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BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING  
THE ALBERT EINSTEIN ACADEMY  
July 19, 2016  
1:00 p.m.  
McCurdy Charter School  
362 S. McCurdy Road  
Española, New Mexico

REPORTED BY: Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219  
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A P P E A R A N C E S

COMMISSIONERS:

MS. PATRICIA GIPSON, Chair  
MR. GILBERT PERALTA, Vice Chair  
MS. KARYL ANN ARMBRUSTER, Secretary  
MR. JEFF CARR, Member  
MS. CAROLYN SHEARMAN, Member  
MS. CARMIE TOULOUSE, Member

STAFF:

MS. KATIE POULOS, Director, Options for Parents

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1 THE CHAIR: I bring back into session  
2 these Public Education Commission Community Input  
3 hearings. It is now Tuesday, July 19th, 1:00 p.m.  
4 And we are here to -- for the input hearings for  
5 Albert Einstein Academy, Española, New Mexico.

6 We don't have flags.

7 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I think we can do  
8 it without flags.

9 THE CHAIR: We are going to have to start  
10 with the Pledge and the New Mex- -- because we're a  
11 State public -- so --

12 (A discussion was held off the record.)

13 THE CHAIR: If I could ask Commissioner  
14 Peralta to lead us in the American -- in the Pledge  
15 of Allegiance, and Commissioner Carr for the  
16 New Mexico Salute.

17 (Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the  
18 New Mexico Flag conducted.)

19 THE CHAIR: And if Commissioner Armbruster  
20 will do roll call, please.

21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner  
22 Pogna? Okay.

23 Commissioner Toulouse?

24 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Yes, present.

25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner

1 Armbruster is present.

2 Commissioner Conyers?

3 Commissioner Peralta?

4 COMMISSIONER PERALTA: Here.

5 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner  
6 Gipson?

7 THE CHAIR: Yes.

8 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner  
9 Shearman?

10 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner

12 Chavez?

13 Commissioner Carr?

14 COMMISSIONER CARR: Here.

15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Madam Chair, we  
16 have six members, and three are not here.

17 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

18 This meeting is being -- this meeting is  
19 being conducted pursuant to New Mexico Statutes  
20 Annotated Title 22, Section 8B-6J, 2009.

21 The purpose of these Community Input  
22 hearings that will be held from July 18th through  
23 July 19th -- yeah, because we had -- we had the 20th  
24 drop -- is to obtain information from the applicants  
25 and to receive community input to assist the Public

1 Education Commission in its decision whether to  
2 grant the proposed charter applications.

3 According to this section of the law, the  
4 Commission may appoint a subcommittee of no fewer  
5 than three members to hold the public hearing.

6 According to law, these hearings are being  
7 transcribed by a professional court reporter.

8 The total time allocated to each  
9 application is 90 minutes, which will be timed to  
10 ensure an equitable opportunity to present  
11 applications.

12 During the hearing, the Commission will  
13 allow for community input about the charter  
14 application. The time for public comments will be  
15 limited to 20 minutes. If you wish to speak  
16 regarding the application, please sign in at least  
17 15 minutes before the applicant's presentations.

18 And I presume everyone has done so.

19 Please be sure that you indicate on the  
20 sign-up sheet whether you are here in opposition or  
21 support of the charter school.

22 The Commission Chair, based on the number  
23 of requests to comment, will allocate time to those  
24 wishing to speak.

25 If there are a large number of supporters

1 or opponents, they are asked to select a speaker to  
2 represent common opinions.

3 We will try to allocate an equitable  
4 amount of time to represent the community  
5 accurately.

6 The Commission will follow this process  
7 for each community input hearing:

8 The Commission will ask each applicant or  
9 group to present at the table in front -- or on top.  
10 They will be given 20 minutes to present their  
11 application in the manner they deem appropriate.

12 The Commission will not accept any written  
13 documentation from the applicant; but the applicant  
14 may use exhibits to describe their school, if  
15 necessary.

16 However, the setup time for exhibits,  
17 et cetera, will be included in that 20 minutes.

18 Following the applicant's presentation,  
19 the local school district representatives, which  
20 include superintendent, administrators, and board  
21 members, will be given ten minutes to comment.

22 Subsequently, the Commission will allow  
23 20 minutes for public comment, as described above.

24 Finally, the Commission will be given at  
25 least 40 minutes to ask questions of the applicant.

1           So we do have here Albert Einstein  
2 Academy, Española, New Mexico.

3           And if you would, please state your names,  
4 and spell your last names for the court reporter.  
5 And if you are ready, your time will begin.

6           FROM THE FLOOR: The 20 minutes?

7           THE CHAIR: Correct.

8           FROM THE FLOOR: All right.

9           THE CHAIR: Are you ready?

10          FROM THE FLOOR: Sure.

11          THE CHAIR: Okay.

12          MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: My name is  
13 Leann Salazar Montoya, S-A-L-A-Z-A-R, hyphen,  
14 M-O-N-T-O-Y-A. I am the founder of the Albert  
15 Einstein Academy. And to my right is...

16          MR. AMBROSE BAROS: Ambrose Baros,  
17 B-A-R-O-S. And I am a board member -- or a  
18 prospective board member of the Albert Einstein  
19 Academy.

20          MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: Sure. I hope  
21 you don't mind if I stand. My name is Leann  
22 Salazar-Montoya. I'm the founder of the Albert  
23 Einstein Academy. I'm a seasoned professional, born  
24 and raised in the Española Valley. My background --

25          THE CHAIR: Sorry. You have to speak just

1 a little bit slower so the court reporter can keep  
2 up with you.

3 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: Sure. So my  
4 background is in education. Currently, I serve as  
5 an administrator in the district, which makes my  
6 application unique to others. I do have credentials  
7 as an administrator, K-12, in the State of New  
8 Mexico. I'm also a K-12 teacher, endorsed in many  
9 areas.

10 I have a master's degree from the  
11 University of New Mexico in Educational Leadership;  
12 also, a master's degree from New Mexico State  
13 University in Special Education, and master's  
14 credentials from New Mexico Highlands University in  
15 Bilingual Education. I have served Northern  
16 New Mexico for the last 17 years, both as an  
17 educator and as an administrator. I'm currently  
18 completing --

19 THE CHAIR: You're starting to --

20 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: Make her  
21 stress? I only have 20 minutes.

22 THE CHAIR: I know; but...

23 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: If the machine  
24 smokes, stop.

25 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: So I am



1 completing my doctoral program in Educational  
2 Leadership at New Mexico State University.

3 The purpose of the Albert Einstein Academy  
4 charter school is to take my background, my  
5 services, and come back and serve my community.

6 Some of the individuals to the back of the  
7 room are individuals that I work with today in my  
8 capacity working with Northern New Mexico Community  
9 College. Northern New Mexico has been plagued by a  
10 number of different issues that are unique to  
11 Northern New Mexico. We have a high rate of  
12 dropout. The current public school district is  
13 graduating 61 -- according to PED's latest  
14 statistic, 61.7 percent of their graduates.

15 As an experienced educator here in  
16 New Mexico, my curiosity is where do these students  
17 go? Any students who have been expelled and who  
18 have had issues in the regular setting have not been  
19 allowed in neighboring school districts, thus  
20 limiting their education.

21 Students are then turned -- some -- to the  
22 college for GED programs. However, as some will  
23 attest to the fact that the GED program is not for  
24 everyone. The GED program is for those who have the  
25 foundation of basic education and then given the

1 skills they need to pass that test.

2 For others who drop out earlier in  
3 Grades 6, 7, and 8, there's nowhere for them to go.  
4 We feel that the Albert Einstein Academy, based on  
5 our vision and our mission, which has been shared --  
6 oh, I can't give you this -- which has been shared  
7 in our application, indicates that our vision is to  
8 create one of the state's most effective schools,  
9 helping students who have not succeeded in  
10 traditional schools prepare for and be accepted into  
11 post-secondary education, whereby our school is  
12 highly regarded for its academic excellence and for  
13 its contribution in actively serving and improving  
14 the community in which it operates.

15 I know that if students are -- have  
16 provided an opportunity, and if the door is open,  
17 they will succeed. Some of the individuals in this  
18 room are an example of that. Thankful to some  
19 programs that they have attended, they are  
20 succeeding in post-secondary education.

21 As parents themselves, they strongly  
22 believe that the Española Valley is in need of a  
23 program like the Albert Einstein Academy, where we  
24 work to serve the students who are not currently  
25 being served adequately in the neighboring public

1 school.

2 We're not looking to take students from  
3 the public school. We're looking to take those  
4 students that are looking for a place to go to  
5 school.

6 I know a number of students at the age of  
7 13 and 14 here in the Valley who are being  
8 introduced that young, and earlier, to heroin and  
9 other heavy drugs. They go back to school, and they  
10 encounter academic issues, social issues. They're  
11 expelled. And I have individuals calling me from  
12 the Probation & Parole Office asking me, "Where do  
13 these students go? They need help."

14 Many times, they turn to Mr. Baros at Hoy  
15 Recovery Center for treatment. These students need  
16 treatment. What Albert Einstein Academy's mission  
17 is, is to look at these students, in addition to  
18 what is written here, to heal them on the inside to  
19 teach them on the outside.

20 If our students are coming where they  
21 don't have dinner at night, and if they're coming  
22 from a home where people are abusing drugs and  
23 alcohol, you know, it's difficult to learn. And so  
24 our partnership, the other side of our founding  
25 method, is to have the social component, the social

1 work component, the counseling, attached to our  
2 academic rigor and relevance.

3 Our mission, in written form, states, "Our  
4 school strives to be a racially and culturally  
5 diverse community of students, parents, and staff  
6 dedicated to creating a respectful environment and  
7 one in which each person is treated with  
8 unconditional positive regard and acceptance. With  
9 such an environment, each student, 8 through 12 -- 7  
10 through 12 -- will be empowered and inspired to  
11 reach his or her full academic, emotional, physical,  
12 and personal potential."

13 Again I want to reemphasize, we're not  
14 trying to take students away from the public school.  
15 We're here to provide another gateway, another  
16 opportunity. We want to see these students who have  
17 failed in other arenas succeed.

18 We have properly prepared some of our  
19 issues with our application, which didn't result in  
20 us scoring very low in our meeting -- our hearing --  
21 was that we had technical difficulties uploading.  
22 We were not allowed to provide those. Some of the  
23 things we were missing include job descriptions. As  
24 a current and practicing superintendent, we have  
25 those. We have those in place; we have them in a

1 file; we can provide them at a moment's notice.  
2 (Indicates.)

3 Also, our governance and operating  
4 manuals, we have those; so the few documents we were  
5 missing, we have those.

6 Again, the primary purpose of our school  
7 is to help students, provide opportunity. Mr. Baros  
8 and his organization have paired up with other local  
9 organizations to provide the supports that we're  
10 going to need for the counseling and other areas  
11 that our students so desperately need.

12 We have community partners; namely,  
13 Ms. Kelly Cook, who has provided us the start-up  
14 area, should we be approved. We already have a  
15 location, which she will front for us, to prepare  
16 for the opening of the school; so we have a facility  
17 picked out. We have other financial sources in  
18 which we can begin to operate to provide the  
19 foundation for the first year.

20 We know that we would have no funding; but  
21 we feel that our community is strong, and we have  
22 adequate resources, financially, physically, and  
23 socially, to have this school open.

24 Do you want to let me just take a  
25 two-second break and just add the social component?

1 THE CHAIR: That would be great.

2 MR. AMBROSE BAROS: Absolutely. Thank  
3 you, Madam Chair, Commission members. My name is  
4 Ambrose Baros, as I stated earlier. I am the CEO of  
5 the Hoy Recovery Program, which provides substance  
6 abuse treatment to adults, ages 18 and up. We also  
7 provide mental health treatment in an outpatient  
8 setting.

9 As Leann stated, the philosophy of this  
10 school is to really integrate behavioral health  
11 services with academic services to help students  
12 build capacity for not only academics and -- and  
13 post-secondary education; but also substance  
14 prevention.

15 It's no secret that substance abuse is a  
16 major epidemic here in our community. Many of the  
17 students who fall through the cracks turn to drugs  
18 or alcohol as a way of self-medicating and coping  
19 with, you know, the pain that they feel, whether  
20 it's trauma that they've experienced due to  
21 decisions, or just being born into a very  
22 unfortunate situation that has caused a lot of  
23 difficulty.

24 In this school, we look to build  
25 resiliency within these student populations. To me,

1 prevention comes from resiliency. And resiliency  
2 forms in the prefrontal cortex of the brain to help  
3 problem-solve, you know, make proper decisions,  
4 limit your impulse control.

5 And a major development in the brain is  
6 math and science skills. They provide that  
7 problem-solving ability. But unfortunately, if our  
8 students are coming from a -- and which many of them  
9 are -- a very trauma environment, they're really  
10 working off the limbic system, the back portion of  
11 the brain that's fight-or-flight, where they're not  
12 really concentrating or focused on problem-solving  
13 at that moment in time because of whatever they may  
14 have witnessed at home.

15 Our age population is going to start in  
16 the seventh grade, that transition age of 13 years  
17 old. We're going to look to go up to twelfth grade  
18 in the hopes that we could graduate more students  
19 and instill this resiliency to provide the hope and  
20 the direction for a further education, whether it be  
21 post-secondary or trade school. That's two seconds?  
22 Or do you want me to --

23 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: You're good.

24 So we really do want to emphasize that  
25 academics is the core focus of our school. We want

1 to make sure that we prepare our students for a  
2 bright future. So let us not forget that that is  
3 what our primary purpose is.

4 We're looking at starting with a four-day  
5 school week so that we can have block scheduling,  
6 provide the instruction that they need at the longer  
7 periods; so two-hour block periods, give or take a  
8 few minutes. Provided that we meet the  
9 instructional hours of 1,180, we would make certain  
10 that our final copy would meet the hours.

11 I know that because of limited resources,  
12 we would have to access types of curriculum within  
13 the state. We are looking at research-based  
14 curriculum. We'd like to do a model in which we  
15 have some of our courses being possibly at IDEAL  
16 New Mexico, because hiring teachers in these highly  
17 qualified areas and to teach this specific  
18 population may not be as easy as we'd like it to be.

19 If we can financially support live  
20 teachers, we'd be more than happy to do that; but if  
21 our budget does not suffice, our Plan B is to have a  
22 hybrid program, where we look to work with some  
23 classes, possibly in IDEAL New Mexico, and possibly  
24 with live teachers. It would all depend on how our  
25 hiring would carry out within our school process.



1           In addition to that, we want to have our  
2 instruction follow the five tenets of the blueprint  
3 that was created by Dr. Fryer at the Educational  
4 Innovation Laboratory at Harvard University. And  
5 what that model really focuses on are five primary  
6 areas, which was in our application. And that is to  
7 have the focus on human capital; that's where our  
8 social area and social well-being comes in.

9           We'd like the increased time on task.  
10 That's our block scheduling and additional tutoring  
11 on Fridays, and the social work or counseling that  
12 may take place on Fridays.

13           High-dosage tutoring for those that need  
14 it. We would have schedules that are adaptable to  
15 their personal lives. Some of our students may be  
16 parents or whatever the case might be, and we want  
17 to work around that and have that availability.

18           We also want to have high expectations.  
19 No excuses. We're not going to hold the bar down  
20 there for them. We want to hold the bar up here.  
21 I'm tired of, as a community member -- I'm a mother.  
22 Two of my children are here in the room who just  
23 walked in. If my student was struggling having  
24 issues, I wouldn't want to see my student in the  
25 back gymnasium of the administration building, which

1 up until this past current school year -- I can't  
2 speak to this school year -- but the Española  
3 Schools were currently serving the at-risk students  
4 or whatever the PC word for students who are having  
5 difficulties is, in the back room of the  
6 administration building with a computer and hoping  
7 that they figure it out for themselves.

8           The people that I know don't think that's  
9 the best instructional model. I, as a parent, sent  
10 my son 45 miles away to the next closest, best  
11 educational center I thought was available to him.  
12 Many parents in Española send their children away  
13 after sixth grade. The statistics will show how  
14 many students in Pojoaque, Los Alamos, Gallina, even  
15 the charter school here, how many choose another  
16 option at the seventh grade.

17           And so we've opted to open our school at  
18 seventh grade, and then seventh, eighth, and ninth,  
19 and graduate a grade in. We do want to have  
20 assessments; we want to make sure we're seeing  
21 academic progress for our students.

22           We have great goals, and we know we have a  
23 solid blueprint and a solid plan. Many of the  
24 people in this room are parents, community members,  
25 all in support of the Albert Einstein Academy. And

1 I know that many of them struggled in school and had  
2 the Albert Einstein Academy been open when they were  
3 of school age, they would have sought out a school  
4 like Albert Einstein.

5 How many people -- raise your hand, just  
6 for visual -- if Albert Einstein had been open in  
7 your day, how many of you would have sought the  
8 Albert Einstein Academy?

9 FROM THE FLOOR: Right here.

10 (Show of hands.)

11 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: So I know that  
12 the Española Valley needs the Albert Einstein  
13 Academy. I know that we need options for our  
14 students. I know that when programs are provided  
15 for students, students succeed.

16 Many of the people in the back row  
17 currently are in a program at Northern New Mexico  
18 College, due to a grant for Hispanic serving  
19 institutions, who were picked up primarily through  
20 the GED program; and because of the five tenets  
21 similar to this, they are successful.

22 We provide free tutoring. We provide them  
23 the support they need, socially, emotionally, and  
24 academically. And when these supports are there,  
25 students can and will succeed. And Española needs a

1 school like the Albert Einstein Academy.

2 How many agree?

3 (Audience response.)

4 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: Do I have any  
5 more time? We're good?

6 MS. POULOS: You have five minutes and  
7 45 seconds.

8 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: Ambrose, do  
9 you have any supplemental?

10 MR. AMBROSE BAROS: One thing that we're  
11 going to do, we're going to take these initiatives  
12 very seriously when we do the integrated model of  
13 behavioral health and academics; so we're looking at  
14 existing evidence-based models that have been  
15 developed on the East Coast that provide  
16 opportunities, alternative opportunities for this  
17 type of student population.

18 Primarily, the student population that is  
19 addressed on the East Coast is -- are those students  
20 at risk of substance abuse or that are already  
21 engaged in a regular pattern of substance abuse.  
22 And research shows that students start experimenting  
23 with drugs and alcohol at a very young age, some as  
24 young as nine years old; but the early onset is  
25 right around 12 and 13 years old, that transition

1 age group.

2 A regular pattern of addiction is usually  
3 identified at 16 years of age. And I'm speaking in  
4 the Española community, from the research that we  
5 have done, that, you know, poses these questions to  
6 students and individuals who are really battling  
7 addiction.

8 The brain doesn't fully develop until the  
9 age of 21, you know. So when they say the -- the  
10 drinking age is 21, that's just not a magic number.  
11 That number was set up because your brain doesn't  
12 fully develop till the age of 25; but 21, that  
13 prefrontal cortex has mainly developed.

14 And so a lot of our students, a lot of our  
15 kids are self-medicating at a very young age. And  
16 it's developing a disease, the addiction disease, in  
17 the brain that's formed in the midbrain, which is  
18 the reward system, where the dopamine is prominent.

19 So the academic portion and the behavioral  
20 health portion will be taken very serious and  
21 integrated together to produce outcomes. And that's  
22 the goal of this school, to produce positive  
23 outcomes to get more students to graduate, to bring  
24 more students back to school that have already  
25 dropped out.

1 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: So in closing,  
2 I think what's important to remember is that we want  
3 to be preventive. We want to catch the students  
4 before they get to Mr. Baros and his treatment  
5 center. We want to help those students who come  
6 from homes who are suffering.

7 Many of our students who fall addiction,  
8 fall into addiction because they come from homes of  
9 addiction. We want to break that cycle, that  
10 generational poverty, and we want to provide  
11 opportunity.

12 We want to instill a hands-on type of  
13 instruction. Many of our students learn better by  
14 doing, and we want to have some of our elective  
15 classes be learned by doing.

16 We want to create partnerships with  
17 Northern New Mexico College and also provide them  
18 access to post-secondary education and let them know  
19 how bright their future can be.

20 I know from working with these students  
21 that when they are exposed to the hands-on, when  
22 they're given the supports and they feel  
23 respected -- so the Albert Einstein Academy is all  
24 about finding these kids, respecting them, and  
25 helping provide opportunity.

1           Many of our kids who drop out feel that  
2 they haven't been respected, that they've fallen  
3 between the cracks, that nobody cares. We want to  
4 be the school that cares.

5           This is a project of passion for me.  
6 Again, I want to reiterate, I was born and raised  
7 and grew up right here in the Española Valley. Most  
8 of these people in this room, I've never seen  
9 before. They're here because they care.

10           I do feel that your support of this school  
11 is a support and a vote for a school that will make  
12 a difference. And when I became an educator and  
13 when I started pursuing my degree, it was all about  
14 making a difference and coming back to my community  
15 and taking what I learned and helping others.

16           I know that it's because of people like me  
17 that I succeeded. It was people who encouraged me,  
18 people who provided me the framework, provided me  
19 the supports, that I succeeded. Statistics should  
20 have said I never should have succeeded. I -- I had  
21 my own troubles growing up. I was homeless at the  
22 age of 12. But because of supports and growing up  
23 here in the Valley, because we're a strong  
24 community, I succeeded, and I am where I am today.

25           I know of another individual in here

1 today, holds a master's degree in social work. And  
2 she, too, dropped out at the age of 15. But she's  
3 here standing, supporting this school because of  
4 people who supported her.

5 And we need a school who has a focus on  
6 just that. Our doors are open to everyone.

7 Let me reiterate. We'd be more than happy  
8 to have the Einsteins of Española Valley be there to  
9 provide the role modeling that our other students  
10 need. We're non-discriminatory; it's open to  
11 everyone. But we do want to make sure that we have  
12 the supplements for the students who need the  
13 preventive measures, whether it be counseling,  
14 social work, academic support.

15 MR. BAROS: I think that phrase is the  
16 biggest key, being a community member and having  
17 worked in the Española Public School system. We're  
18 open to everyone. We will not reject any student  
19 that comes through our doors that needs academic  
20 services, no matter if they're involved in gangs, if  
21 they're involved in substance abuse, if they've been  
22 in trouble behaviorally in the school district that  
23 they came from. We're setting up a system to  
24 address just that.

25 My experience is behavioral health.



1 That's exactly what I've dedicated my life to doing.  
2 And these students need academic -- we need  
3 education instilled in them, so they can have a  
4 sense of hope, like I said, and direction for when  
5 they get older.

6 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: So again, a  
7 vote for the Albert Einstein Academy is a vote for  
8 the future of the kids in the Española Valley.

9 I think we're done. I think we've kind of  
10 brought our message home.

11 THE CHAIR: That's fine. It's a maximum.  
12 You don't have to --

13 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: I don't want  
14 to keep reiterating. I really think we've shared  
15 what we think is central to our model and that we're  
16 here to help. We're here to provide opportunity.

17 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you so much.  
18 Is there anyone here from the Española  
19 School District?

20 Okay.

21 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm representing the Hoy  
22 program, as well; but I am an employee with the  
23 Public Schools. As far as the administration --

24 THE CHAIR: The time allotted is for  
25 superintendent --

1 FROM THE FLOOR: Okay, yeah.

2 THE CHAIR: -- board members, if they  
3 chose to speak.

4 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm just a -- I'm a  
5 teacher.

6 MR. AMBROSE BAROS: You're on the public  
7 comment.

8 THE CHAIR: You're not here to speak for  
9 the Española School District. That's what -- sorry,  
10 that's what I was saying. There is no one here from  
11 the Española School District to speak?

12 MR. AMBROSE BAROS: At the superintendent  
13 or board-member level? Is that what you're asking?

14 THE CHAIR: It's superintendent, board  
15 member, or administration.

16 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: There is no  
17 district administrator here, that I can see.

18 THE CHAIR: All right. Well, I'm not  
19 asking you. I'm asking the group if there's anyone  
20 here to speak. Okay.

21 MR. AMBROSE BAROS: Anyone in the hallway?

22 THE CHAIR: Is there anyone who hadn't  
23 gotten into the room?

24 Okay. So we can -- we can move on.

25 So now we are to the public comment

1 section. So if someone could pass me -- because  
2 we're going to have to divide out the -- oh, okay.

3 Oh. I kept looking at that. I thought  
4 that was the public comment sign-in. And I thought,  
5 "They're going to get 30 seconds."

6 So there are eight people that have signed  
7 up to speak. So you do not have to use the  
8 two-and-a-half minutes. But each person has up to  
9 two-and-a-half minutes to speak. And we do have a  
10 timer. So the first one on the list -- and I  
11 apologize --

12 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner  
13 Gipson, where did you want those people to stand?

14 THE CHAIR: They're going to have to stand  
15 here, at best --

16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: That's fine.

17 THE CHAIR: -- so that Cindy can see them.

18 So if when you do get up to speak, if you  
19 could just come to this end of the table so the  
20 court reporter can -- can follow you?

21 And I apologize. Handwriting I can't  
22 read. The first one is Derrick Voigt. So if you  
23 would introduce yourself and spell your last name  
24 for the record?

25 MR. DERRICK VOIGHT: Okay. My name is

1 Derrick Voight, V-O-I-G-H-T. And I'm here to  
2 represent the Albert Einstein Academy.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Pardon me. I  
4 can't hear you.

5 MR. DERRICK VOIGHT: You can't hear me?  
6 Okay. Like I said, my name is Derrick Voigt. I'm  
7 here to represent the Albert Einstein Academy. I,  
8 personally, was one of the students that was left to  
9 fend for himself when I was young. I was always in  
10 trouble for petty little things in school. They  
11 kind of just kind of shoved me out.

12 I think I was 14 years old when I dropped  
13 out of school. I ended up getting into the 18th  
14 Street gang.

15 We can fast-forward a few years if you  
16 want. I ended up getting into trouble. I ended up  
17 going to prison. I've had to see a lot of people  
18 die. I've done a lot of different things. But it  
19 was because I didn't -- when I was in school, I  
20 didn't have it. I didn't get what they were trying  
21 to give me at the Española Schools. There wasn't  
22 teachers that really cared.

23 There was -- it was basically just me  
24 fending for myself, like I said. And so I ended up  
25 in prison. I ended up getting my GED in prison,

1 because it was people like Leann. My teacher's name  
2 was "Mr. B"; but he's not here today no more. He's  
3 passed away.

4 But if it wasn't for people like Leann  
5 trying to start something like this, there's going  
6 to be a lot of kids that are going to be on that  
7 street. And I can attest to it, because I was  
8 there. I -- I've had to live it, you know. I'm one  
9 of those kids. I didn't have family. I didn't have  
10 nobody but my gang, you know.

11 And now, I wouldn't be -- I haven't  
12 made -- we'll say it like this: I haven't made the  
13 Dean's List once, but twice, here at Northern. I'm  
14 actually going -- I'm four classes away from getting  
15 my associate's degree. And if it wasn't for people  
16 like Leann --

17 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: In what?

18 MR. DERRICK VOIGHT: In electrical  
19 technology. If it wasn't for people like Leann and  
20 some of the people here today investing in me and  
21 believing in me and pushing me, I wouldn't be where  
22 I'm at today. And I believe, personally -- and  
23 along with everybody else -- that this is something  
24 good, and our community needs it; the Valley needs  
25 it, because there's a lot of people -- I know kids

1 that are sticking needles in their arms, because --  
2 and I can't say it's because of the school. But  
3 it's from broken-down families. It's from all these  
4 different things.

5 But they're just not getting it in the  
6 school, either. That's part of what being a teacher  
7 is, is to give yourself, giving yourself to the kids  
8 and teaching them and teaching them the right way.  
9 But --

10 MS. POULOS: Time.

11 MR. DERRICK VOIGHT: But I thank you,  
12 guys, for your time, and thank you, guys.

13 (Applause.)

14 THE CHAIR: Next on the list is Mario  
15 Valerio.

16 MR. MARIO VALERIO: Hello. I'm Mario  
17 Valerio.

18 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. Spell your last  
19 name.

20 MR. MARIO VALERIO: Yeah. "V" for  
21 "Victory" -A-L-E-R-I-O. So I struggled in the  
22 Española School system. It started probably about  
23 middle school. I remember a lot of the kids started  
24 snorting pills and stuff in school. I remember  
25 seeing them right in class doing drugs when -- I

1 think Mr. Ambrose is his name -- said, it's about 12  
2 or 13 when it starts.

3 Made it to high school. C, B, student;  
4 but I was always very high on the -- I can't  
5 remember what they're called -- the Compass test,  
6 the standardized testing. I was also very high in  
7 the standardized testing.

8 Then I came to high school. And it's kind  
9 of like Mr. Derrick said. I ended up with some  
10 teachers I didn't like. I started missing school.  
11 I started ditching his class. I saw more kids do  
12 drugs.

13 I ended up in a position where I dropped  
14 out. I was working a lot of dead-end jobs at Burger  
15 King and all that stuff. And by the grace of God, I  
16 found somebody called "Linda." She worked in the  
17 health program. She pulled me in. When I got my  
18 GED, I got it like that.

19 I guess I knew enough to get it; but when  
20 I got to the college level, my English and math was  
21 so bad, it was horrible. I mean, I spent probably  
22 three semesters fixing that.

23 Now, I'm getting an associates in IT  
24 technology. I'm going to go be taking calculus.  
25 I'm sure it's not going to be a problem now. But

1 our community --

2 THE CHAIR: It was for me.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: It was for me,  
4 too.

5 MR. MARIO VALERIO: But our community  
6 needs these schools; because I've seen a lot of my  
7 friends whose stories were similar to mine, but they  
8 didn't make it. They didn't. Some of my friends  
9 can't even get jobs at fast food. Some of them --  
10 they've just struggled their whole life. I tried to  
11 get them to come get their GED; but they're stuck in  
12 their drugs, stuck in things they've been in since  
13 mid-school.

14 We need something like this. Other than  
15 that, the counselors, they only cared about the  
16 smart students at Española. They never cared when I  
17 got into trouble.

18 I started getting into trouble -- a couple  
19 of my friends started smoking marijuana. One day at  
20 school, I did it, all stupid. Of course, I got  
21 busted, suspended, and all kinds of stuff. The  
22 counselor never cared. I did it again a couple of  
23 weeks later and nothing.

24 So, I mean, at that point, I dropped out.  
25 High school wasn't for me. If nobody was going to



1 care, I'd have to do it myself.

2 MS. POULOS: Time.

3 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

4 MR. MARIO VALERIO: Thank you.

5 THE CHAIR: Next on the list is Jacob  
6 Gomez.

7 MR. JACOB GOMEZ: Hi. My name is Jacob  
8 Gomez. Last name is G-O-M-E-Z.

9 Start this off, when I was a -- when I was  
10 born, my mom and dad were users; they were drug  
11 dealers. And in the womb, I was addicted to heroin.  
12 When I came out, I was premature. I had seizures  
13 and fevers that were higher than 108 degrees up  
14 until I was three years old. That came with some  
15 serious brain damage.

16 My mom went to school to kind of fix what  
17 happened after she got off drugs. She did her best.  
18 But growing up through school, I had a mental  
19 disability. And it was a learning disability. I  
20 needed extra -- not extra attention; but like when I  
21 would see problems on a test or something, and there  
22 were like 50 problems, it was overwhelming. I  
23 couldn't do it; it was like, "No way. There's no  
24 way I can do that."

25 About seventh grade, I basically pretty

1 much dropped out of school. I started stealing  
2 cars, smoking weed. And then I learned how to sell  
3 weed, and I got into that, because that's what I  
4 could focus on.

5 I went back to school. I ended up lasting  
6 in school for about another maybe two or three  
7 years. I dropped out in the ninth or the tenth  
8 grade and went full-force into the drug dealing  
9 game. Since then -- I've been a career criminal  
10 since then. I'm unfortunately up to four felonies  
11 right now. I'm looking at nine years if I don't  
12 complete three years probation.

13 If we could have done something about it  
14 back in fifth, sixth, seventh grade or something  
15 like that -- seventh grade, even -- it could have  
16 changed my life drastically, changed my life, my  
17 cousins, older brothers and sisters. It could have  
18 changed the whole community that I came from. But  
19 it just wasn't there. And here I am, trying to do  
20 the best with what I got.

21 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

22 MR. JACOB GOMEZ: Thank you. (Applause.)

23 THE CHAIR: I believe Patrick Archuleta.

24 MR. PATRICK ARCHULETA: Hi. My name is  
25 Patrick Archuleta, A-R-C-H-U-L-E-T-A. I stand in

1 full support of the Albert Einstein school. I am a  
2 licensed elementary education teacher. I am  
3 employed with Española Public Schools. I teach  
4 seventh-grade science. I've taught eighth-grade  
5 physical science. I've also taught at Cariños  
6 Charter School. I taught the fifth grade and the  
7 sixth grade.

8 I'm from this community, 39 years. I,  
9 myself -- I actually came to school here first. I  
10 got my basic foundation here at McCurdy Christian  
11 School, before it became a charter school. I went  
12 on to play athletics at Española Valley High School.  
13 But the high school didn't have the structure that I  
14 needed, that I was used to. It was shaky -- a shaky  
15 foundation. I ended up dropping out in tenth grade.

16 I worked random jobs -- well, good jobs; I  
17 got some good jobs, but I never went to college. I  
18 got my GED at 17. I, you know, picked up some bad  
19 habits. And it's -- you know, there's thousands  
20 upon thousands upon thousands of those stories in  
21 our community. And I don't need to go over them.  
22 But we do know they exist.

23 And more opportunity needs to be in place  
24 in this community. We have, you know, 13, 14  
25 schools, part of Española Public Schools, and we

1 have two charter schools with Cariños and McCurdy.  
2 And I believe that a new one would help, because I  
3 believe that McCurdy fills up, and there's people on  
4 waiting lists to get here. At Cariños, it was good;  
5 but there was a kind of a lack of certain things  
6 that this school can provide.

7 The main thing I think that is a very big  
8 plus is the behavioral health component that they're  
9 implementing in this school. So that's a really big  
10 plus.

11 I've been found to be an effective  
12 instructor at Carlos Vigil. But what I've seen  
13 there is there's too many students for each  
14 classroom. My classrooms are 34 kids, 30 kids,  
15 31 kids, 28 and 24; for one teacher, no teacher  
16 assistant. It's overwhelming when you have over  
17 160 kids in one day.

18 And there are very, very intelligent kids  
19 in our -- in our district. We have great kids,  
20 great people here.

21 But there are a few that make your  
22 classroom management a little difficult. And I  
23 believe that this school can provide an alternative  
24 to the public school classroom. So I really want to  
25 urge you to consider this and put it forward because

1 we need it.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. POULOS: Time.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Another first name  
5 is "Nicholas." I can't read the last name.

6 MR. NICHOLAS BACA: My name is Nicholas  
7 Baca, B-A-C-A. I'm from the Northern New Mexico  
8 community. I'm not going to sit here and tell you  
9 guys any story. I just want you guys to know this  
10 is very, very real. The communities are starting at  
11 younger and younger ages today, and they've been for  
12 a long time. You know this is an epidemic where  
13 we're from. I don't know if you guys have kids or  
14 grandchildren. I know for one thing. You wouldn't  
15 want them involved in what kids are involved in  
16 these days.

17 This school is a very big necessity to  
18 this community; not only this community, but very  
19 many communities in Northern New Mexico. If we  
20 could start right now with you guys making the first  
21 step to breaking this cycle, we could make a  
22 difference.

23 These young children are the future of  
24 America. You don't know that one kid could be the  
25 next Michael Jordan. He could be the next president

1 of America, and you just don't know, because most  
2 people aren't willing to take that risk to find out.

3 I know as a child, I got introduced to  
4 drugs at a very young age. I've done a prison  
5 sentence, 12 to 15 years of federal prison, because  
6 I didn't have the tools or knowledge at a young age  
7 to deal with my problems inside. So I turned to  
8 drugs. I got addicted, and it ruined my life. I  
9 don't wish that on anybody. If you see this little  
10 kid right here, there's a few years that he's going  
11 to be involved in this situation. And the last  
12 thing any of us, or anyone in this room want to see  
13 is to go through the things we went through.

14 So I really appreciate your guys' thought  
15 and consideration into this school. I really  
16 believe it could make a difference, and it could be  
17 the first step in breaking this cycle throughout our  
18 Northern New Mexico communities.

19 Thank you.

20 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. It's "Vince." I  
23 can't read the last name.

24 MR. VINCENT BENAVIDEZ: Neither can I.  
25 I'll just spell it. Vincent Benavidez,

1 B-E-N-A-V-I-D-E-Z.

2 I'm from Bernalillo, New Mexico. I grew  
3 up up here in Cuba in the mountains, you know.  
4 Bernalillo, all through the schools, there wasn't no  
5 good schools. I dropped out a month before  
6 graduation, 'cause I really -- I don't know why. I  
7 wanted to be an electrician, okay? I didn't have --  
8 there was no good teachers there, no good schools.

9 I wish we had something like this then. I  
10 probably would be -- hopefully, would be nice to be  
11 sitting in the position like she's in right now, you  
12 know, that's good for our kids.

13 We all got kids. I got three, and I don't  
14 want them growing up and seeing them drop out of  
15 school. You know, there was the math program there;  
16 it was bad. Everybody uses math daily, whether you  
17 realize it or not. That's the strongest subject, I  
18 think, for me, personally.

19 When I dropped out of school, I was barely  
20 doing pre-algebra. Then I taught myself to do all  
21 of it. Calculus, taught myself, and helped a few  
22 other people. And we need programs like this  
23 into -- whether it's here, Chama, wherever it's at,  
24 Gallina. It would be nice to see them spread  
25 everywhere.

1 He could be the next president right  
2 there. It would be good to see something.

3 And with your guys' help, it would be  
4 appreciated, because if we can have it in New Mexico  
5 anywhere, who says we can't have it in many other  
6 states? So that's all I got.

7 (Applause.)

8 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Next is  
9 Timothy Flores.

10 MR. TIMOTHY FLORES: Hello. My name is  
11 Timothy Flores. I'm originally from Albuquerque,  
12 New Mexico. Actually, whenever I was in the school,  
13 I never really got into drugs. I was actually, you  
14 know, kind of educated.

15 But I got kicked out because of my  
16 behavior problems. I was always getting into fights  
17 and things like that; and eventually, I got kicked  
18 out of school.

19 I wasn't allowed to go to any other public  
20 school; so I was at home. And kind of being around,  
21 you know, the bad neighborhood and the people I was  
22 around, I ended up, you know, going to using drugs.  
23 From there on, I -- you know, I started just going  
24 downhill. I lost everything I had.

25 I had a good job. I had my family. I had



1 a car. And I lost everything, you know. And there  
2 for a while, you know, I was into, you know,  
3 stealing cars and robbing people. And eventually I  
4 went to prison for it.

5 While I was in there, I always thought  
6 about getting my GED; but I never, you know, wanted  
7 to actually go and do it. I always stalled on doing  
8 it.

9 Now, I'm actually in treatment, and I want  
10 to further my education. And the thing is, is a  
11 program like this, the school, would be awesome for  
12 me to get myself into; because, honestly, I don't  
13 know where to start. As soon as I leave, my  
14 education needs to further more. I want to get into  
15 counseling, and, you know, be a counselor.

16 But other than that, you know, just -- I  
17 think people who have been in this position have  
18 opportunities, just, they're blind to it; because  
19 the world shows them that, you know, that there's  
20 nothing out there. And I think this would be a good  
21 program. Thank you.

22 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

23 (Applause.)

24 THE CHAIR: And the last person on the  
25 list -- I believe the first name is "Lloyd"? I --

1 honestly can't read this at all.

2 MS. LEANN SALAZAR-MONTOYA: It was you.  
3 You were the last sign-in.

4 MR. LLOYD VIGIL: I was just signing in.

5 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I can't even say.  
6 I believe it's --

7 MR. LLOYD VIGIL: It is me, yeah. I  
8 wasn't sure I was supposed to speak. My voice  
9 carries. Can I stand here? Can I stand here? Is  
10 that okay?

11 THE CHAIR: Is that okay? Okay.

12 MR. LLOYD VIGIL: So it's a pleasure to  
13 welcome everybody. It's nice to be a part of a  
14 community-based program such as this.

15 I currently am a psychologist at a school  
16 district. I also provide services to a charter  
17 school. And I have to tell you that it's really  
18 enlightening for me to hear people talk about their  
19 stories.

20 What I want to offer is maybe a science  
21 piece to a charter school; because the charter  
22 school that I'm currently involved in here, McCurdy,  
23 really does provide the piece these people are  
24 really alluding to, which is both the science and  
25 art of instruction.

1           And I know that for many of us who work  
2 with students, who have the capacity to learn,  
3 sometimes they don't have the ability to learn  
4 unless people can recognize each developmental level  
5 of each student. So every student brings to a  
6 school their capacities. Oftentimes, it takes a  
7 charter school to really identify those individual  
8 capacities that then promote into abilities.

9           So I think a charter school really is in a  
10 position to offer that kind of individualized  
11 instruction, considering all the different  
12 components of a community, both gender-specific,  
13 cultural, different talents, both left- and  
14 right-brain talents. And oftentimes, the public  
15 schools don't have the ability to do that because of  
16 the number of students.

17           But charter schools, when they're able to  
18 identify people in a curriculum, really do provide  
19 those fundamental skills that some people talk --  
20 that are alluding to; because if you don't capture  
21 those elements early on, oftentimes you have kids  
22 who are constitutionally 17, but emotionally 14, and  
23 sometimes even younger than that.

24           So my experience with charter schools and  
25 some of the research I've done in the past is that

1 you want to be able to synthesize the constitutional  
2 and developmental needs of kids so that they match  
3 up.

4 What's oftentimes a sad thing in high  
5 schools is that people graduate in twelfth grade,  
6 and they're actually 17 years old; but oftentimes  
7 they're not functionally readers, even though  
8 they're walking down receiving diplomas.

9 The sad thing for me, as a mental health  
10 professional, is that you see people who are  
11 constitutionally 18 years old, but still 10 years  
12 old emotionally. We should have caught that in  
13 public schools. Oftentimes even private schools  
14 don't catch that.

15 But because of the uniqueness of this  
16 community and the wealth of knowledge and people who  
17 are really, really attuned to helping our kids grow  
18 and flourish, we really have the capacity in a  
19 charter school to recognize when kids maybe aren't  
20 flourishing to their full potential.

21 So there's that science and art piece that  
22 I think -- I recognize every day in a public school.  
23 But I also see the real benefits of McCurdy, this  
24 charter school, where I also help them with their  
25 kids.

1           So I just want to say that there's that  
2 piece to really promoting that kind of intelligence  
3 and emotional piece to kids learning.

4           THE CHAIR: Thank you so much.

5           (Applause.)

6           (Court reporter requests clarification.)

7           THE CHAIR: So now we are on to the Public  
8 Education Commission portion. And I will just say  
9 thank you to everyone. There is no doubt that there  
10 is a need here. I'm going to take up this little  
11 bit of time.

12           I taught back East. I taught in a school  
13 that had an intervention and alternate program. And  
14 I taught kids; I was a history teacher. And I'll  
15 just tell you I'm from Las Cruces; so I'm from that  
16 area now. And I know the difficulties. I see the  
17 problems. I think we've all had family that have  
18 had those circumstances. And we know -- we  
19 understand the joy when we can touch those students.  
20 And there is a -- there is an express need here.

21           The problem we face is the application is  
22 incomplete. And we base our decision on the  
23 application, on the material that is presented.

24           And we don't even have a budget. The  
25 application is complete to us -- is incomplete to

1 us. I'm sorry.

2 There are one, two, three, four -- there  
3 are five pieces of the application that we do not  
4 have; so we cannot make a decision on a school with  
5 an incomplete application.

6 And it has always been -- and we voted on  
7 it at the last meeting -- that materials cannot come  
8 in after the application process has closed.

9 So it is unfortunate; but I cannot vote  
10 for a school that has an incomplete application.  
11 And many of our questions that we would have would  
12 absolutely be based on, in particular, that budget  
13 for you today. And we can't -- we can't make those  
14 questions, because we don't have the information.  
15 And I -- I -- you know, I apologize. But we -- I  
16 can't.

17 So I will pass it on to other  
18 Commissioners now.

19 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I think  
20 Commissioner Carr and I are probably the longest  
21 serving members on this Commission. It has always  
22 been the policy of this Commission, we have to have  
23 everything from the very beginning. Just like you  
24 teach class, just like I taught class, we've got to  
25 have it all. There are no shortcuts.

1           So while I think you have a good idea, and  
2 I know there's a need -- I hear it; I believe you --  
3 this application is incomplete. It -- I cannot vote  
4 to approve it. And I don't -- the Commission, I do  
5 not think, can vote to approve it.

6           I would hope that you would come back next  
7 year with what you've learned this year and with one  
8 that just sails through the process; but it's got to  
9 be complete. That's the bottom line.

10           THE CHAIR: Commissioner Peralta?

11           COMMISSIONER PERALTA: Yeah. Thank you,  
12 Chair. Like anything, you know, everything is a  
13 process, and everything takes steps. And so I'm one  
14 of the Commissioners who -- very stingy-minded on  
15 charter school applications, you know. I believe  
16 that we've got a bit too many charter schools --  
17 some good charter schools, but some not so good  
18 charter schools. So very narrow-minded about  
19 decisions when it comes to approving charter school  
20 applications and what have you.

21           But you're eliciting -- you did a great  
22 selling job to me, in my mind. And the community  
23 support, as mentioned, there is a dire need for  
24 something like this. And I think it's a very  
25 promising idea.

1 I just want to encourage you to come back  
2 next year with -- you know, fill in the gaps and  
3 make that application complete so that we can start  
4 moving in the right direction and help the community  
5 where there is a need.

6 So thank you very much for showing up and  
7 sharing your stories and speaking up.

8 Thank you.

9 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

10 Commissioner Carr?

11 COMMISSIONER CARR: What I heard today was  
12 a lot of people really speaking from your heart. I  
13 have taught students like you most of my teaching  
14 career. I've been in Taos, where in my last  
15 three -- I'm at a charter school now up there. But  
16 before that, I was teaching 200 students a day. I  
17 had a former student who dropped out, came up to me  
18 at a gas station -- who dropped out -- and he said,  
19 "Mr. Carr, I didn't listen to you."

20 And he's homeless. I gave him some money,  
21 and I gave him a big hug. And I said, "Please, you  
22 know, work -- do something to turn your life  
23 around."

24 I don't know what I can do. I was --  
25 like, the only thing I could do then, you know, was



1 show him some love, give him a little help. It's  
2 all I ever could do.

3 I could have very easily ended up in  
4 prison or juvenile -- juvie. I think my two older  
5 brothers taught me that that wasn't a good way to  
6 go.

7 And I -- I heard the word "resiliency"  
8 today. I know what it's like to grow up poor. I  
9 think I got some breaks because I was White. I  
10 shouldn't have; but I probably did. And I don't  
11 know if I did or not, but I think that was the only  
12 breaks I got.

13 And -- and I heard the word "no excuses"  
14 today. And our Governor likes to say that. And I  
15 says, "Well, yeah, no excuses. But I will recognize  
16 that it's harder for some people who are poor and  
17 people who are in bad circumstances to get where  
18 they need to go to have -- have a life."

19 So keep that in mind. Don't give up.  
20 I -- I -- you know, the way it sounds like, it's not  
21 going to make it this year. But you have adults in  
22 here and people here who are advocates for these  
23 kids. And I applaud you. And I -- you know, it's  
24 wonderful. And without that, there would be no hope  
25 for these kids. We'd be spending \$50,000, \$60,000 a

1 year in prison, instead of spending \$8,000 or  
2 \$10,000 a year educating them. That's ridiculous,  
3 you know.

4 So, I mean, if I could wave a magic  
5 wand -- we're not -- the State of New Mexico is not  
6 serving you like they should. And I wish we had the  
7 power to change that here. But we, together, our  
8 Commission, can't do that; but we together can  
9 change that in New Mexico, and in Española and in  
10 Taos and all the other communities that are  
11 suffering the same type of situation, you know?

12 I don't -- I -- and I -- I -- I know I'm  
13 pontificating, and I'm sorry. But I just want to  
14 let you know I'm an advocate for you and for all the  
15 other people like that around the state that have  
16 not been served in the past and need to be. And  
17 that needs to change.

18 And to just lock you up and throw away the  
19 key is not the answer. You know, just punishing you  
20 is not the answer. We need to reach out our hand  
21 and say, "What can I do for you? How can I help  
22 you," rather than slap you down, you know.

23 So I'll be quiet. But I -- I feel all the  
24 pain that you guys feel, and I understand it. And  
25 somehow, I worked my way out of it, like a lot of

1 you did. And -- and so keep -- keep working. Don't  
2 give up. That is the one part of success, you know.  
3 You may remember Albert Einstein; but the other one  
4 is the founder of the light bulb.

5 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Thomas Edison.

6 COMMISSIONER CARR: Thomas Edison. He  
7 failed a thousand times before he discovered the  
8 light bulb. So the secret to success is not giving  
9 up, no matter what. It's just -- just keep going.  
10 Keep going. And I -- I hope that you guys can come  
11 back next year.

12 I -- you know, I don't know how  
13 everybody's going to vote. There's nine of us. But  
14 it doesn't sound great; but I -- I'll stop now.  
15 Thank you.

16 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

17 Commissioner Toulouse?

18 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Madam Chair, I  
19 want to tell you, you impressed me. I spent  
20 30 years in Human Service programs. I have lost a  
21 sister who died from the results of many years of  
22 alcohol and drug abuse. There were five of us, and  
23 now there are four, and I'm the oldest. I know  
24 those feelings.

25 My family started in the north. We were

1 the French fur trappers and traders. And despite my  
2 looks -- my mother's were Scandinavian -- I have  
3 cousins all over the north and through the central  
4 part of the state.

5 I want to see you back next year. If you  
6 had the budget part -- I do budgets. I'm not an  
7 educator; you know, I was a bureaucrat. But I need  
8 the budgets; we need the budgets. But this school,  
9 you impressed me so much. I know this school is  
10 needed.

11 In my years in Human Services, in  
12 Albuquerque and out in Estancia and down in Belen  
13 and up in Santa Fe, if there had been schools  
14 then -- it was prior to most charter schools -- that  
15 I could have sent some of my client students to,  
16 there wouldn't have been a next generation.

17 And I just -- I don't know how I can vote  
18 without that budget, either. And it's bureaucratic.  
19 And I know it.

20 But don't give up, because you impressed  
21 me. If there was anything I could have done  
22 without -- you know, if there was a budget here, and  
23 it didn't all make sense, I could have gone with it.  
24 But I want to see you next year. Mr. Carr will not  
25 be on the Commission; Ms. Shearman will not be. The

1 other ones of us will be, with a couple of new  
2 people.

3 But I think you'd sell anybody. And so do  
4 not give up. I know the disappointed feeling. I  
5 know what it's like to work on something and not get  
6 it.

7 But my message to you, and to all of you  
8 out there, nobody gives this up, and everybody gets  
9 behind Leann and Ambrose, and you keep this going,  
10 and you make sure that every single piece of that  
11 application and the budget -- if you need help with  
12 the budget, the charter school -- the association --  
13 the Coalition of Charter Schools can -- I'm just  
14 saying, to get it formatted right, to get it to  
15 upload -- because that's -- because if it came  
16 across to us, we can deal with it. If it doesn't,  
17 we can't take it in paper.

18 If we did it for one -- some years, we've  
19 had 15 applicants or more. But I just want to tell  
20 this whole community, you owe these people a lot,  
21 and you need to back them and get everybody back  
22 here next year.

23 Thank you.

24 THE CHAIR: Anyone else? Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Quickly -- I

1 won't go through all this stuff. I want to say that  
2 I had this plain old middle-class growing up in the  
3 Midwest. But I am an educator and have been for  
4 40 years; so it's not that I have -- do not  
5 understand this.

6 But what I'd like to say is storm the  
7 board meeting. Storm the board meeting. Get some  
8 changes now.

9 I want you to continue. I think that you  
10 can bring this school to fruition. But we're bound  
11 by laws that you have to do this, and you have to do  
12 that. And so our hands are tied. It's not a --  
13 it's not a choice that we can make.

14 But I think you've heard from every single  
15 person here to continue that. And then meanwhile --  
16 because you can't take every child in Española, I  
17 think -- I would storm the board meeting and make  
18 some demands. If you get this many people at a  
19 board meeting, you can --

20 MR. AMBROSE BAROS: The problem with the  
21 community is many people are hopeless. They don't  
22 feel --

23 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. This is -- there's  
24 no discussion.

25 MR. AMBROSE BAROS: Sorry.

1 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I was just  
2 saying my part.

3 THE CHAIR: You can't ask them a question.

4 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: No, it's not a  
5 discussion --

6 THE CHAIR: Sorry.

7 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: -- or a debate.

8 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Sorry.

10 THE CHAIR: In closing, any member of the  
11 public, including the applicants, may submit written  
12 input following this hearing. Written comments can  
13 be sent to the Commission via the PED website,  
14 mailed or hand-delivered. The details and addresses  
15 are listed on the handout at the back of the room.

16 Make -- or here -- I'm sorry -- in front  
17 of the room.

18 Make sure you identify the school you're  
19 commenting on in the drop-down menu. Please note  
20 that any written input must be received by no later  
21 than 5:00 p.m. on the third business day following  
22 the hearing on the application on which you wish to  
23 comment.

24 So for today, that means it must be  
25 submitted by Friday, July 22nd, 2016, by 5:00 p.m.

1           Thank you all for your presentation today.  
2           The Public Education Commission will meet in  
3           Santa Fe August 31st and September 1st, 2016, to  
4           render their decision on approval or denial of this  
5           and other new charter school applications.

6           And I will now ask the Commission for a  
7           motion to adjourn the Public Education Commission  
8           hearings.

9           COMMISSIONER CARR: So move.

10          COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Second.

11          THE CHAIR: There was a motion by  
12          Commissioner Carr and a second by Commissioner  
13          Shearman.

14          Thank you so much.

15          (Proceedings concluded at 2:05 p.m.)

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1                   BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
2                                   STATE OF NEW MEXICO

3  
4  
5                   REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

6           I, Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR, CCR #219, Certified  
7 Court Reporter in the State of New Mexico, do hereby  
8 certify that the foregoing pages constitute a true  
9 transcript of proceedings had before the said NEW  
10 MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION, held in the State  
11 of New Mexico, County of Rio Arriba in the matter  
12 therein stated.

13           In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my  
14 hand on August 2, 2016.

15  
16  
17                                   *Cynthia Chapman*

18                                   Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219  
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HANNA SKANDERA  
 SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
 Governor

## VISITORS ATTENDING PUBLIC EDUCATION HEARING

For The Albert Einstein Academy

July 19, 2016

Please Sign-in

Name (Print)	Representing
Sandy Sanchez	LeAnne Montoya Salazar AEA
Felicitiana Mendocza	LeAnne Montoya Salazar
Mario Valero	LeAnne Montoya-Salazar
Derrick Wright	LeAnne Montoya-Salazar - AEA Support
Felty Callahan	NMCCS
F. Patrick Archuleta	Espanola Public Schools / Hoy
Jacob Gromer	Albert Einstein Support
Ada M. Valdez	AEA Support
Charles Crespin	AEA Support
Bob Siss	AEA Support
Matthew Bacon	AEA Support
Susie Orphan	AEA Support
KEVIN CLASTER	AEA Support
Andre Berawider	AEA Support
Timothy Flores	AEA Support
Leanne Salazar	Founder
Ambrase Bras	AEA Support
Diego Gallegos	AEA Support
Sally Ju	AEA Support
Juan Navarrete	AEA Support
Ja. Lombard	AEA Support
Daniel Aguilar	AEA Support
Camille Scheraga	Social Worker
Leann Archuleta	AEA Support
Michelle R. Martinez	AEA Support
John	M
Jonathan Salazar	AEA Support
Antonio Montoya	AEA Support



