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BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION
STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
PUBLIC INPUT MEETING
TAOS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
August 20, 2012
9:00 a.m.
120 Civic Plaza Drive, Coronado Hall
Taos, New Mexico

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

COMMISSIONERS:

MR. M. ANDREW GARRISON, Chair
MS. CAROLYN SHEARMAN, Vice Chair
MR. EUGENE GANT, Secretary
MS. CARLA LOPEZ
MR. VINCE BERGMAN
MR. MICHAEL CANFIELD

STAFF:

MS. KELLY CALLAHAN, Acting Director
Charter School Division

MS. CORDELIA CHAVEZ
MS. KAREN EHLERT

1 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. The
2 Public Education Commission meeting of August 20
3 through 24, 2012, is in session. This is the input
4 meeting. And there's a statement to describe the
5 proceedings of this meeting that I'll read through.
6 And get your coffee, because it's pretty boring.

7 MS. CALLAHAN: I tried to make it
8 exciting.

9 THE CHAIR: No, no. There's no making
10 this exciting. You did a splendid job.

11 This meeting is being conducted pursuant
12 to New Mexico Statutes Annotated, Title 22, Section
13 8B-6J 2009. The purpose of these community input
14 hearings that will be held from August 20th through
15 August 24th, 2012, is to obtain information from the
16 applicant and to receive community input to assist
17 the Public Education Commission in its decision
18 whether to grant the proposed charter applications.

19 According to this section of the law, the
20 Commission may appoint a subcommittee of no fewer
21 than three members to hold a public hearing.
22 According to law, these hearings are being
23 transcribed by a professional court reporter.

24 The total time allocated to each applicant
25 is 90 minutes, which will be timed to insure an

1 equitable opportunity to present the applications.
2 During the hearing, the Commission will allow for
3 community input about the charter application. The
4 time for public comment will be limited to
5 20 minutes. If you wish to speak on behalf of the
6 applicant, please sign in at least 15 minutes before
7 the applicant's presentation.

8 That actually already occurred, but I'll
9 be -- I'll allow, if someone came in a little bit
10 tardy, to do it since we have such a huge crowd.

11 Please be sure that you indicate on the
12 sign-up sheet whether you are here in opposition or
13 support of the charter school. The Commission
14 Chair, based on the number of requests to comment,
15 will allocate time to those wishing to speak. If
16 there are a large number of supporters or opponents,
17 they are asked to select a speaker to represent
18 common opinions. We will try to allocate an
19 equitable amount of time to represent the community
20 accurately.

21 The Commission will follow this process
22 for each community input hearing: First, the
23 Commission will ask each applicant or group to
24 present at the table in front, which is -- so that
25 would just happen just right there, without a table

1 in front.

2 MS. CALLAHAN: Right.

3 THE CHAIR: So they're good at the mic.
4 This is written for Mabry Hall in Santa Fe. So we
5 have a table in front over there, I assure you.

6 They will be given 20 minutes to present
7 their application in the manner they deem
8 appropriate. The Commission will not accept any
9 written documentation from the applicant; but the
10 applicant may use exhibits to describe their school,
11 if necessary. However, the setup time for exhibits
12 will be included in the 20 minutes.

13 Following the applicant's presentation,
14 the local school district representatives will be
15 given five minutes to comment.

16 Subsequently, the Commission will allow
17 20 minutes for public comment, as described above.

18 Finally, the Commission will be given 45
19 minutes to ask questions of the applicant.

20 Commissioners, are you ready to proceed?

21 (Commissioners so indicate.)

22 THE CHAIR: The Taos International School,
23 please come forward. You're already forward. I
24 don't want you standing while I read more here.

25 A reminder, and I probably need to do the

1 same, turn off all your cell phones. And I always
2 tell my folks that my "vibrate" is like tremor. So
3 I usually just turn it all the way off.

4 So I guess we do need to make it to the
5 mic, Taos International School. For the record,
6 please state the name of your school, the names of
7 the founders of the school, and any other person who
8 is here today on behalf of your school.

9 MS. VIGIL: Okay. Thank you.

10 THE CHAIR: Yeah, that's weird.

11 MS. VIGIL: It's kind of weird. And then
12 I'm pretty short, and you won't be able to see me --
13 because then you won't be able to see me. Let's
14 see. Is there any way to bring it down? Are you
15 okay there? I'm okay.

16 THE CHAIR: That's fine.

17 MS. VIGIL: I'm fine. Okay. Can you hear
18 me? I'm pretty loud.

19 THE CHAIR: You're fine.

20 MS. VIGIL: Okay. Thank you. Thank you
21 all for being here this morning. My name is Nadine
22 Vigil. I am the lead organizer of Taos
23 International School. So to give you a little
24 background on myself. I've been in education for
25 37 years. I worked for Taos Municipal Schools for

1 37 years. I am an adjunct professor for UNM Taos
2 and for Northern New Mexico College.

3 I began my career as an educational
4 assistant, was a bilingual certified instructor,
5 then became an assistant principal, and retired as a
6 principal. I have a lot of experience with
7 education.

8 Part of the founders that are here today
9 are Mr. Kenleigh Winters, parent founder; very
10 supportive. Dr. Pagan here is also one of the
11 founders. Ms. Reina Vigil is a founder. And then I
12 have some parents that are here and community
13 members that are here in support of the school.

14 So with that said, I will begin and give
15 you a little bit of background on the school that
16 I'm proposing for Taos, for the community of Taos.

17 Taos International School will be a free
18 K-through-8th, dual-language, International
19 Baccalaureate charter school that will be located
20 within the boundaries of Taos Municipal Schools.
21 The schools now, presently, have dual-language
22 programs in two of the elementaries that are located
23 here within the Taos Public Schools. But there is
24 limited space, and also, due to the limited space,
25 where students -- all the community does not have

1 the opportunity to participate in these programs.
2 Therefore, that's why I am proposing to have the
3 dual-language model within Taos International
4 School.

5 Also, another thing is, for the students
6 that are participating in a dual-language program
7 here in Taos, after sixth grade there is no
8 continuation at the middle school. So that is a
9 need here in Taos that I foresee. And that's the
10 need that I want to cover with Taos International
11 School.

12 So we have a lot of students that are
13 interested in continuing their study of Spanish and
14 want to become bilingual-biliteral students. Taos
15 International School will produce
16 bilingual-biliteral students, prepare them for the
17 global world, for the college, the workforce. So
18 that is one of the goals of Taos International
19 School.

20 The focus will be on a multilingual
21 curriculum and will address the international
22 educational and foreign-language needs of New Mexico
23 students living in the Taos area. In addition, Taos
24 International School will be the only school within
25 the community of Taos that will be offering the IB

1 program, the International Baccalaureate program. I
2 feel that our students here in Taos should have the
3 same opportunity as other students within the
4 Albuquerque area to be able be given the opportunity
5 to enhance their educational journey by enhancing
6 their education through different programs that we
7 can offer through Taos International School.

8 Our philosophy will be -- an instructional
9 approach will be research-based and will incorporate
10 best practices in all aspects of instruction. The
11 demand for more educational programs combining the
12 dual-language program and the International
13 Baccalaureate program will be a great need, and it
14 will also be just a need for our schools here in
15 Taos.

16 The International Baccalaureate program
17 will be offering the primary and the middle-school
18 years. So it'll be significant for Taos. Our
19 vision is students at Taos International School will
20 learn to respect themselves, their community, and
21 the larger diverse world in which they live, while
22 developing the skills necessary to achieve their
23 goals.

24 The mission is that Taos International
25 School will provide students, K-through-8 students,

1 an educational program focused on inquiry-based
2 teaching and learning, the acquisition of languages,
3 and the development of social-emotional, rigorous
4 academic skills necessary to function in our local,
5 national, and international community.

6 The school that I am proposing to be
7 approved to open here in Taos, if approved, would
8 open its doors during the 2013-2014 school year. It
9 would begin with two kindergarten classes, two
10 first-grade classes, and one sixth-grade class,
11 expanding to second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth,
12 and eighth -- seventh and eighth. TIS will provide
13 students a rigorous world curriculum focused on the
14 90:10 model.

15 The 90:10 dual-language model means that
16 90 percent will be in Spanish for kindergarten;
17 10 percent will be in English. For first grade, 80
18 percent of instruction will be in Spanish; 20
19 percent will be in English. Second grade,
20 70 percent will be in Spanish, and 20 percent --
21 30 percent will be in English, and so forth.

22 Also, the primary and middle years program
23 will be aligned with the New Mexico Common Core
24 Standards.

25 The class sizes is -- the goal is to keep

1 them at 20 students or less, to offer focused
2 attention on developing the social-emotional and
3 rigorous academic skills necessary to be productive
4 members of society.

5 The acquisition of languages will be
6 taught through the Spanish immersion program. And
7 that is designed for the students to become
8 bilingual-biliterate. We will also be introducing
9 the students to Mandarin Chinese at fourth-grade
10 level. So a third language is being proposed also
11 to be taught. TIS will offer a nontraditional
12 sports and activity program, which includes tae kwon
13 do, soccer, and gymnastics. That is something that
14 sets us apart from the regular public schools.

15 The music program and the art program will
16 also be an enhanced, enriched music and art program.
17 Taos, as you all well know, is an artist community.
18 So we plan on bringing the community in through the
19 artists. We also have lots of musicians. So we're
20 planning to bring it in through there, an enrichment
21 program.

22 The enrichment program that we're going to
23 also offer is going to be an after-school enrichment
24 program and will start two to three weeks after the
25 school opens and will allow the students to stay

1 after their normal day. Students will have the
2 opportunity, again, to participate in something new
3 and interesting to them, such as folklorico and
4 mariachi. Those are two things that I really want
5 to impress on our students. The after-school
6 program will be free of charge to all enrolled
7 students.

8 Primary Years Program. What is the
9 Primary Years Program? It is a program for
10 students, ages 3 to 12, and focuses on the whole
11 child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and the
12 world outside. The Middle Years Program is for
13 students aged 11 to 16, and it provides a framework
14 of academic challenge that encourages the children
15 to embrace and understand the connections between
16 traditional subjects and the real world and become
17 critical and reflective thinkers.

18 The program will integrate all content
19 areas through the teaching of transdisciplinary
20 themes. The International Baccalaureate Primary and
21 Middle Years Program prepares students to be active
22 participants in a lifelong journey of learning.

23 There's different attributes that make up
24 the profile for each one. But with the primary
25 years, again, like I mentioned, it focuses on

1 development of the whole child as an inquirer in the
2 classroom and outside. The Middle Years Program
3 encourages students to embrace and understand the
4 connection between traditional subjects and the real
5 world and become critical and reflective thinkers.

6 The curriculum description will be that
7 TIS will adopt -- Taos International School, TIS --
8 will adopt a standard-based curriculum, the
9 New Mexico Common Core Standards. And the
10 International Baccalaureate organization will serve
11 as our foundational documents in the development of
12 the school's curriculum and in the adoption of
13 instructional materials. Additional [verbatim], the
14 World-Class Instructional Design and Assessments,
15 which is the WIDA normas -- WIDA en Español -- will
16 provide guidance in the development of the school's
17 Spanish curriculum.

18 So TIS will be here in Taos to offer our
19 students a better option, a better opportunity for
20 their educational career, where they will become
21 bilingual-biliterate students, again, and be
22 prepared for the college, the workforce, and the
23 global world.

24 Our philosophy also consists of three
25 components that will be aligned to the school's

1 mission, which will be, number one, the written
2 curriculum, what will students learn; number two,
3 the taught curriculum, how will students learn,
4 number three, the assessed curriculum, formative and
5 summative assessments to monitor student progress.

6 We will hire highly qualified teachers to
7 come in and teach our students. And, again, it's
8 time for Taos to have a different option than what
9 they have right now and enhance our students, give
10 them the opportunity to have the same type of
11 schools that other cities have -- we're not very
12 large -- but have a school of the magnitude that I
13 am proposing to have our students from the Taos area
14 be a part of.

15 Our projection, again, like I mentioned,
16 we will start with two kindergarten, two
17 first-grade, and one sixth-grade. If you -- in
18 reviewing the application, you will see that there
19 was a little bit of a conflict with the Facilities
20 Master Plan, five-year projection versus the one in
21 the application. The reason for that was, after
22 doing research, I found out that for sixth grade --
23 students going from the schools to sixth grade,
24 there probably will only be enough to make one
25 class. So that was a little bit of a conflict that

1 you saw there.

2 I did provide PSFA with all the
3 information they needed. The facilities that I'm
4 looking at was approved by the PSFA. It meets all
5 the standards that it needs to meet to be able to
6 carry out our mission and our vision and meet the
7 instructional program for our students. It is close
8 by an eco-park field, which we could also use for
9 our PE program and other activities that we will be
10 utilizing with the program. Can I ask my other
11 founder to stand up, if --

12 THE CHAIR: You can do whatever you would
13 like. You have eight minutes left.

14 MS. VIGIL: We have eight minutes. Do I
15 need to add anything else to what I've --

16 DR. PAGAN: Good morning. I'm Dr. Pagan.
17 And I just wanted to add that this educational model
18 is already being used in the state. So it's a lot
19 like a replication of a school. And that's in
20 Corrales International School and New Mexico
21 International School; so both schools that are in
22 the Albuquerque area.

23 And, as Ms. Vigil has said, I think that
24 it is something that we should spread around the
25 state, and it's something that has been highly

1 successful in Albuquerque with huge waiting lists.
2 I know that at New Mexico International School, we
3 have over 50 students that are waiting to see an
4 opening in kindergarten. So we would appreciate
5 your support. Thank you.

6 MS. VIGIL: Just to mention, a typical day
7 at TIS -- Taos International School -- will start
8 off at 8:30, and at 3:30 [verbatim], the students
9 will have a half-hour lunch. The students will be,
10 again, involved in a very rigorous academic program.
11 And so they'll also be doing the dual-language,
12 again, the international program. Parent
13 involvement is very important. So they will be
14 solicited to come in, and we will expect our parents
15 to be very much a part of it.

16 I have a lot of support right now from
17 parents within the community. Unfortunately, it was
18 the first day of school here in Taos, so they have
19 to take them to the public, but they'll come to me
20 once we are approved.

21 So anything else that I might want to say
22 is that there is a lot of interest within the
23 community. I'm very excited. I'd like to see a
24 school of this magnitude in Taos, being in education
25 for so many years. I believe that the need is here,

1 that I believe we have the students that will come
2 to TIS once we are running and going.

3 We will hold, of course, an enrollment
4 period once we're approved. We'll move on with the
5 next step after we're approved. Again, with the
6 facility I have, again, acquired -- not acquired a
7 facility -- but I do have a facility that I'm
8 looking at, and that will be a challenge; for a
9 while yet, not until after you get approved that you
10 really need to go sign a lease or something. But
11 that's where we're at. I do have that.

12 The planning year will be challenging,
13 also. But I think we're ready. I've got a lot of
14 support, again, like I mentioned. I've got my
15 people here that are ready to speak on behalf of
16 Taos International School. They want to see a
17 change in Taos. And I believe this is a big change.
18 It will be the change that Taos needs to be able to
19 obtain our students' educational journey in a
20 different manner.

21 So I think we're ready to go. And, again,
22 I've read our vision and mission, and I've explained
23 what our plan is. And thank you. Thank you. And
24 anybody else? Can I ask anybody else, or is it
25 just --

1 THE CHAIR: You're not required to swallow
2 up the 20 minutes. If your presentation is done,
3 you're fine.

4 MS. VIGIL: I keep looking and going "Five
5 minutes."

6 THE CHAIR: Unless you have a song or a
7 poem?

8 MS. VIGIL: Yes, I was a kindergarten
9 teacher for many years. This is who I am. I am
10 very much into education. I did retire two years
11 ago, but I'm not done yet. And that's what I tell
12 people. I am totally not done. I feel there's
13 still a need in Taos, in the community of Taos.
14 I've been from this community for all my life. And,
15 again, thank you for listening and for your support.

16 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

17 MS. VIGIL: Thank you.

18 THE CHAIR: Would the Taos School District
19 please come forward? Is there any representative
20 from the Taos School District? For the record,
21 please state your name and the role you play at the
22 local school district. And you'll have five minutes
23 to comment.

24 MR. WESTON: My name is Rod Weston,
25 Superintendent of Schools.

1 THE CHAIR: Good morning.

2 MR. WESTON: Good morning. I would like
3 to express concern with this particular charter
4 school. We already have a K-through-5 dual-language
5 program that's very extensive at Enos Garcia
6 Elementary School. We have a K-through-4
7 dual-language program at Arroyos Del Norte
8 Elementary School. And next year, we'll be putting
9 in place a dual-language program at Ranchos
10 Elementary School. We feel that this charter will
11 dilute the resources available for the education of
12 children.

13 Also, in this community, there are a
14 number of charter schools already in existence. I
15 believe we have five charter schools now. And
16 the -- what we have seen, particularly with
17 elementary charter schools, is the parents who are
18 most capable in terms of educational background,
19 awareness of the educational system, they are the
20 people who tend to move towards the charter schools.
21 This results in a difference in the Free and Reduced
22 Lunch numbers between the charter schools and the
23 regular public schools. The charter schools have
24 far fewer percent -- a much lower percentage of
25 students needing Free and Reduced Lunch.

1 My concern is that this will cause some
2 flight from the Enos Garcia Elementary School in
3 particular, and that critical mass of students who
4 have strong parental support and are highly
5 functioning students will exit and make it more
6 difficult to bring the other students up to that
7 level. Within any school, there's a -- sort of a
8 culture that exists within a school, and we're
9 always trying to move that culture upwards.

10 MS. CHAVEZ: Three minutes.

11 MR. WESTON: Thank you. In a
12 multicultural community like this, it's critical
13 that students of all socioeconomic groups attend
14 school together so that they begin to build those
15 bonds that last a lifetime.

16 Not long ago, I sat at a meeting with a
17 leader from the Pueblo and a leader from the
18 Hispanic community. And their conversation was
19 around their school days and, particularly, who
20 fouled who in basketball and who was better than who
21 and this sort of thing. Those kinds of bonds are
22 critical here. And to further separate people at an
23 early age like that I feel would be very
24 detrimental.

25 And it's not just myself. I've only been

1 here two-and-a-half years. But I've heard from many
2 people that that's a concern, that we need to build
3 community, not divide community.

4 In terms of a middle-school, dual-language
5 program, we do not have that. What we have found is
6 when students get to the middle school, where
7 there's a number of electives, that they choose to
8 go into those electives rather than be in the
9 bilingual classes. We're not opposed to looking
10 into that further. We've even considered that
11 Arroyos Del Norte could change from a K-5 school to
12 a K-8 school and continue the dual-language program
13 there through the eighth grade.

14 So I'm here today to speak against
15 approval of this particular charter. Thank you.

16 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir. We're at
17 letter E, which is Public Comment. And we'll now
18 hear public comment from the community of Taos. The
19 first name is Kenleigh Winters? Is that right?

20 MR. WINTERS: Kenleigh, yeah.

21 THE CHAIR: Did I get it right?
22 Excellent. Let me give you your time limit. Did we
23 not put a time limit on individual -- oh, I'm just
24 making that decision, right. Go, ahead, sir.

25 MR. WINTERS: I won't be that long, I'm

1 not a great public speaker. So good morning. My
2 name is Kenleigh Winters. I am a founder of TIS.
3 And I also am a parent of a four-year-old and an
4 eleven-year-old. My eleven-year-old has actually
5 been in a dual-language program, which Nadine Vigil
6 was actually one of the teachers that started that;
7 did a great job.

8 We started our oldest girl at Enos. And
9 when we applied -- my wife and I applied to have our
10 daughter put in the dual-language program, she was
11 unfortunately fourth on the list, on the wait list.
12 So we were very disappointed. We didn't expect her
13 to be admitted into the program. And if I remember
14 right, there were somewhere around 20 to 50 people
15 on the waiting list. There was a very large demand.

16 Of course, I know that fluctuates from
17 year to year. We were lucky that some of the
18 parents actually relocated, and my daughter was
19 allowed to take part in the program. Nadine was one
20 of the kindergarten teachers when she started.

21 She's done very well. She is at the top
22 of her class with the dual language. And I would
23 like to say, over the years, the program has
24 slipped. The original, I think, concept was 90:10,
25 80:20, 70:30, and so forth. And what we found by

1 the second grade was it was starting to get closer
2 to 50:50. We were really disappointed.

3 I'm not a Spanish-speaking parent. My
4 wife is very limited with that. We've worked really
5 hard on keeping her up to the standards that we set
6 forth for her, and she did very well with that.

7 I have also found -- I was very
8 disappointed that, in a very artistic community like
9 Taos, that the art program was dismal. I mean, it
10 was crayons until fifth grade, which I found very
11 disappointing. Music was good for the first couple
12 of years, and it really slipped after that.

13 So I'm a supporter of any school and
14 choice that allows kids to get all of the
15 educational things and all of the other aspects of
16 going to school.

17 My daughter is now in sixth grade. I just
18 brought her to school, to the middle school. We
19 were trying to get her into the charter school, Taos
20 Academy Charter School. We are -- unfortunately, we
21 were the 40th on the wait list of I don't know how
22 many, but I would assume a lot more on the wait
23 list. We were really disappointed.

24 She was nervous about going to the school.
25 The programs have changed. There was one program

1 that we were excited about, and that was -- it was a
2 program where the student would stay with the
3 primary teacher most of the day. And that was
4 dropped. So now she's going through, you know, the
5 period -- periods of where -- you know, different
6 class, one after another.

7 I'm also concerned -- and, of course, this
8 is not part of TIS -- but that the graduation rate
9 is very low in the high school. And so we've really
10 tried to work on a foundation for our daughter so
11 she does well wherever she goes. And I would say
12 Nadine did a great job with that. She really
13 started her off well. We're two very involved
14 parents. And we've always stayed on top of her
15 academics to make sure she's done very well.

16 I am, of course, a supporter of school
17 choice. Being that the waiting lists are so long
18 for the charter schools, I'm very excited to have
19 TIS start. My four-year-old will be ready for
20 kindergarten next year, so, for me, it's just a
21 beautiful thing.

22 And I think that's pretty much all I have
23 to say. I'm sorry. I just threw a little thing
24 together this morning after a long trip.

25 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir.

1 MR. WINTERS: Thank you. Appreciate the
2 time.

3 THE CHAIR: The next person to give public
4 comments is Juan Montes. Good morning.

5 MR. MONTES: Buenos días. And welcome.
6 It's an honor to present before you all. So I am
7 wearing a number of hats, but the same face. Okay?
8 And ultimately, that face belongs to a grandfather,
9 and with a child in the wonderful -- the excellent
10 dual-language immersion program, which I think is a
11 model statewide, currently in the Taos schools. So
12 I think I come as a supporter, because, again, the
13 limited space. Imagine if what's going on at Enos
14 Garcia could be replicated everywhere; then the need
15 for charters such as this one would not exist.

16 But that need is not being met. If you
17 look at the other charter schools, the cultural, the
18 whole orientation in materials of language -- and
19 language is key -- is very, very different, you
20 know. And, ultimately, let me put on another hat.
21 For the last, I guess, 14 years, I've been working
22 with transitioning high-school students to college.
23 And -- and that doesn't seem to be the problem. The
24 problem is the ones that never get there. So I
25 think there's serious, serious dropout issues. And

1 I'd say 50 percent, if not for Native Americans and
2 Mexican immigrants, 70 percent -- 70 percent will
3 never make it through our system from K to 12.

4 So, to me, that's -- that's the issue,
5 and, ultimately, that's the problem. So we can
6 prepare them to go to college; but if they're not
7 there, then these are serious issues.

8 I think the studies show bilingual
9 students are more engaged in the schools because the
10 schools affirms the language, affirms the culture,
11 especially in these formative years. You know, I
12 deal with high-school students, but I realize it's
13 way too late. When their path to drop out -- you
14 know, maybe it's determined by the third grade,
15 people say. Well, there's research to imply that.
16 I'm not sure.

17 But the whole thing is changing. And I'm
18 in support of this, because this is one of the times
19 to change it, you know. I think the two-way,
20 dual-language immersion should be instituted in all
21 the schools, public schools, all of them.

22 And there are a lot of -- I agree with the
23 Superintendent -- a lot of elite charter schools.
24 And from my perspective -- in my perspective is from
25 the dropout. That's not dealing with the issue at

1 all. Why do I need more elite schools? I could
2 devise programs where I would have 100-percent
3 success with students, based on race, based on
4 class. And those are the realities that these kids
5 have to deal with.

6 So I think this is a good start. And I
7 would encourage many more to flourish. So I
8 wholeheartedly support this effort, if enough so --
9 to go back to the grandfather face -- to commute my
10 grandson 25 miles from Questa every day here to
11 Taos. So that's my commitment.

12 So I would hope you all would have the
13 commitment to support an alternative. And there
14 should be a lot more for them. Thank you.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir. We are now to
16 the Public Education Commission's question period.
17 And this is allocated 45 minutes for these
18 questions. And the Chair will open up the floor.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Was there room for
20 more comments?

21 MS. VIGIL: You mentioned that you would
22 let some other people come in. They didn't realize
23 there was a sign-up sheet.

24 THE CHAIR: I did. Thank you. Come sign
25 in, please.

1 MS. CHAVEZ: Commissioner Garrison, there
2 was ten minutes left.

3 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. I'll let
4 you know that there's ten minutes left. And the
5 clock is ticking. So get those signed and come on
6 up.

7 MR. KELLY: Yes, sir. May I begin?

8 THE CHAIR: You may.

9 MR. KELLY: My name is Warren Kelly, and I
10 wear a couple of hats myself. First of all, I'm a
11 parent of a daughter of mine who started school
12 today in the second grade at Enos Garcia. Second of
13 all, I work for a charter school, the Taos
14 Integrated School for the Arts. Those are my two
15 perspectives for my comments.

16 I speak in support for the charter. And
17 these are my two main reasons: First of all, in
18 response to the idea of the dilution of the student
19 body, I think that, among all the charter schools
20 that we've seen so far, this charter may actually be
21 different, because when you think about what's
22 really happened -- and I think that some of the --
23 some of the numbers bear this out -- there has been
24 some kind of a well-informed parent situation going
25 on. That's true.

1 But this charter in particular, I think,
2 has some things that are very, very valuable and
3 very -- I would say very unique for this Taos
4 community, and may actually attract more of the
5 kinds of students that may end up being the kinds of
6 students that would be lower-income, Free and
7 Reduced Lunch, because it seems to really look into
8 a need that Taos has in particular.

9 So I think that it may be different in
10 that regard than other -- than the concerns that are
11 brought forth from other charter schools, including
12 the one that I work in.

13 The second one is -- my second point is,
14 as an educator and someone with a daughter at Enos,
15 I really do support the continuity of the program
16 throughout middle school. And do I have a
17 particular point about bilingualism versus
18 foreign-language instruction. I think that what
19 kids do in fifth grade when they go on to middle
20 school is they're choosing a bilingual program and
21 then moving into a foreign-language-instruction
22 model. So it's kind of a different way of treating
23 language.

24 And so to say that they have an option to
25 take a class in Spanish in a foreign language

1 context, after being in a bilingual program is a --
2 is really a difference -- a different program
3 altogether. Choosing to speak and use Spanish
4 throughout the school career from kindergarten is
5 different than picking one up in sixth grade.

6 So I think the continuity and the argument
7 for this kind of school, especially in the
8 middle-school grades -- and I have to agree with
9 that -- is pretty important, for me, personally, but
10 I also think for the program itself.

11 So thank you for your time.

12 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir. I'm going
13 to -- I'm going to divvy up the one person opposed
14 and the other supporters of the charter school. I'm
15 going to ask that the supporters speak -- select one
16 person to speak on their behalf. I have, in my
17 instructions, if there are a large number of
18 supporters or opponents, they are asked to select a
19 speaker to represent common opinions.

20 So if the supporters can get together and
21 select a spokesperson, I will call John Rainey up,
22 please.

23 MR. RAINEY: John Rainey. Full
24 disclosure. I'm not speaking on behalf of any
25 organization. President of the PTA. I'm not

1 speaking on behalf of the PTA, but as a parent of a
2 dual-language student currently at Enos Garcia.

3 I want to point out that, as Dr. Weston,
4 the Superintendent, pointed out, there is already a
5 dual-language program. It is the same model that
6 they're proposing, 90:10 model. In response to
7 their comments about art and music, my daughter, a
8 second-grader, is involved in the mariachi program.
9 I'm familiar with the art program there. There is
10 arts there. There is music there.

11 I have heard nothing in the proposal,
12 other than the addition of the Mandarin at a later
13 date, that isn't already taking place at Enos.

14 Dr. Weston also said the other two public
15 schools are also adding dual language. The program
16 is already existing, is already thriving, is
17 expanding. It has always been the plan to expand
18 into the junior high. That hasn't happened yet for
19 logistical reasons and for the numbers of students
20 requesting it. But that's always been a plan, as
21 they are proposing at a later date, to move on to
22 the junior high at a later date.

23 So my concern mainly is a duplication of
24 efforts. Whether you consider it a watering down of
25 the students at one school or not, it's a

1 duplication of facility cost. It's a duplication of
2 administrative cost. It's a duplication of
3 janitorial or food service or all that stuff that's
4 taking money out of the education that's already
5 going on. Putting the same program in another
6 facility, that, to me is a duplication of efforts.

7 You know, they said, "We're going to hire
8 good teachers, and this is going to be a new choice
9 for Taos." But it's the same program. The
10 implication there is that there aren't good teachers
11 at Enos, that the public school isn't currently
12 capable of hiring good teachers. The dual-language,
13 bilingual-endorsed certification is the hottest
14 commodity in teaching right now, and those teachers
15 can get big bonuses and go wherever they want. So
16 there is a financial dilemma; how do you pay these
17 really high-commodity teachers?

18 So I question how is a new school that's
19 duplicating all these other ones going to pay more
20 competitively than the current schools in order to
21 get these teachers that the current schools are
22 saying they're having a hard time hiring. So I
23 don't understand how the economics of that works.

24 And I also want to point out that the
25 dual-language program in Taos has been considered a

1 model program. And, indeed, Ms. Vigil helped start
2 that program and was the principal there as little
3 as -- what? -- three years ago running the program.
4 And in November, at the international conference in
5 Albuquerque, Ms. Vigil spoke about the Taos program,
6 about how good the Taos program is, using it as a
7 model to help other schools implement dual-language
8 programs.

9 So I'm confused as to why now it's being
10 characterized as something that needs to have a
11 whole other entity created in order to have dual
12 language in the schools. It's already here.

13 So I'm speaking in opposition. I think
14 it's a dilution of resources. I think it'll pull
15 kids away from an existing successful program, one
16 that's already expanding. So if there's a question
17 of waiting lists, I think it's a lot easier to hire
18 another teacher or two, expand those. It's
19 expanding into other schools already, taking care of
20 that overload.

21 So if there's a desire on the parents'
22 halves [verbatim] and on the students' desire to be
23 in the program, the school is responding to that.
24 And so I am opposed to another charter school in
25 Taos. There are several available already. There

1 are waiting lists for those charter schools, and
2 they don't offer dual language. And so it's not
3 just a dual-language phenomenon, but if the schools
4 are already addressing the needs of expanding, I
5 don't see a need for a further duplication with a
6 whole other school. Thank you.

7 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir. Spokesperson
8 for those in support, please come up.

9 MR. MARTINEZ: Good morning. My name is
10 Robert Martinez. I'm a lifelong resident of Taos, a
11 parent, who was educated in the Taos Schools and
12 have educated three of my children through the Taos
13 Schools.

14 I guess I would first like to say I'm in
15 favor of this school for the purposes of offering an
16 option, which I think would bring some excellence in
17 education to the area, offer a -- a -- another
18 option for parents like myself. I wish I would have
19 had the option to send my children to a school that
20 has -- like that is being proposed.

21 As a professional, I -- I chose to live in
22 Taos. I live -- I work at Los Alamos National
23 Laboratory. I'm an engineer by training and
24 experience. I had -- had I to do it over again, I
25 probably would have bit the bullet and tried to live

1 in the Los Alamos area and have my children educated
2 there. But I wanted to come home. And this is home
3 for me. And, you know, again, I was born here; I'll
4 die here.

5 I think a lot of what I -- what I
6 experience, both as a parent and as a student in the
7 schools, was there really wasn't a model to
8 encourage excellence in the public schools, or at
9 least the Taos Schools. I am fortunate that -- that
10 I attribute my education, my ability to go to
11 college into a technical field, to really those
12 handful of teachers who were excellent, who cared,
13 who really encouraged. Again, within the schools --
14 and I think this is probably problematic in most of
15 the public schools in this country -- is there's not
16 enough of a focus to help students. I truly believe
17 that.

18 I work in network engineering. And what I
19 find is even though you have -- what? -- greater
20 than 8 percent unemployment, in my field, there are
21 more than 150,000 jobs that go unfilled every year.
22 And it's mostly because of the lack of trained
23 children -- I mean, kids -- that come out of
24 college, because they weren't prepared. They don't
25 go into a lot of these fields.

1 And so I think we need options that allow
2 parents to put their children in schools that will
3 help them advance. As a parent, I know countless
4 nights, I worked with --

5 MS. CHAVEZ: You have one minute. One
6 minute.

7 MR. MARTINEZ: Okay. I worked with my
8 kids in terms of getting homework done, in many
9 cases filling in the gaps that the teachers left;
10 not the good ones, but the other ones. And there
11 are a lot of other ones. And I think that's
12 problematic in the public-school system.

13 Regarding, you know, the dual-language
14 program in the schools, I think it's been very good.
15 But then ask yourself the question, why did it have
16 to be championed at the grassroots level by
17 individual teachers? This wasn't something that was
18 proposed by administration. This was something that
19 Ms. Vigil and other key teachers brought it upon
20 themselves to promote, to bring forward.

21 I mean, they modeled it after -- I think
22 it was the Isleta school system, and, especially in
23 the early years, got pretty minimal support. So
24 it's a success now. But it's a success now because
25 of the individual teachers who put their time and

1 their money into this.

2 MS. CHAVEZ: Time's up. Time's up.

3 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir. And I just
4 want to get a head count for the record. Those
5 folks that came in and did not speak but were in
6 support, would you stand up real quick, please?

7 (People stand up.)

8 THE CHAIR: So there were four others, for
9 the record.

10 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Over here, five, six,
11 seven.

12 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Seven.

13 THE CHAIR: Any others going to pop up for
14 good -- seven. Thank you.

15 We are to the section of the Public
16 Education Commission period. The Chair opens the
17 floor for questions.

18 COMMISSIONER GANT: I'll start? Vince
19 wants to start.

20 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I guess if no one
21 else wants to jump in, I will.

22 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Bergman?

23 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Can you all hear
24 me? Ordinarily, I have a fairly loud voice. If you
25 can't hear me at some point, indicate and we'll use

1 the microphone.

2 I did have some questions. Some are a
3 matter of just curiosity. Some are specific. Why
4 did you choose Mandarin Chinese as a third language?

5 MS. VIGIL: The reason I chose Mandarin
6 Chinese is because we have a population of Chinese
7 people here in Taos, and very involved parents also.
8 And when we started the dual language at Enos, that
9 was one of the things they were asking: Why
10 wouldn't you have a third language? But, of course,
11 it was a brand new baby at the time.

12 So -- in proposing the TIS, I want to
13 offer the students another language, a third
14 language. And it was Mandarin Chinese for that
15 reason.

16 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Okay. Thank you.
17 You, I think, mentioned in your application that
18 UNM -- I assume you're talking about UNM Taos --
19 would be a possible source of instructors. Wouldn't
20 you anticipate having some difficulty finding
21 certified, qualified teachers to teach such a
22 language?

23 MS. VIGIL: We have some teachers at UNM
24 Taos right now that I've spoken to that I did the
25 research on, and they are certified. So we would be

1 able to get them -- contract to get them in and help
2 us with that.

3 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: That would be able
4 to work for you and still work for the University,
5 then?

6 MS. VIGIL: Yes, because it would only be
7 a certain amount of time they spend with us. It's
8 only to going to be conversant Chinese. So we would
9 contract them to come in for a couple of hours a
10 week.

11 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I noticed at one
12 point in your application that you noted that your
13 academic goals would not take effect until the 2017
14 and 2018 years. Did I misread that? That's four
15 years into your term. That does not sound right to
16 me. The goals should take effect immediately when
17 your school is open.

18 DR. PAGAN: If you're referring to the
19 goals that are achievement goals, we state that we
20 want 100 percent of the students proficient. And so
21 it's something that we're working towards. We want
22 100-percent proficient in students every single
23 year. But we -- since we're going to be negotiating
24 a performance contract, we want to make sure that we
25 have the time with the students to achieve that

1 100-percent proficiency.

2 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Normally, I put a
3 page number, and for some reason I didn't, so you
4 can refer in the application to what I'm talking
5 about.

6 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I have 5.

7 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Commissioner
8 Shearman says Page 5.

9 MS. VIGIL: Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And while you're
11 looking, I also wrote right with that, you said
12 "scoring at grade level." That strikes me as just
13 an average goal. That doesn't strike me as
14 particularly vigorous or rigorous. Or maybe you can
15 address that in your answer.

16 DR. PAGAN: Yeah. Our goal is always to
17 exceed that. But we also -- like I said, this will
18 become a performance contract, so we want to meet
19 State requirements in terms of performance
20 achievements before we say we would go beyond that.

21 So it's always been to make sure we meet
22 all the -- you know, the A through Fs of
23 requirements that we have now as schools. And
24 that's by getting the students as close as we can,
25 100 percent, to being proficient in both reading and

1 math.

2 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And I was curious.
3 You mentioned that you've had some affiliation -- it
4 was in the application, too -- with the two
5 International schools in Albuquerque. Do you have a
6 current relationship -- are you on the board, or are
7 you an administrator or --

8 DR. PAGAN: Corrales International School,
9 I have no formal relationship with that school. And
10 New Mexico International School, I'm the head
11 administrator one day a week.

12 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: So what would be
13 your relationship with this school?

14 DR. PAGAN: That would be determined. At
15 this point, I'm just a member of the governing -- or
16 the founders.

17 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And Mr. Martinez
18 happened to mention the Isleta School District. Are
19 you talking about the El Paso-Isleta School
20 District? I've actually had two occasions before
21 this Commission when I've talked about what's been
22 done in the El Paso-Isleta School District. They've
23 done a remarkable job down there.

24 They have almost 100-percent poverty,
25 100-percent Free Lunch, almost 100-percent ELL

1 students, and, in the early '90s, was the worst
2 district in Texas. And they've now got that to
3 where -- was it the Broad Foundation? They've been
4 a finalist in the last two years for that. They
5 have proved that just because you're poor does not
6 mean you've got to be at the bottom of the list. So
7 I'm glad to hear that other people have heard of
8 that, because I've been impressed by that.

9 Oh. You noted on Page 54 in the
10 application -- this is just for your information --
11 that your head administrator will be a non-voting
12 member of the board. That's not allowed. No staff
13 can be even a non-voting member of your board, your
14 governing board. So that's just for your
15 information.

16 DR. PAGAN: We just meant to say that
17 they'll be present at those meetings.

18 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And you noted on
19 Page 68, no homework policy. Why no homework?

20 DR. PAGAN: Well, I think the research is
21 clear that homework does not help. And so we
22 have -- we have extensively researched that. And it
23 does not improve student performance. What it
24 creates is situations where students are going home
25 with packets of worksheets that are not being

1 completed or graded. So after reviewing the
2 research and seeing that it really -- in terms of a
3 cost-benefit analysis, really doesn't add anything,
4 you know, to the academic performance of students,
5 we have decided that the school will have a strict
6 no-homework policy.

7 However, what this also does mean is that
8 if the student needs additional practice, then they
9 will be receiving that practice. It will be
10 completed, and it will -- it could be returned, and
11 the teacher can give feedback, but it will not be
12 mandatory.

13 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I know that's
14 always -- some schools believe this is because we
15 have another applicant that takes the exact opposite
16 tack. They're going to do all kinds of homework,
17 they say. It goes either way. It's not
18 particularly primary to it.

19 MS. VIGIL: Just to add to that, with me,
20 homework is an extension of what you've taught
21 during the day, with all the research and all my
22 educational career that I've been involved in. It's
23 not to say to send homework that you expect the
24 student to be doing without being taught. And that
25 happens a lot. So that is why I'm pro for no

1 homework.

2 MR. WINTERS: I'd like to say that having
3 now my daughter in sixth grade and gone through all
4 these years in the schools, what my wife and I
5 noticed is a lot -- and she does very well in
6 school. But a lot of the homework was not actually
7 taught in the class. So my wife and I would
8 actually have to teach her the stuff that she needed
9 to learn to do the homework.

10 And that went on for three years. So we
11 felt like we were a teacher. Of course, we're happy
12 to help. But we were a little bit disappointed when
13 she comes home with stuff that she doesn't learn
14 anything about.

15 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: There are certainly
16 pros and cons on both sides of that issue.

17 MR. WINTERS: Yeah.

18 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: Let's see. On
19 Page 78 -- to get back -- I'm trying to just get
20 into the relationship -- page 78, you note that your
21 school would be a partner with New Mexico
22 International School. Partner in what way?

23 DR. PAGAN: Well, I think that, you know,
24 in terms of professional development, for example,
25 if we are both dual-language, and we are both

1 International Baccalaureate Primary Years, which I
2 want to emphasize -- it's something that's not
3 offered at all in the Taos community now -- that it
4 would be good to partner with that professional
5 development.

6 At the moment, for example, we have to pay
7 for a trainer, you know, to come from out of state.
8 And so if we have five teachers versus ten teachers,
9 it would be great to do some collaboration in that
10 way. So to reduce costs and, you know, to help, you
11 know, reach as many teachers as we possibly can for
12 the training.

13 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: We're not talking
14 about a formal partnership, then? Is there going to
15 be documents signed? You're just going to work
16 together?

17 MS. VIGIL: Work together, yes.

18 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: For the improvement
19 of both schools, perhaps?

20 DR. PAGAN: Since the models are very
21 similar, the only difference between New Mexico
22 International and Taos International is we don't
23 have a sixth-through-eighth program. But parents
24 are already asking for that.

25 MS. VIGIL: And, again, I also want to

1 emphasize that it's not just the dual-language
2 program that we're going to be offering. It's the
3 International Baccalaureate. And like Dr. Pagan
4 just mentioned, that is not a program being offered
5 in Taos at all throughout the whole public schools
6 community anywhere.

7 So again, you know, being approved, our
8 teachers would be able to go and even possibly get
9 some training, see the actual hands-on going on with
10 the schools that are in Albuquerque.

11 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I'm vaguely
12 familiar with the Baccalaureate. But is there not
13 an application process? Is it going to take a
14 little time to actually get it into place?

15 DR. PAGAN: That's one of our goals is
16 four years to be authorized by the IB organization.
17 It typically takes four years. The fastest I've
18 seen it is Cottonwood Classical. They received
19 their diploma approval in two years.

20 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: So you're looking
21 at at least two years down the road before the
22 program is really --

23 DR. PAGAN: Corrales International became
24 the first PYP program in the state, and that was in
25 January of this year.

1 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I see you're going
2 to require school uniforms. That's always a
3 pro-and-con type thing. Are you anticipating any
4 resistance with that?

5 MS. VIGIL: No, we won't. We had some
6 uniform here at Enos, and with the public schools
7 already, it's not a total, you know, two-piece
8 uniform. But we would look into that also.

9 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And are you aware,
10 in past years, there's been federal -- some call it
11 stimulus grants; some call it other things -- but as
12 much as \$800,000 has been available for new -- the
13 state has been told that money -- there's zero for
14 your class of schools. How are you going to fund
15 your start-up year without that money?

16 DR. PAGAN: Well, through -- you know, the
17 plan is to seek private support for the school fund,
18 you know, in terms of funding for the first year.
19 It's a lot easier to ask a funder if we have an
20 approved charter to help us. If we don't have an
21 approved charter, then it would be a lot more
22 difficult.

23 But we are going to seek funding from all
24 different sources. We are already developing a
25 list. And if that's not -- does not produce the

1 dollars that we need to open the school, then we
2 will take another planning year and apply for the
3 grants when they do become available.

4 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: It's going to be
5 difficult.

6 MS. VIGIL: It's going to be a challenge,
7 yes.

8 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: \$800,000, you don't
9 find that on the street corner, especially in
10 today's economy.

11 DR. PAGAN: It's unfortunate that happened
12 to our state.

13 MS. VIGIL: But we're prepared to meet
14 that challenge.

15 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And just a few
16 questions from the comments you all made, the public
17 made. You mentioned you're going to have a free
18 after-school program. That's great. How are you
19 going to fund that? Where is that money going to
20 come from?

21 DR. PAGAN: Right now, at New Mexico
22 International School, we use operational funds for
23 that. We are very careful how we spend our dollars.
24 And we actually end the year in the black. So --
25 and that's by funding three nine-week periods of

1 after-school programs from -- for one hour. So it
2 is all coming from operational funds. There is no
3 extra funding coming to New Mexico International
4 School. You just have to be very careful how you
5 develop your budget.

6 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: So you're funding
7 what you're required to during the day and still
8 funding --

9 DR. PAGAN: And we pay teachers 5 percent
10 above the APS salary schedule with a goal of
11 10 percent. We have 180 days. It is all with the
12 money that we get from the State.

13 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: So you obviously
14 believe you'll be able to do the same thing?

15 MS. VIGIL: Yes, I believe we'll be able
16 to do that, too, here.

17 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I wanted to make a
18 general comment on facilities, because you talked
19 about it. The class that just ended that are
20 starting their school year now, every one of them
21 had facilities problems. We just, two weeks -- or
22 at the end of June -- had a meeting to give them
23 their final okay, and all but one of them was not in
24 a facility yet when they were going to start school
25 at the appropriate time.

1 You've got to move that to the top of your
2 list. One of those schools thought they had a
3 building, and it got jerked out from under them
4 about a month before they came to our meeting. So
5 you've got to lock up -- facilities are going to be
6 the major issue for schools in this state coming
7 down the road. So I just wanted to make a political
8 comment there.

9 MS. VIGIL: Yes, we understand that.

10 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: And you mentioned
11 parents. But my feeling from reading your
12 application, I didn't see a lot of specifics for
13 your parent involvement. How do you -- can you give
14 me some specifics of how you want to get parents
15 involved?

16 DR. PAGAN: I'm not sure what page it's
17 on. But somewhere in the application, we have a
18 list of committees. And if you saw that, it's
19 11 committees that we are going to be requesting
20 parent involvement in. So -- and at New Mexico
21 International School, they are a huge success, and
22 they are -- they're well attended. Their parents
23 are coming to the meetings.

24 And so we're going to continue to do that
25 with the 11 committees. And the 11 committees are

1 also in charge of getting other parents involved as
2 well. So we have a huge participation rate, and we
3 will continue and will try definitely to --

4 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I personally
5 believe it's almost essential -- most parents look
6 at schooling as a baby-sitting service. Or at least
7 not most; certainly, a lot do. And you're not a
8 baby-sitting service. And in this day and age,
9 you've got to have parental involvement to have the
10 success with the school.

11 MS. VIGIL: Yes, you do. So we will get
12 the parents in to get involved. And, again, you
13 know, as we all know, students learn best when their
14 parents are involved. So that'll be one of our
15 vows.

16 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: If they're
17 involved, they care about the kids, and they care
18 about their results, and they care about their
19 future 20 years down the road.

20 MS. VIGIL: Exactly. And they care about
21 what's going on in the school at that time, so
22 they'll come.

23 COMMISSIONER BERGMAN: I've reached the
24 end of my list. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank
25 you.

1 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner
2 Bergman. Commissioner Shearman.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Good morning. I,
4 too, am looking at Page 5 at your student academic
5 performance goals. I, too, am concerned that all
6 three of these goals have a date of 2017-2018. I'm
7 concerned that students along the way, if you just
8 read the performance goals, have no goals.

9 When they -- if they are in your school
10 for four years, then you expect them to score
11 proficient or above in all assessed content areas on
12 the NMSBA. My concern is that's the fifth year of
13 your school, or the last year of what would be the
14 first contract.

15 NMSBA is given in March or April of the
16 school year is my understanding. If I'm incorrect,
17 please, somebody tell me. We do renewals in
18 December. You won't have any data to support any --
19 that first goal that's dependent on NMSBA at the
20 time that you come back for renewal, should this
21 school be approved. You will have absolutely no
22 data.

23 Am I incorrect? Anybody that -- okay.

24 MS. EHLERT: Mr. Chairman, members of the
25 Commission, Commissioner Shearman, we do annual

1 reports and we do collect data. I realize the
2 concern that you have about the target of the final
3 year of the renewal application. I also was looking
4 in the application at the academic growth set of
5 criteria. And I believe that traditionally -- and
6 I'm sure that Dr. Pagan and Ms. Vigil will be
7 collecting data. So we were operating off of that
8 assumption.

9 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Right. Well, I
10 appreciate that additional information. But I am
11 still concerned, because you have a goal here that
12 is dependent on information that you won't have when
13 it's time to come before this Commission or
14 whomever -- this Commission -- to ask for renewal.

15 DR. PAGAN: Well, we'll have the
16 third-year data. We'll have second-year data.
17 We'll have first-year data.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: But that's not
19 what your goal says.

20 DR. PAGAN: It's also something we're
21 going to be negotiating in our performance contract
22 with the State.

23 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And I appreciate
24 that. But let me make this very clear. I vote on
25 what's in the application. Absolutely. So I think

1 your goal -- your first goal, certainly, is
2 insufficient, because you will not have the data at
3 the time of renewal to support that goal.

4 The other two goals, the Mandarin Chinese
5 and the Spanish language, I'm not sure when those
6 are given. But my focus is on school basics. It
7 really is.

8 The next thing, on Page 38 -- let me get
9 there, too. Taos -- underneath "Addressing Staffing
10 Needs," "Taos International School will contract with
11 licensed professionals to provide ancillary
12 services." Where is this in the budget?

13 DR. PAGAN: Well, it would be under
14 "Contracted Services." I -- you know, I would
15 have -- I would need time to look at the -- you
16 know, the exact page. But that is under -- and,
17 unfortunately, Mr. Michael Vigil is not here to go
18 straight to it. But it is under "Contracted
19 Services."

20 COMMISSIONER GANT: Mr. Chair, I can tell
21 them where it is. It's on Page 3.

22 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: The third page of
23 the budget.

24 COMMISSIONER GANT: Page 3 and 4. To
25 supplement what you said, there is no funding

1 allocated for those professional services, either as
2 a salaried position or a contract position.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: That's why I ask,
4 because I certainly wasn't able to find it.

5 THE CHAIR: Hold on, Commissioner Gant.

6 COMMISSIONER GANT: May I ask who put your
7 budget together, please?

8 DR. PAGAN: Mr. Michael Vigil did.

9 COMMISSIONER GANT: Do you understand
10 what's in the budget?

11 DR. PAGAN: Yes, I do. Because I've gone
12 through this before for New Mexico International
13 School. And I am actually --

14 COMMISSIONER GANT: No, I'm talking about
15 this budget.

16 DR. PAGAN: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER GANT: You didn't know that
18 these professional --

19 DR. PAGAN: My understanding is --

20 COMMISSIONER GANT: -- excuse me --
21 individuals that are required by law to provide IEPs
22 for students in special needs are not budgeted
23 whatsoever?

24 DR. PAGAN: I --

25 COMMISSIONER GANT: Ms. Shearman?

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. So there --
2 I could not find those in the budget. So thank you,
3 Commissioner Gant, for that clarification.

4 I'm looking at Page 43 of your
5 application. Under Section A, Staffing, the last
6 sentence of that paragraph, "When ELL students
7 enroll, TIS will submit application for funding for
8 three-hour bilingual program." How long does this
9 application take, and what do the students do in the
10 meantime?

11 DR. PAGAN: This is the bilingual State
12 application where there is a section where we can
13 identify the students that are ELL that we have
14 identified through the home language survey, and
15 it's usually funded right away. I mean, in -- in --
16 it's -- it's something that it's operational, comes
17 from operational funding, but then the State
18 provides the -- you know, the funding later.

19 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And if it's
20 operational funding, can you tell me where it is in
21 your budget?

22 DR. PAGAN: It would be in the teachers we
23 hire that are going to be licensed bilingual
24 teachers. They will have TESL endorsements. They
25 will be the ones providing the services.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: So under
2 "Teachers," we have five classroom teachers.

3 DR. PAGAN: That will be
4 bilingual-certified.

5 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: They will.

6 MS. VIGIL: Yes.

7 DR. PAGAN: Uh-huh. They have to be.

8 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And you're going
9 to pay them \$40,000 a year.

10 DR. PAGAN: That's the average.

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Five at \$200,000
12 is \$40,000.

13 DR. PAGAN: We don't know how many Level 1
14 teachers, so we take an average.

15 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: That's Level 2
16 with no experience.

17 DR. PAGAN: Right.

18 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I question
19 bilingual endorsement at that amount of money; I
20 really do. Let me see. Let me go to the budget,
21 just specifically on the budget.

22 Under -- I'm looking at teacher salaries.
23 And underneath that is Substitute, Sick Leave.

24 Year 1, it's \$53,500. Year 2, it's \$5,000. Year 3,
25 it's \$7,500. Why so much the first year? Also,

1 Substitutes, Other Leave, is \$53,500, Year 1, and
2 drops to \$5,000 the second year, and \$7,500 the
3 third.

4 DR. PAGAN: It's related to professional
5 development. So, you know, hiring substitute
6 teachers for professional development, when the
7 teachers are in professional development.

8 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Boy, they're going
9 to be out of the classroom a lot. Okay.

10 THE CHAIR: I want to direct all of the
11 Commissioners to ask questions of the application
12 and ask them with dignity and respect. I don't want
13 this to turn into us beating up founders or board
14 members. And this means leaving the personal
15 opinions about things that are missing or what you
16 feel is incorrect out of the equation.

17 Ask the question. You have a chance to
18 respond. And we will continue. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: All right. My
20 next question concerns "Purchased Professional
21 Services." "Auditing" is \$12,000. Just a point
22 of -- of notice. Most of the other applications
23 that I have read through the years have more in
24 their auditing budget than that. The legal budget
25 is at zero. And I believe, certainly, other schools

1 have budgeted more than that, and you probably need
2 more than that.

3 In the "Rental of Building and Land," it
4 is zero. And I believe I heard you say you do have
5 a property in mind and that some operational funds
6 would probably be needed in addition to lease
7 assistance. But I didn't find that anywhere in your
8 budget.

9 DR. PAGAN: We would just take the
10 question, you know, and we'll ask the business
11 manager.

12 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Okay. But in --

13 DR. PAGAN: I don't think we know why it's
14 zero.

15 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Do you have any
16 idea at this point -- and I know you're not -- you
17 haven't contracted for a building or anything like
18 that. Do you have an idea of what the lease on a
19 building sufficient to this school's needs would
20 run, the lease per year, say?

21 MS. VIGIL: Yes, I do. It would be
22 \$11,400 a month is what this person would be asking
23 for.

24 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: And what would
25 your lease assistance amount pay?

1 DR. PAGAN: It's usually about 60 percent;
2 it's not all.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: So that really
4 would be a significant amount to impact your budget.
5 Okay. Let me see if I have anything here. I
6 believe that's it. Thank you.

7 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner
8 Shearman. Commissioner Gant?

9 COMMISSIONER GANT: Mr. Chair, members, I
10 was hop- -- well, I was hoping to be able to get
11 answers to the budget. But one I do have is that on
12 Page 7, no budget for custodial services, no budgets
13 for maintenance, you know, things like that. I
14 go -- in here, you have a plan, I believe it is --
15 as I read my Word -- to help supplement the food
16 sources, the brown bag and all that, with a garden;
17 is that correct? But in your "Purchased Property
18 Services," there's nothing for water or sewage, no
19 budgeting for water or sewage, you know, things like
20 that that are missing out of this budget.

21 I go back to the question about property.
22 A good chunk, it appears, will be coming out of the
23 operational budget to cover the lease, which I do
24 have a history on that of schools almost closing
25 because of that.

1 Okay. But I'll leave it at that. I'll
2 just leave my budget questions out, because we don't
3 have anybody that can answer them. All right.

4 You have the dual-language -- you have a
5 program in here where you're going to -- part of
6 your program is an International Baccalaureate
7 program. And part of your curriculum will be
8 Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. Now, as you have
9 stated many times, International Baccalaureate, the
10 school, if granted, will be the first school to have
11 an IB in Taos.

12 And part of your requirements, it is a
13 requirement -- and it so states in here -- that all
14 students will either take -- will take Spanish and
15 Mandarin Chinese. What if a child, and/or the
16 parents, would like to get into the International
17 Baccalaureate program and not take Spanish or
18 Mandarin? What then?

19 DR. PAGAN: Well, at the beginning of each
20 enrollment cycle, we will be having information
21 sessions and explaining the school's program. And
22 we'll be very clear about what dual language --
23 explaining the dual-language program and what's
24 expected.

25 But as we have already said before, this

1 is a school of choice. This is -- it's like going
2 to Taos Integrated for the Arts and saying, "I don't
3 want to participate in art." So we will be very
4 clear about what it is that -- you know, that school
5 offers in terms of, you know, the language program
6 and the International Baccalaureate. And after that
7 session, just like at New Mexico International
8 School, parents either continue the process,
9 applying through lottery, or they decide it's not
10 something for them.

11 COMMISSIONER GANT: What if a parent wants
12 IB, is -- really believes in the IB, but cannot or
13 do not -- or their children cannot -- some children
14 cannot learn language. Cannot. We know that. What
15 happens if these children do not want to take a
16 language?

17 DR. PAGAN: If this charter is approved,
18 it is IB and dual-language. We cannot deviate from
19 that contract that we will have with the State. So
20 I -- I say that, you know, I would share that with
21 the parent and to make sure that we are also -- have
22 expectations that we need to follow and deliver on.

23 COMMISSIONER GANT: You don't consider
24 that a barrier to the child wanting to take IB?

25 DR. PAGAN: The family -- the parents and

1 the child need to be willing to participate in both
2 an IB and a dual-language program.

3 MS. VIGIL: The school is a
4 dual-language/IB program school.

5 COMMISSIONER GANT: Thank you.

6 THE CHAIR: Is that all your questions,
7 Commissioner?

8 COMMISSIONER GANT: No. Let me come back
9 if I find some more that I really have a drive to
10 answer. Okay.

11 THE CHAIR: Okay. Any other questions on
12 this end? We'll go with Commissioner Lopez, then
13 Commissioner Canfield, then we'll come back to
14 Commissioner Gant.

15 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: I'm sorry, but I
16 don't have the page number. But somewhere in there,
17 you said that you will require proof of citizenship.
18 And you know that's not legal, and not only -- shuts
19 out kids?

20 DR. PAGAN: Right. No, we -- we will
21 remove that.

22 MS. VIGIL: Yes, we'll remove that.

23 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Okay. And you didn't
24 have a goal on addressing achievement gaps, which is
25 generally a big issue, it seems to me. If you want

1 to track --

2 DR. PAGAN: Well, I think not
3 specifically. But I think they raise an
4 intervention plan here. So, obviously, the way to
5 address the achievement gap is to do it early, as
6 early as possible. So at the end of each -- end of
7 each year, we will see how students are performing
8 and provide -- not even at the end of the year, but
9 sort of periodically with formative and summative
10 assessments, we will be providing interventions to
11 make sure that the achievement gap -- we don't
12 create one, and, if there is one, that we address it
13 right away, because it becomes a 20-point, 30-point
14 gap.

15 In the mission, we state that there will
16 be some tutoring that teachers will be providing
17 after school. And that's one-on-one. So it's one
18 of our -- sort of level one sort of interventions.
19 And then we will continue through the SAT process
20 through an assistance team to make sure that we are
21 addressing the gap that we are seeing as soon as
22 possible and not wait.

23 MS. VIGIL: Yes, we definitely will not
24 wait. We will be able to tell what students are
25 going to need to go through the SAT process, and we

1 will address that immediately.

2 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: You need a measurable
3 goal on that. Thank you. That's it. Mr. Chair.

4 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Canfield.

5 COMMISSIONER CANFIELD: Thank you. Good
6 morning. I want to go back to the facilities.
7 We've touched on it, and the reason being is that
8 we've had so much experience with our charter
9 schools struggling with this issue. How much -- you
10 say you've identified a property already?

11 MS. VIGIL: Yes.

12 COMMISSIONER CANFIELD: Approximately how
13 many square feet do you think this --

14 MS. VIGIL: One of the buildings is
15 10,000 square feet, and that's where we would start.
16 But it's got some other ones that are adjacent to
17 it, which would give us room to grow. So a total
18 would be -- if I'm not -- you know --

19 COMMISSIONER CANFIELD: That's okay.

20 MS. VIGIL: I think it's 25,000 square
21 feet, which would house all the way K through eighth
22 grade. But to begin with, we would start off with
23 that other small one.

24 COMMISSIONER CANFIELD: Okay. In the
25 budget process you talked about, you said that you

1 think that the rent right now would be about \$11,000
2 a month for that first section of --

3 MS. VIGIL: That's what was quoted to me,
4 yes.

5 COMMISSIONER CANFIELD: How confident are
6 you that you'll be able to -- once you're approved,
7 if you're approved, that you'll be able to secure
8 that location? Is there -- do you have a Plan B, or
9 what's your thoughts there?

10 MS. VIGIL: My thoughts there are that,
11 yes, I would love to have that building. I'd love
12 to secure it immediately after finding out -- after
13 getting our approval. I check on it every day that
14 I pass by, because that's the building I want. I
15 don't want to see anybody else there.

16 But it is also owned privately. So I have
17 been in contact with the owner. And he says he'll
18 wait as long as he can. And he's very excited that
19 a school would be in his building, again, with the
20 option to grow with the rest of the building that's
21 there. If not, yes, I have looked at other
22 buildings.

23 I do have a Plan B, other buildings that
24 would meet whatever we need with the PSFA. And I
25 did notify PSFA of that, and it's in my final

1 facilities plan that I submitted, that there's other
2 places. But this one would be ideal. Because of
3 the eco-park fields that are right there, and
4 there's another park also that we could be -- we
5 could utilize. I've already spoken to the eco-park
6 people, and they're willing to let us come in free
7 of charge to use it.

8 COMMISSIONER CANFIELD: If approved, I
9 wish you well on that. That's a challenge,
10 obviously. Everybody is having it. That's
11 important. So good luck with that. That's it,
12 Mr. Chairman.

13 THE CHAIR: Commissioner --

14 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Sorry. I missed one
15 of mine.

16 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Lopez. Go ahead.

17 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Sorry. On your
18 application pages, where you talk about curriculum,
19 10 to 21, you have a framework for the IB program,
20 but you really don't have a framework for the
21 language immersion program.

22 DR. PAGAN: Well -- so the way that the
23 language is -- the delivery aspect of the
24 curriculum. So we start with the Common Core
25 Standards, and we deliver them -- in kindergarten,

1 we start with oral language development, making sure
2 that students have the vocabulary and understanding
3 of the Spanish language. Then we start to differ
4 the actual content, and we continue to deliver that
5 content through the Spanish, through the language.

6 We use a coup- -- well, previously, we've
7 used some of the documents that are found on our
8 bilingual Web site, on the State bilingual Web site
9 guidance on how students should acquire Spanish.

10 But what we noticed is that it's just a translation
11 of the English language standards, which really
12 doesn't help us, because Spanish is very unique.

13 There are some things that could transfer, but there
14 are also some things like grammar, punctuation, that
15 are different. We found the WIDA documents are also
16 helpful.

17 What we're doing now is our teachers at
18 New Mexico International School are translating the
19 Common Score Standards into Spanish, with the
20 understanding that Spanish will require a little bit
21 different in some areas. So that document should be
22 ready soon, and so we will be using that as well for
23 Taos International School. That's another example
24 of how we can partner with each other.

25 MS. VIGIL: Plus research-based

1 instruction and strategies that we'll be using also,
2 like the silent model and different models.

3 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner Lopez.
5 Commissioner Gant.

6 COMMISSIONER GANT: I guess I'll ask a
7 couple of budget questions. As you stated -- or as
8 is stated in here, you plan to have this garden run
9 by a committee; correct? Is that correct? How do
10 you plan to -- there's a garden, as I -- maybe I'm
11 missing -- wrong -- no? Forget it. But -- forget
12 that question. It's another one. Okay.

13 But in your budget, you have allocations
14 for advertisement. Where are those funds coming
15 from?

16 DR. PAGAN: I'm sorry?

17 COMMISSIONER GANT: You have, in your
18 budget, a certain amount of money set aside for
19 advertising.

20 DR. PAGAN: So that's for advertising for
21 staff.

22 COMMISSIONER GANT: For staff.

23 DR. PAGAN: Yes, for the Journal, any Web
24 sites we need to recruit teachers.

25 COMMISSIONER GANT: You can't use SEG for

1 advertisement.

2 DR. PAGAN: Yes, we can for staff, but not
3 for students.

4 COMMISSIONER GANT: All right. Page 25 of
5 the basic, talking about alignment, the core
6 alignment with IB. As you know you're not going to
7 get any start-up funds. And the only money you're
8 going to get will probably -- if approved, will only
9 start till 1 July. So how will you have core -- the
10 core curriculum, the core state -- the Common Core
11 State Standards aligned with IB in time for this
12 school to start, let's say, in mid-August?

13 DR. PAGAN: New Mexico international
14 School will provide those documents for Taos
15 International School. We are currently completing
16 those right now.

17 COMMISSIONER GANT: Okay. And the funds
18 to pay for -- pay for that? Where is that coming
19 from?

20 DR. PAGAN: From NMIA's operating funds.

21 COMMISSIONER GANT: From who, please?

22 DR. PAGAN: New Mexico International
23 School.

24 COMMISSIONER GANT: New Mexico
25 International School. So they are funding part of

1 your start-up?

2 DR. PAGAN: Well, if we can share
3 something we've already completed, we'd be happy to
4 give them away. We would give them to Corrales
5 International School, Cien Aguas International
6 School. We would give it to any school.

7 COMMISSIONER GANT: Okay. That's all
8 right.

9 THE CHAIR: Any other questions from
10 Commissioners? Commissioner Shearman.

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: I'm sorry. I did
12 miss one other question. Down in "Personnel
13 Services, Compensation, Business Manager," you have
14 budgeted \$50,000. But it doesn't start until the
15 second year of the budget; and \$25,000 for clerical
16 technical assistance. I'm concerned that you don't
17 have an allocation for a business manager in the
18 first year.

19 DR. PAGAN: Typically, that's covered
20 through the federal grant in terms of our -- they
21 have an initial -- the business manager that we
22 would be working with, they have a product or some
23 service that they offer for the first-year schools
24 that are opening up. And it's usually about
25 \$25,000, and it's usually covered by the grant.

1 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: But there won't be
2 a grant this year.

3 DR. PAGAN: But we will be seeking
4 funding, if the school is approved, through private
5 sources, and we will be putting that in the grant
6 application budget.

7 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Let me just ask
8 what your backup plan is, though, if -- if your
9 private funding does not come through --

10 DR. PAGAN: We wait a year.

11 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: -- to a sufficient
12 level.

13 DR. PAGAN: We delay opening a year. We
14 did that with Corrales International School.

15 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: What if there's
16 still no federal funding, because we're sort of
17 getting the feeling that there may not be. Of
18 course, nobody can tell the future, but --

19 DR. PAGAN: I can't, either. And I can't
20 answer that question. There are quite a bit of
21 venture capitalists and funders now that are willing
22 to lend to schools, that provide grants to schools.

23 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: So, really, you're
24 going to be pretty dependent on private funding to
25 get started.

1 DR. PAGAN: The first year, yes, because
2 we don't know what's happening.

3 COMMISSIONER SHEARMAN: Thank you.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner
5 Shearman. Any other questions from Commissioners?

6 Any member of the public, including the
7 applicants, may submit written input following this
8 hearing. Written comments can be sent to the
9 Commission via the PED main Web site through the
10 Calendar listing on the front PED Web page -- "PED"
11 meaning the Public Education Department -- through
12 the Public Comments section on the front Public
13 Education Department Web page. You will be directed
14 to an e-mail -- using the link, you will be directed
15 to an e-mail format in which to write your comment.

16 Make sure you identify the school you're
17 commenting on in the drop-down menu. Please note
18 that any written input must be received by no later
19 than close of business on the third business day
20 following the hearing on the application you wish to
21 comment on.

22 And I want to thank the Charter School
23 Division for making that option as an option, versus
24 just mailing stuff in. I know that gets cumbersome,
25 and you end up not mailing anything in. So to be

1 able to go directly to the Web site greatly helps.

2 Thank you.

3 Thank you for your presentations. We know
4 you worked very hard in preparing these
5 applications, and we're going to recess just for
6 five minutes before we continue with the next
7 school. We're in recess.

8 (Proceedings in recess at 10:30 a.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand on August 28, 2012.

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