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BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING PROCEEDINGS  
THE WILLIAM W. AND JOSEPHINE DORN  
CHARTER COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
August 9, 2011  
10:13 a.m.  
Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque  
International Balloon Museum  
9201 Balloon Museum Drive, Northeast  
Albuquerque, 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

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- MR. EUGENE GANT, Secretary
- MS. MILLIE POGNA
- MR. GILBERT G. PERALTA
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- MR. MICHAEL C DE BACA, Executive Administrative Assistant
- MS. PATRICIA MATTHEWS, Director-Options for Parents
- MS. KELLY CALLAHAN, Volunteer Consultant
- MS. MARJORIE GILLESPIE, Staff Member

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1 (August 9, 2011, 10:13 a.m.)

2 THE CHAIR: I'll call this meeting back  
3 into session. We have the William W. and Josephine  
4 Dorn Charter. For the record, please state the name  
5 of your school, the names of the founders of the  
6 school and any other person who is here today on  
7 behalf of your school. Please also identify his or  
8 her role today. Please be sure to tell us the  
9 grades you plan to serve and the total enrollment  
10 projection.

11 Hold on.

12 MS. DORN JONES: Good morning. My name is  
13 Diana Dorn Jones. I'm the executive director of  
14 United South Broadway Corporation, and I'm joined  
15 here today by two of our governance members, Moneka  
16 Stevens-Cordova and Kiran Katira. The William W. &  
17 Josephine Dorn Charter School is a charter school  
18 proposed for the South Broadway neighborhood. We  
19 have a governance council, but first I'd like to  
20 begin with my presentation, and I'll get into the  
21 governance for you.

22 The USBC is a primary partner of the WWJDC  
23 and will lend its 25 years of community development,  
24 community engagement programs, programming,  
25 management, and fiscal accountability and

1 specifically USBC's 15 years of managing and  
2 operating university-assisted charter after-school  
3 community-school programs for literacy-based  
4 education. Our program is university-assisted, and  
5 assisted by two universities, the University of New  
6 Mexico and the University of Pennsylvania.

7 WWJDC is proposing grades K through 5.  
8 Kinder will operate as a full-day kindergarten. The  
9 first year of the school will open with grades K  
10 through 2 and add grades yearly until the grade span  
11 reaches K through 5 and total enrollment reaches 180  
12 students.

13 WWJDC is a resident-driven, United South  
14 Broadway-backed initiative that is intended to serve  
15 and prepare students from diverse backgrounds and  
16 abilities to become dedicated learners and caring  
17 stewards of the built and natural environments. The  
18 school's mission is to provide collaborative  
19 leadership within a community school setting that  
20 will connect and engage learners, excite them about  
21 the possibilities and wonders of education, and  
22 teach them about the importance of the natural and  
23 built environment. And we will stress the  
24 importance of civic engagement, thereby opening the  
25 doors of opportunity for students and their

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1 families.

2           The school will utilize USBC's community  
3 gardens and experience an environmental education  
4 and programming as a backdrop to enhance learning by  
5 providing students with hands-on experiential  
6 learning and civic engagement opportunities. I  
7 would like to reference the "Back-to-School" insert  
8 of the Journal, little insert in the Journal that  
9 was put out on August 4th. It was an article  
10 written by Tania Soussan, and it was titled "How  
11 Gardens Grow." This article's byline reads,  
12 "Cultivating Veggies at School teaches kids math,  
13 science and appreciation of their food and the  
14 outdoors."

15           USBC has been doing this for years because  
16 we know it works. It goes beyond that. It also  
17 teaches children critical thinking, problem-solving,  
18 and also how to negotiate, how to get along with  
19 others and to work in unison with others, team  
20 building and collaboration. Our outdoors learning  
21 studio will be an integral part to the WWJDC  
22 experience.

23           We propose to fulfill a need. Our  
24 proposal -- in our proposal we cite the 1998 study  
25 conducted by the Project Change Initiative. The

1 report stated, "Educational equity is a  
2 long-standing problem in Albuquerque. It is a  
3 problem waiting for a solution. The current pattern  
4 of lower educational outcomes for students of color  
5 has persisted for decades despite various efforts by  
6 school districts and communities to address the  
7 problem. At present, the lack of educational equity  
8 is having serious adverse effects on students,  
9 families, schools, neighborhoods and, indeed, our  
10 entire community."

11 USBC and members of the South Broadway  
12 neighborhood and the WWJDC governing council feel it  
13 is in the best interests of students, family, and  
14 the greater community for us to organize and operate  
15 our proposed charter school, because, quite frankly,  
16 our children deserve the same opportunity to succeed  
17 as any other students in any other area of our city  
18 or our state.

19 There is no high performing elementary  
20 schools in the proposed WWJDC boundaries. If you  
21 look at Page 17 of our proposal, you'll see the  
22 demographics. USBC views its role as a capacity  
23 builder. That's one of our key roles in this  
24 endeavor. We will assist WWJDC to build the  
25 necessary fiscal and operational capacity to make

1 the school a success.

2 USBC has administered multimillion-dollar  
3 contracts that include city, state, federal and  
4 private foundation grants. USBC understands  
5 contract compliance, reporting, and, equally  
6 important, fiscal accountability and transparency of  
7 public dollars.

8 During our interview, we were -- it was  
9 pointed out that there is a number of things that we  
10 have to address, and we want to take care of that  
11 business today which is why the two board members  
12 join me. The organizational structure calls for a  
13 business manager. There is a job description for  
14 that position in the proposal. This position is --  
15 can be -- we're literally looking for this position  
16 to be a contract position. USBC operates that way  
17 currently with a contract position as a certified  
18 bookkeeper and with independent auditors that work  
19 with us, and it's a cost-effective way to do  
20 business. USBC will provide training and overall  
21 support to this position through the formative years  
22 of the school.

23 It is fully expected that our principal  
24 and our teaching staff will be multi-certified and  
25 also spend time in the classroom and instruction.

1 So the principal will be supported by a business  
2 manager, by teaching staff, as well as by the  
3 resources of the United South Broadway Corporation.  
4 The governance council brings experience in the area  
5 of education and knowledge of community schools and  
6 a commitment to connecting and engaging with  
7 students and their families and the community.

8 And there are currently five members of  
9 our governance council. I'd like to just go through  
10 a brief profile of them. Moneka Stevens, who is  
11 here with me today, grew up and worked in all of  
12 USBC's after-school programs, received her BA in  
13 family studies and health education and community  
14 and regional planning. She will complete her  
15 master's degree in community and regional planning  
16 through the University of New Mexico School of  
17 Architecture and Planning this year. She is a  
18 director of network support for the New Mexico Youth  
19 Alliance, a collaboration between Children, Youth  
20 and Families Department and the New Mexico Forum for  
21 Youth and Community.

22 Dr. Kiran Katira who sits next to me -- we  
23 call her "Kiran" -- received her bachelor's in  
24 elementary multicultural education in England, her  
25 master's degree in educational administration from



1 New Mexico State University, her Ph.D. in  
2 educational thought and social and cultural  
3 education from UNM. She is currently the director  
4 of UNM's Office for Community Learning and Public  
5 Service, where she works with university students to  
6 develop and support the UNM university-assisted  
7 community schools network that's across the state.

8 We have Ziarra Kirksey. Ziarra is not  
9 here today. She's the mother of a three-week-old  
10 baby. Ziarra attended all of our after-school  
11 programs and worked in the USBC Youth Conservation  
12 Corps program for three years while she was in high  
13 school. She currently works for the City of  
14 Albuquerque as a recreational youth supervisor for  
15 at-risk youth. Ziarra is 20 years of age. She is  
16 enrolled at CNM in the Children, Youth and Family  
17 Development Program with a concentration on social  
18 work. She is working towards completing her  
19 master's degree in social work.

20 Christina Chavez is here today.  
21 Christina, like me, is one of the old ladies of the  
22 group. Christina is an LPN. She is a  
23 third-generation community activist and has been  
24 active in the Santa Barbara-Martineztown Association  
25 for 22 years. In 1994, she was named Outstanding

1 Neighborhood Volunteer by the City of Albuquerque  
2 Coalition of Neighborhoods. She is a founding  
3 member of the Santa Barbara-Martineztown Community  
4 Schools initiatives. She has served on numerous  
5 citywide boards and commissions.

6 Christina is the mother of three girls.  
7 She was active in PTA and school governance at the  
8 Longfellow Elementary School her children attended.  
9 All of her girls are college graduates, and one of  
10 them works in their after-school program overseeing  
11 that program now.

12 Finally, we have Vicki Plevin. Vicki is a  
13 retired member of the New Mexico Bar. She has over  
14 three decades of experience in education, community  
15 organizing, program development, training, media  
16 relations, and administration. She is a certified  
17 K-3 educator.

18 Vicki and I collaborated together to  
19 develop USBCs Fair Lending Center and the Antiracism  
20 Institute of the Southwest. She served as the  
21 director of these programs until 1998, when she  
22 graduated with honors from the UNM School of Law.  
23 She is retired and has been consulting with  
24 nonprofits to build capacity. She is excited about  
25 the school and expects to invest some real serious

1 amount of time working with and supporting the WWJDC  
2 program in all aspects of its operation.

3 Two members of our governing council, as I  
4 said, are here, Kiran and Moneka, and they are going  
5 to review for the goals and student performance  
6 expectations.

7 MS. STEVENS-CORDOVA: Good morning. My  
8 name is Moneka. I just wanted to reemphasize about  
9 the mission and how it's truly innovative to engage  
10 learners and to excite them of having a love of  
11 learning as well as exposing them to the built and  
12 natural environment. Well, in order to achieve  
13 this, the school will focus on three goals.

14 Each day, at least two founding community  
15 members will actively engage in supporting the  
16 students' educational success via math, science,  
17 reading, public speaking, as well as applied  
18 education through environmental learning.

19 The second goal is focused on the  
20 educational -- the individual educational plan,  
21 which here, we're viewing as the academic and social  
22 growth plan which focuses on it's truly proactive  
23 and preventive, where every student will receive  
24 this as they enter in the school, to not wait till  
25 the last minute until students are not achieving

1 academically, but be able to be proactive and  
2 develop an educational plan for success, as well as  
3 it will help the teachers see where the students are  
4 and guide toward that collaborative approach of  
5 working together for academic success.

6           The third goal focuses on ownership,  
7 having a sense of belonging of where the school --  
8 the school personnel or the staff or the community  
9 or the family will be able to talk, to speak through  
10 the components of the mission. And this could be  
11 definitely achievable. And what it allows families  
12 to do is have a true investment in their child's  
13 education, where not just in elementary school, but  
14 as they go on through middle school and high school,  
15 to truly see how family engagement in education  
16 leads to success, how community engagement leads to  
17 success. And it truly speaks to that notion of, "It  
18 takes a village to raise a child."

19           So this collaborative approach engages all  
20 these three measurable goals.

21           DR. KITARA: So with the three goals, one  
22 really addressing the parental involvement, one the  
23 academic social, and the third one the ownership and  
24 the shared vision, it's actualized in the student  
25 performance expectations. And what we've done is

1 lay out for one year what those expectations will  
2 be, knowing that, at the end of that year, we're  
3 going to bring together the parents and community  
4 and the youth to really assess what is being done  
5 that year and plan for the following year.

6 And this is in the spirit of what the  
7 school is about. If we're going to have ownership  
8 and shared vision, there needs to be a way for the  
9 school community to input in what happens in the  
10 coming years. And so the student performance  
11 expectations, as laid out on Page 38, give us an  
12 idea of the safe space, language arts and the math,  
13 the increase in basic testing. The daily attendance  
14 is a part of it, the pro-social behaviors,  
15 leadership that leads to parental involvement. And  
16 then the passing of all grade levels. And then the  
17 improving of study habits. And then the final one  
18 is the project-based and service learning  
19 components, which really reengage with the community  
20 as well.

21 Now, that's where we want to make sure  
22 that this is what the parents and the community  
23 wants to emphasize for the coming years as well. We  
24 know that we have long-range vision as well. It's  
25 not that there is no long-range vision. Our long

1 range vision is within the proposal, with children  
2 passing third-grade reading. We have the academic  
3 preparedness so that they enter the university. The  
4 university-assisted model actually infuses that from  
5 the very young ages onwards. It's all about getting  
6 them exposed to the university and learning from  
7 different majors in universities, coming back into  
8 that setting and doing the community engagement with  
9 them.

10 So I hope that gives you an idea of -- our  
11 long-range plan is definitely something that's  
12 strategic, but needs to be inclusive. And it needs  
13 to be inclusive of both the parents and the  
14 community. And so after the first year, we hope to  
15 do that.

16 I'm going to pass it back to Diana for the  
17 closing.

18 MS. DORN JONES: We didn't wake up a few  
19 days ago and decide that it was time to start a  
20 charter school. We have looked at this for a long  
21 time. South Broadway is a neighborhood that is  
22 resident-driven. We believe in self-starting, not  
23 asking people for help but starting it ourselves,  
24 and typically help comes along because people want  
25 to support those who support themselves.

1           And that's what we've done in our  
2 neighborhood. We have -- I believe went to Eugene  
3 Field Elementary School, which is one of the local  
4 elementary schools. So did my seven -- five --  
5 actually, six brothers and sisters. We all went to  
6 the local elementary schools. We are huge  
7 supporters of public education. But quite frankly,  
8 we've been disappointed for a number of years.

9           And just when we think we're ready to soar  
10 in our local elementary school, something happens,  
11 something critical happens in terms maybe a  
12 principal moving or whatever. But leadership  
13 changes, and our school seems to have to start all  
14 over again. And so we're saying, "How many  
15 generations should we lose?" We're not saying we  
16 should take on the world. As you see, our numbers  
17 are small. We're starting with 80 students. In  
18 fact we're starting smaller and building up.  
19 Because USBC has a history of starting small,  
20 testing, tweaking, perfecting, and then moving on.

21           So we came to the door of possibly  
22 starting a charter school more than once. We just  
23 didn't knock because we didn't think we were ready  
24 at the time. We feel that we have prepared  
25 ourselves over the years with all of our

1 after-school programming, with our university  
2 relationship, with building a team of support,  
3 working with the neighborhood, working with parents.  
4 The time has come for us to do that. We feel like  
5 we can do something special for a group of children  
6 and hopefully grow and have something that can be  
7 replicated in this community.

8 THE CHAIR: Thank you. At this time the  
9 Public Education Commission will hear from the local  
10 school district, if there's any local school  
11 district representative that would wish to speak.  
12 We had no one in the previous application hearings,  
13 either.

14 We will move forward to community input.  
15 Everyone who indicated whether they are for or  
16 against this school has indicated that they are in  
17 support. There are some blank spaces here. I won't  
18 assume that it's in support or opposition, so we  
19 will just go through the list. What I'll do is I'll  
20 put the microphone over there, and each person will  
21 have two, two-and-a-half minutes to speak.

22 And, please, we do have a timer here, so  
23 please be considerate of the other speakers, too.

24 So I have first on the list is Diana Dorn  
25 Jones.



1 MS. DORN JONES: That would be me. I'm a  
2 presenter.

3 THE CHAIR: So we'll move to Grace Gibson.

4 MS. DORN JONES: No, they're not speaking.  
5 Unless they indicate, they're not speaking.

6 THE CHAIR: Elaine Leal? Same?

7 SPEAKER: We got confused when we came in  
8 to sign.

9 THE CHAIR: You thought it was attendance.  
10 See, I'm taking attendance.

11 SPEAKER: Sorry.

12 THE CHAIR: You were present. Christine  
13 Chavez. Good morning. Oh, I didn't mean to do  
14 that, take it away there. But, please, when you  
15 state your name, spell it for the court reporter.  
16 Thank you.

17 SPEAKER: Christina Chavez,  
18 C-H-R-I-S-T-I-N-A, Chávez, C-H-A-V-E-Z, accent over  
19 the A.

20 Good morning. Buenos días. I am in  
21 support of this community schools project. As Diana  
22 had stated earlier, I was one of the founding  
23 members of an after-school community schools program  
24 in the Santa Barbara-Martineztown neighborhood.

25 Through the many years we have seen -- back in the

1 '90s we did a survey, and we noticed that many of  
2 our children were failing, were not even making  
3 middle school.

4 In essence, what I want to do is support  
5 this school, because we have worked together in my  
6 neighborhood kind of mirroring what Diana did in her  
7 neighborhood. We saw our children's success rate go  
8 up. As little -- with creative programs, with  
9 Saturday after-school program, with bringing  
10 programs into the community. We can only do so much  
11 in the schools. But I think if we do a community  
12 schools program in our neighborhood, we all have --  
13 especially those neighborhoods that are in the  
14 historic neighborhood alliance or the pocket of  
15 poverty, many of our children from, let's say,  
16 Martineztown sometimes might go to the South  
17 Broadway area, and due to economics, children are  
18 not taught equally. There is different things going  
19 on.

20 What impressed me more about this  
21 community schools program is the fact of community  
22 involvement, the fact that parental involvement.  
23 Parents do care. Parents want to be involved with  
24 their schools. I think that, as you read through  
25 the packet here, there is a lot of community

1 coaching. We want our parents and our children to  
2 be very, very successful in their future.

3 The -- the whole idea of dealing with our  
4 environment. Many of us come -- if you know the  
5 downtown neighborhood, they're old, established  
6 neighborhoods. We don't want to lose our  
7 neighborhoods. We have redeveloped neighborhoods.  
8 We want the success in our neighborhoods. How can  
9 this be successful is through education and having  
10 the opportunity to have an alternative choice in  
11 education.

12 I am very blessed that I was very active  
13 in my children's education. They came from one of  
14 those, quote, socioeconomic, you know, statuses that  
15 they give us: Poor people. But my girls made it.  
16 Three girls graduated from UNM because we were  
17 there, because there were programs, after-school  
18 programs in our neighborhood that engaged parents  
19 and students in saying, "Yes, you can do it."

20 The goal is not graduating from high  
21 school. The goal is graduating from college. And I  
22 think, as we see through this, they're starting  
23 small, but that's how you start. Your family starts  
24 small in your house, and as we grow up, you grow  
25 older into the community and you look around. And

1 that is what the charter school here is proposing.

2 Oh, I'm buzzing here.

3 But anyway, I do want to thank you for  
4 your support, most especially to you members of the  
5 Public Education Commission in supporting education  
6 statewide. You've heard all the proposals.

7 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much.

8 SPEAKER: And it's about choice. Thank  
9 you so much. And it's taking care of our kids.  
10 Thanks.

11 THE CHAIR: Evan. And it starts with an  
12 "O"? What's the last name?

13 SPEAKER: Overton.

14 THE CHAIR: Overton. Okay.

15 SPEAKER: Good morning, Commission. My  
16 name is Evan Overton, E-V-A-N, O-V-E-R-T-O-N.

17 THE CHAIR: Hold your microphone closer.

18 SPEAKER: Is that better? Okay. I'd just  
19 like to share kind of my two viewpoints I have,  
20 actually, as growing up a member of this community  
21 and a byproduct of some of the organizational  
22 components that United South Broadway actually  
23 incorporates into the community that they kind of  
24 infuse that actually made me a better individual, a  
25 more well-rounded individual and more

1 education-driven.

2           So for starters, I, as a child growing up,  
3 when I moved here, I was involved in their  
4 after-school programs. And then I later moved on,  
5 when I was in high school, with the Bosque Youth  
6 Conservation Corps. Are you guys familiar with that  
7 at all? No? Okay. And then post-high school,  
8 actually joined AmeriCorps and I'm an AmeriCorps  
9 alum.

10           So through support that I've gotten from  
11 United South Broadway in particular, it's actually  
12 helped me to be where I probably wouldn't be.  
13 Because when -- as Commissioners, when you think  
14 about education, you're probably thinking about more  
15 numbers-driven, curriculum-driven. But as an  
16 educator, you do much, much more than that. I mean,  
17 you are a counselor, a psychiatrist. You do much  
18 more with children, and a lot of it comes from some  
19 very important thing, which is engagement. Okay?

20           So unless you have parental engagement  
21 with children, especially at that young of an age,  
22 you're not going to have the success that you need.  
23 Because the parents -- even though they don't spend  
24 the majority of time with the parents, they're  
25 usually at school most of the day -- inform their

1 children. They get their habits from their  
2 children. So if the community informs the school,  
3 you get a more well-rounded education, regardless of  
4 the approach you take to educate while you're  
5 actually in school. The basis, the philosophy, the  
6 groundwork has to come from the community.

7 If I didn't have a support system outside  
8 of my parents, in general, I probably wouldn't be  
9 where I am today. And that's not -- and for some,  
10 that may not be saying much. I graduate with a BA  
11 in the spring. I have a ton of experience from  
12 working. I've actually worked with AmeriCorps with  
13 youth, so I understand the importance of being able  
14 to affect youth at a young age, because by the time  
15 you get to high school, you may already be lost  
16 regardless of all the choices you've had.

17 Other things outside of the home may be  
18 going on. That's why I can't stress the community  
19 aspect and engagement aspect enough and how  
20 important that is when you're forming a school,  
21 because if that philosophy and groundwork isn't  
22 there, it won't be successful.

23 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I see S-U-S-A? I  
24 don't know if that's "Susan" or "Susa."

25 SPEAKER: I'm here.

1 THE CHAIR: I can't read any of -- most of  
2 this. Come on up. Oh, you're just here. You're  
3 present.

4 SPEAKER: I'm present.

5 THE CHAIR: No detention for you.

6 MS. DORN JONES: Our next speaker is  
7 Maggie Ramirez.

8 THE CHAIR: I have "Maggie." Come on up.

9 SPEAKER: Hi. My name is Maggie Ramirez,  
10 M-A-G-G-I-E, R-A-M-I-R-E-Z. I am -- I guess I'm  
11 here to tell you a little bit about myself. And so  
12 I'm -- I came from the Sawmill community, which is a  
13 partner in a lot of the work that has gone on within  
14 United South Broadway. So we have something called  
15 a Historic Communities Alliance. And so a lot of  
16 the work that we do crosses communities; it crosses  
17 the boundary, but it doesn't cross the people;  
18 right? I mean, the people with the same -- the  
19 needs are the same; the communities look the same.

20 About three years ago, I guess I could  
21 say, we had the opportunity to speak with our  
22 current superintendent. And he was really  
23 interested, and we had a very frank discussion about  
24 why I succeeded and others didn't. And I think  
25 that's a very black-and-white way to look at things.

1 But I guess what I -- my response was I had a  
2 support system.

3 And Diana Dorn Jones will build a school  
4 that has a support system, and Kiran and Moneka.  
5 So, you know, when I was growing up I always had a  
6 project to do. I always had a community mural to  
7 do, a community event to be a part of. And that's  
8 just kind of a legacy of our neighborhood. And now,  
9 you know, we have community -- like, a community  
10 development corporation -- right? -- where they  
11 build their -- where we have input in what's  
12 actually being developed in our area.

13 So I think that, you know, from my  
14 testimony, what I would like to say is that it's  
15 not -- it takes a community. It takes parents. It  
16 takes -- it takes leaders. It takes teachers. And  
17 it takes a school to really help people to succeed.  
18 And I was able to -- I got my undergrad in  
19 government and my graduate's degree in public  
20 administration, and I'll go on to get my Ph.D. next  
21 year in education and leadership. And so my  
22 experience has really -- has really helped me to  
23 be -- to want to take the path of public -- of  
24 public administration, working with the public and  
25 working for people. Thank you.



1 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Wanda. The last  
2 name starts with "B."

3 SPEAKER: Present.

4 MS. DORN JONES: That's our last speaker,  
5 sir.

6 THE CHAIR: Who was supposed to bring  
7 snack?

8 MS. DORN JONES: They wanted the Krispie  
9 Kremes.

10 THE CHAIR: I know. I think we all did.  
11 And then Robin Sandia?

12 SPEAKER: Present.

13 THE CHAIR: What a great class. Thank you  
14 for all the community input. We appreciate your  
15 being here and spending time with us. We're at the  
16 point of the Public Education Commission's question  
17 period. And I will open the floor for questions  
18 from Commissioners. Commissioner Gant.

19 COMMISSIONER GANT: They'll be brief,  
20 really. Thank you for paying attention to special  
21 needs students in your budget. I -- that's one of  
22 my -- and I do appreciate that very much.

23 MS. DORN JONES: You're welcome.

24 COMMISSIONER GANT: And if you haven't  
25 figured out if you've been here long enough,

1 facilities is one of my buttons that needs to get  
2 pushed properly. And I note in your application  
3 you're going to have -- well, first of all, what is  
4 located on that property at 1119 Edith?

5 MS. DORN JONES: There is a  
6 15,000-square-foot what was -- we call a warehouse.  
7 But it really isn't a warehouse. It used -- when I  
8 grew up, it was Rick's Grocery Store. It was the  
9 Goodwill Industries. It was then Habitat for  
10 Humanities. And United South Broadway bought it  
11 from Habitat. It was sitting there vacant for a  
12 number of years in the middle of a residential area.  
13 We were able to secure federal dollars to actually  
14 purchase that building, and it's paid off. We paid  
15 it off through a negotiated process of creating jobs  
16 for youth.

17 And so for every job we created, we  
18 received some dollars to go towards it. And so at  
19 this point, we pretty much own that building. We  
20 have renovated one-half of that building. And we  
21 actually hold all of our youth -- our after-school  
22 programming in that building, and we have other  
23 community gatherings in that building. It's kind of  
24 a network for the neighborhood to meet.

25 We have a number of community spaces to

1 meet in. Some of them are City of Albuquerque  
2 Community Centers. But there's times when they're  
3 not open. And our -- and we have to have community  
4 gathering spaces. So that building belongs to  
5 United South Broadway, and we offer that as the --  
6 at this point, we're saying we'd like to operate the  
7 charter school out of that building.

8 We're in the process of looking at whether  
9 it would meet what we need to do to make it ready  
10 for that. So we'll be working with the State  
11 building -- you know, facilities people to look at  
12 it. I know it's zoned properly. And I don't  
13 think -- and the neighborhood has gotten used to  
14 having a lot of people there. We -- having an  
15 elementary school, we don't think is going to have a  
16 lot of cars. So we're thinking we're going to be  
17 okay with that property.

18 COMMISSIONER GANT: Okay. You do --  
19 you'll deal with the State on that, to get the  
20 proper certification, E-occupancy.

21 MS. DORN JONES: Yes, sir.

22 COMMISSIONER GANT: But in looking -- and  
23 I'm looking at it on the map here. I am looking at  
24 it here on the map.

25 MS. DORN JONES: Okay.

1           COMMISSIONER GANT:  What about a  
2  playground?  Normally, we've been dealing with  
3  nothing but high schools until you came along.  
4  We've been dealing with high schools.

5           MS. DORN JONES:  Kids have to play.

6           COMMISSIONER GANT:  Where is the  
7  playground?

8           MS. DORN JONES:  We have a couple of  
9  things.  We are wealthy in South Broadway with parks  
10 within walking distance.  There is one two blocks  
11 south.  You don't even have to cross a major street.  
12 That's a pocket park.  You'll see on your map just  
13 west of that there is a huge soccer park, as well as  
14 the South Broadway Cultural Center and full library.  
15 There is another vest-pocket park that is two blocks  
16 from the South Broadway Cultural Center.  Again, the  
17 only street kids would have to cross is Broadway,  
18 and there's ways to get that done.  And then we also  
19 have, on the southern part of the neighborhood,  
20 probably about five blocks or so in the 1500 block  
21 of Walter, we have a three-block large park which is  
22 the Cesar Chavez Community Park and Center.

23           COMMISSIONER GANT:  And you're close to a  
24 school, too.

25           MS. DORN JONES:  And we're close to Eugene

1 Field Elementary School. And we also have a  
2 community garden. It's a residential lot that is  
3 catty-corner. Actually, it's owned by my family,  
4 but we have a public easement so the school uses it.  
5 And has been a community garden and open space for  
6 probably ten, fifteen years.

7 So we have a number of places where  
8 children can get out so they can have outdoor  
9 activity.

10 COMMISSIONER GANT: Okay. I -- because  
11 it's one of my buttons is that I see too many -- and  
12 this is my personal opinion, nobody else's -- you  
13 know, too many charters going into buildings that  
14 are not designed for schools, and they shouldn't  
15 even be in them. But that's the way life is. I  
16 think you've done your homework. Thank you.

17 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carr.

18 COMMISSIONER CARR: Yeah. Commissioner  
19 Gant made me -- on the playground, there's a lot  
20 of -- been a lot of -- I mean that, you know, that  
21 brought up a concern of mine in regards to safety  
22 and supervision in a public park, you know. I  
23 just -- I -- you know, I think that that's just  
24 something -- something definite -- you probably  
25 are -- I'm sure you're already much aware of that,

1 but just something to be aware of, please. If you  
2 get accepted, keep that in mind if you take them to  
3 a public park.

4 If you don't have fences and -- and you've  
5 got other people in the park at the same time  
6 because they have a right to be there, too, because  
7 it's a public park, you know, there could be a lot  
8 of issues around that.

9 MS. DORN JONES: Commissioner Carr, if I  
10 could just comment on that. We have thought about  
11 that, and we have a couple -- the garden as well as  
12 if you look at the map that Secretary Gant was  
13 looking at, you will see that we also have some land  
14 that surrounds the facility. It is sufficient space  
15 that children could have recess in without going off  
16 the facility's grounds, as well as the garden space,  
17 which is catty-corner to across the street.

18 So I would see them going to parks as  
19 field trips, quite frankly, where we take them in a  
20 supervised fashion, with the proper ratio of  
21 children-teacher, children-adult ratios.

22 COMMISSIONER CARR: Okay.

23 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Bergman.

24 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Thank you. I have  
25 a couple of things that I would like to address.

1 Excuse me. You specifically talk about the UNM  
2 Teacher Corps in your application. And I'm not  
3 familiar with that. Is that -- are they college  
4 students in the teacher program, or are these  
5 college professors that teach at UNM?

6 DR. KATIRA: These are actually teacher  
7 education students, and they're going to be  
8 connected to community schools projects all across  
9 Albuquerque. So it's a pilot project within the  
10 College of Education, you know, out of our office.  
11 And it works at trying to have teacher education  
12 transformed so that there's parental connection and  
13 community engagement all through their studies. So  
14 they receive service learning and service and  
15 community engagement education all through their  
16 years.

17 Their methods classes are designed so that  
18 they can work in a school like our charter school  
19 here to really infuse service learning, to connect  
20 to community-identified needs. And so these are the  
21 new generation of teachers that are coming out of  
22 UNM. And the first year of it is starting this  
23 year. And it's based on models all across the  
24 country, where they try to have teachers from early  
25 on connect to community-based projects like these

1 ones.

2 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: So, in essence,  
3 it's a form of student teaching, then?

4 DR. KATIRA: Uh-huh, yes.

5 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Which means they  
6 are not certified yet, though.

7 DR. KATIRA: No, they are not certified.

8 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: But you will have  
9 certified teachers on the premises.

10 DR. KATIRA: Certified teachers are the  
11 core. These are the ones coming in with additional  
12 expertise, additional resources, additional  
13 connections. Like every school has in-service  
14 teachers, but these ones are specifically for  
15 community-based organizations.

16 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And perhaps I  
17 missed it. But I wrote a note to myself. I saw no  
18 mention of transportation in the application. What  
19 are your plans for transportation of the students?

20 MS. DORN JONES: Well, I'm a kind of a  
21 mother hen. I don't like them to go too far from us  
22 because of their age. But United South Broadway,  
23 typically, we have budgeted into our budget have  
24 resources for transportation. We will not have  
25 buses at this point in time. We don't want to own a



1 fleet of buses. We think that's kind of a little  
2 bit beyond us at this point.

3 We do have a bus right now, like a  
4 15-passenger bus, that we can use for transporting  
5 kids to small -- to short distances. But beyond  
6 that, if we do field trips and other things, we will  
7 contract for that service.

8 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I meant on the  
9 transportation, how are they going to get to school  
10 and how are they going to get home?

11 MS. DORN JONES: We're hoping that most of  
12 our kids, even though they may come from other  
13 neighborhoods, some kids, their parents will provide  
14 transportation to school, like many elementary  
15 schools parents do today. Hopefully, we will have  
16 them within walking distance.

17 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I'm not sure how to  
18 word this. Last year we had an application from a  
19 community nonprofit similar to yours. I wish I  
20 could remember. All the staff was gone that was  
21 here with us last year. There was some concern  
22 raised about possible conflict of interests since a  
23 charter school has to be independent, stand-alone.  
24 And I wish I could remember how that was resolved,  
25 especially since we don't have legal representation

1 here today. But I had made a note about that. You  
2 have to be very careful in that area.

3 MS. DORN JONES: Well, we would address  
4 that through memorandums of understanding and  
5 memorandums of agreement. USBC is really clear that  
6 this -- that we are shepherding a school into  
7 existence and providing technical assistance for the  
8 support so that it will have its own legs. But it  
9 has its own governance. And we will operate as a  
10 support to that. But it is a -- it is -- it belongs  
11 to the community. It does not belong to the entity  
12 that has a separate board of directors.

13 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Great. Thanks very  
14 much.

15 MS. DORN JONES: You're welcome.

16 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Peralta.

17 COMMISSIONER PERALTA: Could you please  
18 talk about your -- a little bit about your Saturday  
19 program and what your students will be doing on that  
20 day, or what programs you have available to them?

21 MS. STEVENS-CORDOVA: The role of Saturday  
22 Academy is to expose students to applied education  
23 and learning, as well as to engage parents to come  
24 out and engage in activities with their children so  
25 they get the chance to learn math and science and

1 cooking and different activities and how they can  
2 also implement that in their home as well.

3 It's also to just give, like, a richness  
4 of how education is fun, how education is engaging,  
5 as well as to bring out the community and to just  
6 continue, so that, you know, working together to  
7 support our students, our children is -- is  
8 essential to their education.

9 DR. KATIRA: So an example of that might  
10 be architecture students coming during the Saturday  
11 Academy working with the children and exposing them  
12 to professions and ways of learning that they might  
13 not be exposed to. And that's something that has  
14 happened. We've had architecture students. We've  
15 had community and regional plannings, people with  
16 cooking expertise, exposing them to other worlds on  
17 Saturdays.

18 MS. STEVENS-CORDOVA: Also allowing them  
19 to -- that exposure, to plant a seed of career and  
20 college readiness and planting those seeds and  
21 watering those seeds and nurturing them to start  
22 thinking about what their pathway in the college  
23 world will be like.

24 MS. DORN JONES: I think that there is a  
25 way of collaborating with Eugene Field Elementary.

1 That's what we've done in the past. The Saturday  
2 Academy is the extension of our Community Schools  
3 After-School Program. And as they said, it's a way  
4 to engage the broader community. I'm not a parent.  
5 So if you say parents and teachers, then maybe I'm  
6 not invited. But the Saturday Academy is everybody  
7 can come that's in the community that's interested  
8 in fostering education for children. So we see it  
9 as an extension of that.

10 And also our collaboration, we don't want  
11 to just say Eugene Field is not a part of this  
12 anymore. We have the Francis Parish Book Bucks  
13 program there, and a bookstore domiciled in that  
14 school. We want to keep that there because we think  
15 it's important to connect -- all the kids in the  
16 neighborhood cannot attend this school, but they  
17 still know each other, and so they need places in  
18 which they can meet and gather and communicate and  
19 still have a sense of oneness and community. So  
20 we'll keep the Saturday Academy and keep Eugene  
21 Field in this program.

22 COMMISSIONER PERALTA: So this is  
23 something that's not mandatory as part of your  
24 school you're creating, anything like that?

25 MS. DORN JONES: No, it's not mandatory;

1 an enhancement, well-attended, though.

2 COMMISSIONER PERALTA: Thank you.

3 THE CHAIR: Are there any other questions  
4 by Commissioners? I can't hear myself anymore,  
5 which is probably a good thing.

6 I want to thank you all for presenting in  
7 front of us today. I know the application is a lot  
8 of hard work. And I want to just state my closing  
9 here, that any member of the public, including the  
10 applicant, may submit written input following this  
11 hearing. Please note that any written input must be  
12 received by Ms. Beverly Friedman, Public Information  
13 Officer, by no later than close of business on the  
14 third business day following the hearing on the  
15 application that anyone wishes to comment on. There  
16 is contact information for Ms. Friedman at the  
17 sign-in table.

18 And our next -- our next school is going  
19 to be presenting at 1:00 p.m. So I'm going to call  
20 a recess, and we will be back here at 1:00 p.m.  
21 Thank you.

22 (Proceedings in recess at 10:57 a.m.)

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, CCR #219,  
Certified Court Reporter in the State of New Mexico,  
do hereby certify that the foregoing pages constitute  
a true transcript of proceedings had before the said  
NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION, held in the  
State of New Mexico, County of Bernalillo, in the  
matter therein stated.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my  
hand on August 21, 2011.

-----  
Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219  
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201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630  
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