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BEFORE THE
PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING
August 20, 2014
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APPEARANCES

COMMISSIONERS:

MS. CAROLYN SHEARMAN, Chair
 MR. EUGENE GANT, Vice Chair
 MR. VINCE BERGMAN, Secretary
 MS. MILLIE POGNA
 MR. JAMES CONYERS
 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: I call back into
2 session this hearing before the New Mexico Public
3 Education Commission. Would everyone please turn
4 off or down or something your electronic devices?
5 Which reminds me, I probably need to do the same.
6 Okay.

7 This meeting is being conducted pursuant
8 to New Mexico Statutes Annotated Title 22, Section
9 8B6J 2009. The purpose of these community input
10 hearings that will be held from August 18 through
11 August 21, 2014, is to obtain information from the
12 applicants and to receive community input to assist
13 the Public Education Commission in its decision
14 whether to grant the proposed charter applications.
15 According to this section of the law, the Commission
16 may appoint a subcommittee of no fewer than three
17 members to hold a public hearing according to law.
18 These hearings are being transcribed by a
19 professional court reporter.

20 At this point, I will ask Secretary
21 Bergman for a roll call, to ascertain that we have
22 enough members here.

23 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner
24 Conyers?

25 COMMISSIONER CONYERS: Here.

1 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner Pogna?

2 COMMISSIONER POGNA: Here.

3 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner

4 Toulouse?

5 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Present.

6 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner Gant?

7 COMMISSIONER GANT: Here.

8 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner

9 Shearman?

10 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Here.

11 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner

12 Bergman is here. Madam Chair, you have six members

13 present.

14 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And I did hear

15 from Commissioner Parker earlier that he will be

16 here, but he will be late. So we'll note when he

17 arrives.

18 Total time allocated to each application

19 is 90 minutes which will be timed to ensure an

20 equitable opportunity to present applications, and I

21 have asked Vice Chair Gant to be our official timer

22 today.

23 During the hearing, the Commission will

24 allow for community input about the charter

25 application. The time for public comments will be

1 limited to 20 minutes. If you wish to speak
2 regarding the application, please sign in. And
3 there should be a signup sheet in the back. Is
4 there, Matt?

5 MR. PAHL: Yes.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Please note that
7 you would like to speak. The Commission Chair,
8 based on the number of requests to comment, will
9 allocate time to those wishing to speak. If there
10 are a large number of supporters or opponents, they
11 are asked to select a speaker to represent common
12 interests. We will try to allocate an equitable
13 amount of time to represent the community
14 accurately. The Commission will follow this process
15 for each community input hearing.

16 The Commission will ask each applicant or
17 group to present at the table in front and will be
18 given 20 minutes to present their application in the
19 manner they deem appropriate. The Commission will
20 not accept any written documentation from the
21 applicant, but the applicant may use exhibits to
22 describe their school if necessary.

23 Following the applicant's presentation,
24 the local school district representatives, which
25 includes the superintendent, administrators and

1 board members, will be given ten minutes to comment.
2 Subsequently, the Commission will allow 20 minutes
3 for public comment as described above.

4 And finally, the Commission will be given
5 approximately 40 minutes or whatever time necessary
6 to ask the appropriate questions of the applicants.

7 There are directions on the back table to
8 send in written comments if anyone chooses to do.
9 So we'll talk more about that in just a minute. Is
10 everyone ready?

11 Good morning. We would ask those of you
12 at the table to please introduce yourselves and
13 spell your names. I think the reporter has already
14 got it. Please identify the founders of the school
15 and any person who is here today on behalf of the
16 school. After those introductions are complete,
17 you'll have 20 minutes to present your application.
18 Whenever you're ready. And do please use the
19 microphone. It's pretty hard to hear in here.

20 MR. MONFILETTO: Good morning, Madam Chair
21 and Commission members. My name is Tony Monfiletto,
22 T-O-N-Y, M-O-N-F-I-L-E-T-T-O. I'm one of the
23 co-founders of Technology Leadership High School.

24 MS. CORTAZZO: Kara Cortazzo, K-A-R-A,
25 C-O-R-T-A-Z-Z-O. I'm one of the co-founders of

1 Technology Leadership High School and the principal.

2 MS. PEACOCK-FRIEDRICH: Good morning,
3 Madam Chair and Commission members. I'm Dr. Paola
4 Peacock-Friedrich. P-A-O-L-A, P-E-A-C-O-C-K,
5 F-R-I-E-D-R-I-C-H. I'm one of the cofounders of
6 Technology High School.

7 MS. STEINBRECHER: Hello, everyone. I'm
8 Trish Steinbrecher. I'm a professor at the
9 University of New Mexico, but I'm also a board
10 member with the Technology Leadership High School,
11 as well. And my name is T-R-I-S-H, and the last
12 name is S-T-E-I-N-B-R-E-C-H-E-R.

13 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.
14 Whenever you're ready.

15 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you, Madam Chair.
16 It's great to be here. I'm really happy to present
17 Technology Leadership High School to you, the Public
18 Education Commission. I feel lucky to be in a cold
19 room. I feel sharp today in this cold room, so
20 thank you for that. I'll thank the maintenance guy
21 on the way out, I guess.

22 I want to start with laying out what I
23 think is the big picture of the school. And the big
24 picture is: This school is about opportunity for
25 young people and for our economy in Albuquerque.

1 Albuquerque has the dubious distinction of
2 being one of the top 100 cities in the United States
3 that, in terms of population, we are 94th in the
4 rate of youth unemployment. Our young people are in
5 tough stead when it comes to being productive,
6 constructive members of our community. And our
7 school is about preparing young people to be in the
8 work force and have productive careers in the work
9 force. The schools are rooted in partnerships with
10 growing industries so that we can understand the
11 needs of those industries and connect school to the
12 preparation for the work force.

13 It's really vital for our community that
14 we have an education system that can prepare young
15 people for a growing job sector so that the
16 Albuquerque economy can grow, but also so that those
17 young people have an opportunity to have productive,
18 fruitful careers in their own community, without
19 having to leave and go someplace else.

20 I'd like to start with a little bit of
21 data. There has been some work done by some
22 foundations and out of the White House on a term
23 called opportunity youth. Opportunity youth are
24 those young people who had the opportunity to engage
25 in productive careers in college, but are currently

1 disengaged from school or the work force. There's a
2 prevalence of those young people in Albuquerque, a
3 very high number of those young people in
4 Albuquerque. And when the research was done to
5 consider the costs to society of those young people,
6 what they found was that one young person over the
7 course of their lifetime -- the cost, the fiscal
8 impact of government services, transfer payments
9 from welfare to those young people is \$235,000 over
10 the course of a young person's lifetime, if they're
11 not gainfully employed and productive.

12 Last year, ACE Leadership High School
13 graduated its first four-year class, and our model
14 is based on the ACE Leadership model. We graduated
15 75 young people last year, and the fiscal impact of
16 those 75 young people that otherwise would have been
17 disengaged from school or dropped out of school and
18 unproductive will be \$17,676,000 over the course of
19 their lifetime. That's the impact of those 75
20 graduates. The social impact of those young people,
21 the lifetime cost, in lost wages by not being
22 employed for one graduate is \$704,000. The social
23 impact of those young people over the course of
24 their lives is \$52,801,000. That's in lost wages
25 from not being productive members of the economy.

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1 These schools' mission is to transition
2 kids into college or work who otherwise are off
3 track to graduation or have dropped out of school
4 and are returning. Our job is to make school
5 relevant to that future, which requires a different
6 kind of model and different kind of approach in
7 order to reach these young people.

8 Thank you for letting me present our big
9 idea, and I'm going to turn it to Kara, who's going
10 to talk a little bit more about the school.

11 MS. CORTAZZO: Technology Leadership High
12 School will be located in the Southeast Heights of
13 Albuquerque. When we look at the demographics of
14 the community that we will be building our school
15 in, we're looking at 42 percent that are living
16 below the federal poverty income. Nine percent are
17 unemployed. It's the highest in the City of
18 Albuquerque. 53.9 percent graduated from our main
19 APS high school that is in the Southeast Heights.
20 So the question is: Where do those other 48 percent
21 go?

22 COMMISSIONER GANT: Fifteen minutes.

23 MS. CORTAZZO: The highest percentage of
24 5-to-17-year-olds that live in the Southeast Heights
25 are not enrolled in school. The letters that you

1 will receive from the community, the parents, and
2 the educators that live and work in the Southeast
3 Heights -- I chose one quote from Major Racamon, who
4 is retired United States Air Force. His quote from
5 his letter that he has given to the PEC is: "The
6 southeast is a neighborhood of high need and
7 Technology Leadership High School is an innovative
8 community approach that will support achievement
9 across generations and socioeconomic strata. I
10 firmly believe that Technology Leadership High
11 School will achieve significantly higher graduation
12 rates than we have previously seen in the Southeast
13 Heights."

14 Now we're going to talk about our industry
15 partners in the design of the school.

16 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you, Cara. Over
17 the past two years, we've worked with scientists
18 from University of New Mexico, Sandia Laboratories,
19 the City of Albuquerque, State of New Mexico, Intel,
20 Sage Technology, which is a cyber security firm,
21 PNM, UNM Media Lab, the STEMulus Center at CNM,
22 which is the new technology center at CNM;
23 Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, Sumitomo Electronic Device
24 Innovations, Raytheon, US Air Force laboratories,
25 and other technology firms to design the foundation

1 of a curriculum going forward.

2 Our goal is to work with our partners to
3 design a curriculum. They have committed to
4 training our teachers about the future of the
5 technology sector, and they have also committed to
6 helping us evaluate whether our students are
7 prepared to graduate and ready to transition into
8 college or the work force. Our school prides itself
9 on being responsive to the needs of employers and
10 the community. We serve as a bridge that connects
11 those two.

12 We have a disenfranchised community
13 without a lot of economic opportunity. We have a
14 set of hungry employers looking for young people,
15 and our job is to connect those two currently
16 disparate parts of our community.

17 With that, I'll mention one of our
18 partners, PNM, the Public Service Company of
19 New Mexico. PNM gave a startup grant to us to start
20 begin preparing the curriculum of the school. We're
21 working on an energy curriculum that will prepare
22 young people for PNM. PNM has told us that their
23 attrition rate over the next five to ten years is
24 over 40 percent of their current employees. They're
25 investing in our school because they need a work

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1 force. We're partnering with them to develop a
2 curriculum that's going to prepare young people to
3 be productive parts of their company and other
4 energy companies around the state.

5 Paola.

6 MS. PEACOCK-FRIEDRICH: As we work to
7 prepare our youth for career and college
8 opportunities, we also require dual enrollment for
9 our students as a graduation requirement. We're
10 currently partnering with the new STEMulus Center,
11 which is a branch of CNM and will be located in
12 downtown Albuquerque. The director of the STEMulus
13 Center, John Mierzwa, is a board member for
14 Technology Leadership High School. We partner with
15 organizations like the STEMulus Center and Sage
16 Technologies in order to prepare our youth for
17 realistic work opportunities that will come for them
18 in the future. Dual enrollment and internships are
19 an integral part of the education that our students
20 will receive at Technology Leadership High School.

21 MR. MONFILETTO: Next I'd like to address
22 what we think is very hopeful news about our school
23 report cards at ACE Leadership High School. Last
24 year ACE Leadership High School received a B on its
25 school report card. Our growth in student test

1 scores earned us that B grade. This year our growth
2 at ACE Leadership High School, the growth in test
3 scores, also earned a B in that category of the
4 report card.

5 We've appealed the report card because for
6 some reason they left off our graduation rates.
7 We're not sure why that is. But we graduated twice
8 the number of students last year that we graduated
9 the year before, so we feel as soon as our grade is
10 corrected, it will be a similar grade to the year
11 before.

12 COMMISSIONER GANT: Ten minutes.

13 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you. Next I'd like
14 to address our charter application in three areas.
15 The first is, upon reviewing the comments from PED
16 about our charter application, we went and checked
17 our facility master plan, which I have here, and
18 it's been approved by the Public School Facility
19 Authority, so we feel like we're in good stead with
20 our facility plan.

21 We have a committee of committed
22 contractors, architects, and finance people who are
23 serving on that committee to identify a facility
24 that will meet the needs of the school and past PSFA
25 standards. So like I said, I have that here. It's

1 based on the facility master plan that is from
2 Health and ACE Leadership High School, and it has
3 been successful in locating both of those schools in
4 a facility.

5 Second, our internal controls. It was
6 pointed out that there was some criticism of our
7 internal controls. Those internal controls are the
8 same internal controls that were submitted with
9 Health and ACE Leadership High School and there was
10 no criticism of them earlier. But we do recognize
11 that there could be more description of our payroll
12 process, and we brought that with us, so we have
13 that. We had that, we didn't include that in the
14 original, but I have it with me, if you'd like to
15 see that.

16 And thirdly, there's an organization chart
17 that was missing. We did upload that with our
18 application. I'm not sure why the software or the
19 system at PED wasn't able to take our organization
20 chart, but we did provide it and we brought a hard
21 copy with us.

22 Lastly, I think I'd like to let Trish talk
23 about one of the other critiques which is around the
24 academic performance and corrective action.

25 MS. STEINBRECHER: One of the critiques

1 that was in the application was around the idea of
2 corrective action for low performance. And so how I
3 wanted to go ahead and address that as a board
4 member is that if we are having persistent student
5 academic performance issues, the principal will most
6 likely be put onto a corrective action plan. There
7 will be follow-up from the board. We'll be
8 reviewing that kind of data on a regular basis.

9 If it continues to persist, then we can
10 re-evaluate that plan and either decide to continue
11 with a corrective action plan or we can go ahead and
12 end her contract. So I did want to go ahead and
13 address that.

14 Secondly, the role of the board, as I kind
15 of alluded to there. The role of the board in
16 monitoring the school performance is fairly
17 consistent. We're going to be looking at data once
18 we've established a baseline, and we'll be looking
19 back at those kinds of academic goals and some of
20 the social/emotional goals that are part of our
21 pillars. And so we will be monitoring progress.
22 Progress monitoring is probably one of the
23 best-established evidence-based practices for
24 increasing student achievement. So we'll be doing
25 that rather frequently; monthly, I would say. And

1 so we will be looking at that at all board meetings.

2 I will turn it over to Kara from here.

3 MS. CORTAZZO: I would like to talk about
4 myself for a minute, and my background and how
5 important it is that this school is developed in the
6 Southeast Heights.

7 I have had the privilege of living and
8 working in the Southeast Heights for the last ten
9 years. I was an elementary schoolteacher for four
10 years. I was an instructional coach at an
11 elementary school for one year, and I have been the
12 assistant principal at the feeder middle school that
13 goes into the southeast main high school.

14 And what I have noticed over the last
15 couple of years is that the southeast is not making
16 the gains that the northeast is, and we need to do
17 something about that. And if we look at the SBA
18 scores that were given in the year 2013, we're
19 looking at a comparison of the southeast versus the
20 northeast. Looking at the math proficiency in the
21 southeast, it was 33.2 percent compared to the
22 northeast, which was 73.3.

23 The reading proficiency in the southeast
24 was 41 percent compared to the northeast, which was
25 79 percent.

1 Science proficiency was 38 percent in the
2 southeast compared to 77 percent in the northeast.

3 Our English language learners population
4 in the southeast is 46.1 percent compared to 4
5 percent in the northeast.

6 Our special education population in the
7 southeast is 18 percent compared to 10 percent in
8 the northeast.

9 And I'm sure, as you read the charter,
10 that we are going to address those needs for our
11 community to make sure that they're individualized
12 and so that they're able to be successful.

13 COMMISSIONER GANT: Five minutes.

14 MS. CORTAZZO: So looking at that data, I
15 would just like to reiterate that Technology
16 Leadership High School is going to be a high school
17 that is going to be in the Southeast Heights that is
18 going to bring an innovation that is like no other
19 in the states. And we are extremely fortunate to
20 have many partners already on board before the
21 charter has been approved. Funding and foundations
22 are also supporting us, and I would just like to
23 thank you for listening today.

24 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you very much.
25 That finishes our presentation.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you. Thank
2 you very much.

3 Do we have anyone here from the district
4 who would like to speak? I don't see anyone. Okay.

5 Next would be a public comment. So if you
6 all would not mind stepping back, so that those who
7 want to speak could come up to the table.

8 I have four people who have indicated they
9 would like to speak. So each person will have five
10 minutes, if you choose to take that much.

11 Carmie Toulouse, would you read the names
12 on the list, please? I think your eyes are better
13 than mine.

14 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Since I had my
15 cataract surgery, yes. Vanessa.

16 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Please introduce
17 yourself.

18 DR. SVIHLA: I am Dr. Vanessa Svihla,
19 V-A-N-E-S-S-A, S-V-I-H-L-A. I'm an assistant
20 professor at the University of New Mexico, and I'm a
21 learning scientist, which means I study how people
22 learn.

23 I have been working with ACE Leadership
24 High School and Health Leadership High School for
25 the past few years and I was first attracted to them

1 because they were project-based. And we know from
2 research on learning and on schools that
3 project-based learning is one of the very few things
4 that has been shown with urban diverse populations
5 to narrow achievement gaps. And while we have other
6 project-based schools in Albuquerque, like Next Gen,
7 ACE and Health Leadership are some of the most
8 authentic and relevant real-world project-based
9 schools that I have ever seen.

10 I have worked across Texas, California,
11 Indiana, Massachusetts, in various schools in the
12 Philippines and Ukraine. And these schools really
13 make it a mission to serve the students that they
14 have, not to try to serve students that they would
15 like to have or that we wish we had sometimes as
16 teachers. They really serve the students they have.
17 And I want to emphasize how well they're doing, how
18 successful they have been.

19 I was recently awarded a grant, one of the
20 most prestigious grants in the field of education
21 from the National Academy of Education and the
22 Spencer Foundation to work with ACE to continue the
23 work I have been doing that began as a small grant
24 from the College of Education and the provost's
25 office last year. And so in this work we'll be

1 documenting how students are getting to learn and
2 then how they're doing things that supposedly, you
3 know, students like these maybe shouldn't do or
4 shouldn't get access to. I'm not trying to point
5 fingers at particular schools, really, but over the
6 past decade, nationally and even internationally,
7 we've made assumptions about student ability. These
8 are policy assumptions, nothing to do with
9 New Mexico schools or particular schools or
10 teachers, but policy assumptions that think that
11 students don't have this kind of potential.

12 And what I have seen at ACE and what I see
13 in the application for Technology Leadership is this
14 belief in student potential, and the support to help
15 students actually achieve. So it's a very exciting
16 place, as a community member and as a researcher, to
17 help demonstrate what students actually are capable
18 of when given resources, support, and people who
19 believe in them. And that authenticity and that
20 relevance, which again is research-based, is really
21 what lets them accomplish this great work.

22 COMMISSIONER GANT: Two minutes.

23 DR. SVIHLA: So I'm also just very excited
24 because I think this is timely. UNM has shown a
25 commitment to the Innovate ABQ movement right now

1 through the innovation Academy. So we've been
2 looking at innovative ways to support creative
3 thinking, problem-solving, and the various skills
4 they'll be developing at Technology Leadership.

5 I have begun a partnership with Professor
6 Dan Hickey at IU who has MacArthur funds to work on
7 a digital badging system that we'll bring to UNM to
8 help track the performance of students. And we'd
9 like to also seek a partnership with Technology
10 Leadership using the MacArthur and Gates Foundation
11 monies to document learning at Technology
12 Leadership. So thank you very much.

13 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Elizabeth.

15 DR. KISTIN-KELLER: Good morning. My name
16 is Dr. Elizabeth Kistin-Keller, K-I-S-T-I-N,
17 K-E-L-L-E-R. I am a research scientist at Sandia
18 National Labs and a former adjunct professor in the
19 water resources masters program at the University of
20 New Mexico. The comments I will share today
21 represent myself and are not institutional comments
22 from Sandia, but reflect my role in that
23 institution.

24 The two pieces I would like to focus on as
25 a community member who also lives in the Southeast

1 Heights and the international district include first
2 a reflection on what I have been able to see at ACE
3 Leadership in terms of the level of engagement and
4 the products that are produced by the students there
5 through the project-based learning. For someone who
6 has worked in the technology sector for most of my
7 career, the kind of innovation and creativities that
8 are coming out in the projects that are created
9 through this model are remarkable for high school
10 students.

11 Beyond that, I think the model prepares
12 students for the work atmosphere in the technology
13 sector that we see both in my field and in
14 government-related technology, science and
15 technology research, as well as among our industry
16 partners where, right out of the education system,
17 you're required to work with your peers, you need
18 peer review to move ideas forward, and to work
19 together for innovation. So to see the students
20 coming out of ACE with those skills already at a
21 high-school level that I didn't develop until
22 working with colleagues in undergrad and in grad
23 school is remarkable.

24 The second piece I would just like to note
25 is the feeling and I think the promise to be engaged

1 as a professional partner in the planning of the
2 Technology Leadership School. We were convened as
3 part of the planning with other colleagues of mine
4 from Sandia National Labs in addition to technology
5 professionals from PNM and from other industry
6 partners across Albuquerque and across the state.
7 And the level of excitement emerging from that
8 room -- I think we picked a group that is already
9 community-minded. These are folks who have had
10 opportunities to volunteer for science night or
11 science fairs in the school system, but had never
12 been asked at this level to contribute to the kind
13 of curriculum development, student engagement,
14 thinking about the design of a school. The level of
15 excitement about long-term engagement was palpable.
16 I would have colleagues call me weeks after we had
17 this convening to talk about ideas to think about
18 how they could be involved. I think that kind of
19 partnership for the Southeast Heights and for
20 Albuquerque as a whole is essential to get industry
21 folks who may not even have kids in the system yet
22 reengaged in a different way.

23 COMMISSIONER GANT: Two minutes.

24 MS. KISTIN-KELLER: The final piece I
25 would just like to mention as a member of the

1 international district and a technology professional
2 is to understand that the assets that the students
3 that the Technology Leadership school is targeting,
4 that haven't always been compatible with a
5 traditional school system but I think can really
6 excel in the problem-based learning, are also the
7 kinds of assets we know for new technology fields
8 like cyber security, thinking out of the box; some
9 of that creativity are the kinds of skills we're
10 going to need in the technology field going forward
11 and the kind of skills we'll need for New Mexico to
12 be successful in technology and industry going
13 forward. Thank you very much.

14 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Linda.

16 MS. SMITH: Good morning. I'm Linda
17 Smith. I'm the director of academic and community
18 services for Presbyterian Healthcare Services. I'm
19 here on behalf of Cathy Davis, our chief nursing
20 officer, and Presbyterian to show our support for
21 another wonderful high school that is beginning, we
22 hope, in technology.

23 We are the largest not-for-profit health
24 care organization in the state. We hire
25 approximately 10,000 employees at any given time,

1 and our information technology services have
2 exponentially grown. We need more people in this
3 field. We would prefer to hire locally.
4 Unfortunately, there are not enough local people to
5 be hired. We just went statewide with our
6 integrated electronic medical record, which took
7 thousands of hours of planning, teaching, and
8 support, most of it, if not all of it, from
9 information technology specialists.

10 I am a nurse. I'm an educator. I have
11 worked with students on many different levels,
12 adolescents, adults, in nursing. But I'm very
13 familiar with what helps people to learn. And I
14 also have been involved with ACE in developing the
15 health care curriculum for the Health Leadership
16 High School. I have met and supported both of these
17 institutions and their staff, and we're excited to
18 have this opportunity.

19 Our largest facility is in the southeast
20 area of Albuquerque, as you know, although we have
21 satellites across the state. We want to support
22 locally. We have the facilities to bring people in,
23 students, to learn onsite, including preceptorships,
24 including excursions and tours, but more in-depth
25 outside of the classroom.

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1 So I would like to thank you for looking
2 at this charter. We definitely will support this
3 school, if it's approved, as we are currently
4 supporting Health Leadership High School, as well.
5 Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you very
7 much.

8 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: The final one is
9 Denicia.

10 MS. CADENA: Good morning. My name is
11 Denicia Cadena, C-A-D-E-N-A. I'm the communications
12 and cultural strategy director at Young Women
13 United, a community organizing group based here in
14 Albuquerque.

15 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I'm sorry, I don't
16 mean to interrupt you. I did not hear what group
17 you work with.

18 MS. CADENA: Young Women United. We're a
19 nonprofit based here in Albuquerque. And one of our
20 core groups is working with young women age 13 to 19
21 on a leadership development program. Until very
22 recently, we were based in the Southeast Heights.

23 Previous to going to Young Women United, I
24 was the executive director of an organization called
25 Albuquerque Women Earn, an economic development

1 organization for refugee, immigrant and Native
2 American women in the Southeast Heights. And I know
3 the unique challenges and strengths of the Southeast
4 Heights, and when we're creating educational models,
5 we have to create a model that's going to work with
6 refugee, immigrant, and Native American communities,
7 and doing that can be very difficult.

8 I'm here today to speak in support of
9 Technical Leadership High School because from what I
10 have heard of their plans, being in conversation
11 with them and the support that I have already heard
12 within the Southeast Heights, I know that they're
13 going to take a community approach, and I know that
14 nothing else will be able to work in that community,
15 where whole families are working up to build their
16 skills in adult literacy, to build their skills in
17 employability, and it's really going to take a model
18 that works with the whole family.

19 I can also speak, in my role as a
20 communications director, to what I have seen working
21 with our young people. When I'm creating social
22 media strategies, when I'm developing videos, their
23 skills are often more advanced than my own. You
24 know, they readily have those skills and they're
25 willing to work with them and I oftentimes think as

1 adult allies, we dismiss those skills as
2 insignificant, that we don't -- you know, when we
3 see young people on Facebook or where they're
4 sending pictures through Snapchat, that is a skill
5 that will translate into the workplace. But I'm
6 here to say that that's not, you know -- as we
7 develop into the nonprofit sector, one of the most
8 important parts of my job is being able to tell our
9 stories to our communities, and I know that young
10 people have valuable skills in that.

11 Currently, our young women received a
12 fellowship with the Parsons The New School for
13 Design in New York to develop an online game to
14 teach health literacy and we're excited to roll that
15 out this semester. And I have seen the change in
16 their approach, how excited they are to work on a
17 game, and just what technology has meant in their
18 lives and their willingness to engage on such a
19 project.

20 As I said, I'm the communications
21 director, and often young people who develop their
22 skills in communications, be it in video, online
23 media, developing games, go into other sectors,
24 commercial sectors, developing designs for brands,
25 developing video games, but they're sorely needed as

1 a nonprofit industry. As we look for technologies
2 that are going to reach out into our communities,
3 traditional modes of outreach just simply aren't
4 working.

5 We conducted a research program with our
6 youth to see what their preferred place of care was,
7 and for 40 percent of them, their preferred place
8 for reproductive health care was going to a
9 hospital. So we knew we had a serious gap in health
10 literacy, and that's why they're working on
11 developing a game. Because they knew that there
12 were websites out there that had this information,
13 that there were brochures, that they could go to the
14 clinic; but a game would make all the difference in
15 being able to outreach to youth.

16 I know that nonprofits here in New Mexico
17 could sorely use young people that are trained in
18 these skills and committed to community.

19 And just to close on a personal note, I'm
20 proud to say that I'm a graduate of Las Cruces High
21 School, and there I was the president of the math,
22 engineering, and science club. And I know what a
23 difference that made in my life, and I'm excited to
24 see that this opportunity, the same opportunities,
25 could be there in an even more expanded reach for

1 students of the Southeast Heights. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you very
3 much.

4 Is there anyone else who would like to
5 speak that perhaps didn't get signed up?

6 Senator Ivey-Soto.

7 SENATOR IVEY-SOTO: Thank you, Madam
8 Chair. I'm Daniel Ivey-Soto. I'm not here in my
9 attorney capacity. I'm here as an educator and as a
10 legislator; in terms of being an educator, having
11 taught at Ernie Pyle Middle School and having been a
12 department chair at Manzano High School. I got my
13 master's degree in education from Claremont with a
14 focus on education reform. And a lot of the reason
15 for my interest in pursuing education reform was
16 actually due to my own history of never having
17 finished high school, because the traditional high
18 school did not speak to me. And it was through many
19 years of struggle that I was finally able to get
20 through the fact that I wasn't able to finish in the
21 traditional way.

22 One of the things about Tech that it does,
23 along with the rest of the leadership high schools,
24 is that it speaks to the students who don't do well
25 in the traditional classroom. It speaks to the

1 students who need a different approach. The irony
2 of saying they need a different approach is that the
3 approach they need is exactly the approach that
4 employers are looking for. You know, in the
5 traditional classroom you work alone. In the model
6 for Tech Leadership High School, you collaborate.
7 In fact, in the workplace, what you're expected to
8 do is collaborate.

9 In my legislative capacity, one of the
10 things that I have become involved in are questions
11 of economic development and making sure that we have
12 a tax base in New Mexico to be able to do the things
13 that we need to do and provide the services we need
14 to provide. In order to do that, we need to have a
15 work force that is ready and capable, and one of the
16 real problems with attracting businesses from
17 outside of New Mexico is making sure that we have
18 people in New Mexico who are capable of fulfilling
19 certain jobs.

20 Tech Leadership High School will be
21 providing that niche for a number of employers who
22 come in, who are going to be needing support, who
23 are going to be needing people who are able to come
24 in and have the skills not only in terms of the
25 substantive area, but have developed the workplace

1 social skills to be able to be successful. Thank
2 you.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you. Anyone
4 else?

5 COMMISSIONER GANT: We're out of time.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you so much.
7 We would ask the founders please to come back up to
8 the table for Commissioners' questions.

9 If you all are ready, we'll begin.

10 Commissioners, do you have questions?
11 Commissioner Toulouse.

12 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Madam Chair.
13 Since this is very much in my home area -- I grew up
14 in that area, raised my children in the Southeast
15 Heights, graduated from Highland High School, as
16 both of my kids did, and I have also visited ACE,
17 and the first thing I'd like to know, this plan is
18 going to be very similar to how you are training
19 students at ACE, the projects and that kind of --

20 MR. MONFILETTO: Ms. Toulouse, that's
21 correct. It's a collaborative project-based
22 approach. We use folks from the Buck Institute for
23 Education. They're a national trainer in
24 project-based learning as our support, and our goal
25 is to build an environment that's similar to ACE and

1 Health Leadership.

2 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: I do have some
3 concerns about you finding a location. I'm sure you
4 will, but knowing that area and being on the board
5 of the Albuquerque Indian Center, which has lost
6 most of its state funding and most of its city
7 funding with the current administrations in both
8 places, I know that there is a tremendous need for
9 additional services up there, because we were
10 providing all sorts of services that we no longer
11 can fund, and many of them to young people. So I
12 know the kinds of young people that are up there.
13 So I'm glad that's the area you want to be in, and I
14 know there are places there, but how much money do
15 you really think you're going to need to fix
16 something up or find something or have somebody
17 build something?

18 MR. MONFILETTO: Ms. Toulouse, we have
19 been working with the same Realtor that we used at
20 ACE and Health Leadership to identify location.
21 He's done a preliminary look and there are six
22 facilities that would be ready for an education
23 occupancy status by the PSFA. So within that
24 region. So we feel like probably one of those six
25 spaces will work out for us. It's never the first

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1 one you look at. It's probably never the second
2 one, either, but at least in a preliminary way, we
3 feel that there's going to be a space that will
4 accommodate us.

5 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: I'm looking
6 forward to it. We are sorely underserved with
7 charter schools in that southeast part of town. The
8 South Valley has everybody. That's where everybody
9 headed, and now I think they have an excess. The
10 northeast corridor has a lot, and we have almost
11 none. Especially for the high school age, we have
12 the two schools, and they're both close to the
13 airport, and so I'm glad you're locating out
14 farther.

15 That's mainly what I wanted to address. I
16 mean, I know, having spoken with you, too, you know
17 the problems of funding, and I do know there's space
18 there, but I just didn't know what condition any of
19 them were in anymore. But thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you,
21 Commissioner.

22 Commissioner Gant.

23 COMMISSIONER GANT: Madam Chair, members.

24 Good morning to you all. I do have
25 several questions. I'm going to start off with some

1 that I wrote down while you were talking. And one
2 of them that jumped out to me, I believe you were
3 the one that said this, students will be required to
4 take dual language. If they don't take dual
5 language, then what?

6 MR. MONFILETTO: Mr. Gant, I wonder if
7 that was -- Paola said dual enrollment. Was that
8 what you were --

9 COMMISSIONER GANT: Dual enrollment.
10 That's considered in places dual language, dual
11 enrollment.

12 MR. MONFILETTO: The dual enrollment
13 requirement is dual enrollment class at CNM or UNM
14 prior to graduation.

15 COMMISSIONER GANT: What if they don't
16 want to do that?

17 MR. MONFILETTO: Well, that's a graduation
18 requirement for us, and we had not run into a
19 problem with that at ACE or Health Leadership. It's
20 part of their transition. They need to be able to
21 learn at the next level before they graduate.

22 COMMISSIONER GANT: Yes, I know that's one
23 of them they can pick to do. But they don't have to
24 do dual enrollment. There are several things in the
25 state statute that satisfy that requirement. Okay.

1 Now, in your presentation and basically in
2 this document, what I didn't hear was about the
3 students themselves. And I have two questions.
4 What ownership do you believe students have for
5 dropping out? What ownership do students have for
6 dropping out? Because right now what I hear, it's
7 all on APS. It's all their problem. That's what I
8 hear across the state. Down in Las Cruces, where
9 I'm from, that's what I hear. It's all the public
10 schools' problem. I never hear you talk about the
11 students and why they dropped out. So what's their
12 responsibility?

13 MR. MONFILETTO: They have a
14 responsibility to graduate. It's necessary. They
15 will go nowhere without a high school diploma and a
16 transition to work or college. Our job is to help
17 them become responsible enough to graduate. We
18 won't do the work for them. We need to have them to
19 engage in their own learning, and that's part of our
20 job.

21 To be honest, we've chosen to work with
22 the kids who have the hardest time with that
23 reality. But in the end, it's up to them whether
24 they want to graduate and transition to work or
25 college, and we offer that opportunity and all the

1 support to get there, but we don't do it for them.

2 COMMISSIONER GANT: Well, you talked about
3 relevancy of classes. I have heard this for many
4 years. I served on a school board for eight years,
5 I've been in this volunteer business for 34 years in
6 the schools. But what ownership do students have
7 for making their classes relevant?

8 MR. MONFILETTO: Well, I can only speak
9 for our schools, the ACE Health and Tech Leadership.
10 They have a responsibility to look beyond today and
11 tomorrow, to the rest of their lives. And our job
12 is to provide them the experiences in school that
13 help make their future a reality for them. So it's
14 their responsibility to own their own future. And
15 our job is to give them the experiences that let
16 them arrive at their own future.

17 COMMISSIONER GANT: Thank you. I believe
18 it's on page 104 of your application. It's under
19 M(3), about five lines down. The sentence starts,
20 "For example, ACE Leadership High School has
21 financed a building with New Mexico Bank."

22 ACE High School has financed with a bank?
23 Explain that, please.

24 MR. MONFILETTO: Sure. ACE Leadership
25 High School has a nonprofit foundation called ACE

1 Leadership High School Foundation, and it has a
2 commercial loan with New Mexico Bank and Trust, and
3 the foundation owns the building and the school
4 leases the building from the foundation.

5 COMMISSIONER GANT: See, but if someone
6 read that from the outside, it says ACE Leadership
7 High School has the loan, not a foundation. So when
8 that jumped out, I thought, That's totally illegal.

9 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you for that
10 correction. You're right.

11 COMMISSIONER GANT: All right. Now go to
12 your master plan, and that one jumped at me. And I
13 understand what you said, you based it on Health
14 Leadership, you based it on ACE, and all you did was
15 just copy it, change the date; is that correct?

16 MR. MONFILETTO: That's correct.

17 COMMISSIONER GANT: And in the document
18 you put on here, you have a cap of 430 and then your
19 application is 350.

20 MR. MONFILETTO: Our ultimate goal is to
21 get to 430. We don't think we'll be there at the
22 end of the fourth year. But we'd like to get to a
23 scale where we no longer need small-size school
24 adjustment funding. But that probably won't happen
25 within the first five years. So our goal is to

1 build a building that will accommodate that size.

2 COMMISSIONER GANT: You're going to think
3 this is picky. But would you allow a student to do
4 that? Just to copy, copy, copy and turn it in as
5 their own work?

6 MR. MONFILETTO: It is our work. The PSFA
7 is well aware of our plan to use the same facility
8 master plan across all three schools, and they
9 endorsed that approach. So I don't consider it to
10 be copying when the person who's grading it has
11 given you permission to use the same plan.

12 COMMISSIONER GANT: It was written back in
13 2012.

14 My last question, Madam Chair -- and we've
15 asked this of other schools doing the same thing --
16 you have got ACE and you have got Health Leadership
17 in place. You have got all the administration in
18 place, et cetera. Now you're going to add another
19 school and add another layer of administration by
20 basically running it by the same people at the cost
21 of the taxpayers. And this governor, previous
22 governors, and the secretary say we have got to
23 reduce overhead. But what we're doing with this
24 school is increasing the overhead again, not
25 decreasing overhead. You know, if you go out in the

1 traditional public schools, they're getting told to
2 reduce, reduce, reduce. But here, what we're doing
3 here is adding another one, doing technical stuff,
4 just like ACE and Health Leadership. So why should
5 we add this -- technical is technical, and you can
6 teach all that stuff either in health -- the young
7 lady back there talked about health. You have that.
8 That's why she thought this would be a great one to
9 open up, and other people back there. Now we're
10 adding another layer of building, administration,
11 overhead, utilities, everything.

12 Please explain the purpose and the reason
13 for that.

14 MR. MONFILETTO: That is a good question.
15 We have purposely designed the schools to reach a
16 cap of 430 students. At 430 students, there is no
17 additional cost to the State in a cost of small-size
18 adjustment. So the cost to the State is the same
19 per student across all three of those schools. It's
20 the reason why we're growing to the level that we're
21 growing, so that no more resources are required to
22 run those schools than the traditional school in
23 Albuquerque or anywhere else across the state.

24 I share your concern, and that's the
25 reason why the schools are slated to be 430 students

1 out beyond the cutoff for small-size adjustment,
2 which is what drives costs to the State, which is
3 what drives the revenue need to the State.

4 COMMISSIONER GANT: Madam Chair, just a
5 comment on that. I do serve on the Public School
6 Capital Outlay Council. I see all the leases. And
7 right now, the charter schools are paying almost \$7
8 million more than what we allow for leasing
9 assistance. And I believe you, ACE and Health
10 Leadership -- and I can call it up and look -- are
11 paying a lot more for your buildings than what we
12 allow for lease. So you know, there's an argument
13 there. But as you add more and more principals,
14 administration, there is a cost associated with it.
15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

17 I have a couple of questions, if you will
18 let me go right ahead here. I'm looking at your
19 application, page 75. Page 74 is the number on the
20 document up in my window, it tells me it's on page
21 75. I'm looking at your staffing plan. It's the
22 very top of the page. Are you with me? Okay. I
23 notice that in year 2019 your number of teachers
24 decreases. It has been a steady increase through
25 the other years, but it decreases by one. I realize

1 that's not huge, but it seems odd to me, when your
2 student numbers are going up, that your teachers are
3 going down. I understand, too, that your special
4 education teacher numbers are going up in that year.
5 They didn't in the two preceding years. Tell me how
6 that's going to work.

7 MR. MONFILETTO: What we have is some
8 experience from ACE Leadership about the staffing
9 needs, and we think that what is probably happening
10 is the experiences outside of school are requiring
11 less classroom teaching because kids are in
12 internships, they're out doing work, they're at the
13 University, and so the classroom teaching need isn't
14 as high, but the support for those kids outside is
15 really where the need is. So I think that our
16 classroom presence isn't as great in the senior
17 year, in that last year.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: So your increase
19 in the number of special ed. teachers, is that --

20 MR. MONFILETTO: A lot of it has to do
21 with the transition planning for kids, making sure
22 that they're transitioned well into college, and
23 special ed. people just have great skills about
24 that. And so that's really, I think, likely where
25 it's coming from.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. And it was
2 curious to me, the instructions in this application
3 form said to use the number of 15 percent when
4 estimating your special ed. population, particularly
5 for the budget. I heard one of your people at the
6 table with you earlier say the South Valley had an
7 18 percent special ed. population, and you used 17
8 percent in your budget.

9 MR. MONFILETTO: Yeah. That's a good
10 question. Again, it's based on the experiences at
11 ACE and Health. We asked our principals what the
12 rates were, and we took a conservative -- at ACE
13 it's 21 percent. So we used less than what our
14 actual experience is.

15 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: The reason we put
16 15 percent in there is because it's a statewide
17 average, and we just tried to make a level playing
18 field for people to do an initial budget, to show
19 their capacity for budgeting.

20 Okay. I'm looking at page 94 under
21 section J, where it talks about services that will
22 be provided. "Technology Leadership High School
23 will become a member of the leadership high school
24 network and receive services through its
25 affiliation."

1 Is there a charge for that?

2 MR. MONFILETTO: No. We've never asked
3 any school to pay for any kind of service from
4 across schools or -- yeah.

5 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And in the same
6 vein, where you talk about the principal residency
7 on page 84, is there a charge for that?

8 MR. MONFILETTO: There is not a charge.
9 What we have done is secured a grant from a
10 foundation to pay Kara's salary for a year of
11 residency at ACE and Health Leadership to learn the
12 model. So there's no charge. She's paid for
13 through a grant and she has a residency at the
14 schools, learning about how to run the school.

15 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. And that
16 brings up another question that popped up as I was
17 reading the application. Nowhere in there does it
18 say you have administrative credentials. I'm
19 assuming you do.

20 MS. CORTAZZO: Yes. I have a bachelor's
21 in elementary education, K through 8, and my
22 master's is in educational leadership, K through 12.

23 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: You're a licensed
24 New Mexico administrator?

25 MS. CORTAZZO: Yes.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you very
2 much. My other question on your principal and the
3 residency. When you lose a principal, as you have
4 at Health Leadership, how do you go back and redo
5 that residency for someone new coming in?

6 MR. MONFILETTO: It is super challenging.
7 We are in the middle of identifying a new leader for
8 the school. Part of our role will be to help ramp
9 them up so that they're prepared to take control of
10 the school. We feel like there's a lot of
11 institutional knowledge currently and that we can
12 bring somebody on and they'll be able to adapt to
13 the new school. But part of our role is to support
14 that person and their learning curve, to learn about
15 the new school.

16 The other good thing about having a
17 network is that there's a higher level of knowledge
18 across all of the schools, and we can support one
19 another in that transition. So it's not easy, but
20 it's better than being alone in a school that
21 doesn't have any partners.

22 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: You talked earlier
23 about your 2014 school report card and the fact that
24 it reflected no graduates, and that really impacted
25 your grade. It also had no information on -- I have

1 lost the words -- career to -- nothing was there.

2 Have you also sent in more information there?

3 MR. MONFILETTO: We've appealed both of
4 those. We're just not sure why that data was left
5 off. But we've appealed both, and we expect that --
6 that's what we do. We transition kids to college
7 and work. So we feel like there's likely to be an
8 improved score because of when it's -- after the
9 appeal is finished, after they have had a chance to
10 look at it.

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: If those scores
12 are corrected and a new report card grade is issued,
13 would you please be sure that you forward that to
14 CSD so that they can provide that to us? That
15 worries me when a high school says, "We had
16 graduates," and their report card shows none.

17 Senator, did you have a comment?

18 SENATOR IVEY-SOTO: On that point, I want
19 to say under the PED rules, those are two areas that
20 are unappealable. So what Mr. Monfiletto said is
21 correct. We have filed an appeal on those,
22 recognizing that those are unappealable areas.

23 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you for that
24 information. I appreciate that.

25 But if you do get some change there, some

1 recognition of what the school really is doing, we
2 would appreciate knowing it.

3 MR. MONFILETTO: I would just say that we
4 doubled the number of graduates last year, so we
5 went from 35 to 75 graduates. So it should be --
6 we'll figure it out.

7 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Good.

8 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: On page 99, where
10 you talk about waivers, I'm looking at staffing
11 pattern. You require teachers who are multifaceted
12 and have varying degrees of training. That puts
13 fear in my heart. I'm not really sure what you're
14 saying there.

15 MR. MONFILETTO: We will need industry
16 professionals working in the school. And some of
17 them will be certified, or some of them will be
18 newly certified. They won't have a lot of teaching
19 experience. They'll be new to the field and we're
20 going to have to teach them how to teach so that
21 they can -- and they're going to need to teach us
22 about the industry and that's why we -- at ACE
23 Leadership, there are two architects that earned
24 their teaching degree who came, and actually a
25 carpenter who came, earned his teaching degree late,

1 and wasn't a trained teacher until, you know, late
2 in their careers, but we need that real-life
3 experience in the school. So it's a combination of
4 teaching and professional experience that make a
5 faculty learn.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: But they do have
7 their teaching license.

8 MR. MONFILETTO: Absolutely.

9 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. All right.
10 I know at the college level, particularly the
11 community college level, you don't have to have a
12 teaching degree or a teaching license, but you have
13 to have experience in the field or qualification.
14 But that doesn't apply here.

15 Let me see. On page 102, when you talk
16 about your nutrition program feeding students,
17 "Contract food service management provide meals for
18 our students," blah, blah, blah, "to offer breakfast
19 and lunch to our regular day school program and an
20 evening dinner to our reengagement students."

21 I believe that's the first time I have
22 seen any reference to reengagement students. Have I
23 just missed it? Is it in the application?

24 MR. MONFILETTO: I believe so. At ACE and
25 Health, there will be -- at ACE currently, there's

1 an evening and a day program. We run school from
2 9:00 in the morning until 8:00 at night. And in the
3 evening, when students come in for an evening
4 program, there's a meal that would be like lunch
5 during the day.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. So could
7 you tell me where in the application there's more
8 information on that, on the reengagement students,
9 or the evening students?

10 MS. PEACOCK-FRIEDRICH: Thank you, Madam
11 Chair. Throughout the application, we refer to our
12 students in a full continuum, so serving students
13 from age 14 to 24, and offering hours of schooling
14 from 9:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. So it's correct that
15 previously in the application we may not have
16 differentiated between those students because we
17 offer our school services and administrative
18 services to that whole continuum of students. At
19 this point in the application, they were referred to
20 in a distinct way. However, throughout the
21 application, we are considering them in that
22 spectrum of students that are enrolled at our
23 school.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. Thank you.
25 I have a note about graduation

1 requirements. Your students are required so many
2 units. How do you count the work that your students
3 do in these projects and those kinds of things? How
4 does that translate into the requirements for
5 graduation? How is it counted?

6 MR. MONFILETTO: It's counted as credits.
7 So students earn credits every trimester. They have
8 certified teachers that award credits. The credits
9 are assigned based on the project work done at the
10 school.

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Is it based on the
12 hours that a project requires?

13 MR. MONFILETTO: Projects run for a
14 trimester, so there's a limited amount of time to
15 complete a project. However, the credit is assigned
16 based on the learning outcomes or the standards that
17 the State expects to earn a biology credit, a
18 chemistry credit. The students are demonstrating
19 that either through performance assessment or a test
20 or some other assessment of their learning.

21 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. I believe
22 that's it for right now. Anyone else?

23 Commissioner Bergman.

24 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Thank you, Madam
25 Chair.

1 Several things. First is a clarification.
2 We need to nail this enrollment cap down. We can't
3 have two different caps. On the front page of the
4 application you say 350, but back in the back you
5 said 430. You used 430 in one of your responses.
6 Which number are we going to use? CSD has to have
7 that in the records.

8 MR. MONFILETTO: Let's use 350. We will
9 be back to you to increase it to 430 at the return.

10 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I just want to be
11 sure, so there's no future misunderstanding because
12 some of these Commissioners may be gone when the
13 misunderstanding occurs. So it's going to be 350,
14 what's up in the front of your application.

15 MR. MONFILETTO: Correct.

16 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And one of your
17 answers to what the chairman just asked -- on page
18 11 you said that your class ages were going to be 14
19 years to 24 years, your student ages. But on page
20 134 you said your student ages are going to be 13 to
21 20. So there was a contradiction there, too. I
22 just am pointing that out, really.

23 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you for that. I
24 didn't catch that.

25 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: What I wanted to

1 ask was, I want to explore -- on page 8, you start
2 page 8 by stating a truism, which is that math
3 proficiency not only in Albuquerque but in every
4 school in this state is a -- all schools are having
5 difficulty with that. And then later on on that
6 page, you talk about you're not going to have any
7 class periods. The students will be embedded in
8 their project-based learning.

9 So that raised just a question in my mind.
10 One, you're talking about technology and the state
11 mandates that you have got to have X number of
12 credits to graduate. How are you going to teach
13 complex things, talking about math, like trig and
14 algebra II, when there's no class period? Can you
15 explore that for me?

16 MR. MONFILETTO: Sure. Paola is better at
17 math than me, and probably will want to add in. So
18 the school operates on what's called a workshop
19 model. So what happens is, there's a direct
20 instruction for the beginning of the period. So
21 there's a project happening, but it's direct
22 instruction. So kids are getting some direct
23 instruction at the beginning and then there's work
24 happening. After the work, there's a debrief.

25 Now, those periods are long. They're an

1 hour and a half long. And within that hour and a
2 half, there is a lot of pull-out direct instruction
3 that happens. If kids need some support in learning
4 trigonometry, some formulas in trigonometry, there's
5 the opportunity, because the classes are taught in
6 teams of teachers teaching classes or teaching
7 projects. They're able to take some kids out and do
8 some direct instruction if some more support is
9 needed.

10 Also, we run a year-round calendar with a
11 week of class for students during the break. So
12 every quarter we have an extra week of instruction
13 where we take kids who are behind or haven't learned
14 what they needed to learn and they get some direct
15 instruction. It's called interim school. And so
16 there's more time to address some specific needs
17 that kids have.

18 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: So there is going
19 to be some face-to-face interaction between the kids
20 and the teaching staff or especially for the -- when
21 you're talking about the Southeast Heights, you have
22 already noted that the proficiency levels in the
23 Southeast Heights are sometimes significantly lower
24 than they are in the other parts of the city. And
25 so that means, by definition, you're going to have

1 kids that are going to need some face-to-face time,
2 obviously, to me. They can't do it all online. And
3 they can't do it all within a project, I don't
4 think.

5 MR. MONFILETTO: You're absolutely right.
6 They need some face-to-face time with the expert,
7 and that's the teacher in the class. Absolutely.

8 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Okay. And the
9 other thing that kind of jumped into the back of my
10 head was, you have got the leadership high school
11 network, kind of an umbrella group. Let's see. You
12 kind of briefly talked about it on page 83, your
13 Center for School Leadership, which you're also
14 calling the principal residency. I just want to be
15 sure that each of these schools is separate. How is
16 this center or the leadership network -- I almost
17 got the impression sometimes it's involved a little
18 bit in the management. These are independent
19 bodies, so what's the relationship there?

20 MR. MONFILETTO: The relationship starts
21 with a residency, so we have a principal who does a
22 residency at one of the leadership high school
23 network schools. So actually Kara will be at both
24 Health and ACE, learning about the schools.

25 After the school is created and has its

1 students in place, we will do cross-school
2 collaboration, professional development, other
3 things that will help the learning across all of the
4 schools. But Kara's accountable to one entity, and
5 that's the board at Technology Leadership High
6 School. She doesn't work for me, she doesn't work
7 for any of the other schools. She works only for
8 Technology Leadership.

9 Trish, who was here earlier, will be her
10 evaluator and she'll be accountable to Trish about
11 her performance. So the schools are separate, but
12 they're linked together because they have common
13 beliefs about kids and common beliefs about
14 instruction and community.

15 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I just wanted to
16 hear you say that they are independent, they are
17 stand-alone schools. I just wanted to hear you say
18 that. I was just going to note, I lived in the
19 Southeast Heights in the late '60s when I was going
20 to UNM, and that area was lagging then, and here we
21 are 50 years later and it's still lagging. So maybe
22 it is time to do something about that.

23 Thank you, Madam Chair.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

25 Commissioner Toulouse.

1 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: I'm not lagging.
2 There are several of these people in the audience,
3 however, I know exactly. The thing I wanted to
4 bring up -- again, my brain is beginning to turn on.
5 It's getting to be my time of day. You know, both
6 of your schools are in an area with low-income
7 populations, South Valley, North Valley. But that
8 area up there has a very significant homeless
9 population or families that are day-to-day or
10 week-to-week from being homeless, especially the
11 Native American population, who are the students I
12 would love to see you try to pick up. There's also
13 a very large Asian population up there that is not
14 present in other parts.

15 How are you going to reach out to those
16 and what kind of services are you going to be able
17 to provide, especially to the homeless or on the
18 verge of being homeless students?

19 MR. MONFILETTO: I'll start to answer, but
20 I think Kara, who works there currently, can
21 probably add. But if you don't mind, I'll start and
22 then let Kara take over.

23 The school is built with a community
24 engagement center, so we have a pillar of the school
25 is how we engage with the community, how we have a

1 reciprocal relationship. We care about them and
2 they care about us and how can we support each
3 other, the community and the school together.

4 Kara has assembled a group of folks that
5 are going to be building a plan for the community
6 engagement center. Denicia is one of the folks, and
7 some other public health people, and other folks
8 that are engaged, that do community work. They're
9 going to be putting together a community engagement
10 plan that is about building that reciprocal
11 relationship, so that we're valuable to the
12 community and the community is also an asset to us,
13 helps us do our work better with kids and families.

14 Kara might be able to speak specifically
15 about the Native American community, the high
16 transient rate, things like that.

17 MS. CORTAZZO: That is a great question,
18 and I wish I had the full answer for you. My
19 experience in the Southeast Heights, our high
20 mobility rate is one of the number-one issues. Our
21 homelessness is one of the number-one issues.
22 Having apartments and homes that are either boarded
23 up or taken down and now there's open lots. When
24 you have a structure within your community where you
25 start to have buildings that aren't being used by

1 humans, and they aren't paying rent or mortgage and
2 you have open lots where the homeless will start to
3 move into so that they can live there, it spikes
4 your drugs and your gangs and your murder rate, et
5 cetera, et cetera.

6 So this is something that has really been
7 an answer that I wish I had. And the best answer I
8 can give to you is working within the community
9 throughout the Southeast Heights. There needs to be
10 a plan put into place where our families who are in
11 this poverty and they can't get out -- we need to
12 help them to get out. And how that occurs is, you
13 start from one little thing, and having a place that
14 the community and the students can go to that's a
15 place of educational institution, that is safe, that
16 is in the middle of their neighborhood, not on the
17 side, not on the base, not up, you know, in Four
18 Hills; that is in their neighborhood, that they can
19 call their own.

20 After we build a school like that and we
21 over the next couple of years really get together a
22 strong community that is about educating these
23 students and supporting these families, what I think
24 will happen -- and you can write this in and we'll
25 check in ten years -- after we build this school, it

1 will start to trickle out to the neighborhood. So
2 one of the places that we are really hoping to build
3 in a couple of years for our permanent site is on an
4 open lot behind the community center on Southern and
5 Louisiana, right on that corner. Right now there's
6 a couple acres there that are open, and I can tell
7 you from experience, when I worked at Van Buren
8 Middle School, what goes on there at night and what
9 goes on there in the morning -- when my kids walked
10 to school -- because I have to stand in that lot for
11 them to be safe. The police don't stand there.
12 Myself and other staff members from Van Buren would
13 stand there because of what was going on there.

14 And there are another few lots just in
15 that area alone that aren't safe. Until we start to
16 build a community, physically and socially and
17 emotionally, nothing is going to change.

18 So to answer your question, it starts with
19 a plan. What exactly that plan is going to be I
20 don't know, but I know that starting with a physical
21 space -- because education is what gets you out of
22 poverty. And right now, that's what our focus needs
23 to be, so the homelessness stops and the Native
24 Americans are able to get the support that they need
25 within the school, because it's such a diverse area

1 there with our indigent population, refugee
2 population, our Asian population, our Native
3 American population, our homeless population. There
4 are so many different areas that need to be
5 addressed, and that will be in our long-range plan.

6 I hope that answers your question.

7 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: One of the issues,
8 though, that I'm looking at more, too, especially
9 with high school kids, you can't teach a kid til you
10 met their basic needs, which means they need a place
11 to clean their clothes, to take a shower, to feel
12 comfortable, as well as to get fed. And I know,
13 because of our Albuquerque Indian Center, which used
14 to have a staff of 17 and now is down to two
15 full-time and a couple of part-time, because of
16 state and city funding, but we're still open.
17 There's a community, and we serve everybody. Eighty
18 percent of the people we serve are Native American.
19 The other 20 percent are not. We're, you know,
20 501(c)(3).

21 But I know, being in that area, what the
22 needs are. And we can provide hot lunches. We
23 don't have the staff anymore to provide those other
24 things. But I know, knowing high school kids,
25 they're not going to be comfortable coming to school

1 unless they can feel comfortable, too, and I'm
2 hoping you're planning for those kind of facilities
3 where they also don't have to have everybody seeing
4 them coming in and doing that. It's hard to be a
5 high school kid. It isn't just the kids at the
6 regular high schools that don't want to get the free
7 lunches because people know.

8 So I guess my point was if you're planning
9 for that homeless population, too. I also would
10 just like to point out, we finally managed to get
11 the Navajo Tribe to give us funding for our center,
12 and this will be the second time that they will
13 provide us funding. If you had enough Navajo
14 students, you might be able to get some grants to
15 provide some of these services, now that the tribe
16 has actually recognized that they have a homeless
17 population and a population in that area. So I
18 would encourage you, if you get approved -- and who
19 knows -- to look at the tribe, too, for grant funds.

20 MS. CORTAZZO: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Commissioner Gant,
22 did you have something?

23 COMMISSIONER GANT: Just two things.

24 Madam Chair, members, you said on your continuum --
25 why do you stop at age 24 of entering students?

1 MR. MONFILETTO: We think that there are
2 other adult basic ed. opportunities for older
3 adults. We think that at 24, there might be a
4 better placement for you. It's not a perfect
5 cutoff, but at some time, you're ready to enter CNM
6 or another adult institution.

7 COMMISSIONER GANT: Madam Chair, but if a
8 student walks through your door that's 25 or almost
9 72 like I am, can you turn them down?

10 MR. MONFILETTO: We haven't had that
11 happen yet. So that's a good question, if we would
12 turn them down. I think we would probably make them
13 aware of what the other options were. If they
14 believe that we were the best option, we probably
15 would serve them. Paola just told me we have a
16 student who's 25. She just graduated. So she
17 probably started with us when she was 24, but she's
18 25 when she graduated.

19 COMMISSIONER GANT: The only law on
20 continuum, as I remember, is age 22 for special
21 needs. Okay? Other than that, you cannot deny
22 them.

23 My last question. You have ACE and you
24 have Health Leadership and everybody talks about how
25 they're all connected. I have to ask this question.

1 Are there any individuals -- if you get the third
2 school -- that receive any financial compensations
3 based from any of the three or all of the three?

4 MR. MONFILETTO: No, there is not. Thank
5 you for asking, and I feel really good about being
6 able to say no.

7 COMMISSIONER GANT: Okay. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I just saw this in
9 my notes. It's more clarification. I know you guys
10 know this because this isn't your first rodeo here.

11 On page 71 you stated that "All planning
12 year expectations required by the Public Education
13 Department."

14 We're real sensitive folks here at the
15 Public Education Commission. Those planning year
16 requirements are not required by the Public
17 Education Department. They're required by the
18 Public Education Commission and administered by
19 staff who does, yes, work for the public education,
20 but in this case they're working for us. So that is
21 the Public Education Commission that does your
22 planning-year checklist and everything.

23 Down a little further, you state, "The
24 expectations of the contract with the Public
25 Education Department."

1 Your contract is not with the Public
2 Education Department. It is, by statute, with the
3 Public Education Commission. And as you well know,
4 we will be negotiating with you down the road,
5 should you be approved. I just wanted to clarify
6 that. For some reason we're kind of sensitive about
7 some of these issues, and I just wanted to bring
8 that up, because you did put that in your
9 application.

10 Thank you, Madam Chair.

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you,
12 Commissioner. I appreciate that.

13 I'm looking at your budget and your
14 spreadsheet. I'm looking at the 1100 series
15 expenditures, general administration. You have a
16 salary expense for a CEC director. What is a CEC
17 director?

18 MR. MONFILETTO: That's the community
19 engagement center that we just talked about.

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. Somehow I
21 guess I missed that. And tell me again their
22 duties?

23 MR. MONFILETTO: Their role is to
24 interface with the community, so they handle both
25 the employers, so bringing the employers into the

1 building and helping us with our partnerships, and
2 they also handle the social service side. So what
3 kind of supports kids need and how we can build
4 partnerships to make sure that we're leveraging all
5 the community resources around us.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. In the
7 56630 line item, rental, in parentheses it says
8 "Copier." The first year is \$5,000. The second
9 year is zero. And then the remaining years is
10 \$25,000. You have a dandy copier there.

11 MR. MONFILETTO: I don't know. I'm going
12 to check and see if it's in another line, in another
13 place in the budget.

14 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I'm sorry, I
15 didn't hear you.

16 MR. MONFILETTO: It should be there, but I
17 might have put it in another place in the budget.
18 We're going to check to see.

19 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: What do you think
20 that \$25,000 might be, though?

21 MR. MONFILETTO: Oh, I see. I'm sorry. I
22 don't know. It's taken from -- I don't know. I
23 can't answer that. I'm sorry.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. Then under
25 property, 57331, fixed assets, you say in your

1 application that you're parking money in this area
2 to save for a future building site or a future site.
3 And the amounts don't really catch my eye until year
4 four when it's \$509,000. How in the world can you
5 have that much excess money in the school? That's
6 half a million dollars.

7 MR. MONFILETTO: We're doing without in a
8 lot of areas and raising private money in order to
9 support the program of the school. We have had very
10 good success in raising private funds to support --

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: But you don't have
12 private funds in this budget, do you?

13 MR. MONFILETTO: We've left that out. So
14 what that allows for is the equipment budget, that
15 would have been paid for with state equalization
16 funding, is actually raised from private sources,
17 things like that. So we're pretty assertive in the
18 way that we raise funding in order to support the
19 budget of the schools.

20 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And I understand
21 there are things that you can pay for with private
22 funding so that your operational funds can be used
23 for other things. And I understand \$39,000,
24 \$211,000, \$88,000, \$51,000. But \$509,000 just one
25 year? I'm just astounded.

1 MR. MONFILETTO: It will get spent. I'm
2 not sure in year five exactly what the need will be,
3 but it will get spent. It will get spent either on
4 equipment -- either a moving cost to the permanent
5 facility, so some equipment gearing up in a new
6 facility; or it will get spent on some capital need
7 that the school experiences. There's not sufficient
8 revenue to support that kind of cost for the school,
9 so it's necessary to have it. I can't tell you
10 exactly how it will get spent, but it will be
11 necessary in year five to have cash to move into a
12 new building.

13 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Who's going to do
14 your business management services?

15 MR. MONFILETTO: We will hire.

16 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: An individual or a
17 firm?

18 MR. MONFILETTO: We'll hire an individual.

19 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. Who on your
20 board will be knowledgeable in business and finance?

21 MR. MONFILETTO: We have a board member
22 who is the vice president of lending at the Bank of
23 Albuquerque, and his name is Albino Hernandez. He
24 has a finance degree, he's a banker, and has all the
25 accounting expertise I think that we need.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And familiar with
2 school finance?

3 MR. MONFILETTO: He's becoming familiar,
4 absolutely.

5 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you very
6 much.

7 Any other questions? Commissioner
8 Conyers.

9 COMMISSIONER CONYERS: Good morning. I
10 noticed somewhere -- I don't have the page
11 reference -- but your student/teacher ratio or
12 teacher/student ratio, I guess, was 1 to 25. And I
13 know you're serving high-needs at-risk students, and
14 I know schools now use a lot of technology to
15 supplement teaching or teachers. Can you tell -- I
16 don't know, to me that seems a little low. But what
17 do you think? What's the thinking?

18 MR. MONFILETTO: The projects are taught
19 by teams of teachers, which allows for some
20 personalization for students within the larger
21 groups, so you don't have one teacher trying to
22 manage 25 kids. You have got two teachers, which
23 allows someone with special ed. training, for
24 example, to be able to do some one-on-one or
25 small-group experiences with kids, and we find that

1 highly skilled teachers are able to work together to
2 personalize -- to deal with a group, but then also
3 personalize to a smaller set of needs, specific
4 kids.

5 COMMISSIONER CONYERS: Another question
6 here on staffing. I realize your student body that
7 you're looking at is, as I said, going to be
8 high-needs and probably have a lot of mental health
9 issues and needs. And I'm putting myself at risk,
10 considering who I'm sitting next to, but I noticed
11 you're addressing those, I think, with social
12 workers and I don't see any school counselors listed
13 there. Also, you have a transition coach. I worked
14 a number of years as a transition specialist, which
15 was with special education students. I'm not quite
16 sure what a transition coach is.

17 MR. MONFILETTO: Very similar. So someone
18 with the training to be able to transition kids --
19 not just from special ed., though; all of our
20 kids -- into their work or college, depending on
21 what they're prepared for and what they want to do.
22 So the transition coach works across that spectrum
23 of special ed. and regular ed. And our social
24 workers are capable of providing therapeutic
25 services for kids.

1 COMMISSIONER CONYERS: Okay. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Let me just ask a
3 question, because you all know I'm from Artesia and
4 we just had a big discussion at the school board not
5 very long ago about who can provide mental health
6 services for our students. And unless the social
7 worker has an additional license, they are not
8 licensed nor qualified for mental health services.
9 Neither are your counselors. It takes a school
10 psychologist or, as I said, a person with a very
11 specific license. So how are you dealing with that
12 in your schools?

13 MR. MONFILETTO: We will hire -- well,
14 they currently have the certification needed to
15 provide counseling.

16 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Counseling.

17 MR. MONFILETTO: Well, and therapeutic
18 services, a master's in -- MISM -- masters in social
19 work. I can't remember the acronym. But it's the
20 highest level of social work certification that
21 allows them to --

22 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: As I said, we've
23 been down this road, and it is not sufficient, the
24 information that we received from PED.

25 MR. MONFILETTO: I will check, just to

1 make sure that we're aligned with the needs.

2 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: We were told a
3 licensed school psychologist is the only one.

4 MR. MONFILETTO: We also have those
5 resources outside of school that we partner with
6 currently. So if that's true, we'll be able to tap
7 our current partners for that service.

8 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Please do
9 double-check.

10 Commissioners, other questions? I see
11 none.

12 Let me just finish up our agenda here. In
13 closing, any member of the public, including the
14 applicant, may submit written input following this
15 hearing. Written input can be sent to the
16 Commission via the PED website, mailed, or
17 hand-delivered. The details and addresses are
18 listed on the handout in the back of the room. Make
19 sure you identify the school you're commenting on in
20 the e-mail drop-down menu. Please note that any
21 written input must be received by no later than 5:00
22 p.m. on the third business day following the hearing
23 on the application on which you wish to comment.
24 And for Technology Leadership High School, that
25 would be Monday, August 25, 2014, at 5:00 p.m.

1 Thank you all for your presentation today.
2 The Public Education Commission will meet in
3 Santa Fe on September 25, 26, 2014, to render their
4 decision on approval or denial of this and other new
5 charter school applications.

6 The Commission will now recess this
7 hearing until 11:00 in the community of Isleta.
8 Thank you all so much for being here.

9 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you very much.

10 (The proceedings recessed at 9:37 a.m.)

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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*

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