

BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
COMMUNITY INPUT HEARINGS

July 20, 2017

9:04 a.m.

ALBUQUERQUE COLLEGIATE CHARTER SCHOOL

ALTURA PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce

115 Gold Avenue, Southwest

Albuquerque, New Mexico

REPORTED BY: Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219

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1 APPEARANCES
 2 COMMISSIONERS:
 3 MS. PATRICIA GIPSON, Chair
 MR. GILBERT PERALTA, Vice Chair
 4 MS. KARYL ANN ARMBRUSTER, Secretary
 MR. R. CARLOS CABALLERO, Commissioner
 5 MR. TIM CRONE, Commissioner
 MS. DANIELLE JOHNSTON, Commissioner
 6 MS. TRISH RUIZ, Commissioner
 MS. CARMIE TOULOUSE, Commissioner
 7
 STAFF:
 8
 MS. KATIE POULOS, Director, Options for Parents
 & Families
 9
 MS. BEVERLY FRIEDMAN, Custodian of Records,
 10 PED Liaison to the PEC
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1 THE CHAIR: So I'm going to bring to order
 2 this meeting of the Public Education Commission,
 3 which is being held for the Community Input
 4 Hearings.
 5 It is Thursday, July 20th, 2017, and it is
 6 about 9:04 a.m. I will ask Commissioner Armbruster
 7 to do a roll-call vote, please.
 8 (A discussion was held off the record.)
 9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: You have to be
 10 flexible, or you can't be here or here.
 11 Commissioner Toulouse?
 12 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Present.
 13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 14 Ruiz?
 15 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Here.
 16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 17 Caballero is not here yet. Right?
 18 Commissioner Peralta?
 19 COMMISSIONER PERALTA: Here.
 20 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 21 Gipson?
 22 THE CHAIR: Here.
 23 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 24 Armbruster is here.
 25 Commissioner Johnston?

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1 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Is present.
 2 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 3 Conyers is absent.
 4 And Commissioner Crone?
 5 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Here.
 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: So we are all
 7 here, and we won't be voting anyway.
 8 THE CHAIR: So it doesn't matter. But we
 9 have a quorum to have the meeting, which --
 10 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Well, we don't
 11 need a quorum for this meeting.
 12 THE CHAIR: We don't need a quorum; but we
 13 have a quorum anyway. So we're good.
 14 We are going to move on to the Pledge of
 15 Allegiance and the Salute to the New Mexico flag.
 16 Commissioner Johnston -- yes, and these are them.
 17 (Indicates.)
 18 If you will lead us in the Pledge, and
 19 Commissioner Crone will lead us in the New Mexico
 20 Salute.
 21 (Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to
 22 the New Mexico Flag conducted.)
 23 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And the first
 24 school that we have up is the Albuquerque Collegiate
 25 Charter School. And I just have a short little

<p>Page 6</p> <p>1 script to read. 2 So -- this meeting is being conducted 3 pursuant to New Mexico Statutes Annotated, Title 22, 4 Section 8B-6J, 2009. 5 The purpose of these Community Input 6 Hearings that will be held on July 20th, 2017, is to 7 obtain information from the applicants and to 8 receive community input to assist the Public 9 Education Commission in its decision whether to 10 grant the proposed charter applications. 11 According to this section of the law, the 12 Commission may appoint a subcommittee of no fewer 13 than three members to hold a public hearing. 14 According to the law, these hearings are 15 being transcribed by a professional court reporter. 16 The total time allocated to each 17 application is 90 minutes, which will be timed to 18 ensure an opportunity to present applications. 19 And, Beverly has the little paddles. 20 She'll just tell me, and I'll tell you. That's -- 21 and playing telephone, it'll get messed up, okay? 22 During the hearing, the Commission will 23 allow for community input about the charter 24 application. The time for public comments will be 25 limited to 20 minutes.</p>	<p>Page 8</p> <p>1 in the 20 minutes. 2 Following the applicant's presentation, 3 the local school district representatives, which 4 includes the superintendent, administrators, and 5 board members, will be given 10 minutes to comment. 6 Subsequently, the Commission will allow 7 20 minutes for Public Comment, as described above. 8 Finally, the Commission will be given 9 40 minutes to ask questions of the applicant. And 10 we reserve the right to go beyond that 40 minutes; 11 just so -- 12 Commissioners, are we ready to proceed? 13 Okay. Albuquerque Collegiate Charter 14 School is already here. And if you would, for the 15 record, please state the name of your school, the 16 names of the founders of the school, and any other 17 person who is here today to be included in this 18 20-minute segment. 19 MS. JADE RIVERA: Madam Chair and 20 Commissioners, the name of this school is 21 Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School. My name is 22 Jade Rivera. 23 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: My name is Scott 24 Hughes, and I am the proposed board chair. 25 MR. TOMÁS GARCIA: My name is Tomás</p>
<p>Page 7</p> <p>1 If you wish to speak regarding the 2 application, please sign in at least 15 minutes 3 before the applicant's presentation. 4 And if anyone didn't see them, they're out 5 in the hallway. 6 Please be sure that you indicate on the 7 sign-up sheet whether you are here in opposition or 8 support of the charter school. 9 The Commission Chair, based on the number 10 of requests to comment, will allocate time to those 11 wishing to speak. If there are a large number of 12 supporters or opponents, they are asked to select a 13 speaker to represent common opinions. We will try 14 to allocate an equitable amount of time to represent 15 the community accurately. 16 The Commission will follow this process 17 for each Community Input Hearing: 18 The Commission will ask each applicant, or 19 group, to present at the table in front. They will 20 be given 20 minutes to present their application in 21 the manner they deem appropriate. The Commission 22 will not accept any written documentation from the 23 applicant; but the applicant may use exhibits to 24 describe their school, if necessary. However, the 25 set time for exhibits, et cetera, will be included</p>	<p>Page 9</p> <p>1 Garcia. I am the proposed board vice chair. 2 MS. BEVERLY CRUZ: My name is Beverly 3 Cruz, and I'm a proposed board member. 4 MR. JOSHUA GALLEGOS: Good morning. My 5 name is Joshua Gallegos, and I'm a proposed Board 6 secretary. 7 MS. KATIE RARICK: Hello. My name is 8 Katie Rarick, and I'm the proposed treasurer. 9 MS. CYNTHIA AL-AGHBARY: My name is 10 Cynthia Al-Aghbary, and I'm a proposed board member, 11 MS. ROSA PYNES: Hi. My name is Rosa 12 Pynes, and I am a proposed board member, as well. 13 THE CHAIR: Thanks. 14 Okay. You may begin. 15 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, Madam Chair 16 and Commissioners, for having us here this morning. 17 Again, my name is Jade Rivera. Again, I'm 18 the lead founder for the Albuquerque Collegiate 19 Founding Team. We're excited today to tell you a 20 bit more about our charter application, answer any 21 questions you may have, and share, along with 22 members of the community, why we believe it is truly 23 critical for Albuquerque Collegiate to be 24 established and exist here in the Greater Downtown 25 area.</p>

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1 With that, I will defer to members of the
2 founding team for introductions.

3 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: Okay. Good morning,
4 Madam Chair and members of the Commission. My name
5 is Scott Hughes, as I stated earlier. And as the
6 proposed board chair of the Albuquerque Collegiate
7 team, I want to go ahead and express my appreciation
8 for the Commission's willingness to hear our
9 petition.

10 I am committed to the promise that
11 Albuquerque Collegiate has laid out in its
12 application to you to go ahead and provide a new
13 elementary charter school in the Albuquerque area,
14 especially the 87108 area.

15 MS. JADE RIVERA: -102.

16 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: 87102. And I bring
17 nearly -- over 16 years' worth of experience to the
18 founding board in areas of education policy,
19 finance, and research that go back to my time as a
20 Staff Analyst for the Legislative Education Study
21 Committee. I served as the Director for the Office
22 of Education Accountability when it was still in
23 existence at the Department of Finance and
24 Administration. And for the past six-and-a-half
25 years, I've been faculty and staff at the University

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1 far from Downtown in the South Valley, came from a
2 family that was very committed to promoting
3 education and making sure that my sister and I had
4 every opportunity available to us.

5 I came to the experience seeing my family
6 sacrifice tremendously to be able to make
7 educational opportunities available for us. And I
8 saw the frustration that my family had in dealing
9 with limited public education options that were
10 available to them at the time.

11 And so for me, this -- the mission of the
12 school is something that's very personal to me, to
13 see a school that sets high objectives and high
14 goals for its students to be another alternative
15 option for families in this community.

16 I moved away from New Mexico but found my
17 way back here after nine years away. This is --
18 this is my home. Downtown, in particular, is the
19 neighborhood that I currently live, the Sawmill
20 Neighborhood, which is just adjacent to Downtown.
21 But I work Downtown, and this is a community I care
22 a great deal about, and I'm interested in seeing the
23 vitality of this neighborhood maintain its -- I'm
24 interested in seeing this neighborhood maintain its
25 vitality. And I believe that that very much begins

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1 of New Mexico Center for Education Policy Research.

2 I'm really excited at the prospect of the
3 Commission awarding us a charter, being able to go
4 ahead and open the school, and serving the -- the
5 families of the -- the Greater Downtown Core area of
6 Albuquerque. And I look forward to having this
7 opportunity.

8 And I want to go ahead and close out by
9 stating that I think I speak on behalf of all
10 members of the board that our goal is nothing less
11 than being able to help Albuquerque Collegiate
12 achieve recognition as the highest performing
13 elementary charter school in the State of New
14 Mexico.

15 MR. TOMÁS GARCIA: Good morning,
16 Madam Chair and Commission. Thank you again for
17 having us here today and for hearing our
18 presentation on Albuquerque Collegiate Charter
19 School.

20 Once again, my name is Tomás Garcia, and
21 I'm the proposed vice chair for the board. I'm very
22 excited to be here today to represent the school, to
23 tell you about the school.

24 I am a Native New Mexican, having been
25 born and raised here in Albuquerque. I grew up not

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1 with strong educational options for -- for families
2 and for students in this area.

3 I'm an attorney here in Albuquerque. I
4 work at the Modrall Sperlberg Law Firm. I bring to
5 this board experience and background in the law from
6 my perspective as a litigator; but I also have
7 experience, having served on the Board of Trustees
8 for Menaul School, which is an independent, private
9 school in Albuquerque. So I have prior board
10 experience.

11 I bring with me the legal background and
12 expertise to contribute to this board. And I very
13 much look forward to continuing to serve this board
14 and to make our case to you today.

15 MS. BEVERLY CRUZ: Good morning,
16 Madam Chair, members of the Commission. Thank you
17 for the opportunity to be here with you guys today.
18 Appreciate it very much.

19 My name is Beverly Cruz. And in my
20 professional capacity, I serve as the Senior
21 Vice President for the Albuquerque Chamber of
22 Commerce. My work at the Chamber gives me great
23 insight into the challenges that our workforce face
24 now and will face in the future.

25 Today, I enjoy a wonderful career; but it

1 wasn't necessarily the path that was set for me
2 earlier in my childhood.

3 Outside of the walls of my home, education
4 was not necessarily something that was encouraged.
5 Growing up, I attended school just north of
6 Albuquerque, in a district that today has all
7 D-rated schools. I suspect that had schools been
8 rated, when I attended, it would have been the same
9 or worse.

10 All schools, elementary through high
11 school, in that district are D-rated. And that's
12 not unlike what children in the 87102 ZIP code
13 experience. We have the opportunity to provide
14 these families with options. And I believe that
15 Albuquerque Collegiate will fill a void that exists
16 in this district right now.

17 Students who attend Albuquerque Collegiate
18 will be expected to achieve very high goals; but
19 they will be supported along the way, as well. The
20 experience that they will receive at Albuquerque
21 Collegiate will be life-changing. It won't be an
22 issue of luck for them. Their path will be
23 structured; their expectations will be high. And,
24 again, they will be supported.

25 This is a model, upon learning about

1 name is Joshua Gallegos, and I currently serve the
2 University of New Mexico as a Senior Academic
3 Adviser for the Anderson School of Management, and
4 am the proposed board secretary for Albuquerque
5 Collegiate Charter School.

6 I've been a part of the Albuquerque
7 community for about ten years and served the
8 University of New Mexico in academic advisement,
9 mentoring for five years, and I do consider this my
10 home. I've worked across colleges, and despite the
11 discipline, many first-generation students enter the
12 university with challenges in reading comprehension
13 and math, and, most often, have to take remedial or
14 foundational courses.

15 I grew up originally in Grants,
16 New Mexico, and I did experience educational
17 inequity, and saw that in my community as a child.
18 Personally, I was fortunate to have the opportunity
19 to attend a small parochial school on a sponsorship
20 from the community, and there was a heavy emphasis
21 on reading and education.

22 And so I'm thankful and attribute my
23 personal success as a first-generation college
24 student to that desire and love for education from
25 kindergarten and a desire to read and be involved

1 Albuquerque Collegiate, that I subscribe to wholly
2 and I believe is necessary and needed in the 87102
3 ZIP code.

4 I have a very personal and vested interest
5 in seeing students in this community succeed. I am
6 an Albuquerque Native, born and raised right outside
7 of the city. Grew up in New Mexico. The children
8 of New Mexico can achieve great things if we provide
9 them with the opportunities to do so.

10 My work at the Chamber, in addition to
11 allowing me great insight into the current and
12 future challenges of the workforce, has well
13 prepared me to be a part of the governing board of
14 this school. I have had the opportunity to manage
15 this organization, to oversee all areas of
16 programming and finance for the organization. And I
17 am excited to be here to be part of this founding
18 team, wholly believe in the model and the mission of
19 Albuquerque Collegiate, and it is a great pleasure
20 to be before you today encouraging you to also --
21 to -- to be a part -- or allow us to be a part of
22 this opportunity.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. JOSHUA GALLEGOS: Good morning,
25 Madam Chair and Commission. Thank you again. My

1 from the beginning. And so having the opportunity
2 to work with this group of individuals from the
3 greater community, from very different backgrounds,
4 but with that common goal that we can effect a
5 positive change for our children. And it starts at
6 day one in kindergarten and can lead on if those
7 children do choose to attend college later.

8 So I'm very thankful to be here and very
9 happy.

10 MS. KATIE RARICK: Good morning,
11 Madam Chair and Commission. My name is Katie
12 Rarick. I am currently the proposed treasurer for
13 Albuquerque Collegiate. I currently manage a
14 finance team for a large nonprofit, education
15 nonprofit. I've been in public education for over
16 ten years.

17 And not only I have been working in public
18 education for over ten years, I am born and raised
19 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I graduated from
20 Manzano High School, attended University of New
21 Mexico, and also, my family has -- has also worked
22 in education in the state for many years, including
23 my grandfather being the Assistant Superintendent of
24 APS in the '70s and '80s.

25 So public education is very important to

1 myself and my family, and I see this, being on this
2 board, as an extension of that work that my family
3 has been doing in Albuquerque for so long. And I
4 get to bring my finance expertise, after working in
5 the nonprofit setting for so long, to the board.

6 I come to you not only as an educator, but
7 also a parent. I have two young children who will
8 be attending APS, who will be attending a public
9 school, in the near future. And so to -- I think
10 it's incredibly important that my children have the
11 opportunity to achieve an excellent education. And
12 I know other parents do, too.

13 And that's -- and I know Albuquerque
14 Collegiate will be providing that excellent
15 education to all our students. And that's why I
16 find it -- that's why I feel it's incredibly
17 important to be part of this school, and I hope you
18 agree with us.

19 MS. CYNTHIA AL-AGHBARY: Good morning,
20 Madam Chair, Commission. My name is Cynthia
21 Al-Aghbary, and I'm a Master's-prepared Community
22 Health Nurse. I'm going to date myself. I have
23 worked as a nurse in New Mexico for 35 years, and I
24 have worked in different areas of New Mexico:
25 Gallup, Navajo Nation, Pueblo of Zuni, Acoma,

1 Laguna, San Felipe, and Jemez. And I've worked in
2 Albuquerque specifically for the last 23 years.

3 As a Community Health Nurse, I identified
4 quite a few years ago that health literacy was a
5 significant issue for our population here in
6 New Mexico. I'm currently the Executive Director of
7 Government Programs, Clinical Operations for Blue
8 Cross Blue Shield in New Mexico, which has -- I've
9 been fortunate to be able to start health literacy
10 programs and social community care programs; because
11 education really, truly is a social determinant of
12 health. And if people can't read and do
13 mathematics, it's very hard to understand their
14 doctors' instructions and take prescriptions
15 appropriately.

16 My personal experience, when I lived in
17 the Pueblo of Zuni, I was actually working Community
18 Health at the time, but was approached by the
19 University of New Mexico to teach CNA courses there.
20 And the reason was because the people that applied
21 and tried to get through nursing school at UNM at
22 that point in time could not manage to get through
23 nursing school, because they really did start out
24 school as non-English-speaking students in
25 kindergarten. And education is a challenge in such

1 an isolated rural community.

2 So we thought if we could get them through
3 the CNA program, that maybe they'd have a better
4 shot at nursing school. So I've had personal
5 experience in teaching in areas where students
6 started at a disadvantage early on in their
7 educational career.

8 So I'm really dedicated for this school to
9 start in the 87102 district, because the students
10 there are facing similar challenges. Thank you.

11 MS. ROSA PYNES: Hi, Madam Chair and the
12 rest of the Commission -- Committee. Thank you so
13 much for having us today.

14 My name is Rosa Pynes, and as I stated
15 earlier, I am a proposed board member. I've spent
16 my professional career advocating for educational
17 equity. I started as a bilingual teacher, teaching
18 fourth and fifth grade in math and science in
19 Dallas, Texas. After that, I led all Early
20 Childhood initiatives in Dallas Independent School
21 District.

22 And last year, I moved back to my home
23 state, New Mexico. I grew up in Grants, New Mexico.
24 Josh and I go way back. And, yeah, now I will be
25 taking on a new role with new classrooms, where I

1 will get to work with schools in New Mexico to help
2 them enhance their math curriculum.

3 I've always prioritized high quality
4 education. I believe that setting high standards
5 and expectations for students result in success for
6 all students. And I am very passionate about the
7 schools -- the school's mission statement, because I
8 really do think it is clear, and it really sets us
9 to where we want to go.

10 I think it is time to reimagine education
11 here in New Mexico, and I think our school does just
12 that. We are taking an innovative approach that,
13 you know, is really providing students to reach new
14 heights they never imaged.

15 So thank you so much for having us here
16 today, and I look forward to answering the rest of
17 your questions.

18 MS. JADE RIVERA: Madam Chair and
19 Commissioners, as I stated, my name is Jade Rivera.
20 I'm a lifelong New Mexican and come from generations
21 of New Mexicans before we were even a state.
22 Following graduation at the University of New Mexico
23 I taught in a low-income school. I taught
24 mathematics and special education.

25 During that same time, I received a

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1 Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction
 2 Education. For the past few years, I've been
 3 working in education policy here in New Mexico to
 4 impact changes for our students right here.
 5 Growing up, I was raised by a single
 6 mother here in the Downtown area. My mother
 7 continually fought for me to have strong educational
 8 options, even if that meant sending me to schools
 9 outside of my zoned area, because many of those
 10 schools were historically underperforming and often
 11 viewed as unsafe.
 12 Families should not have to make that
 13 choice in this area or any area. Quality options
 14 should be readily available to families, regardless
 15 of ZIP code.
 16 Here in the 87102 ZIP code, this is home
 17 to some of our city's oldest neighborhoods,
 18 including Martineztown, Barelás, San Jose, South
 19 Broadway, and Wells Park, where I grew up. It is
 20 the most impoverished ZIP code of the 17 that exist
 21 here in the city. There are zero A-rated schools in
 22 this ZIP code.
 23 For comparison, 87122, which is the most
 24 affluent ZIP code in the city has all A-rated
 25 schools. And that's wonderful for that community.

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1 That shouldn't be an issue because of circumstance
 2 for families where children grow up.
 3 We know that children in this area,
 4 currently 20.5 percent of elementary students in
 5 this area are proficient in math -- in reading;
 6 19.3 percent of them are proficient in math. We
 7 know that the odds are stacked against children in
 8 this community. And Albuquerque Collegiate is
 9 committed to changing that narrative and reimagining
 10 what education can look like here in Albuquerque for
 11 the families of Downtown and the Greater Albuquerque
 12 area.
 13 We have provided to you all an application
 14 and a school design that prioritizes different
 15 innovative and exciting, what we believe, components
 16 of our design that will really set us apart,
 17 including an expanded focus on literacy and
 18 mathematics, an extended school year and school day,
 19 a two-teacher model in all of our
 20 kindergarten-through-second-grade classrooms, as
 21 well as a comprehensive coaching and professional
 22 development program for staff.
 23 And these unique components will really
 24 build out the essential design elements of
 25 Albuquerque Collegiate and ensure success for our

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1 school and future students.
 2 If I may, can I ask members of the
 3 community that are here today to stand, or indicate
 4 in some other way, their support, if they are here
 5 in support for Albuquerque Collegiate?
 6 (People stand and/or indicate.)
 7 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, all.
 8 We have worked tirelessly over the last
 9 nine months to communicate with members of the
 10 community about the design of our school, to get
 11 their feedback, to ensure that this is something
 12 that our community wants, because we know deeply
 13 that it is something our community needs.
 14 We have worked with nonprofit
 15 organizations, collaborated with different community
 16 organizations to really be able to get this school
 17 off the ground and provide our community with --
 18 with something strong.
 19 As many of the attendees, their shirts
 20 say, "Quality Schools Equal Thriving Communities,"
 21 and we deeply believe that.
 22 Albuquerque Collegiate is a school that is
 23 not only designed for a community, but for our
 24 community. And we are excited to be here today and
 25 answer any questions that you may have.

Page 25

1 Thank you.
 2 THE CHAIR: You've got 30 seconds, I
 3 think.
 4 Thank you.
 5 While we're doing this, do we have anyone
 6 here from the local school district that is wishing
 7 to speak? Speak now, or forever hold your peace.
 8 Okay.
 9 So we have 33 people that have signed up
 10 for public comment for 20 minutes. So I'll ask
 11 first if there's anyone on this list that wants to
 12 coordinate their efforts with someone else on the
 13 list, so that there's maybe a better use of time.
 14 If not, we'll start, and when the
 15 20 minutes is up, the 20 minutes is up. So you can
 16 blame the person in front of you if you don't get a
 17 chance to -- to speak.
 18 And looking at this, I think handwriting
 19 should be a key component --
 20 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: We will be introducing
 21 cursive.
 22 THE CHAIR: I'm telling you that right
 23 now. And this is the pot calling the kettle black;
 24 because my handwriting is awful.
 25 So, please, don't -- don't be offended.

1 And the first one on the list is Amber
2 Shiel.

3 FROM THE FLOOR: I don't think I was going
4 to say anything; but I support the school.

5 THE CHAIR: Oh, I'm sorry. You know what?
6 Beverly, this says "Visitors." Do we have a
7 separate one for speaking? We don't.

8 FROM THE FLOOR: It just says "yes" or
9 "no."

10 THE CHAIR: Duh. I'm sorry. Got you, got
11 you. Sorry, sorry. I wasn't -- I didn't even go
12 that far. I just assumed everyone -- so I feel
13 better now.

14 Okay. So I guess I'm going to have to
15 ask, the people who didn't fill in the "yes" or
16 "no" --

17 MS. POULOS: It was supposed to be "yes"
18 or blank. That's why we gave the example of "yes"
19 or blank.

20 THE CHAIR: If they didn't fill in "yes"
21 or "no," I don't know whether they want to speak or
22 not.

23 MS. POULOS: The blank should be a "no."
24 Those were the instructions. So only "yeses."

25 THE CHAIR: So now we only have eight

1 dedicated to public education in the State of New
2 Mexico, born and raised. I have seven English --
3 seven -- seven public education teachers in my
4 family; so -- in New Mexico.

5 With that said, I think that Albuquerque
6 Collegiate is so imperative to our state. A couple
7 of reasons: I do think that smaller classroom size
8 do make a difference. Coming from a family of
9 teachers, that connection with one-on-one
10 interaction with students does make a difference, as
11 well as the longer school years. I do think that
12 that is also very important.

13 The summer is a time for students to be
14 able to go and have a break; but they also lose a
15 lot of the knowledge that they garnered within the
16 year of school. So I think with that extra time for
17 longer class days, longer school years, we'll be
18 able to help them retain that information and move
19 forward, hopefully, towards a more successful
20 future.

21 But I just wanted to be brief, tell you
22 that I am in support of this, and I hope that we can
23 see this project move forward. Thank you.

24 THE CHAIR: Thank you. So the next is
25 Seth.

1 people that want to speak; so you have about two
2 minutes apiece, roughly. So can we -- we'll do,
3 like, two, and we'll have four minutes left; so if
4 someone wants to add, they can. Okay?

5 MS. FRIEDMAN: Okay.

6 THE CHAIR: We'll do that. So this is
7 going to be harder. Jenna Hagan --

8 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: Madam Chair, I was just
9 going to ask, do you want us to leave the table so
10 they can come to the front, or --

11 THE CHAIR: It would probabl- -- well, if
12 they want to just come to the front to the side
13 there, as long as Cindy can hear.

14 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Why don't you read
15 off the names and have them line up?

16 THE CHAIR: So -- I hate to have them
17 standing there.

18 The second and third is Seth, and then
19 Susan Estrada. So is this Jenna?

20 FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah, hi. Okay. I'll be
21 brief. My name is Jenna Hagengruber. I graduated
22 from the University of New Mexico in 2016 with an
23 English and philosophy double major. I just got
24 back from my year in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a
25 Fulbright English teacher five days ago. I'm very

1 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi, I'm Seth.

2 THE CHAIR: Would you please spell your
3 last name?

4 FROM THE FLOOR: S-A-A-V-E-D-R-A.

5 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

6 FROM THE FLOOR: I come to you as a
7 lifelong Albuquerque resident, having gone to APS
8 schools, graduated from UNM, and having left for
9 about ten years, including teaching and working in
10 education. And I also come to you as someone whose
11 mom used a fake address so that I could go to the
12 school that she wanted me to go to, and who rode
13 city school buses to get to that school, starting in
14 fifth grade.

15 So for me, our parents should have the
16 options to send their kids to the school that they
17 would like and not have the ZIP code that you're
18 born into be the destiny, which is not what my mom
19 wanted for me. I think she has the right to choose
20 that.

21 That is a large part of why I stand here
22 in support of Albuquerque Collegiate, for the
23 parents here and the neighborhood that I live in
24 just about a quarter of a mile north from here; more
25 broadly, that Albuquerque parents have the choices

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p> <p>1 to send their kids to the school that will educate 2 their child best, prepare them for the life they 3 want to lead, have the options that they would like. 4 And so as a lifelong education advocate 5 and someone who's here for good, I really hope that 6 I'm able to walk past Albuquerque Collegiate here in 7 a few years and stop in and teach and be a volunteer 8 there. 9 Thank you for the opportunity to speak. 10 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 11 Susan Estrada? 12 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. Good morning. It's 13 nice to see you all. I'm representing myself as an 14 indigenous educator. I taught fifth grade in 15 Gallup, New Mexico, for two years. And I'm also 16 representing Teach for America, because I'm on staff 17 with them, and I was a Teach for America educator 18 while I was in the classroom. And I'm representing, 19 or speaking on behalf with all these experiences, 20 in, one as a Board member for Six Directions 21 Indigenous School, for my experiences coming from 22 that arena. 23 And the thing that I think I'm most 24 excited about with Albuquerque Collegiate is that 25 they have unnegotiable [verbatim] high expectations</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p> <p>1 And the thing I'm most excited about is 2 the collaborative environment that it creates. 3 There are a couple of educators in the room today 4 who made impacts on students that I worked with when 5 I was in the classroom. And I would have loved an 6 opportunity to innovate with them. I love that 7 that's part of the model. 8 Thank you for the opportunity to speak. 9 THE CHAIR: I panicked for a second. I 10 thought Six Directions? What are they doing here 11 today? Thank you. 12 Next on the list is Marianne Billy? 13 FROM THE FLOOR: Sorry. I'm in the back. 14 THE CHAIR: That's okay. It doesn't take 15 off your time. 16 And then next will be Samira -- is it 17 "Samira"? 18 FROM THE FLOOR: Well, good morning, 19 everyone. I just come, and I stand in support of 20 the Academy and what they're planning to do here. 21 I'm a proponent of school choice and a proponent of 22 Options for Parents, good options, and classic and 23 alternative kind of options. 24 I think from a -- a practical standpoint, 25 I was back there thinking, what -- what would life</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p> <p>1 for their students, regardless of their background. 2 They're interested in serving our most vulnerable 3 students in a way that I want to stand with, in 4 general, as a person. 5 And I think, on behalf of Teach for 6 America, we're really proud of the leadership that 7 they're showing, because we have some Teach for 8 America alum on the Board, and Jade is a Teach for 9 America alum that we're also really proud of. But I 10 think that they show what can be possible with 11 leadership in the area. 12 Teach for America is recruiting leaders 13 from here. We have a group of teachers that are 14 coming in, our group of 25, that are from Shiprock; 15 some are from Albuquerque. We also have some coming 16 from around the United States. They have an 17 experience in the classroom, where they see the 18 barriers that students face and that families face 19 and that communities really face in meeting those 20 students' needs, and then they want to do something 21 about it. 22 And I think the Collegiate Academy gives 23 them an opportunity to do that, that will captivate 24 their minds and give them an outlet for all of that 25 energy and excitement.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p> <p>1 look like if we had to only choose the restaurant 2 that is closest to our home? That's what I was 3 thinking about -- I've got some McDonald's-es; I've 4 got a wing place -- and that was my option for the 5 rest of my life. 6 And so -- so we benefit from options just 7 in a daily life. Just as we go through normal life, 8 we benefit from it. And we all benefit as a 9 community, as from the infusion of new ideas and 10 fresh ideas. And when things become stagnant, we 11 need to liven them up again. 12 So that's what I believe charter schools 13 and alternative private public schools can do as a 14 community. We can come in and support each other 15 and do that. And I think we all stand behind our 16 children, realizing that there's a high need out 17 there. 18 Our adult population hovers around a 19 50 percent illiteracy rate. They can't read at a 20 Level 2 rate. They can't go into a normal 21 entry-level job and function to -- and be successful 22 and move up the ladder. 23 We can't -- there's -- it's just not 24 possible. APD can't hire people to pass an 25 eighth-grade written exam, because our -- it's not</p>

1 for lack of applications or applicants; we can't
2 find people that will pass the test.

3 So these are all things that affect us at
4 large as a community and things that I believe we
5 can stand behind and get behind. So thank you for
6 coming. And we support Albuquerque Collegiate.

7 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Samira.

8 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. I'm Samira
9 Al-Aghbary. Okay. A-L dash A-G-H-B-A-R-Y.

10 So my name is Samira Al-Aghbary. I am in
11 my third year of college. It's super-fun. I'm
12 going into international studies, and, honestly, I
13 feel like everyone should have a option to go to
14 college. And I believe that a solid foundation in
15 early education, especially on those grades, is
16 important to start a future for that drive to go to
17 college and to continue school.

18 And I feel as if that the charter school
19 that we're all here supporting can definitely add
20 that oomph to the education that we need in
21 Albuquerque.

22 I'm born and raised in Albuquerque. And I
23 went to Montezuma Elementary School, as well as
24 Chaparral Elementary School, which are both public
25 schools. And both of the big serious problems when

1 just hired a new information officer where I work,
2 at Central New Mexico Community College. And one of
3 the most important things to him was where are his
4 children going to go to school when he takes a job
5 here. And, fortunately, you know, he has a lot of
6 different options for his kids because of his income
7 and his mobility.

8 And I think that should be offered to all
9 children here in Albuquerque. So thank you very
10 much.

11 THE CHAIR: David -- Mantes [ph], perhaps?
12 Montes [ph]? I'm not sure.

13 Okay. Oh. Got you. Here he is.

14 FROM THE FLOOR: Apologize for that.
15 Well, my name is David Montes, and I'm the
16 New Mexico Field Director for the LIBRE Initiative.
17 We're a nonprofit organization dedicated to economic
18 prosperity, and, especially in the case of
19 New Mexico, education.

20 So basically, we believe that freedom
21 drives progress; so the more options, the more
22 choices available to parents and children for how
23 they're going to be educated and all that. Well, we
24 believe that that's their right, and we believe that
25 from an economic standpoint, the competition

1 I was attending there was the classroom size. It
2 was getting very bad, that they had to collab
3 [verbatim], you know, grades together. So I was in
4 a second-and-third-grade class, as well as a
5 fourth-and-fifth-grade class.

6 And I believe that a small classroom can
7 really help students get the attention and help that
8 they need in the early start of school.

9 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much. And,
10 finally, we will have Phillip, David, and Alex.
11 Phillip Bustos, I think it is.

12 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes. Thank you,
13 Madam Chair and Commissioners. My name is Phillip
14 Bustos, and I'm currently the Chair of the
15 Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce Education
16 Committee. So I am here to speak on behalf of the
17 Education Committee in support of Albuquerque
18 Collegiate.

19 We feel that's -- it would be situated in
20 one of the best places in Albuquerque and certainly
21 serve the constituents of the Chamber in this area.

22 We also believe in the concept behind it.
23 And think it's a very necessary option for
24 individuals coming to Albuquerque to have.

25 If I may offer just a quick anecdote, we

1 increases the quality.

2 And having a monopoly that is more
3 restrictive on choice and restrictive in the
4 different methods and means of being able to
5 educate, we feel puts -- puts any -- any district,
6 any state, at a disadvantage.

7 And I think that we've seen through, of
8 course, in the past, and up to recently, the
9 education -- basically, what we're getting out of
10 the investment that we put into it could be improved
11 drastically.

12 And so we're in support of choice; and so
13 we're in support of this Albuquerque Collegiate
14 being, you know, given as an option to the parents
15 in the community as a choice. So thank you for your
16 time.

17 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And then Alex and
18 then Scott.

19 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello, everybody. My
20 name is Alexander Mick. And I don't really have any
21 credentials like everybody else. But I do have a
22 strong opinion. And I really genuinely feel that
23 having a strong education and a really good
24 education at a young age is very, very important.

25 A lot of people now -- you guys would

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1 know; everybody would know -- that a lot of
 2 education nowadays is very fast-paced. They just
 3 kind of throw you out the door; you know what I
 4 mean. And I feel like it's really important to have
 5 something like this, another option to have a better
 6 education and for everyone to have a better
 7 education, not just the few and the far between.
 8 And that's all I have to say.
 9 THE CHAIR: Thank you.
 10 FROM THE FLOOR: It's going to be hard to
 11 follow Alexander.
 12 THE CHAIR: You're going to have to come
 13 up with some credentials.
 14 FROM THE FLOOR: I don't have many of
 15 them. Sorry. My name is Scott Hindman -- Madam
 16 Commissioner, members of the Commission, my name is
 17 Scott Hindman. I'm the Executive Director of
 18 Excellent Schools New Mexico. We are an
 19 Albuquerque-based nonprofit that provides grants to
 20 help struggling schools.
 21 I want to talk about why we're supporting
 22 Albuquerque Collegiate both from a leadership
 23 perspective and from a program perspective, which I
 24 think is really important.
 25 So I moved here about 18 months ago with

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1 my girlfriend, Meaghan, who is a Native New Mexican,
 2 lifelong educator. You'll actually hear from her
 3 later today; she's part of the Altura Prep team,
 4 which we're really excited about.
 5 And we came back because we hear this
 6 scenario all the time about young people who were
 7 born here and raised here, got educated, left, and
 8 never came back. And the two of us have been
 9 fortunate to be educated in some of the best schools
 10 in the world and worked for some amazing
 11 organizations. And we finally, one day, said,
 12 "We've got to put our money where our mouth is and
 13 actually do something about this."
 14 What gets me really excited about this
 15 team -- and you heard from their board -- is they
 16 have four board members -- maybe even more, this is
 17 really what I've caught -- who were born here,
 18 raised here, left, got Master's degrees, went to
 19 Ivy League schools, and came back and decided to get
 20 behind this effort. That's something that's really
 21 exciting to us.
 22 Second, I'll talk about the programs.
 23 Before I moved here, I was in Memphis, Tennessee.
 24 We saw very -- schools with a similar model and a
 25 similar type of training program. There are several

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1 of those in Memphis. They all operate in South
 2 Memphis, which is probably 100 percent -- 99 percent
 3 African-American and 99 percent Title I area. And
 4 charter schools there are actually authorized by the
 5 district.
 6 These schools are the highest performing
 7 schools in the City of Memphis. So when that
 8 opportunity came to support a model like this in
 9 Albuquerque, for me, and especially for my -- for my
 10 board, who are the decision-makers, they looked at
 11 this and said, "You know, this is something that we
 12 can get behind, can get really excited about," and
 13 that's why we're here supporting the school. Thank
 14 you.
 15 THE CHAIR: Thank you. How much?
 16 MS. FRIEDMAN: There's seven minutes if
 17 anyone else wishes to --
 18 FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you, Commissioner,
 19 Board. I am Dr. Stephanie Hubbard McGirt.
 20 THE CHAIR: Could you please spell your
 21 last name?
 22 FROM THE FLOOR: Oh, sure. H-U-B-B-A-R-D,
 23 space, M-C capital G-I-R-T.
 24 I'm a Family Medicine physician. And I
 25 just wanted to speak about the importance of

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1 education, literacy related to people's health;
 2 because we know, we have the data, we have really
 3 strong statistics that when people can't read, their
 4 health is greatly affected, detrimentally.
 5 People don't get preventive health
 6 services. We're not able to prevent cancer; we're
 7 not able to prevent heart disease; we're not able to
 8 prevent pneumonia because they're not getting their
 9 pneumonia shots.
 10 If they do have medical conditions,
 11 they're not really seeking the care, sometimes due
 12 to stigma of not being able to read their medicine
 13 bottles or instructions that the doctor has given
 14 them. And so rates of hospitalization go up,
 15 complications of their conditions go up. And this,
 16 of course, affects our economics, too, because
 17 health care costs go up.
 18 And one of the things -- I mean, there's
 19 literacy, and then there's health literacy, which is
 20 its own thing. But if you don't have basic
 21 literacy, you're not going to have health literacy.
 22 And if you look at Albuquerque, we have
 23 some really interesting information about health
 24 statistics and how it's coupled with economics and,
 25 you know, education that people have had in those

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1 districts.

2 If you look at the area code that this

3 school will be in, you can basically see that people

4 are going to live a shorter life -- have shorter

5 lifespans; they're going to have way more medical

6 chronic diseases that kill them earlier, that they

7 have complications from not allowing them to work.

8 People get depressed from all of these things. It

9 just sort of compounds and perpetuates the issues.

10 So I am totally in support of any school

11 that's really going to make it their mission to

12 support kids early on to get this really solid

13 foundation of literacy; because literacy isn't the

14 end goal. It's really about offering people

15 opportunity, then, to follow their dreams, to get

16 good jobs, to really take care of their families and

17 their communities.

18 So thank you.

19 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much.

20 We have how much time left?

21 MS. FRIEDMAN: We have five minutes.

22 THE CHAIR: There's five minutes left.

23 FROM THE FLOOR: My name is Billy Jimenez,

24 and I am a local attorney and resident of Wells Park

25 Neighborhood. I am a Board Member of the New Mexico

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1 Young Lawyers Division, a District Representative

2 for the American Bar Association, a Board Member

3 with the Albuquerque Center for Hope and Recovery,

4 and just lifelong public education product from

5 New Mexico, from Rio Rancho, and through UNM.

6 I say all these things -- I'm not trying

7 to highlight accolades. I say that because I

8 consider myself extremely, extremely lucky to have

9 basically fallen in the right positions with the

10 right mentors and the right teachers somehow along

11 the way that allowed me to excel and get to where I

12 am today.

13 It's been very humbling to see what can

14 happen when you do that, when you try and promote

15 other people. I think we don't need to highlight

16 the disparate impacts of poverty and impacts on

17 minorities in these communities; and I think that's

18 very clear.

19 But I just think that we can offer these

20 opportunities through charter schools like this one

21 that can provide better class sizes, that can

22 provide better attention and focused opportunities

23 for folks.

24 I think back, though -- one of the

25 greatest things I've ever found was a bottle cap to

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1 a Granny's Iced Tea. And on Granny's Iced Tea, they

2 have "Granny-isms" under the bottle cap.

3 The one I got one time said, "Luck is when

4 preparation meets opportunity."

5 And I think -- I still actually still have

6 the bottle cap, and I always look at it; because I

7 think that's very informative to how we can give

8 folks the opportunity to be lucky. And then they

9 can be prepared and do what they -- be successful in

10 life.

11 So thank you.

12 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

13 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning, Madam

14 Commissioner, Commissioners. My name is Michelle

15 Hernandez. I am a partner at the Modrall Sperling

16 Law Firm. I'm also here to echo the thoughts of

17 Phil Bustos, the Chair of the Education Committee. I

18 am the incoming chair for the Albuquerque Hispano

19 Chamber of Commerce. I also serve as the Regional

20 President for the Hispanic National Bar Association.

21 And so I stand in full support of the

22 Collegiate Albuquerque, not only in my capacity

23 [inaudible], but also personally.

24 I also am a product of APS. I went to

25 Governor Bent, Cleveland, and Del Norte High School.

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1 I did go to UNM.

2 And while I was a student at UNM, I was

3 lucky to serve as a work study for a program called

4 Minority Improvement and Intention, back in the

5 early '90s. And one of the focuses that we did is

6 we would be assigned to different high schools in

7 Albuquerque and have the opportunity to meet with

8 students -- and have the opportunity to meet with

9 students and talk to them about post --

10 post-high-school opportunities.

11 And that was very meaningful; but it was

12 also very frustrating, because we could spend five

13 minutes with those students. And as I continued my

14 education, and as I am now -- and, again, like

15 Billy, I'm not here to brag. But I realize how

16 fortunate I was to have different mentors along the

17 way. And everybody is not that fortunate to have

18 that. But to have a charter school that's

19 completely dedicated to that is phenomenal.

20 I have two children of my own, two

21 daughters, one who's 10 and one who's 13. And we're

22 fortunate to have those role models for them and

23 encourage them. And I think every parent should

24 have that opportunity.

25 Thank you very much.

1 THE CHAIR: Thank you. There's two
2 minutes left.

3 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is Tony
4 Rivera, and I just want to speak for a moment as a
5 parent, from personal experience. Common theme
6 running through a lot of the comments this
7 morning --

8 (Reporter cautions.)

9 FROM THE FLOOR: -- about the importance
10 of having opportunities within a ZIP code area so
11 that you don't have to go through, you know, some
12 backroom's door to get your kids into a school that
13 is going to give them some good opportunities.

14 I lived in the Downtown area -- gosh, I
15 don't know -- probably for ten years before I had
16 kids, then had kids. Once they got to school age,
17 looking at the -- at the schools that were in the
18 area, it was not, you know, very promising. So I
19 actually decided to move out of the area, even
20 though I really loved the Downtown area and vested a
21 lot of time, money, you know, trying to become part
22 of this neighborhood, the community. Made the
23 choice that the only really good way I could get
24 better opportunities for my kids within the
25 Albuquerque School District area was to move out of

1 for whatever questions.

2 What I -- I'm going to try to do maybe
3 something a little different -- is when someone's
4 asking a question, so that they can kind of stay in
5 the moment, if there -- if the -- if you have a
6 question that pertains to the same subject, maybe
7 that Commissioner can tie in with that question, so
8 that they're not going back and forth from, you
9 know, finances back to curriculum.

10 It's probably going to happen, anyway; but
11 if we can -- I think it might help them out, and it
12 might help us out in terms of keeping our thoughts,
13 also, so that we don't forget something that we
14 wanted to say.

15 So -- and also without getting into all
16 this -- there's a lot of years of educational
17 experience sitting up here; so, you know, I think
18 that's another way that we can appreciate the time
19 and effort and the -- and the absolute commitment
20 that's here for this.

21 So I'm going to -- I'll start with -- with
22 just a question.

23 I'm intrigued by the two-teacher model;
24 but I do have some concern with the ability to be
25 able to sustain that with the budget. You know,

1 the Downtown area.

2 And so I don't think that that -- you
3 know, people shouldn't have to make that kind of a
4 choice; so...

5 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Are we just
6 about -- okay. Time is up. Thank you all so much.

7 And if we could just take a short break
8 before we start our questions, I'd appreciate it.

9 Thank you.

10 (Recess taken, 9:58 a.m. to 10:11 a.m.)

11 THE CHAIR: All right. So we are back in
12 order. And we will stay close to 40 minutes. We --
13 you know, we do have a tendency to sometimes go
14 over.

15 So, first off, I want to thank you for the
16 obvious time and effort that went into this
17 application; so that that, I think, is duly noted,
18 after seeing -- not this year, but others -- that
19 this is a work well -- well worked on. And I can --
20 I can certainly see the thought that went into it.

21 And I guess I'll qualify this a little bit
22 with, you know, sometimes we have a tendency to, you
23 know, jab during this question session. It's not
24 necessarily an indication that it's all negative;
25 but we're fleshing out things. So it's just open

1 that I can -- you know, I think every school, if you
2 could say, "We're going to put two teachers in every
3 classroom," no one would say, "That's a bad idea."

4 But in the budget times that we're in, I
5 think it -- it has its definite challenges. And I'm
6 kind of getting off my own -- but I know that there
7 was a -- there was a question that was raised when I
8 was reading through this, immediately. I said, "How
9 are they going to be able to do it?" There seemed
10 to be an indication, when the questions came up
11 about budget that, "Well, if we have to, we'll
12 eliminate that model."

13 So that -- that, I have a -- that's a
14 little bit of a concern for me about how accurate
15 you are in being able to say, "Yes, we can do this
16 in a manner."

17 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. Absolutely,
18 Madam Chair, if I can respond to that?

19 The two-teacher model, we think, again,
20 it's one of those really unique components of our
21 school design. With that, we know that that is
22 where the bulk of our, you know, operational
23 dollars, our spending, will go, is towards
24 personnel. We also know that high-quality teachers
25 are the biggest indicator of student success; and so

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p> <p>1 we think that is where our dollars need to be going. 2 With that, yes, it will be difficult to 3 financially maintain that. For that reason, in the 4 application, we've budgeted teacher salaries quite a 5 bit higher, 20 percent higher than neighboring 6 schools in the neighboring district, and that being 7 a very, very conservative amount, so that we're 8 almost over-budgeting for teacher salaries there. 9 Again, with that, we plan to hire 10 primarily Level I and Level II teachers, as we want 11 to be able to adequately train them to the 12 Albuquerque Collegiate way. And that means having 13 kind of standardized lesson plans among -- across 14 classrooms and grade levels, that we do things a 15 certain way, and that that is the Albuquerque 16 Collegiate way. And that may be something that 17 doesn't appeal to a teacher that's been in the 18 workforce for a longer amount of time. 19 As -- in response to the question 20 regarding the interview response that we had, if, 21 for some reason, we weren't able to sustain the 22 two-teacher model, whether due to enrollment or 23 budget deficits, we would propose to transition that 24 to a one-and-a-half-teacher model, which is what 25 we've proposed in our third through fifth grade</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p> <p>1 it starts to flesh out, say, "Oh, I'm really going 2 to wait and see," so that it creates, often, 3 unanticipated struggles with that budget, when you 4 don't get that. 5 MS. JADE RIVERA: Absolutely. 6 THE CHAIR: The student enrollment that 7 you -- you know, that you anticipated. 8 So it's -- it's a -- you know, that is a 9 concern. 10 I'll just do one, more and I'll pass it 11 along. I'll give you a little bit of history. 12 I've got a strong academic background, but 13 also athletic background. So I have challenges when 14 recess and physical education are taken away. Not 15 only for that, but through much of the research that 16 I've done, recess and physical education are being 17 taken away from minority and poverty areas at a 18 4-to-1 ratio. 19 So to me, that's a -- you know, that if 20 you're saying, "Yes, this is the group that we want 21 to service," but at the same time, you're playing 22 into that -- that stereotype that they don't deserve 23 those -- and when you're looking at -- for me, when 24 you're looking at K-2, in particular, you're looking 25 at a population of folks that you want to be able to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p> <p>1 classrooms. 2 In those third- through fifth-grade 3 classrooms, students would have one teacher during 4 mathematics and science, and then they would have 5 two teachers during all of their literacy blocks. 6 And so that ends up being about half of their day, 7 still putting the student-to-teacher ratio at those 8 grade levels at 20-to-1 instead of 15-to-1 in our 9 K-2 grade levels. 10 And so we think that would still propose 11 an option -- though it's not our first choice -- an 12 option that would still be able to sustain 13 high-quality academics and instruction for our 14 students. 15 THE CHAIR: 'Cause I -- I think since I've 16 been on here, we haven't seen a lot of schools open. 17 But I think historically, there's always a 18 challenge, definitely, in that first or second year, 19 as far as you have community support, yes, yes, yes, 20 yes, yes. But many parents are going to sit back 21 and say, "Well, I'm going to wait and make sure 22 they're going to be okay. I don't want to move my 23 child." There's that struggle. 24 We've got 100 people who said, "Yes, I 25 want my child to go to this school"; but then when</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p> <p>1 challenge and grow their free thinking. 2 And that lack of opportunity for free play 3 and for -- you know, you've got this structure here, 4 and everyone needs an outlet. So it's -- and I -- 5 I'm -- I'm a proponent of the co-curricular, not 6 extracurricular. Because I don't think it's just -- 7 and I'll also say as well as art and music, that 8 it's a whole person that we're looking at. 9 And we're not looking to create, to me, 10 automatons, that everyone's got to think this way, 11 that that opportunity for different types of 12 interaction is important for their social 13 development, as well. So that -- that is a concern 14 that I have with that option that you've taken. 15 MS. JADE RIVERA: Absolutely. 16 Madam Chair, if I may respond to that? 17 I think that is a great concern for our 18 entire team, as well as someone who greatly 19 benefited and loved, you know, PE, art, and music, I 20 played music from elementary through high school at 21 public schools. And I think that's a critical 22 component of a strong education. 23 We know that, you know, music education 24 increases math proficiency, that those two go hand 25 in hand. And that's why those are critical</p>

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1 components of our school design. If you see in the
2 schedule in the application, it is in one of the
3 attachments that the daily schedule includes
4 multiple recess breaks for students. In addition,
5 students receive an enrichment block every single
6 day. And those days will alternate between art and
7 music and physical education.

8 So that's something that students will
9 receive every day. Twice a week, they'll receive
10 physical education; twice a week, art and music.

11 And on Fridays, we've created a block for
12 community enrichment, at which time we would bring
13 in members from the outside community and really
14 leverage their expertise. I imagine that being a
15 number of local artists we have, especially right
16 here in the Downtown area, we have a thriving arts
17 district. Bringing in the whole artist, bringing in
18 yoga instructors, bringing in any variety of
19 community members that want to be involved and share
20 their knowledge and love and passion with our
21 students, because we think that that is -- that's
22 critical, and that's something that makes kids love
23 school. I loved playing dodgeball, you know,
24 during --

25 THE CHAIR: Oh, you shouldn't say that.

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1 That's politically incorrect, to say you like
2 dodgeball.

3 MS. JADE RIVERA: And those are things
4 that we want our students to experience. As much as
5 we want them to have twice as much time with
6 reading, that -- those reading hours, those reading
7 blocks, are also fun and engaging. And students are
8 moving around the classroom and are excited, and,
9 you know, yelling at the top of their lungs and then
10 really quiet.

11 That -- we want that. We know that the
12 schedule we're proposing is a very long school day
13 for both our students and teachers. And that has to
14 include variety. And so we've been very thoughtful
15 in our schedule to be able to include those
16 components.

17 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you; because I
18 was wondering, in the narrative, that you were
19 eliminating it.

20 MS. JADE RIVERA: No, not at all.

21 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: And, Madam Chair, if I
22 may add, the last thing that we want to go ahead and
23 produce out of Albuquerque Collegiate is automatons.
24 We want these children to really be enriched and
25 become full, total human beings as a consequence of

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1 their time in our school. And I think that given
2 the opportunity to attend, that's what we will
3 ultimately end up providing to the City of
4 Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico.

5 THE CHAIR: All right. I guess I just
6 misinterpreted, when there was the -- the piece that
7 said 32 percent of instructional time was lost, that
8 you were -- that you were not to fall into that. So
9 my interpretation of that was -- because that -- you
10 know, that was attributed to recess. And it's,
11 like, "We're not going to do that."

12 So it's, like, "Okay. That's" -- okay.

13 So I'm glad we cleared that up.

14 MS. JADE RIVERA: Absolutely.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Commissioners?

16 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Madam Chair?

17 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Toulouse?

18 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: It was a very
19 well-done presentation; but you told us a lot more
20 about all of you than you did about what you're
21 going to do for the school.

22 Commissioner Peralta has been here the
23 longest of us here now. But I've got the next
24 record, and I've been through this a number of years
25 now. And I have not heard a school yet, whether we

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1 approved them or didn't, that told us they were the
2 best thing that ever came to their neighborhood.

3 I agree -- your school is in my district.

4 Both schools we're hearing today are in my district.
5 As far as I know -- I know we don't have charter
6 schools down in this area now, and I'm not sure APS
7 does with Alice King moving.

8 And I am concerned, as the Chair, about we
9 need -- if you want a student who's ready to go to
10 college, they need to be well-rounded. They need
11 the arts; they need all of these other things that
12 get their mind going.

13 I'm not an educator. I was an
14 anthropologist, and I was a bureaucrat, worked in
15 the Human Services Department with low-income
16 families.

17 But I'm a Native. My family are all
18 Natives. My father was born at 1011 Forrester. And
19 most of my growing up here is -- were at 1020 Adams.
20 So two of you come from neighborhoods I know well;
21 and I still live in the 87108 ZIP code.

22 But my family started in Taos in the
23 1700s, moved into Santa Fe, and then, in 1904, into
24 Albuquerque. So my -- my roots are here.

25 I went to Wilson. I went to Highland. My

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p> <p>1 kids went to Wilson and Highland. My grandchildren, 2 who are now in school -- I have four of them in 3 school -- they're all in charter schools, two of 4 them at Alice King.</p> <p>5 So I know these area schools. And I just 6 want to make sure that what we do with our kids is 7 we also -- the other piece -- because they're coming 8 out of this area, and many of them are from 9 long-time families with deep roots, all of you 10 appreciate your roots; we need to teach them to 11 appreciate theirs. There also needs to be that 12 history, that's always been my soapbox, to teach 13 New Mexico History and the depths we have with the 14 Native American, with the Spanish, with the Mexican, 15 with the Early American groups coming in here, 16 before we ever get to the railroad coming in and 17 everything exploding in the 1880s, and then World 18 War II and the bases building us up.</p> <p>19 Our kids need to understand how important 20 they are. And I didn't hear any of that, or really 21 see much about history in here, since we covered the 22 arts and PE components.</p> <p>23 What are you going to do about giving your 24 kids that sense of who they are and who we are? 25 MS. JADE RIVERA: Absolutely. That's one</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p> <p>1 be reemphasized through, you know, the background of 2 our students.</p> <p>3 And I think that that has to be an 4 important aspect of what we teach, and that we are 5 providing instruction to our students that is 6 culturally relevant and responsive, not just to 7 their background; but to be truly culturally 8 relevant and responsive means teaching any variety 9 of background and teaching students about the world 10 that they are going to go into.</p> <p>11 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: You know, the -- 12 back in, for you, the old days, when this body was 13 the State School Board, they did a standard, based 14 on what Texas does, on being able to teach 15 New Mexico History from kindergarten all the way 16 through, and had components. Unfortunately, APS 17 never adopted that.</p> <p>18 But when Gary Johnson became the Governor, 19 he threw it out the door. And I think -- there are 20 a lot of things -- I worked for the State during his 21 administration, too. There are things I hold 22 against him; but that's one of them that our 23 history -- because all of us -- I don't know how all 24 of you feel. But I worked in State government for 25 years. And I still -- it was always, if it came</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p> <p>1 of the questions, Madam Chair and Commissioner 2 Toulouse, we certainly agree. I share that love for 3 New Mexico. I am a diehard, proud New Mexican and I 4 think that that's something that strengthens our 5 community. And I think that it's something that 6 binds us together, and that's something that we 7 really want to teach to our students, as well.</p> <p>8 Speaking to the component of history 9 education, our students will receive social studies 10 education beginning in kindergarten twice a week; 11 and then as a transition into later grades, they 12 will receive science and social studies education 13 every day, as different component blocks of that.</p> <p>14 I, in an effort to be totally honest, 15 hadn't really even given full consideration of the 16 idea of New Mexico History, because that's something 17 that is in, you know, later curriculum for many 18 schools. But I think that's a wonderful thing to be 19 able to teach our students.</p> <p>20 In our schedule, we've also included, in 21 addition to the community enrichment piece, 22 community gatherings for our students. And that's 23 really to emphasize that familial feeling among our 24 students, among our school, and among our community. 25 And I think that that's something that can certainly</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p> <p>1 from outside New Mexico, it had -- people paid more 2 attention to it than if it came here.</p> <p>3 And yet we have so much home-grown 4 knowledge. Look at all of you out here. So much 5 depth of experience. I was impressed to see Phillip 6 Bustos here. I don't know if any of you know his 7 history. I do, because I was on the CNM Board for 8 years, and when he was promoted to the 9 vice president. He came out of Española, and he 10 went to Harvard. He has a daughter at Juilliard.</p> <p>11 We need to show that New Mexicans can do 12 those things and are just as good. And then we 13 bring it back. We don't stay away. Several of you 14 have gone and come back.</p> <p>15 In my family, we were raised to, "You go 16 off to school, so you know whether you want to be 17 here or not. You're not here because you have to 18 be."</p> <p>19 I went to Georgetown, a sister went to 20 Notre Dame, a sister went to Chicago, my son went to 21 California. But every one of us has come home. But 22 there needs to be this pride in our culture, whether 23 it's me, who looks more Anglo than I am, or whether 24 it's somebody who is Native American or Hispanic. 25 And that's what you need to start with at</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p> <p>1 kindergarten of "who you are and where you come 2 from." 3 Anyway, that's my soapbox for the day. 4 Thank you. 5 THE CHAIR: Speaking as a history teacher, 6 I thank you. And I also want to thank you all, 7 because I just learned -- am learning something 8 fascinating about you folks from Albuquerque, that 9 you identify through your ZIP code and don't just -- 10 this is -- this is amazing to me, you know. 11 MS. JADE RIVERA: "The Big City." 12 THE CHAIR: I'm from Las Cruces; so I 13 think we may have two ZIP codes. So it's not -- 14 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: Madam Chair, may I add, 15 in response to Commissioner Toulouse, as you 16 probably have seen in my resume, I have all three of 17 my degrees in history; so I am -- I'm a staunch 18 advocate of historical consciousness. 19 And I think, overall, we have done a 20 horrible job of instilling a sense of historical 21 grounding, historical identity, and historical 22 consciousness. 23 I will do what I -- what is possible for 24 me to promote the study of New Mexico History, 25 because my -- both my Master's thesis and Ph.D.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p> <p>1 New Jersey on me? 2 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: You know, that's 3 the kind of response our kids get, when I thought 4 that was interesting for him to say. 5 And I'm sure he is not the only young 6 person in New Mexico, especially, you know, down 7 toward the southern part of the state, who didn't 8 have people on both sides. And so I think that's 9 why it's important to teach our kids where they sit 10 in history. 11 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: Absolutely, yeah. 12 THE CHAIR: Commissioners? 13 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Madam Chair? 14 THE CHAIR: Sure. 15 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Back to ZIP code 16 87102 -- of course, I lost my place; so I have to -- 17 it's my understanding -- and I was a little bit 18 confused, because in the application, you have all 19 of these possible locations. But on the page I was 20 reading about facility -- and you realize we're 21 under the gun and are supposed to have all this 22 organized, but you make us nervous -- page 176. Let 23 me find it again. 24 On Page 176, you identify -- Page 176 -- 25 that you have a location. So do you have a</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p> <p>1 dissertation were on Los Alamos and the Labs and the 2 effect of the "Atomic Culture" on the State of New 3 Mexico, and, consequently, what happened as a result 4 of that. And so I have a very good grounding in 5 history that I will bring forward to -- through the 6 Board into the teaching team and make sure that that 7 is a component that is highlighted. 8 COMMISSIONER TOULOUSE: Well, I have a 9 quick story, that I have a grandson who has now 10 graduated from high school. When he took New Mexico 11 History, and they were talking about the Pancho 12 Villa Raid -- and I will say for the record, as 13 everybody here knows, our -- Ms. Chapman, who's 14 doing our recording today, happens to share the 15 grandson with me. 16 And I told him. I said, "When you go in 17 there discussing Columbus, you tell them that your 18 great-grandfather was one of the National Guard who 19 went down to fight them"; but on his mother's side, 20 he had a male relative who was with Pancho Villa. 21 So you had family on both sides. 22 His teacher who had been here only a 23 couple of years from an Eastern state I won't name 24 said, "That's a lie." 25 THE CHAIR: Are you going to call out</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p> <p>1 location? Or are you still looking for a location? 2 MS. JADE RIVERA: Madam Chair, 3 Commissioner Johnston, my apologies for any 4 confusion there. 5 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: It's not your 6 fault; it's mine. 7 THE CHAIR: No, I'm with you. 8 MS. JADE RIVERA: If there is any 9 confusion, that's certainly on us. We have 10 identified a potential location. There is a charter 11 school -- charter high school here in the 12 Albuquerque area on Martin Luther King and Broadway 13 intersection that is seeking to move into a larger 14 facility. And that is really our ideal location at 15 this point. We have been working with Dove Property 16 Associates, one of their representatives -- I see 17 her today, as well -- to identify other potential 18 facilities. 19 One of the challenges of Downtown is that 20 there are a lot of facilities, but many that -- 21 there is a lot of space; but many of them are in 22 facilities like this that may not want to share 23 space with very loud little kindergarteners, which 24 is understandable. 25 And so through that, we've been working</p>

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1 very diligently with Dove Property Advisors to be
 2 able to find appropriate facilities. I -- I'm
 3 scheduled to see another facility with the
 4 representatives from Dove in another week or so.
 5 That is on the Broadway and Central intersection.
 6 And so we are working to just ensure that
 7 we have, you know, something lined up and as many
 8 backups as possible, because we know that the
 9 facilities have proven to be a consistent challenge
 10 for many new charters.
 11 THE CHAIR: Right. And the requirement is
 12 now that whatever your cap, that that facility has
 13 to meet that; not, "We'll take here," and -- so that
 14 that -- Director?
 15 MS. POULOS: Madam Chairwoman,
 16 Commissioner Johnston, I just also wanted to clarify
 17 that this may be a piece of the application that
 18 results in something that they come across as not
 19 exactly clear, which is the application really does
 20 require them to have a facility that could support
 21 their school.
 22 So it's not just a theoretical idea. We
 23 do actually, as part of the application process,
 24 require them to be able to say, "This facility would
 25 work for us. This is how we would make it work for

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1 us."
 2 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Yeah.
 3 MS. POULOS: And so that's maybe why it
 4 seems more certain than it is; because, obviously,
 5 at this point in the process, there's no way they
 6 would have a school site identified, selected, and
 7 secured. But what we try to get them to do is
 8 actually get pretty far in the process during the
 9 application. And that's why it may cause some
 10 confusion.
 11 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: So you have been
 12 in conversation with this school about their move.
 13 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. Yes.
 14 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: And you know that
 15 they are planning on moving; but you don't know
 16 when.
 17 MS. JADE RIVERA: Correct. And so for
 18 that reason, we want to ensure that we have backup
 19 facilities in place, in the case that they didn't
 20 want to move at the end of this upcoming school
 21 year.
 22 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: And -- okay.
 23 Because I took it -- when I read it -- you can see
 24 all my highlights here, and even a star -- that it
 25 was an absolute. And I thought, "Boy, isn't that

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1 serendipitous? Wow."
 2 THE CHAIR: That someone's going to hold
 3 it out for a whole year.
 4 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Okay. But you
 5 don't know for sure.
 6 MS. JADE RIVERA: We don't know for sure,
 7 unfortunately.
 8 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: But you know
 9 they're moving.
 10 MS. JADE RIVERA: We know that they would
 11 like to move. And for that reason --
 12 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: They would like to
 13 move; we're still not at the -- they are.
 14 THE CHAIR: Because they probably still
 15 have the same challenges, you know, trying to move.
 16 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Sure, the same
 17 thing.
 18 Then the other thing that I have that has
 19 to do with -- well, that's the second question;
 20 because they all have to do with the ZIP code -- is
 21 budget and your relationship with EdTec. I looked
 22 up EdTec. I read all that I could about it.
 23 My -- my question that needs to be
 24 answered is you will need to have a licensed --
 25 New Mexico Licensed School Business Official. And I

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1 wasn't able to really understand how you'll make
 2 that transition. I see the expertise from EdTec to
 3 help you, and I think that that's a strong
 4 organization. I have no objection.
 5 But my goal for you would be, in a couple
 6 of years, to have a Licensed School Business
 7 Official, New Mexico-licensed person. And I think
 8 statutorily, you'll have to have someone. What's
 9 your transition to that like?
 10 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. Madam Chair,
 11 Commissioner Johnston, in our collaboration with
 12 EdTec, whoever we worked with directly would obtain
 13 the appropriate license for the New Mexico School
 14 Business Official so that they would meet that
 15 statutory requirement.
 16 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Where would they
 17 live?
 18 MS. JADE RIVERA: I think that is still --
 19 THE CHAIR: In another ZIP code.
 20 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: They wouldn't even
 21 have to live in this country.
 22 MS. KATIE RARICK: So I did talk to Gaspar
 23 about this. He's our contact; right? He's our
 24 contact there right now.
 25 And so their vision for all of the states

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1 that they are currently supporting is within the
 2 next year, to really build out their organization,
 3 to put someone in the region; because right now,
 4 they have schools in Colorado, Nevada, and
 5 New Mexico, that they are supporting. And so they
 6 want at least one, if not two, people in this area
 7 to support these schools.
 8 And then they are also building out
 9 Atlanta, and they are building out Chicago, and they
 10 have a lot of people, like, in the
 11 New York/New Jersey area, already.
 12 So that's -- that's their growth plan in
 13 the next year, given all the folks that they are
 14 currently supporting.
 15 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Do you recognize
 16 how vulnerable that makes you? And I say that,
 17 because we have local contractors in the State of
 18 New Mexico who contract for school business finance.
 19 And so many of the schools who depend on these
 20 people and are then unable to obtain the time, the
 21 commitment that is required, stumble because of
 22 fiscal matters.
 23 So I want you to recognize the
 24 vulnerability that goes along with a very well
 25 respected organization wanting to grow their

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1 organization. Have they -- have they really looked
 2 at the requirements for licensure in the State of
 3 New Mexico as a School Business Official?
 4 MS. KATIE RARICK: Yes. Yes, they have.
 5 And I will say, given the work I do, we -- my team
 6 supports 53 regions across the country. And so
 7 their model replicates the model that we have at my
 8 organization.
 9 And we're very successful giving time and
 10 resources to all 53 regions we work with. And I
 11 feel like, given the model that they're proposing
 12 and they have shown great success with, I feel like
 13 they are going to provide us the support we need.
 14 And the fact that I'm the proposed treasurer on the
 15 board, it is Jade and my's responsibility to make
 16 sure we are getting the resources that they have
 17 committed to us, the time, the reports, the
 18 expertise; and if not, then we won't be satisfied
 19 with our contract, and we can get out of it and go
 20 to someone else.
 21 But we are committed to making sure that
 22 we are a financially secure school. 95 percent of
 23 the schools they work with have zero audit findings.
 24 And so we would expect the same from our school.
 25 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: And there's a

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1 responsiveness to the State, the Public Education
 2 Department.
 3 MS. KATIE RARICK: Absolutely.
 4 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: And I would
 5 encourage you, as you make this journey, to look at
 6 becoming independent of EdTec. That would be my
 7 goal for you. I don't hear any sounds about
 8 transitioning away so that you have your own finance
 9 person.
 10 It is going to take the head of school
 11 much time to coordinate all of this. And this is
 12 where administrators get all embroiled. I know
 13 you're committed to instruction.
 14 MS. JADE RIVERA: If I can respond, just
 15 quickly, to that?
 16 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: You really -- I
 17 really -- I appreciate it, and I know that you're
 18 prepared.
 19 I'm just -- those are almost rhetorical
 20 statements that I'm making. I have full confidence
 21 in EdTec. I've just seen -- we talked about
 22 location; we've talked about EdTec.
 23 The Level I and II teachers that you're
 24 bringing into the system, how are you looking at
 25 recruiting teachers?

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1 MS. JADE RIVERA: Madam Chair and
 2 Commissioner Johnston -- so our recruitment plan
 3 will be very expansive. We have already had
 4 conversations with organizations like Teach for
 5 America, which may support bringing in at least
 6 possibly two to four Corps members; so new teachers
 7 for the school.
 8 In addition, we really want to partner
 9 closely with our local colleges and universities to
 10 recruit brand-new teachers and to be able to really
 11 provide them strong professional development and
 12 instructional coaching that they need as they
 13 develop as new teachers.
 14 Thankfully, we have some wonderful
 15 connections among our board members to the
 16 University of New Mexico and to the College of
 17 Education there at the University of New Mexico.
 18 In addition, we seek to be able to expand
 19 that communication further and relationships with
 20 the other local universities. And really what we
 21 will be doing is, you know, posting our positions on
 22 every job site available. Ideally, the vast
 23 majority of our team will be local; but we will
 24 certainly be advertising through our personal and
 25 professional networks at the national level, as

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1 well. And we are confident, with this model, that
 2 we will be able to recruit the right teachers that
 3 really want to see the shared outcomes for our
 4 students and that are aligned with our mission and
 5 vision.
 6 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Why are you
 7 seeking a State charter as opposed to an APS
 8 charter?
 9 MS. JADE RIVERA: That's a wonderful
 10 question. Madam Chair and Commissioner Johnston,
 11 from what I've discussed, and from my experience
 12 working in public education for the State and in
 13 local schools, we really felt that the option and
 14 the opportunity to go through a state, being our own
 15 LEA, would provide us the necessary flexibility that
 16 we would need to function at the level necessary in
 17 alignment with our school design.
 18 And we see the Commission as being
 19 hopefully more open to our proposal than the local
 20 district might be.
 21 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Okay. I was Head
 22 of School at East Mountain Charter and at PAPA. And
 23 we were both APS charters. Wonderful relationships,
 24 very supportive of facility, with maintenance; never
 25 attempted to intervene in our structure.

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1 So I just would -- I would remind you of
 2 that, that there are some successes that come from
 3 that.
 4 MS. JADE RIVERA: Uh-huh. Sure.
 5 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: And East Mountain
 6 even decided they would become a State charter, and
 7 they lasted two years, and went back to APS and
 8 said, "Please allow us to recharter with you again;"
 9 so...
 10 Let's see. Those -- those of you who have
 11 presented today, an impressive group. But -- and
 12 this is an assumption. And you know what -- when we
 13 make assumptions what happens. So I'm making the
 14 assumption. I'm the one.
 15 My thought is is that the -- the community
 16 members who presented today live in the 87102 ZIP
 17 code by choice. You're talking about a community of
 18 students that -- and young people who live in this
 19 ZIP code because their parents either choose to or
 20 are required to.
 21 And you're looking at a high -- low income
 22 level, English Language Learners -- I'm looking --
 23 ethnicity distribution, and students with
 24 disabilities in these areas.
 25 I haven't heard you talk about the impact

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1 of the folks you're -- you've identified you want to
 2 serve on their -- the socioeconomic support you'll
 3 provide.
 4 You may have a student who comes to
 5 kindergarten whose parents really want that student
 6 to be there. And those parents don't read. What --
 7 how are you going to help that family unit
 8 strengthen? Because you really have a structured
 9 plan here, and a good plan for students. But it's
 10 going to require that -- you're going to have a lot
 11 of trauma, also.
 12 And have you thought about the impact of
 13 trauma on cognitive development and where those
 14 students -- and I haven't heard you -- I didn't read
 15 this, and you can tell from my sticky notes, I took
 16 you very seriously. So if you could tell me how you
 17 would reach out to these families.
 18 MS. JADE RIVERA: Absolutely.
 19 Madam Chair, Commissioner Johnston, I think those
 20 are completely valid concerns and certainly things
 21 that we are cognizant of and want to have really
 22 established plans for our families.
 23 As I stated in the introduction, I grew up
 24 in this area. I'm the daughter of a single mother
 25 who is a retired Social Worker, retired from the

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1 Children's Psychiatric Hospital at University
 2 Hospital. So I -- it's something that is always at
 3 the forefront of my thinking.
 4 And I think, certainly in agreement for
 5 the board, that those are things that we want to be
 6 thoughtful about for our students.
 7 First and foremost, we really do believe
 8 that the structure and predictability provides that
 9 safe environment for students and families. Having
 10 taught in low-income schools and having taught
 11 special education students, I worked with many
 12 families where there were language barriers, where
 13 families were undocumented and felt unsafe and
 14 uncomfortable coming into the school building. And
 15 so those are things that we want to address head-on
 16 with families.
 17 One of the ways that we will do that early
 18 on, even before the school year starts, with
 19 potential families, is doing home visits, or visits
 20 with families in a place of their choosing, whether
 21 that be a local library or community center,
 22 somewhere that is comfortable for them to really
 23 bridge that gap and ensure, with them, that we are
 24 committed to establishing that meaningful
 25 relationship.

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p> <p>1 As a school, we also know that our 2 strongest strength and area is academics. And, you 3 know, we will not pretend to be experts on -- on 4 trauma care and trauma-informed -- 5 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Education. 6 Trauma-informed education. 7 MS. JADE RIVERA: Certainly. That is 8 something that we will do on our end, but want to be 9 able to provide our families strong resources to 10 outside organizations that will be able to provide 11 those -- those needs and meet those needs of the 12 families. 13 So having really strong connections in the 14 community, we believe is critical, and that for our 15 students that need additional services or supports, 16 whether that be in the school or outside of the 17 school, we would certainly contract services, as 18 necessary, for in-school support, if that expertise 19 is not available within our hired staff team. 20 So it's something that we certainly are 21 cognizant of and want to be able to support for our 22 students. But also know that our best strength that 23 we bring to the table is academics and instruction, 24 and that we want to be able to partner with 25 organizations, community organizations in the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p> <p>1 as needed, for these students while they remain in 2 school, where the effects of trauma are impacting 3 their cognitive development, not referring them out. 4 If academics truly is, as you say, the 5 goal, then I would -- my expectation, or my desire, 6 would be that every one of your staff members be 7 trained in trauma-informed education, that every 8 everyone is knowledgeable; because that -- that's 9 important to me. 10 One last comment. I apologize. We're 11 short on time; but this is very important to me, 12 because I get defensive. 13 Public education in the State of New 14 Mexico is imperfect; but it works. And public 15 education in the State of New Mexico produces people 16 who do accomplish great things: The people in this 17 room. 18 I live between Moriarty and Estancia. All 19 of my teaching career has been that way, except for 20 the times where I dealt with charter schools. 21 Be very, very careful when you speak about 22 public education and -- and have the respect for 23 public education in the State of New Mexico that it 24 really deserves, and the diversity of -- of students 25 whom they serve very effectively and with great</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p> <p>1 community, to be able to come in and support 2 families or be able to refer families to directly. 3 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Okay. And so -- 4 THE CHAIR: Yes, ma'am. 5 MS. CYNTHIA AL-AGHBARY: I'm sorry, 6 Madam Chair, Commissioner Johnston. I -- my 7 clinical specialty is children with special health 8 care needs, both behaviorally and physically. And 9 I'm a Board-certified Case Manager, and still work 10 with children today in connecting them to 11 appropriate resources, and including, you know, if 12 they have -- need trauma-informed care, and, you 13 know, and making sure we have, you know, competent 14 professionals that perform those assessments. 15 I'm also on the professional advisory 16 committee for the Medically Fragile Case Management 17 Program at the UNM School of Medicine. So 18 clinically, I'm still very active and I'm very 19 passionate to make sure that any child receives the 20 services that they need. And usually, in these 21 cases, it's the entire family that needs services, 22 not just the child. 23 COMMISSIONER JOHNSTON: Okay. And my 24 concern is -- my question is -- or my desire 25 would -- you would be able to provide modifications,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p> <p>1 quality. 2 I don't think that was an intention today. 3 And sometimes when we are speaking in large 4 groups -- and I see people smirking in the audience. 5 And the teacher in me will kick in real fast; 6 because you don't -- we're talking about the 7 importance of history in the State of New Mexico. 8 And I'll get off my soapbox. But you 9 don't know the feelings that people carry with them. 10 So just respectfully disagree. Don't -- okay? 11 Thank you. I'll be quiet now. 12 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Ruiz? 13 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. Thank you for 14 your time that you've put into your application. 15 And I'll be just really brief, because Chairman 16 Gipson said something that I had a question about, 17 and Chairman Johnston. 18 A couple of things that I looked at the 19 application and just kind of wasn't clear about -- 20 but then Commissioner Johnston just echoed my 21 sentiments -- one of the things that I noticed when 22 you all were talking, several of you, is that 23 there's a push for Teach for America. And I -- I 24 understand that; I respect the need for that. And I 25 think it has its place.</p>

1 But I, like Commissioner Johnston -- you
2 know, I went through the whole process of the
3 educational program. There is increasing evidence
4 that Teach for America drastically under-prepares
5 its recruits for the reality of classroom teaching.

6 Now, I can tell you firsthand from where
7 I -- I teach in Hobbs Schools. I'm from Hobbs,
8 New Mexico. And we have many Teach for America
9 employees. And while many of them do a tremendous,
10 tremendous job in the classrooms, we have just as
11 many that we have to work with, because they're
12 unprepared with classroom management; they're
13 unprepared to deal with the day-to-day realities of
14 working in public ed.

15 And so my question is, when she asked you,
16 your specific response is that you're going to
17 pretty much focus your recruitment efforts in Teach
18 for America; and I think that's great. But you're
19 starting up the school, and you don't really know
20 what you're going to encounter.

21 And I just want to have you talk to me
22 about that; because I can tell you that I also am a
23 union member. And on that side of it, we really
24 have to work with a lot of Teach for America
25 employees. We really have to present -- represent

1 you when you were teaching; but -- when you've been
2 teaching.

3 But for myself, I know that my summer PD
4 leading into the school year was about three days;
5 and most of that time was setting up my classroom;
6 and that that's really not what we envision our
7 summer professional development being for our
8 teachers. It really is having that intellectual
9 preparation to get lesson plans internalized, to
10 understand, to practice as a team what reading
11 comprehension looks like, and practice it again and
12 again and again, so that we get it right for our
13 students on day one.

14 And we have that expectation for our
15 teachers that, you know, are more experienced and
16 those that are brand new to the field. So it's
17 certainly something that we want to explore. And we
18 hope to be able to have some Teach for America Corps
19 members on our staff. But, again, we expect that
20 the vast majority of our staff will come from
21 traditional teacher preparation programs.

22 MS. ROSA PYNES: And if I may add,
23 Madam Chair and Commissioner Ruiz, another thing
24 that we're doing in our school is that the principal
25 is really focused in the academics; and so they are

1 them in many, many situations.

2 And I think it's a wonderful program; but
3 I do think that there are many educators out there
4 that are equally, if not more, prepared for that.

5 So if you'll speak to me about the push
6 for TFA.

7 MS. JADE RIVERA: Certainly, Madam Chair
8 and Commissioner Ruiz. We certainly agree. I
9 see -- and I believe our team sees -- the benefit of
10 having a wide variety of teachers. Certainly, we
11 expect that the vast majority of our staff will come
12 from traditional teacher preparation programs.
13 That's our expectation, and that's how we really
14 intend to see the staffing model for the school.

15 You know, for -- for the collaboration
16 with Teach for America, that's certainly not set in
17 stone yet. We've had conversations, and we would
18 like to be able to bring in Teach for America
19 educators; because, you know, then we, again, have
20 that wide variety of -- of representation among our
21 teachers.

22 And with that, we have proposed in our
23 application a really intensive summer professional
24 development program for all of our teachers. It's a
25 three-week program. And I'm not sure how it was for

1 doing -- visiting classrooms and doing observations
2 for 20 minutes. And they are required to follow up
3 with the teacher and have a meeting 48 hours after
4 that observation to really go over, like, your
5 strengths, some areas of growth, and how can we
6 improve this.

7 And I think that's crucial. As a former
8 educator myself, I think feedback is always
9 important because you're going so, so fast on
10 everything that you just really need someone to let
11 you know that, like, "Hey, these are some of the
12 adjustments you need to make." And I'm really
13 excited to provide that for our teachers.

14 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Thank you. And the
15 other thing I wanted to comment: Our school
16 district, just the campus that I'm at -- and I'm not
17 a teacher -- well, I am an educator; but I'm a
18 counselor and a test coordinator now.

19 But our campus, last year, decided to go
20 on an 8:00-to-4:00 schedule. And I am going to tell
21 you that is a wonderful, wonderful choice that you
22 have made; because we're the only campus that does
23 that. And just in one year, we can see a huge, huge
24 increase in how kids are doing on tests. And, you
25 know, we -- they have shorter class periods; but

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p> <p>1 they're doing really well.</p> <p>2 So I wanted to commend you on the extended</p> <p>3 day; because just our campus is kind of a little</p> <p>4 pilot program, and they're looking into expanding it</p> <p>5 into the other campuses; but it's been really</p> <p>6 successful for us.</p> <p>7 MS. JADE RIVERA: Madam Chair and</p> <p>8 Commissioner Ruiz, may I ask which campus that is?</p> <p>9 I would love to be able to visit.</p> <p>10 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Hobbs High School, the</p> <p>11 Harold Murphy Alternative Learning Center.</p> <p>12 THE CHAIR: I have just a quick question</p> <p>13 about -- you mentioned in the narrative that during</p> <p>14 the planning year -- year zero; trying to get away</p> <p>15 from that -- that the principal, along with the</p> <p>16 contracted consultant services, will create the</p> <p>17 curriculum.</p> <p>18 But then on the next page, it says,</p> <p>19 "Contracted consultant services, if necessary."</p> <p>20 So I'm -- I'm conflicted with -- is there</p> <p>21 going to be a contract consultant service for the</p> <p>22 curriculum development? And where's the funding for</p> <p>23 that?</p> <p>24 MS. JADE RIVERA: Madam Chair and</p> <p>25 Commissioners, so I think that's something that</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p> <p>1 potential for grant money.</p> <p>2 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes.</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: Are you relying on that money</p> <p>4 coming in? Or that's just --</p> <p>5 MS. JADE RIVERA: That's a wonderful</p> <p>6 question. So we do have secured a very generous</p> <p>7 donation from a local nonprofit for \$200,000 for</p> <p>8 start-up that will be used prior to opening.</p> <p>9 THE CHAIR: Zero year, you're using that.</p> <p>10 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. So that is</p> <p>11 secured, pending your decision. Those dollars</p> <p>12 already exist, and will be received by our team as</p> <p>13 soon as we, hopefully, receive that positive</p> <p>14 recommendation from you all.</p> <p>15 With that, we will continue to pursue</p> <p>16 grant opportunities to be able to provide our</p> <p>17 students additional resources and things beyond our</p> <p>18 standard curriculum.</p> <p>19 I would love our students to be able to</p> <p>20 play keyboards, to be able to learn piano. Is that</p> <p>21 something that is essentially core that we may be</p> <p>22 able to do with public dollars? Maybe; maybe not.</p> <p>23 Likely not. So that would be something that we</p> <p>24 would pursue grant dollars for.</p> <p>25 THE CHAIR: I just wanted to make sure</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p> <p>1 we're certainly still exploring. We've -- I,</p> <p>2 myself, have done quite a bit of research on the</p> <p>3 different curriculum models that we would like to be</p> <p>4 able to use, whether pre-prepared and then adjusting</p> <p>5 and aligned to our local standards and needs of our</p> <p>6 students, or whether that means developing something</p> <p>7 from scratch, so to speak; but deeply informed by</p> <p>8 strong models.</p> <p>9 You know, that's something that we want to</p> <p>10 ensure that we have really high-quality instruction,</p> <p>11 high-quality lessons that we put in front of our</p> <p>12 students, and resources and that we ideally would be</p> <p>13 able to have someone with really great expertise</p> <p>14 give a look over what we've, you know, designed.</p> <p>15 Ideally, that would be free of cost. I don't know</p> <p>16 that that's the world that we live in anymore.</p> <p>17 And so for that reason, you know, it is</p> <p>18 still a bit up in the air about the contracted</p> <p>19 consulting services that we may need on that, and,</p> <p>20 again, dependent upon the level at which we have an</p> <p>21 already pre-designed curriculum, versus one that is</p> <p>22 developed through -- through resources from folks</p> <p>23 around the country that are similar to the design</p> <p>24 and model that we want to be able to see and use.</p> <p>25 THE CHAIR: Okay. And you mentioned the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p> <p>1 that it wasn't money that was necessary for</p> <p>2 programming --</p> <p>3 MS. JADE RIVERA: No.</p> <p>4 THE CHAIR: -- that you were relying on,</p> <p>5 that that's -- fine.</p> <p>6 Commissioner Armbruster? We're -- we're</p> <p>7 way over our 40; but --</p> <p>8 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Oh.</p> <p>9 THE CHAIR: -- but I did qualify that,</p> <p>10 saying --</p> <p>11 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes, you did.</p> <p>12 THE CHAIR: -- we're the ones not timed;</p> <p>13 but...</p> <p>14 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Okay. Well,</p> <p>15 I'll try to go more quickly. Listen fast.</p> <p>16 So I do want to identify you, Cynthia. I</p> <p>17 began when I was five, also. And I've been teaching</p> <p>18 special ed -- I taught special education for</p> <p>19 39 years; you know, nice round number.</p> <p>20 So my concerns -- well, first, let me see</p> <p>21 positives. I think you have a lot of good ideas. I</p> <p>22 think it's -- I'm not a Native New Mexican. I feel</p> <p>23 like -- should I be here? I was, like, an Anglo</p> <p>24 from Indianapolis. What can I say? But I have been</p> <p>25 here for 25 years.</p>

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1 I know. Sorry. Sorry.
 2 But, you know, you have to have diversity;
 3 so here I am.
 4 But my questions are that when you have --
 5 and I just don't know this. When you have Teach for
 6 America, they have New Mexico credentials, and they
 7 can stay here forever? Or just -- didn't there used
 8 to be, like, a two-year thing? It's a forever
 9 thing -- right? -- if they get their credential?
 10 License?
 11 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. If I can respond
 12 to that, Madam Chair and Commissioner -- am I saying
 13 this -- Armbruster?
 14 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Very Hispanic,
 15 yes.
 16 MS. JADE RIVERA: Forgot to roll the "R."
 17 For those individuals, if we do have Teach
 18 for America Corps members -- and, again, that isn't
 19 for sure or not. If we do have them, they will have
 20 the New Mexico-appropriate credentials through the
 21 alternative licensing program. And so they would be
 22 completing licensure requirements during that same
 23 time.
 24 Their commitment to the organization,
 25 Teach for America, is a two-year commitment; but

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1 well as some people who have that stability: "We
 2 did this. This is not going to work. Let's try --
 3 what if we tweak it?"
 4 That's just something you get from -- from
 5 nursing, or from any other field, I think. So when
 6 you talk about first- and second-year -- Level I and
 7 Level II teachers, I just want to throw that in as a
 8 consideration.
 9 I want to commend you on paying more,
 10 because when you work more, you're not really paying
 11 them more; they're working more, so you're paying
 12 them at the same -- and I am an AFT, past union
 13 president; so I -- so I think that's really
 14 important. I do; because I think that teachers
 15 don't go into teaching just because they love
 16 children. It's an occupation, and they should be
 17 able to live on that. That's my bottom line. And
 18 I -- and so I commend you for doing that.
 19 The other thing I wanted to ask you was in
 20 terms of parents -- also a comment. I don't know if
 21 you will be able to incorporate something helping
 22 them learn to read, helping them learn English or
 23 whatever it is. And I'm going to throw this little
 24 idea out, because it just came up not too long ago.
 25 When I was having my nails done in

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1 that doesn't, you know, mean that they couldn't stay
 2 in New Mexico for the rest of their lives, as many
 3 of us have. I, personally, don't like the phrase,
 4 "Land of Entrapment"; but I think it's -- I think
 5 it's something beautiful about our state, that we
 6 have people that come and want to stay forever.
 7 So ideally, we would love to be able to
 8 have them stay with us for a long time.
 9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Okay. My next
 10 question -- thank you for explaining that.
 11 This is just a comment, and you don't
 12 really have to respond to it. But as a Level III
 13 teacher, I think it's important to have young
 14 teachers, because you can train them in the way that
 15 you want to be trained. I also think there's
 16 something that happens when you have a Level III
 17 teacher; because I might not be better -- in fact,
 18 I'm going to tell you that I'm not doing this
 19 technology stuff so well, which is why I'm now
 20 reading this again.
 21 But I think that as you have been teaching
 22 for a longer period of time, you have a degree of
 23 wisdom that you don't have as a young teacher.
 24 That's why it's important to have both young, new
 25 teachers, or who have taught two or three years, as

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1 Los Alamos, the nail technician is from Vietnam. So
 2 as you imagine, they didn't necessarily know English
 3 until they got here. So I was talking to her about
 4 how did her children -- because they only spoke
 5 Vietnamese -- how did her children succeed, which
 6 they did, and how did they learn English.
 7 And she told me they had television -- so
 8 they had television that they had for English, and
 9 they had DVDs -- in those days, maybe VHR -- maybe
 10 VCA -- whatever those letters are -- but that really
 11 helped her children learn English. And as much as I
 12 believe that it would be wonderful if I were able to
 13 speak two languages, I don't want children to lose
 14 whatever their first language is -- in this case,
 15 maybe Spanish; but it doesn't necessarily need to be
 16 Spanish -- I think it's really, really important
 17 that we're looking at children in poverty; we're
 18 looking at children with probably high levels of
 19 learning disabilities; we're looking at children
 20 with issues -- go on down the line -- that English
 21 is their language; because they live in America at
 22 the end.
 23 So I'm hoping -- I'm just giving you that
 24 little thought, that maybe you could share with
 25 parents; because I think it's important that

<p>Page 94</p> <p>1 children not only keep their language, but they have 2 to learn English, because they are so disadvantaged 3 when they come into kindergarten as five-year-old -- 4 you know, five years old, and they're already two 5 years behind, that's truly frightening. I think 6 it's a very frightening thing. 7 And I'm expecting that as you have these 8 children as kindergarteners, that they will make -- 9 pretty much be proficient by the end of their 10 kindergarten year because of what you're going to be 11 doing, interventions you're going to be looking at, 12 special ed services, and the kinds of things you're 13 going to be doing. 14 And I guess I'll stop because we're going 15 over. But thank you. 16 THE CHAIR: So thank you for putting up 17 with us. 18 Any member of the public, including the 19 applicants, may submit written input following this 20 hearing. 21 Written comments can be sent to the 22 Commission via Charter.Schools@state.nm.us, mailed, 23 or hand-delivered. The details and addresses are 24 listed on the handout at the back of the room, which 25 I think is actually in the hallway. Make sure you</p>	<p>Page 96</p> <p>1 We're in recess. 2 (Proceedings in recess at 11:13 a.m.) 3 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And welcome. 4 We are out of recess, coming back for our 5 second Community Input hearing. And I just -- I'm 6 sorry. I have to just double-check the name, 7 because I want to get it right for the record. I 8 know I've got it handy somewhere. 9 Here we go. Okay. And we are here today 10 to hear from Altura Preparatory School. 11 (A discussion was held off the record.) 12 THE CHAIR: Okay. I just have to get 13 through this. 14 This meeting is being conducted pursuant 15 to New Mexico Statutes Annotated Title 22, 16 Section 8B-6J, 2009. The purpose of these Community 17 Input Hearings that will be held on July 20th, 2017, 18 is to obtain information from the applicants and to 19 receive community input to assist the Public 20 Education Commission in its decision whether to 21 grant the proposed charter applications. 22 According to this section of the law, the 23 Commission may appoint a subcommittee of no fewer 24 than three members to hold a public hearing. 25 According to law, these hearings are being</p>
<p>Page 95</p> <p>1 identify the school you're commenting on in the 2 drop-down menu; obviously, that's online. 3 Please note that any written input must be 4 received by no later than 5:00 p.m. on the third 5 business day following the hearing on the 6 application on which you -- on which you wish to 7 comment, which makes it the 23rd, which -- 8 MS. POULOS: Is a Sunday. 9 THE CHAIR: -- is a Sunday; so it would be 10 the 24th; Monday, the 24th. I'm sorry. It says the 11 25th. Sorry. The 25th. Yeah. 12 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: Next -- close of 13 business? 14 THE CHAIR: Close of business, yeah. 15 And the Public Education Commission will 16 meet in Santa Fe on September 1st, 2017, to render 17 their decision on approval or denial of this and 18 other new charter school applications. 19 So once again, we thank you very much for 20 all the time and the effort that you have put into 21 this. Thank you. 22 DR. SCOTT HUGHES: Thank you very much to 23 you, Madam Chair, and members of the Commission. We 24 really appreciate your consideration. 25 THE CHAIR: Thank you. We appreciate it.</p>	<p>Page 97</p> <p>1 transcribed by a professional court reporter. 2 The total time allocated to each 3 application is 90 minutes, which will be timed to 4 ensure an equitable opportunity to present 5 applications. 6 During the hearing, the Commission will 7 allow for community input about the charter 8 application. The time for public comments will be 9 limited to 20 minutes. If you wish to speak 10 regarding the application, please sign in at least 11 15 minutes before the applicant's presentation. 12 Please be sure that you indicate on the sign-up 13 sheet whether you are here in opposition or support 14 of the charter school. 15 The Commission Chair, based on the number 16 of requests to comment, will allocate time to those 17 wishing to speak. If there are a large number of 18 supporters or opponents, they are asked to select a 19 speaker to represent common opinions. 20 We will try to allocate an equitable 21 amount of time to represent the community's -- the 22 community accurately. 23 The Commission will follow this process 24 for each of the hearings: 25 The Commission will ask each applicant or</p>