
4 can serve a number of students that can be a cohort
5 that we're going to watch for years and have
6 something to back on, and we had increased it to 25
7 per grade level, and it didn't -- that part
8 referenced that old piece of it, so the cap of 25
9 per grade level in order to have a good cohort to
10 monitor and assess through the five years.

11 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: If I misspoke, you
12 cannot exceed your cap. You do not want to exceed
13 your cap. That is a major violation, yes. So
14 whatever I may have said. But anyway, thank you. I
15 don't know why you'd want to limit yourself if you
16 set a cap.

17 Thank you, Madam Chair.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

19 Any other comments? We want to thank you
20 all for your hospitality today. We appreciate it
21 very much. Any member of the public, including the
22 applicant, may submit written input following this
23 hearing. Written comments can be sent to the
24 Commission via the PED website, mailed, or
25 hand-delivered. The details and addresses are

1 listed on the handout over by the door. And you'll
2 see on one side of the paper is the agenda for our
3 hearings. On the backside is all the information
4 and addresses for comments, if you should choose to
5 turn in some.

6 If you choose to use e-mail, please be
7 sure you identify the school name that you're
8 commenting on. Please note that any written input
9 must be received by no later than 5:00 p.m. on the
10 third business day following the hearing on the
11 application on which you wish to comment. For the
12 Sh'eh Wheef Shu-need High School, that would be
13 Monday, August 25, 2014, by 5:00 p.m.

14 MS. LUCERO: Can I ask you about that?
15 Because on the website I saw the deadline for
16 comments on one of the documents you put out and
17 they put Friday as the deadline for comments.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: No.

19 MS. LUCERO: So long as we are clear.

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: You have until
21 Monday at 5:00 p.m. Today is Wednesday.

22 We thank you all for your presentation
23 today. The Public Education Commission will meet in
24 Santa Fe on September 25 and 26, 2014, to render
25 their decision on approval or denial of this and

1 other new charter school applications.

2 The Commission will now recess this
3 hearing until 3:00 p.m. this afternoon, in the
4 community of Rio Rancho. Again, thank you very much
5 for your hospitality.

6 (The proceeding recessed at 12:27 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO)
2) ss
3 COUNTY OF BERNALILLO)

4 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

5 I, Mary Abernathy Seal, New Mexico
6 Certified Shorthand Reporter, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that
7 I did report in stenographic shorthand the testimony
8 set forth herein, and the foregoing is a true and
9 correct transcription of the proceeding had upon the
10 taking of this hearing.

11 *Mary A. Seal*

12 Mary Abernathy Seal
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16 (1125L) MAS
17 Date taken: August 20, 2014
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