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BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE MATTER OF:

THE ASK ACADEMY

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
CHARTER SCHOOL PUBLIC INPUT HEARING
August 25, 2009
4:36 p.m.
4330 Meadowlark Lane, SE
Rio Rancho, New Mexico

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

COMMISSIONERS :

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MS. CARLA LOPEZ
MS. KATHRYN KRIVITZKY
MS. CAROLYN SHEARMAN
MR. VINCE BERGMAN
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MR. SAM OBENSHAIN
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1 THE CHAIR: I have a whole bunch of rules
2 that Dr. Duran has prepared for me to read. I asked
3 him if he were going to give me a cheat sheet again,
4 and he very nicely accommodated me. So listen so we
5 know how all of us are operating on the same ground.

6 I am, number one, going to call this
7 meeting to order. I am going to -- our secretary is
8 not here today, so I will -- neither is our vice
9 chair. So I just will say that we called the roll
10 with the PEC introducing themselves.

11 A change has taken place in State
12 legislation. And until this year, as we held these
13 hearings, we had to have a quorum of the Public
14 Education Commission present, which meant that we
15 had to have a minimum of six people present as we
16 went throughout New Mexico in these hearings. And
17 that got to be quite a struggle a time or two.

18 So we went to the legislature. We told
19 them what our problem was, and they, very nicely,
20 accommodated us to make it possible for three
21 members of the Commission to hold the public
22 hearings in the various places, because all of us
23 legislators, including the Public Education
24 Commission as well as the Public Education
25 Department, believed that it was more important that

1 we go out into the communities than it was to have
2 six or more Public Education Commission people.

3 And so we have our -- we have our quorum
4 of three or more. And we have accomplished the roll
5 call with people introducing themselves. At this
6 time, then, I'd like for you to stand, and we'll
7 have the Pledge of Allegiance and the Salute to the
8 New Mexico Flag.

9 (Pledge of Allegiance and
10 Salute to New Mexico Flag.)

11 THE CHAIR: The statement for the hearing.
12 The purpose of this hearing is to solicit both
13 written and oral input on the proposed charter in
14 accordance with the Charter Schools Act. Quote,
15 "The commission shall receive applications for
16 initial chartering and renewals of charter for
17 charter schools that want to be chartered by the
18 State and approve or disapprove those charter
19 applications," end of quote. 22-8B-16 New Mexico
20 Statutes Annotated, 1978.

21 In addition, the Charter Schools Act
22 states that, quote, "The chartering authority shall
23 hold at least one public hearing in the school
24 district in which the charter school is proposed to
25 be located to obtain information and community input

1 to assist in its decision whether to grant a charter
2 school application. Community input may include
3 written or oral comments in favor of, or in
4 opposition to, the application from the Applicant,
5 the local community, and, for State-chartered
6 schools, the local school board and school district
7 in whose geographic boundaries the charter school is
8 proposed to be located. And that's from 22-8B-6,
9 New Mexico Statutes Annotated, 1978.

10 Now we are to No. 5 of my agenda. The
11 Applicant at this time will be the ASK Academy.
12 And -- I'm sorry. Go ahead, Dr. Duran, if you need
13 to.

14 DR. DURAN: No. That's fine.

15 THE CHAIR: At this time, if you would ask
16 the people from --

17 DR. DURAN: ASK Academy.

18 THE CHAIR: And I'll read this. And I'll
19 read the format for how we're going to function. At
20 this time, we would like to hear from the Applicant.
21 When I get all through with all of these words if
22 you will please, for the record, state the name of
23 the school, the names of the founders of the school,
24 the proposed grade levels to be served and the
25 membership projection of the school. When you -- I

1 gave you a turn.

2 I'll ask you to state for the record a
3 brief description of the school, the reasons you
4 believe this school will benefit the children and
5 citizens of this community, and any other
6 information that you would like the Commission to
7 know about your application. You have 15 minutes.
8 So please be as precise as you can during this time.

9 And this will be followed by the local
10 school board and/or school district representatives
11 having an opportunity to make their presentation,
12 followed, then, by community input, and, finally,
13 followed by the Public Education Commission having
14 an opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

15 So at this time, Dr. C de Baca is going to
16 be the timekeeper. And he will -- he will assist
17 you in telling you how you're faring on this. We
18 have 15 minutes. And you may begin now.

19 MR. STEPHENSON: Madam Chair and members
20 of the Commission. We're very privileged and proud
21 to be here before you today. We are the ASK
22 Academy. My name is Paul Stephenson. This is my
23 partner, Dan Barbour. We are two of the initial
24 founders that initiated this movement.

25 We are a STEM. We're going to be using

1 that phrase quite a bit. Science, technology,
2 engineering, mathematics. "STEM" is an acronym for
3 that. We are a STEM innovation is part of our title
4 in this charter. We're providing a liberal art
5 education with a focus on STEM.

6 But before we really start talking about
7 us, we have two questions to share with you.

8 MR. BARBOUR: I'd like you to think back
9 five years ago, and think to today, and think about
10 what technology you have today that we didn't have
11 five years ago. I'd also like you to think about
12 what technology will there be in five years that we
13 don't know about now.

14 MR. STEPHENSON: And that was a two-part
15 question. This is the second question we want you
16 to think about in the next 15 minutes. What is your
17 passion in life? The reason we ask that question in
18 countless places we go around to speak is because
19 it's all about students. The STEM Academy is about
20 that. We're trying to create an environment where
21 we're trying to connect with students' passion and
22 interest.

23 MR. BARBOUR: So our missions -- we have
24 an academic mission. Our first mission is to
25 improve the retention of the core New Mexico State

1 standards through providing application and context
2 for those New Mexico State standards.

3 MR. STEPHENSON: And we have a second
4 mission, that we're trying to -- we want to create a
5 new learning environment that engages the learner in
6 the process. What an idea. We want to be able to
7 do that through creating project-driven
8 applications, so that lifelong learning can happen,
9 where core curriculum is applied to projects and
10 real applications.

11 We want to create research programs. We
12 want to create strong partnerships with industry and
13 university, which you see sitting in the audience
14 with us today. We want to incorporate 21st century
15 technology, meeting the flexibility of the learner
16 where they are.

17 MR. BARBOUR: Our target population, when
18 fully built out, will be seven through twelve. And
19 that's licensure issues with the State. We propose
20 to serve 600 students. That comes from the State
21 Board for small schools for 600. And we're open to
22 any student on the -- that would like to come and
23 join us at our school.

24 MR. STEPHENSON: Seven through twelve.
25 And we have a purpose. The ASK Academy has a

1 purpose. I want to mention two of them. Two prime
2 purposes are this. We are going to be on a pipeline
3 for seventh through twelfth-grade students in our
4 state to be prepared academically. Attitude,
5 skills, and knowledge. That's what ASK stands for,
6 attitude, skills, and knowledge. We're going to
7 prepare them for those pipelines of job, of career
8 path, and of program for STEM, science, technology,
9 engineering, mathematics.

10 A second purpose would be, again, to
11 create this learning environment, this way that
12 critical thinking is commonplace, that the learner
13 is engaged in the learning process because we are
14 directing the core curriculum towards specific STEM
15 purpose.

16 MR. BARBOUR: So how are we going to be
17 unique? How are we going to take what a normal
18 school does and be a little different to be able to
19 engage our students?

20 MR. STEPHENSON: We are going to have a
21 longer school year.

22 MR. BARBOUR: Going to have a longer
23 schoolday.

24 MR. STEPHENSON: We're going to have
25 year-round scheduling.

1 MR. BARBOUR: We want it to be
2 project-driven as the glue that holds everything
3 together.

4 MR. STEPHENSON: We're going to build it
5 on what we're calling a corporate model. We're
6 going to have not classes, but seminars. We're
7 going to have not teachers, necessarily, but project
8 managers that are experts in the standards that they
9 teach.

10 MR. BARBOUR: It's about relationship
11 building. You see MySpace and Twitter and you see
12 all those social networks. They're building
13 relationships. We'll build relationships also.

14 MR. STEPHENSON: We're going to have
15 radical collaborations. As a matter of fact, one of
16 our partners is Stanford University. They're going
17 to train us how to sit at a table with different
18 thinking people and collaborate in a radical way to
19 create great learning opportunities for students.

20 MR. BARBOUR: We want to train students to
21 be self-directed learners, where they don't have to
22 wait to be told what to learn. They want to be
23 engaged and go out and find out what they need to
24 learn.

25 MR. STEPHENSON: Now listen to this. We

1 want to teach the performance standards at just the
2 right time, so the student can apply it to a real
3 application, a real project, and say, "Oh. That's
4 why I needed to learn that."

5 MR. BARBOUR: We want to create the strong
6 industry and secondary partnerships so that the
7 students starting in seventh grade can see their
8 pathway into a career.

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Twenty-first century
10 technologies overlap all the time. We want to give
11 those opportunities to have the students to see
12 where those technologies intersect.

13 MR. BARBOUR: And as I previously said,
14 we're going to keep it as a small school and cap at
15 600 students.

16 MR. STEPHENSON: Hey. Where are we going
17 to put our school? We're going to locate our school
18 in Rio Rancho. It's where our children are being
19 raised. It's where our heart is, and this is where
20 our passion is.

21 MR. BARBOUR: So we talk a little bit
22 about our capacity. My name is Daniel Barbour. I
23 would like to say I have a bachelor's in
24 mathematics, a master's in science teaching. I've
25 been teaching for 16 years, 11 of them in a

1 wonderful district, Rio Rancho Public Schools.
2 We've built a student research program. At one
3 time, we had 5,000 students exploring their
4 passions.

5 I was a scientific researcher in the
6 military in the Ground Base Laser Beam project.
7 I've helped develop sciences and I've facilitated
8 the development of programs in Career Pathways.

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Again, more about us. In
10 that capacity, I'm Paul Stephenson, bachelor's in
11 mathematics. I have a master's in curriculum and
12 instruction, been curriculum director for math and
13 engineering programs for the last seven or eight
14 years, been successful with meeting staff members --
15 incredible staff members, building a nationally
16 certified engineering program that we plan to bring
17 to the ASK Academy.

18 MR. BARBOUR: So what are some of the
19 other skills that we bring?

20 MR. STEPHENSON: We're very familiar with
21 school budgets. Part of our job.

22 MR. BARBOUR: We're familiar with grant
23 writing, going out and looking for money.

24 MR. STEPHENSON: We're familiar with going
25 to the legislature in Santa Fe and creating

1 educational responsibilities. We're aware of that.

2 MR. BARBOUR: We're familiar with the
3 interviewing process and hiring and looking for
4 people that have job-related skills.

5 MR. STEPHENSON: We've been facilitators
6 for statewide STEM professional developments. We've
7 given workshops all across the state for three or
8 four years.

9 MR. BARBOUR: The opportunities we've had,
10 we're familiar with many of the school processes and
11 of the testing requirements.

12 MR. STEPHENSON: We're not expert in
13 everything, so we know how to delegate to those that
14 are experts in the areas that we're not to get big
15 jobs done well.

16 MR. BARBOUR: We philosophically agree
17 that all students can learn.

18 MR. STEPHENSON: We have extensive
19 knowledge of the New Mexico State standards in the
20 math and science field.

21 MR. BARBOUR: We have extensive STEM
22 connections of the opportunities for our students
23 throughout the state.

24 MR. STEPHENSON: And networking with our
25 industry and with our partners evident by the strong

1 STEM partnership that we have in our board of
2 directors and in our partners for the ASK Academy.

3 MR. BARBOUR: So what will our curriculum
4 look like? We're looking at 28 credits for
5 graduation, above the State minimum.

6 MR. STEPHENSON: The elected curriculum
7 we're bringing in is a program called "Project Lead
8 The Way." It's a national program. It's been
9 around since the mid-'80s. It's out of the East.
10 It is a program much like an AP program, where
11 students can take classes in high-school level, take
12 an exit exam and get college credit from
13 universities like Duke, Purdue, University of
14 California, Colorado, New Mexico State University,
15 who is our affiliate university for the State of
16 New Mexico for the program Project Lead The Way.

17 They will provide us with structured
18 projects in four career pathways. Those projects,
19 we will enhance to make it -- give it the New Mexico
20 flare, if you like, add some green chile to it. And
21 we can make our programs and the programs we get
22 from them New Mexican.

23 MR. BARBOUR: Our organizational
24 structure. We're looking at having an
25 organizational leadership team of three on the

1 campus. We're looking at an administrator with two
2 curricular team people. We're going to -- our
3 governance, we're looking at our governance; seven
4 members on our board with extensive STEM
5 backgrounds. They'll be responsible for the
6 policies.

7 We also want them involved in meeting the
8 students so the students can see what they're doing.
9 And we also think we have a training plan in place
10 to be able to get our board of governance up and
11 running so we know what they're going to be doing.

12 MR. STEPHENSON: We're going to have
13 school goals. And here's a thought. Why don't we
14 create goals that validate if we're making our
15 missions? That's what we're going to do at the ASK
16 Academy. We're going to have smart, specific,
17 measurable, attainable, reasonable, and time-lined
18 goals to make sure that we're making the missions
19 that we've stated, so that you're sure that we're
20 making the missions that we've stated: Creating
21 relationships, creating project-driven programs,
22 research programs, partnerships with our industries
23 and universities and maintaining the academic
24 retention in our students.

25 MR. BARBOUR: So what are the indicators

1 and the performance indicators and the staffing that
2 we're going to be looking at?

3 MR. STEPHENSON: What we're going to do,
4 Dan, is we're going to hire staff that are highly
5 qualified. We're used to that, been doing that job
6 for quite a while, identifying New Mexico licensed
7 individuals that have endorsements in the area we
8 want them to teach.

9 MR. BARBOUR: During our planning year,
10 we'll be developing the staff evaluation process.
11 We know there are some state laws we must comply
12 with. We want it to be meaningful, where we sit
13 down at the beginning with our staff and we develop
14 those goals together. We want -- there will be
15 observations, both formal and informal as required.
16 And, again, we'll be submitting those evaluations as
17 needed.

18 MR. STEPHENSON: Our environment is going
19 to be really, really radi -- it's going to be
20 innovative. It's not going to be your normal public
21 school. So teachers that come out of that normal
22 public school setting, there's going to be lots of
23 training that has to go on for all of us to be -- to
24 meet the missions that we have forth.

25 We're going to have data -- school data

1 strategies for measurement. We're going to develop
2 a central database for all data to go to and be
3 housed in. So at the teacher level, at the leader
4 level, at the administrative level, we can look at
5 specific students, where they are in their academic
6 position and know how to respond to that.

7 We're going to develop placement exams so
8 the students are placed in the proper course at the
9 proper time. We're going to have curriculum maps so
10 the curriculum is tied together well, power
11 standards so we have essential learning.

12 Are they ready for college? We want to
13 use PSATs to identify are they ready for college,
14 sophomore, junior, senior level. ACCUPLACERS with
15 our partners at CNM to do the same thing. And we're
16 going to have standards aligned with common
17 assessments so math teachers at this level can
18 collaborate really well together and make sure that
19 we're meeting the marks.

20 MR. BARBOUR: And as our students come to
21 us, of course, we want to develop placement exams so
22 we get them in the right place. Now, how will the
23 PED know that we're doing our job? Well, we're
24 required to report quarterly SCAs for both math and
25 reading. We plan on developing SCAs for all of our

1 core content areas. We know that we give the
2 Standards Based Assessment in both the seventh
3 grade, the eighth grade, and now the eleventh grade
4 in the spring.

5 We will have our AMOs out there for our
6 students to know what we're being targeted. We
7 understand how to read AMOs and so we think we can
8 push that forward. This is something different.
9 Every nine weeks, we want to have a celebration of
10 success. And this is a hard deadline, where
11 students and the staff celebrate the learning, just
12 like you would in sports, and we show off all the
13 things that our students have been learning over
14 that quarter. And then we want to have regular
15 report-outs using our Web site, using the media and
16 newsletters and any other media we can think of at
17 the time.

18 MR. STEPHENSON: Dan, let's talk a little
19 bit about budget, finance, and facility. What do
20 you want to say about facility?

21 MR. BARBOUR: As you know, facility is
22 always a challenge. We are out looking. We know
23 there are statutes out there for adequacy standards.
24 A Certificate of Occupancy for getting into a school
25 is a little bit higher standard. So we're going to

1 be working with our architects, with our real estate
2 agent to be able to make sure that that building
3 does go forward as, also, we work with the State.

4 We know about ADA, a little bit about fire
5 code, and I'm sure there are some other things that
6 we just don't know about yet, but we'll find out.

7 MR. STEPHENSON: Staffing. We're going to
8 have our class ratio, PTR, 20 to 1. So we have a
9 better ratio. We also -- our FTE allocations are
10 going to be there to support the staffing plan. We
11 want to make sure we're aligned with that FTE. And
12 we've done that as the phase-in goes through the
13 years.

14 MR. BARBOUR: For our internal controls
15 for purchasing and for being fiscally responsible.
16 We know that that is an issue. We've all read about
17 those things. So we want to make sure that all
18 purchases go through our leadership team, through
19 the curriculum and the administrator. One, are they
20 justified curricularly; two, are they justified to
21 help the school run.

22 If a teacher comes to us, we will say
23 we'll sign a request for purchase order and we'll
24 talk about that. From there, we're planning on
25 sending this over to our business management

1 officer. We're going to contract our services with
2 Mr. Michael Vigil, who we have here, extensive
3 experience in public finance. And he's proven to us
4 that he's got separation of duties at his office.
5 We know there's reconciliation reports. We know
6 that there is a yearly audit from which we must fund
7 to have our funds audited. And I think we can make
8 this work.

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Other funding sources.
10 Does anybody have any money in their pocket? We're
11 going to look -- we're going to look for other
12 funding sources. We're going to apply -- we're very
13 comfortable and used to STEM grants. We've been
14 successful at securing half-million-dollar grants
15 over the years, so we know how to do this. We're
16 going to apply often.

17 We have NSF grants sitting in the room,
18 actually, to partner with us. So we're going to
19 look for those sources, critical capital outlay,
20 federal charter school grants, federal IDEA, federal
21 stimuluses, charter school planning grants, and
22 anything else we can find that might support our
23 mission. And in one minute --

24 MR. BARBOUR: Would you like to give them
25 the final impression of what the ASK Academy is

1 about?

2 MR. STEPHENSON: Would I like to do that?

3 MR. BARBOUR: Would you?

4 MR. STEPHENSON: Why, Dan, I would love to
5 do that.

6 Ladies and gentlemen, we are the ASK
7 Academy. We're very passionate about what we've
8 been doing. We've been doing this for quite a few
9 years, and we have a lot of experience with it.

10 Curricularly, we know how to build a
11 school. We know how to meet the passions and
12 interests of the students. And we want to create a
13 new learning environment. Here are sound bites.
14 This is what you leave with today.

15 A new learning environment that engages,
16 truly, the student into the learning process. We're
17 going to be a pipeline for science technology -- and
18 what state has a more rich STEM history than
19 New Mexico? Why not educate our children to assume
20 those jobs? Why not, instead of waiting for people
21 from out of state to come.

22 It is critical that the STEM academy gets
23 the charter and is able to impact at least
24 600 students over four years to our school.

25 MR. BARBOUR: Thank you.

1 THE CHAIR: At this time, is there a
2 member of the local school board and/or district
3 representatives who would like to come forward?

4 MR. LEPPELMAN: I don't see a School Board
5 member. I'm Carl Leppelman, School Superintendent.

6 THE CHAIR: Please give your name, spell
7 it for the recorder also.

8 MR. LEPPELMAN: Carl, C-A-R-L, Leppelman,
9 L-E-P-P-E-L-M-A-N.

10 THE CHAIR: Mr. Jeff Carr has just joined
11 us. Good afternoon, Mr. Carr.

12 MR. CARR: Thank you.

13 THE CHAIR: Hello.

14 MR. LEPPELMAN: Yes. And I think I have
15 ten minutes; is that correct? I read in the letter.
16 Well, thank you for the opportunity.

17 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. I probably had to
18 read the rules, and I didn't. Pardon me. I've got
19 to read these rules.

20 MR. LEPPELMAN: That's all right.

21 THE CHAIR: We now request that you state
22 your reasons this charter school application should
23 be approved by the Commission, and/or reasons why
24 this charter school application should be denied.
25 You have ten minutes. So please be as precise as

1 you can during your time. You may now begin.

2 And thank you. I know you've already
3 given your name and spelled it.

4 MR. LEPPELMAN: Thank you. I was hoping
5 Richard Bruce could be here from the operational
6 site, because he's reviewed it all. I'm a
7 curriculum instruction person for the District. And
8 many of the things that both Mr. Stephenson and
9 Mr. Barbour said are very, very true. We know very
10 clearly that some things he discussed tonight are
11 similar, we've built, as part of our actual
12 Rio Rancho High School.

13 So we understand and have, actually,
14 Project Lead The Way curriculum in our current high
15 school. And it's fully deployed there. In fact, I
16 see some of our teachers back in the audience. So
17 we support that, because it's a national curriculum.
18 It certainly has high standards. Everything they
19 said is very true.

20 They've -- both Dan and Paul have worked
21 on curriculum maps. They've also worked very hard
22 in having students excel in our -- the international
23 science fair. So you know the history of Rio Rancho
24 High School. So I think, really, what you hear --
25 what you saw here when we read it is pretty much a

1 similar replication of what we currently do at our
2 current high school.

3 The only concerns is that I didn't see in
4 the application is, really, what do we do with
5 students who are below level of proficiency. I
6 don't think there was enough detail there to deal
7 with those students, who -- you know, I could see
8 the challenge, the acceleration, all of those things
9 in that plan. But I didn't see enough detail in
10 terms of what do you do when a student comes to you
11 who has other needs, whether it's ELL, free and
12 reduced, those types of populations, language
13 difference -- students who are learning a different
14 language. So -- or a student with a disability.

15 So that's an area that I still think the
16 application needs work. But, overall, when I look
17 at the curriculum, it certainly looks like a strong
18 curriculum. That's my background. And we at
19 Rio Rancho certainly support anything that has to do
20 with leveraging technology to support our students.

21 And they can -- they can actually probably
22 comment that, because we've spent hundreds of
23 thousands of dollars bringing in Project Lead The
24 Way into the high school.

25 The only other concern I did notice in the

1 application is the amount of money it would take to
2 start up that type of a program. And so, basically,
3 I think that's -- it's a high -- a very good
4 program, very strong, very rich. But it has
5 cost-extensive need in terms of training of the
6 staff, the equipment, and software, and then ongoing
7 support for Project Lead The Way. We've made that
8 commitment in the District, in Rio Rancho High
9 School. I know both Dan and Paul have that
10 continuing commitment in the ASK Academy.

11 But as I looked at the budget -- and I'm
12 not the budget person as much as my -- as Richard
13 Bruce. But he did have some concerns and questions
14 about the -- the one-half million capital that was
15 going to be needed to start up the academy, the ASK
16 Academy.

17 So we don't stand in opposition to this --
18 certainly, this charter at all. Nor do we want to
19 talk to Dr. Cleveland, our Superintendent and Board.
20 Certainly, we believe that the students in
21 Rio Rancho deserve as many opportunities as they can
22 have to do really well as they leave our high
23 schools and do well in post-secondary. But if there
24 are any questions you might have of me or any other
25 questions they might have of me, I'm fine to answer

1 those.

2 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Thank
3 you. Okay. We're to the place now that we have
4 time for community input. Public comments and
5 observations regarding the application will be heard
6 at this time. There will be a four-minute time-line
7 limit per presenter. Persons from the same group
8 and having similar viewpoints are asked to select a
9 spokesperson to speak on their behalf. Multiple and
10 repetitious presentations of the same view are
11 discouraged.

12 So are there people who would like to come
13 forward at this time?

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'd like to ask if
15 I could go last --

16 DR. DURAN: Sure.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- if that's okay.

18 DR. DURAN: He's last.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm last.

20 THE CHAIR: We are asking you to come
21 forward, so that we have the best view and hearing
22 ability from all of you. Hello, sir.

23 MR. HANSON: Hi. My name is Bob Hanson.
24 I was a teacher in Rio Rancho for 15 years. In
25 fact, I was on the ground level of the

1 implementation of Project Lead The Way. I was sent
2 to the University of Houston for the great way to
3 technology training, which is a six-through-eight
4 program for the middle-school level, kind of a
5 precursor to the high school Project Lead The Way
6 courses to get them prepped for it.

7 In my experience, to address some of the
8 concerns that Mr. Leppelman had, one thing I found,
9 even with the rigors of the Project Lead The Way
10 curriculum, the students that were below levels,
11 like he was making reference to, I found that just
12 being immersed in the curriculum, the hands-on
13 curriculum, and actually seeing the application of
14 the science and the application of the math that
15 they learn in class every single day, it makes
16 connections. And when they make those connections,
17 they become passionate about learning, not just in
18 their elective course, but also in their core
19 courses.

20 When -- I continued, did Gateway to
21 Technology for two years. Then I was sent away for
22 training at the University of Colorado in Colorado
23 Springs for the Introduction to Engineering Design
24 course, which is a ninth and tenth course, one of
25 the very first courses in the Project Lead The Way

1 curriculum at the high school level. And what I
2 found is the kids coming out of eighth grade to
3 ninth grade, literally, we had a waiting list for
4 them coming in.

5 The kids that weren't fortunate enough to
6 be in the eighth grade course were literally beating
7 down the doors wanting to be in the ninth grade
8 course, and there was not enough time or staffing to
9 take care of it. I just -- I -- there is such a
10 need for this kind of program in any community just
11 to get the kids jazzed up, excited, whatever you
12 want to call it, about learning and actually
13 applying the everyday skills that they learn their
14 courses, math, science, language arts.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

16 MR. HANSON: Thank you.

17 THE CHAIR: Is there anyone else? Yes,
18 sir, from way back there.

19 MR. JOHNSON: Is it Madam Chairman or
20 Madam President?

21 THE CHAIR: Chair.

22 MR. LEPPELMAN: Chair. Okay. Thank you
23 very much. First of all, I'd like to congratulate
24 these two, Mr. Barbour and Paul Stephenson over
25 here. That was one of the best presentations I've

1 seen in many a year. And I wish I had brought my
2 recorder. Thank you. My name is Kim Johnson. And
3 I'm past president of two organizations. One of
4 them, Coalition for Excellence in Science and Math
5 Education. And I believe you used to know it as
6 CESE, on the old school board. And the other is
7 New Mexico Academy of Science.

8 And it was our job -- or it is our job in
9 both of those organizations, to promote science and
10 math education. And we've done much studying over
11 the years over the state of science and math
12 education, not only in the state of New Mexico, but
13 in the nation. And right now, our nation is
14 hemorrhaging. It's hemorrhaging its capabilities,
15 which is the future of the nation.

16 If we don't have efforts like these
17 innovative efforts that combine some of the best of
18 the techniques that have been studied around the
19 nation in terms of teaching science and math
20 education, technology, then the United States is
21 going to be hurting very, very badly. Already, we
22 have India and China catching up with us.

23 This is not just about Rio Rancho or the
24 west side of Albuquerque, or even Albuquerque or the
25 Rio Grande corridor. This is about pioneering and

1 making this country a better place to live in by
2 taking those students that are interested and are
3 capable and pushing them and making them achieve to
4 their highest level.

5 I am highly in favor of this academy. And
6 I know at least two organizations that will support
7 it. I don't have an official board vote from either
8 one, but I am a member of both the boards. So I
9 just want to give you a thumbs-up and say, Please,
10 please, go along with these guys. This is really a
11 great, great thing that they're doing. Thank you
12 very much.

13 THE CHAIR: Did you get his name all
14 right?

15 THE REPORTER: Yes, ma'am.

16 THE CHAIR: Is there anyone else? Yes,
17 ma'am. The lady back there -- I guess lady and
18 gentleman. They must be coming together. They're a
19 team. A tag team.

20 MS. TAYLOR: Good afternoon. My name is
21 Anne Taylor. I'm a Regents Professor at the School
22 of Architecture and Planning at the University of
23 New Mexico.

24 MR. JUAREZ: My name is Manny Juarez. I'm
25 a partner with Design Plus Architects in

1 Albuquerque.

2 THE CHAIR: Hello.

3 MS. TAYLOR: I would like to really
4 support this approach. For years, I've had a
5 program at the University of New Mexico for children
6 teaching them architecture and design. And
7 architecture students have been going into the
8 schools teaching engineering and design with a
9 curriculum that we have used and proved to be very
10 wonderful. Architecture and Children.

11 And we have also had a high school class
12 for the last two summers with -- which we call
13 "Career Discovery" with kids who are probably from
14 economically challenged families who come to the
15 University of New Mexico to explore architecture,
16 design, and engineering.

17 And in this curriculum, there is an
18 interdisciplinary model for using design,
19 engineering, art, and even English language and
20 writing as an interdisciplinary way of teaching math
21 and science. And I brought my little Rubric Cube.
22 I call it the "Rubric Cube" (Indicates) because the
23 idea of the Rubik's Cube is to get all sides, you
24 know, one color. We're saying no, we don't want it
25 all one color. We want it mixed up in an

1 interdisciplinary way, using design and two- and
2 three-dimensional thinking to teach math and
3 science.

4 So I wanted to bring this because I want
5 you to remember it. So it is a very
6 interdisciplinary, holistic way of thinking about
7 the environment and our built, natural, and cultural
8 environments. So I'll stop so Manny can say a few
9 words.

10 MR. JUAREZ: Thank you. We work also with
11 Dr. Taylor. I'm a former student. And now we work
12 on many education programs throughout the city and
13 state, and around the world, actually.

14 We are -- we were asked to come and help
15 with the Academy, maybe provide some of the creative
16 background that some of these students are going to
17 be applying to their studies. So we're very proud,
18 of course, in support of this program. I did want
19 to come from a different -- slightly different point
20 of view, though, maybe it's something that's unique,
21 being someone who has grown up here.

22 We moved here in 1978, my family and
23 myself, and my family still lives here. And growing
24 up and going to school in Rio Rancho, when it was
25 part of APS, this kind of program would have been

1 very beneficial, not only for myself, but for many
2 of my classmates growing up.

3 You know, Rio Rancho is a great place to
4 grow up. I have no regrets. And, of course, my
5 family still lives here. So we've fallen in love,
6 and I think we've been here, you know, quite a bit
7 and seen it really grow. In terms of being a
8 student, and, then, of course, coming back and
9 teaching with Mr. Short at Rio Rancho High School
10 for a period of a few years helping him with his
11 program, I've always wanted to do something for
12 Rio Rancho, come back and give a little bit, now, as
13 a professional and as a business owner of a design
14 studio in Albuquerque.

15 So, again, you know, growing up here for
16 so many years, and this being, you know, one of the
17 few unique programs to really give students --
18 which, again, Rio Rancho is a great program. Don't
19 get me wrong. Rio Rancho High School. But to give
20 another option to help develop the students and
21 their abilities to go on and do bigger things.

22 And so it's just great to be back and to
23 be in support of them and, hopefully, get to do more
24 work here. So I wanted to thank you for your time.

25 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

1 MS. TAYLOR: Our students cheer the
2 students in the school cheer when our architect
3 students come into the classroom.

4 THE CHAIR: I thought you were going to
5 solve that Rubric Cube for us.

6 MS. TAYLOR: No. I don't want to solve
7 it.

8 THE CHAIR: Yes, sir.

9 MR. TRUJILLO: Madam Chair, members of the
10 board. My name is Tony Trujillo. And I'm a small
11 business --

12 THE REPORTER: I've got it.

13 MR. TRUJILLO: Old Irish name. I'm a
14 small business partner with ASK Academy and have
15 been working with Mr. Stephenson for some time now.
16 I run a small business that's been around since 1955
17 called Homan's, Incorporated. And we really cater
18 to the surveying community, contractors and mappers,
19 along with the technology folks at Sandia and
20 Los Alamos.

21 One of the things that I discovered a few
22 years ago is we have 500 Registered Professional
23 Surveyors in New Mexico, which many of them are in
24 retirement mode. Here's the problem. We have no
25 conductivity between a high school and the

1 profession of surveying and mapping. And I feel
2 this new academy could really provide that
3 conductivity, provide future opportunities for these
4 young minds to get into a profession of surveying
5 and mapping, and construction as well.

6 We need people to survey your properties.
7 We need people to survey our new roads, our
8 buildings and for the future. And by providing
9 surveying and things like Goal Positioning Systems,
10 this academy can really do a -- I think, a really
11 nice job for us. So I'm in complete support of the
12 Academy.

13 We provide a lot of professional
14 assistance to the instructors. We provide equipment
15 on loan. And we definitely will help the Academy
16 with, you know, working out some grants from some of
17 these manufacturers that exist throughout the
18 country and the world. Because this is a very
19 important thing that I see in the business that I've
20 been in for over four decades, to have these young
21 minds think about some new opportunities in
22 surveying and mapping. So I thank you for the time,
23 and I do want you to support this academy.

24 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, ma'am. Yes,
25 ma'am.

1 MS. RUGGLES: Pardon?

2 THE CHAIR: Oh, pardon. Another team
3 approach.

4 MS. RUGGLES: We make a connection. My
5 name is Lorraine Ruggles, R-U-G-G-L-E-S. And I'm
6 with the State of New Mexico with the New Mexico
7 Workforce Connection. And I'm here to speak a
8 little bit about the impact of this initiative in
9 regard to our workforce. And this gentleman?

10 MR. KLUESS: And I'm Steven Kluess,
11 K-L-U-E-S-S, with EQC Technologies. I'm here to
12 support the ASK Academy and kind of touch on that a
13 little bit, too.

14 MS. RUGGLES: I am in full support. And
15 Mr. Stephenson's passion has touched me very deeply.
16 I'm a past educator, HR person, trainer, multiple
17 diversified skill sets. One of the things that I
18 do, I'm a business consultant here in Sandoval
19 County with the New Mexico Workforce Connection. So
20 I am the connection after an individual leaves high
21 school.

22 And one of the things that we are not
23 seeing in the workplace is the establishment of work
24 ethic, as Mr. Stephenson tapped on, as well as the
25 skill set needed so that an individual coming out of

1 high school can be gainfully employed as well as
2 being able to support themselves on their own,
3 independently, on a long-term basis so they're not
4 in an employment volatility. Okay? We don't have
5 that.

6 Employers say, "If I could just get
7 somebody skilled with established work ethic, I can
8 teach them the rest." But we don't have that. And
9 if we don't have that, we can't attract future
10 business into our community. So our community will
11 not experience that growth here in Sandoval County.

12 And so I fully support this, and I
13 encourage you to support it as well. One of the
14 things that -- I'll give you an example. Kluess
15 represents a company that I worked with. They are
16 in need of a systems engineer. I couldn't find one.
17 I couldn't find one. And especially today, where
18 our applicant pool is at the greatest it's ever
19 been, with the unemployment rate that we have, we
20 couldn't find that specific skill set customized for
21 this particular employer. That's scary, because
22 this is just one employer. Thank you.

23 MR. KLEUSS: And to touch on what Lorraine
24 said, too. You know, we were looking for a certain
25 skill set that we were looking for from applicants.

1 And the pool was very, very minimal on what we could
2 find. That's one thing why we decided to partner
3 with ASK Academy, for that reason, you know, to be
4 able to help kids, educate them.

5 We do everything from network
6 infrastructure, everything technology-based,
7 videoconferencing. And we're really on top of the
8 ball game as far as, you know keeping up with the
9 current trends of technology, which is sometimes
10 kind of hard to find. We find some people that have
11 the skill set. But -- goes back to the ASK Academy
12 if they don't have the attitude.

13 And, you know, sometimes, you know, we're
14 looking for that as a long-term career growth with
15 our company. So that's what we feel we could, you
16 know, partner with them. And I think it sets a
17 great thing, like Lorraine was saying. They have
18 such a good passion for it. And to me, passion is
19 everything when it comes to that. And change is
20 good, you know. You always used to say, you know,
21 "The only person who likes change is a baby with a
22 wet diaper." And I think it's really good that the
23 ASK Academy is here. And that's why we support it.

24 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

25 MR. KLEUSS: Thank you.

1 THE CHAIR: Is there anyone else? Yes,
2 sir.

3 MR. POORBAUGH: My name is Jim Poorbaugh;
4 Poor -- "B" as in "Boy" -- A-U-G-H. Good evening,
5 Madam Chair. I'm really pleased to be here. And
6 I'm not going to add anything that anybody else has
7 said. But I wanted to share with you what brought
8 me here tonight and something that amazed me.
9 Actually, two stories, and I know their anecdotal,
10 and you have to trust me.

11 I met Paul and Edgar Short at a -- I'm a
12 Registered Professional Engineer. My specialty is
13 transportation engineer engineering. I met Edgar
14 and Paul at a luncheon that they came to talk about
15 Project Lead The Way. And they had some students
16 there. And I'm watching them, and I'm going, "Yeah,
17 right. There's no way that works."

18 And I'm looking at these kids, and I'm
19 saying, "These are just all the eggheads. You got
20 to be kidding me." I had to see it firsthand.

21 And so Paul -- I gave him my card and I
22 said, "Please call me. I want to see this. I can't
23 believe it's true."

24 And I went in and I got the privilege to
25 take the day off and to go spend some time with some

1 brilliant kids, all age groups, 16 to 18,
2 sophomores, juniors, seniors, and I got to review
3 their projects. Blew me away what they did with the
4 computers. They were on par or exceeded technicians
5 that I -- and engineers that I work with. I've
6 worked with engineers who can't make the computer do
7 half of what these kids did.

8 And one of the kids had a project that he
9 had done a complete solar analysis of his home. And
10 you could watch the sun go. And I said, "Why do you
11 have that big awning out there?"

12 And he says, "Well, in the summertime, it
13 provides shade. And then, based on the latitude and
14 longitude, in the wintertime, it shines through and
15 heats up this chimney inside the house and provides
16 natural heating to the home."

17 And I said, "Well, how did you figure out
18 the structures, and how did you do all that? Did
19 Edgar teach that to you?"

20 And he says, "No. We all got together and
21 talk about it." Stunning. I can't get people who
22 sit next to each other to talk. And these are grown
23 adults. And I looked around the room, and on the
24 board there's all these scribblings and writings.
25 And you go up and look. And it's kids that have

1 been sharing ideas. And the strong kids have
2 gathered up the weak ones, and they're working
3 together. And it blew me away. And if I could get
4 people like that in my work environment, I'd give
5 you a million dollars.

6 And another thing that just really struck
7 me is the first time I met Edgar, I went to his
8 class. I said, "How in the heck in one semester did
9 you teach all those kids that software program?"
10 And he laughed and looked at me like I was crazy.
11 And he said, "I don't teach them. They learn it."
12 And what an epiphany that was. Because we can't get
13 people -- and it was mentioned -- to come in,
14 professionals with college educations, to sit down
15 and do those tutorials and to learn the software and
16 to learn the product.

17 But then make that connection to the work
18 flow, and what we're actually trying to do and to
19 see these 16-, 17-, 18-year-old people doing that
20 was stunning. And the only travesty is that there's
21 not more of them.

22 So I would encourage you that it's a great
23 thing. You've got passion. You've got vision. And
24 that passion is the impetus for the school. And
25 what's going to drive the school is its values. And

1 once you combine passion, guided by values, you have
2 success. So I would encourage you to vote
3 positively. Thank you very much.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

5 MR. DOUGLAS: Good afternoon. I'm Gordon
6 Douglas. I'm a teacher at Rio Rancho High School.
7 And I've known Dan and Paul for years. And they're
8 wonderful teachers and compassionate men. And in
9 some of our recent talks, we were talking about the
10 academy and the philosophy. And we talked about the
11 opportunity for students with special needs. And,
12 indeed, some of the entrants into the ASK Academy
13 may be students with special needs.

14 I've been at the Rio Rancho High School
15 since 1997, when the school began. And my
16 discipline is working with students with special
17 needs. And I know that they work off of an
18 Individualized Education Plan, an IEP, or a 504
19 plan. But their curriculum is structured according
20 to those plans and in accordance with the New Mexico
21 expanded benchmarks and standards.

22 I can tell you that these kids are
23 compassionate. They have plans. They work well.
24 They are lifetime, lifelong learners. And they're
25 very smart. There's a way to reach them. And I'm

1 excited about an opportunity like the ASK Academy.

2 One of the things that we do are projects.

3 We are fortunate to have a parcel of land on

4 Rio Rancho High School. And it's a trailer. And

5 some of the things that we've done is we have built

6 indoor furniture. We have built a 12-by-24 deck

7 with a wheelchair access. We've built fences. We

8 have a full kitchen. They learn living skills.

9 It's a doublewide trailer. Reminds me of growing up

10 in South Florida. Makes me want to fry something.

11 So it's a wonderful opportunity for them

12 to see what it's like in the real world. And I'm

13 here to support this and ask that you really

14 seriously consider this academy.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, ma'am.

16 MS. MARTIN: Hi. Thank you for this

17 opportunity to come and be a part of this. I'm very

18 enthusiastic and very excited about it. My name is

19 Debora Martin. D-E-B-O-R-A. Last name M-A-R-T-I-N.

20 I am a parent of a student that has been

21 fortunate -- fortunate enough to be in

22 Mr. Barbour's, as well as Mr. Stephenson's and

23 Mr. Short's -- class. And I also have a daughter

24 who's in the special ed class with Mr. Douglas at

25 the high school. I wanted to speak from a personal

1 background with these teachers I've mentioned, the
2 original three, that they genuinely take a very
3 personal interest in their students.

4 And my son, who's now a senior,
5 unfortunately -- I would love for him to be able to
6 take part of -- in this new program -- but he has
7 been very fortunate and very blessed by these
8 teachers. And they have taken, even from eighth
9 grade with the Science Expo, a very personal
10 interest in my son and I know with other students as
11 well.

12 And my son has been a part of Project Lead
13 The Way there and various technology programs and
14 science and engineering programs that they have
15 offered and has benefited to the extent that
16 being -- let's see -- a junior last year, he was
17 actually given the opportunity to work with an
18 engineering firm here locally, Wilson Engineering,
19 because he has such extensive background and
20 understanding of so many of the skills that these
21 people teach and have a desire to teach. And they
22 have, I think, brought him a great distance in those
23 skills that he's already using in a professional
24 manner.

25 I will go on to say that we are now in the

1 season of applying to colleges. And having gone out
2 of state to several colleges, we talk to them, and
3 we tell them about the program that he's already
4 been -- benefited from under these teachers'
5 guidance and wisdom. And their ears perk up when
6 they hear about Project Lead The Way. And I don't
7 know. I'm not sure I understand if that's going to
8 be continuing at the high school or not. But I am
9 thrilled that you're going to be incorporating that
10 into the ASK Academy.

11 And I think when these colleges that are
12 out of state say, "Oh, I've heard about that program
13 in Rio Rancho," that puts us on the map. That's
14 saying something. And it is a nationally recognized
15 program. If you're not familiar with it, I
16 encourage you to go to that Web site and be
17 encouraged by it, yeah, and be familiar with it,
18 because the colleges are certainly paying attention
19 to it. And if we have an opportunity to teach our
20 students now, at this level, and get -- you know,
21 get a jump start, as they've already spoken about,
22 we ought to be grabbing hold of that.

23 Something else I'm excited about. I will
24 also say that I home-schooled my children for a
25 period of time. And one thing that I loved about

1 that is I did a lot of -- oh, I have to hurry --
2 project-based learning. And I think if each of you
3 take a moment and think about something that you
4 learned when you were younger, or even recently, I
5 would challenge you, did you learn it from a book?
6 Did you learn it by watching? Did you learn by
7 being engaged in it? And I bet you the answer is
8 probably going to be that you were engaged in it and
9 you had hands-on approach.

10 You were involved in a project where you
11 really learned, whether it's -- I don't know --
12 cooking, sewing, building, whatever it might have
13 been. This is the approach that, if I'm
14 understanding correctly, that they want to take.
15 And those kids are going to learn it, and they're
16 going to remember it, and they're going to know it
17 inside and out when they leave here.

18 And a college is going to be very --
19 colleges, universities -- very interested, not to
20 mention employers down the road, somebody who really
21 has an understanding.

22 And such a great need for these kind of
23 job skills in the future, right now, and in the
24 future. And I hope their enthusiasm has been
25 contagious for you.

1 Lastly, I'll close by I think it'll be
2 great for Rio Rancho. This is going to be a school
3 that people are going to say, "I want to come here
4 to get my kids in that school." Thank you very
5 much.

6 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you,
7 Dr. C de Baca. Is there anyone else? Yes, sir.

8 MR. KOLESSAR: My name is John Kolessar,
9 K-O-L-E-S-S-A-R. I'm the old man in the group. I
10 heard about the ASK Academy. I asked Paul to
11 consider my credentials. I have lots of
12 credentials. I'm an engineer from Rutgers, and I
13 have a master's in business from Wisconsin, and I've
14 got an advanced management program from Texas A&M
15 and an executive program from US -- Southern
16 California. But my passion here is not about
17 engineering or 40 years of experience. It's about
18 my kids and my kids' kids.

19 I have a wife that's a teacher. I have a
20 daughter that's a teacher. I have a son that's a
21 Ph.D., and he instructs. We all know about the word
22 "teachable moments." And we know about the learning
23 moments. And what's missing in the weaker programs
24 in New Jersey, Michigan, Wisconsin, Texas, and
25 here -- I've moved in all those states -- is there's

1 a perception that these teachable learning moments
2 float about in the sky to be grabbed down and taken
3 advantage of. That is not the case. I can tell you
4 from my wife, my daughter and my son, they're
5 created. The passion here -- the only regret that I
6 have is that my youngest kid is 25 and can't go.
7 But I have grandkids. I have four of them, and
8 they'll be coming up, and I'm looking forward to
9 that.

10 But I want to support, for the kids' sake,
11 the creation of teachable moments and learning
12 moments so that they can have the opportunity to
13 self-actuate, do their thing. And, obviously, I'm
14 an engineer and a construction guy, so I want them
15 to do it in a technical field if they can, if
16 they're oriented and if that's their interest. I
17 like to think that even my teaching wife and my
18 teaching daughter have a strong technical
19 background. Thank you. And I support this.

20 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir. Is there
21 anyone else?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I want to go last.

23 THE CHAIR: Yes, ma'am.

24 MS. MALNERITCH: My name is Sondra
25 Malneritch, M-A-L-N-E-R-I-T-C-H. I'm a parent in

1 the community. I'm not an engineer with big
2 degrees. I'm a nurse, and I'm here in support of
3 the ASK Academy because my son is passionate about
4 engineering and robotics. And most of the teachers
5 that are in this room have been teaching him since
6 the seventh grade, where he began his passion for
7 robotics.

8 And it's just been such a great thing to
9 watch these teachers take these kids and find their
10 talents and their passions and help them to grow.
11 They have taken my son, Jared, and his friend,
12 Jeremiah, and handed them computers and laptops and
13 robots and said, "Here. We have a project for you
14 and we'd like you to present. Go figure it out."

15 You know, I don't know of too many other
16 regular programs where you would get that,
17 especially for someone who loves the academic world
18 instead of the athletic world. We, so much here in
19 Rio Rancho, push athletics but not academics. You
20 know, they've developed the RoboRAVE, and they've
21 sat and taken kids that we usually don't pay
22 attention to and put them out there and made them
23 feel important and shown them how to be individuals
24 and take something and design something with it.

25 The sad part about Rio Rancho High School,

1 though, is that, you know, the curriculum comes out.
2 They have all these classes they want to take. The
3 kids get real excited. And then all of a sudden,
4 "Oh, I'm sorry. There's not enough kids so they
5 can't do it."

6 I think in the ASK Academy, when they find
7 a kid with a passion, they'll make sure they help
8 develop them in those areas so they can grow and
9 become great members of our community and that
10 they'll be able to give something back to us. Too
11 often -- I work as a work comp nurse. Too often, I
12 work with people that want to take instead of give
13 back. It's very important to see that when my kid
14 graduates and he's done here, he is someone that
15 gives back.

16 He is someone independent. He's not
17 someone that's here to take advantage of our
18 community, and he's not going to take from us, but
19 he's going to give to us and he's going to use his
20 talents. I've watched these teachers help him
21 become that kind of person. He has a passion to go
22 to Carnegie Mellon or to UNM. His friend wants to
23 go to MIT. I don't know if other teachers hadn't
24 been there for them, that they would have those same
25 passions.

1 So, as a parent, and as a parent in this
2 community in Rio Rancho, we stayed here because of
3 the PLTW program. And so I hope you really consider
4 the school. Thank you.

5 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Is there anyone
6 else? Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. McINTYRE: Sarah McIntyre. S-A-R-A-H.
8 Last name is M-C-I-N-T-Y-R-E. I'm a 2002 graduate
9 of Rio Rancho High School, and I'm actually a former
10 math student of Paul Stephenson's. I got a degree
11 in chemistry with a math minor from the University
12 of New Mexico in 2006. And I work in a spectroscopy
13 lab at Sandia National Laboratories.

14 And I can think of a ton of reasons to
15 support this charter. But given that I only have a
16 few minutes, I'll stick to the ones that I think are
17 the most important.

18 The most important thing that I think we
19 need to consider is that we all know that
20 undergraduate enrollment in STEM programs in this
21 country is nowhere near enough to sustain our
22 traditions of excellence in science, research, and
23 engineering innovation. And the statistics are even
24 clear at the graduate education level. And
25 according to the National Bureau of Economic

1 Research, in 1966, only 20 percent of science and
2 engineering Ph.D.s in this country were awarded to
3 foreign students.

4 By contrast, in the year 2000, that number
5 had doubled. And all the Ph.D.s in science and
6 engineering that were being awarded in this country,
7 40 percent were being awarded to foreign students,
8 not American students. And this number continues to
9 increase.

10 We're obviously lagging in STEM education,
11 and this lag is definitely beginning at the high
12 school level. We could debate the reasons for that
13 all day long. But what we really need to consider
14 is what the impact of that lag is eventually going
15 to be. And we all know, you know, when we face
16 challenges as Americans, that range from -- you
17 know, we're going to face challenges that range from
18 energy and climate to biomedical research and even
19 biomedical ethics.

20 And, as a nation, we're known for tackling
21 these big problems and finding the most innovative
22 and the best solutions to them. But if there aren't
23 enough scientists and engineers to tackle those
24 problems, what's going to happen? Are we just going
25 to fail? And I think we all know that we can't let

1 that happen.

2 And that's one of the biggest reasons that
3 this academy is so important and why this charter
4 needs to be approved. Too many promising minds are
5 being lost before they even get to college. And I
6 think that's really because they don't have a chance
7 to dig deeply into these topics and learn why STEM
8 areas are exciting and why their skills in these
9 areas are relevant and why they're important.

10 And I think that the fusion of classroom
11 learning with directed research projects such that
12 is being proposed by the ASK Academy, they teach
13 both fundamental skills that are obviously very
14 important, but they also teach real science and
15 engineering, kind of "street smarts," if you will,
16 because this is a realization that in scientific
17 research and in engineering, just knowing how to
18 solve a math problem will only get you halfway
19 there. It's knowing how to actually apply how to
20 solve that problem that will get you all the way to
21 the answer.

22 And that's what keeps students interested,
23 as has been reiterated several times this afternoon.
24 And I think also the strong emphasis on character
25 building and community service is really going to

1 help their students develop an ethical conscience,
2 which is important to success in any field, but
3 certainly to science and engineering.

4 And to touch, again, on something that
5 Paul mentioned earlier, in a state that has such a
6 rich history of science and engineering, I think
7 it's only fitting that we add to that legacy by
8 making this move to support our future and to
9 support future students. And so with that, I would
10 ask you to approve the charter, and I thank you for
11 your time.

12 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Is there anyone
13 else?

14 DR. DURAN: I think we have one last
15 person. Oh. Two "last" people.

16 THE CHAIR: There was someone that wanted
17 to be last. Oh, I forgot about him.

18 DR. DURAN: This is the next to last.

19 MR. SHORT: Since I can't be last, I'll
20 just be next to last.

21 THE CHAIR: All right, sir. Come forward,
22 please.

23 MR. SHORT: Thank you, Madam Chairman. My
24 name is Edgar Short. And I really have nothing
25 planned to say, except I'm kindly caught up in the

1 excitement of the crowd. So I thought I should say
2 something.

3 I'm speaking as a citizen of Rio Rancho,
4 the City of Vision, and as a blessed teacher from
5 one of the finest school districts in the state.
6 I've worked at Rio Rancho High School for 12 years.
7 And now I have the opportunity to go out to our new
8 21st century high school, Cleveland. I think that
9 we're seeing a moment in history. We saw Rio Rancho
10 school district evolve. We saw Rio Rancho High
11 School come about. We've now seen Cleveland High
12 School come about. And now we have the opportunity
13 to see the first charter school in Rio Rancho High
14 School, a STEM charter school, a charter school of
15 design and extreme collaboration that is going to
16 take place.

17 I see the new charter school not to take
18 away from any existing schools we have in
19 Rio Rancho, but to add to it, to offer
20 collaboration. I see the charter school as an
21 opportunity to evolve new ideas in education that's
22 very difficult for large high schools to do. With
23 the smaller schools, there's more opportunities,
24 more involvement with industry, more involvement
25 with higher education that can come about.

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1 So I would just like to say I think this
2 moment in history deserves the support of existing
3 schools, of the city. And I'm certain that the new
4 high school will make a name for itself worldwide,
5 internationally, in our country, so forth. So just
6 had to say a few things. It's so exciting in here.

7 THE CHAIR: Thank you, sir.

8 MR. SHORT: Hey. Thank you all.

9 THE CHAIR: Is there anyone else?

10 DR. DURAN: I think we have the last.

11 THE CHAIR: The last of the last?

12 MR. PLEIL: The last. Yes. The last.

13 DR. DURAN: I hope somebody out there will
14 come after this guy.

15 MR. PLEIL: I've already got a reputation.
16 My name is Matthias Pleil. I have my card here,
17 because it's German and it's hard to spell. I'm
18 jazzed. I think this is a wonderful opportunity. I
19 think this is a wonderful opportunity, not just for
20 Rio Rancho, but for New Mexico, but for the nation.

21 This is a really good project. I've had
22 the privilege of knowing Paul and Dan for a couple
23 of years now with my work with the National Science
24 Foundation and the advanced technology education
25 grant that I was fortunate enough to get five years

1 ago, and we just got a continuation grant for
2 another three years. So NSF likes what we're doing
3 in New Mexico with education and technical education
4 as well.

5 My background is I got a Ph.D. in physics,
6 and then I worked as an engineer -- so that's kind
7 of strange -- in semiconductors both at Texas
8 Instruments and Phillips Semiconductors. And I got
9 the opportunity to start teaching at T-VI. Now it's
10 called CNM, and now I'm at UNM as well as at CNM,
11 and I teach and do research at both institutions.

12 So I go and reach out to public schools,
13 high schools, as well as universities and community
14 colleges. And our charter that -- with the NSF
15 grant is to improve education for the technical
16 workforce, for the future technical workforce. So
17 we're chartered to go out and talk to, you know, the
18 community, go out to high schools, go out to
19 industry and all of that.

20 So what these guys are doing fits that
21 really, really well. So I've been fortunate enough
22 to be asked to be on the board, and so I'm jazzed
23 about that. I'm looking forward to learning from
24 Paul and how -- and Dan on how they teach the kids.
25 And I think the ASK Academy has the right plan.

1 They've matched the national perspective as well as
2 a need to improve our technical competence in the
3 workforce and by going down to the -- to the
4 K-through-12 level. That's where the kids get
5 interested in science and technology.

6 We have to give them a reason to study
7 STEM curricula. And so being a project-based
8 academy, I really think that's the right approach.
9 It seems to work with all of my students. I do
10 project-based teaching as well at CNM. So we're
11 going to be able to provide an educated workforce.
12 And if some of those students leave New Mexico,
13 they'll actually be great ambassadors for New Mexico
14 as well.

15 So that's about all I have to say. But I
16 would like to invite anybody else who wants to
17 support the ASK Academy to stand with me in support
18 of this venture.

19 THE CHAIR: Is that your way of getting to
20 be the last?

21 MR. PLEIL: That's that. So thank you,
22 Madam Chair, for this opportunity.

23 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you. Is
24 there anyone else? All right. We're to Part No. 9
25 of the agenda. At this time, the Public Education

1 Commission reserves time to address any questions
2 that the Commissioners may have of the applicants,
3 the Chair would like to ask the Applicant for some
4 additional information or whatever.

5 And we'll -- I'll try to take turns with
6 everybody here. And knowing that, to my right, we
7 have four Commissioners. To my left, we have one
8 Commissioner. So I don't think I'm going to divide
9 this equally between sides. So is there a
10 Commissioner who has a question or a comment?

11 Ms. Shearman?

12 MS. SHEARMAN: I do.

13 THE CHAIR: All right.

14 MS. SHEARMAN: I do. I applaud your
15 enthusiasm. It is contagious. But I have to ask
16 the question. It sounds as if you have a really
17 strong program at Rio Rancho High School, very
18 successful, very strong. But then I heard one
19 comment that students sign up for classes, and then
20 they don't make it because of lack of interest, lack
21 of enrollment. So that's sort of a concern.

22 When I think that you all are looking at
23 500 students in your first year, and they can't make
24 a class because they don't have enough students.

25 Layer over that, why do we need another program if

1 Rio Rancho High School already has it and it's very
2 successful?

3 MR. STEPHENSON: That's a very good
4 question. A little bit of correction. We're only
5 going to have 150 students in the first year. We're
6 going to max out at 600 over a five-year time span.

7 MS. SHEARMAN: Okay. Even so, though.

8 MR. STEPHENSON: Absolutely so. And it's
9 a valid point. We -- in our current situation,
10 we're very thankful for our experience and what
11 we've had at Rio Rancho school district. I can
12 speak from both Dan and I. The programs that we
13 have been managing, we were concerned in how it was
14 going to be supported and directed over the next few
15 years. And there were some comments on classes not
16 making -- it wasn't so much that it wasn't the
17 interest that was closing; it was some structural
18 decisions that were being made that were making it
19 more difficult for students.

20 We went from a 32-credit high school
21 career to graduate to a 28. So the number of
22 chances that a student got to choose an elective
23 minimized, lessened. And so -- but those are valid
24 points. And if the program at -- that we have --
25 the programs that we have begun at Rio Rancho do

1 continue -- and we hope they do -- we hope they do
2 for the sake of the students that choose to go to
3 Cleveland or to Rio Rancho in the Rio Rancho Public
4 School district. We hope they do.

5 We've tried to leave them as healthy as we
6 could in the wake of our changes. We brought in
7 grants in the wake of our -- so we've done -- we've
8 tried to make it as positive and leave the programs
9 as healthy as we could.

10 We were concerned with the direction of
11 the offerings that were going be offered to
12 Rio Rancho students. That's why we felt it was
13 imperative that we created another choice in the
14 case that maybe it doesn't, the programs that we had
15 don't survive. There's no tangible leadership in
16 those elective programs. The engineering program
17 doesn't have a manager anymore. And I asked
18 Honeywell last spring, "What happens to your
19 programs when your managers go away?"

20 The programs go away. So we were just
21 concerned about that. And so we went through this
22 venture to anticipate servicing the need of the
23 community, hoping that the programs that we've begun
24 at Rio Rancho do continue. But whether they do or
25 not, children then will have an option at the ASK

1 Academy.

2 MS. SHEARMAN: I appreciate your answer.
3 Thank you. I have just --

4 THE CHAIR: Please go ahead.

5 MS. SHEARMAN: I have several more
6 questions. This one is sort of a nitpicking
7 question. It's on Page 34 of your application. And
8 it's under Counseling and Nursing Needs. Probably
9 what I'm asking for is a clarification. But it
10 says, as the student body increases, a full-time
11 counselor who will also teach will be hired in the
12 second year to deliver full-time service. How can
13 you be a full-time counselor and teach, too?

14 MR. BARBOUR: One of the things that we've
15 been looking at is throughout our careers, we wanted
16 to make sure that whoever comes in contact with
17 students stays in contact with students. So when we
18 talk about having a full-time counselor, our
19 counselor, we plan on having teaching maybe one
20 class a day and delivering their counseling services
21 upon -- on top of that, depending on the counselor
22 and the certification that they have and their
23 expertise. That's something that we'll be working
24 on in the future.

25 But the idea is that we want that

1 counselor in with our students interacting with our
2 students, advising all of our students and helping
3 push forward in the mission, and also not only in
4 the advising way, but in educating our students.

5 MR. STEPHENSON: They wouldn't be a
6 full-time teacher. They would teach maybe one
7 elective course, depending on what they're certified
8 in, to that group of kids, that single slot of hour
9 in the day. The rest of the day, they would be
10 servicing the counseling.

11 MR. BARBOUR: So it may not be full-time.
12 We could have put that at 5/6.

13 MS. SHEARMAN: As I say, I'm nitpicking
14 the full-time component.

15 THE CHAIR: May I interrupt for a moment
16 here, Ms. Shearman? Our role is not to be the
17 cheerleader. Please understand that.

18 MR. STEPHENSON: And I understand that.
19 Absolutely.

20 THE CHAIR: Our role is to elicit
21 responses to concerns we have. We have heard some
22 beautiful presentations today, and we've had some
23 affirmation from the community. But I would hope
24 that everybody in this audience understands this
25 afternoon what our role is. And so please do not be

1 apologetic about it, Ms. Shearman. Thank you.

2 MS. SHEARMAN: Thank you. I appreciate
3 that.

4 MR. BARBOUR: Thank you.

5 MS. SHEARMAN: Is anything going to be
6 online in your curriculum?

7 MR. STEPHENSON: Great question. What an
8 excellent question. Can I field that?

9 MR. BARBOUR: (Indicates.)

10 MR. STEPHENSON: We are going to be so
11 online. I'm going to mention some things that many
12 people in the room may not even know exist.

13 MS. SHEARMAN: May I interrupt you before
14 you do? Give me a percentage of your curriculum
15 that's going to be online.

16 MR. STEPHENSON: Okay. Courses that could
17 be offered as what we may think as an online course
18 will not be created at the ASK Academy. But there
19 will be courses that students can access online that
20 we will be happy to encourage and promote and
21 connect the kids with through other institutions,
22 CNM, maybe, University of Phoenix, or other
23 dual-enrollment type of opportunities.

24 We're going to investigate that and create
25 EMOs with those institutions to provide those

1 opportunities. Or maybe a high school level of --
2 of E-school, we call it in the high school level.
3 There's an electronic means by which to get credit
4 in core standards through E-school type of
5 opportunities.

6 MS. SHEARMAN: Required components of the
7 curriculum?

8 MR. BARBOUR: Yes. Within some of our
9 classes, you will see required components of some
10 online instruction.

11 MR. STEPHENSON: But -- did that answer
12 your question?

13 MS. SHEARMAN: All online, or partially
14 online? Are we talking about a hybrid course, or
15 are we talking about totally online?

16 MR. BARBOUR: We look at some of the
17 courses, depending on student interest, probably
18 being hybrid.

19 MS. SHEARMAN: So give me a percentage of
20 the total required curriculum that will be -- will
21 be delivered online.

22 MR. STEPHENSON: At this point, the
23 percentage is small. There's really nothing in
24 place as required. What we're looking at, in using
25 the E-school type of a vehicle, is a choice, a

1 choice that offers the students the opportunity to
2 maybe take a Mandarin Chinese that we can't offer
3 because we don't have the staff to teach it and that
4 type. But that wouldn't be a requirement. But that
5 would be an offering, an elective choice.

6 Other online -- other online facets that I
7 thought you were speaking of -- and if you weren't
8 speaking of this, stop me. We are going to create
9 an E-portfolio that 100 percent of our students will
10 be using. They will be saving documents in Google
11 Cloud, per se, that will allow them to save their
12 work, present their work. We're going to connect
13 with universities in the state -- really, around the
14 world -- that demonstrates what students are doing
15 and their interest and passion at our level so that
16 universities can see what they're doing, or the
17 workforce, and see what they're doing in the areas
18 of interest they may have. We're going to use
19 Online Vacation in many different facets.

20 MS. SHEARMAN: But as far as a course
21 that's delivered totally online --

22 MR. STEPHENSON: No.

23 MR. BARBOUR: No. Can I defer to that to
24 respond in writing? I'd like to do that.

25 MR. STEPHENSON: That's fine. We have

1 that option, don't we?

2 MR. BARBOUR: Because under state law,
3 students are required a distance learning AP or a
4 dual enrollment. So there will be a provision for
5 students to get online learning.

6 MR. STEPHENSON: Could we respond to that
7 in writing?

8 DR. DURAN: Yes.

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Could we do that?

10 MS. SHEARMAN: Please. Please. Okay. In
11 the preliminary analysis, there were a couple of
12 areas of concern. And I'd like to ask you to
13 elaborate on those, if you would, please. Under how
14 the school will be governed -- and I'm sorry. If
15 there are page numbers on this, I'm missing them.
16 It refers to Page 43 in the application, how the
17 school will be governed. Are we there? The second
18 item, it says the statement, The Board of Directors
19 will hire the principal, and the subject matter
20 specialist is in conflict with state law?

21 MR. BARBOUR: Right. We've looked at
22 this. And we've gone in and we've consulted on
23 that. What we have is it'll be our director that
24 they'll be hiring that will also serve in our first
25 year as both principal and director. And then from

1 there, we found out that the principal will be able
2 to hire a subject matter specialist. We misspoke in
3 this when we found out more about law in our
4 analysis.

5 MS. SHEARMAN: Okay. Down below that,
6 under "Governing Board Policies and Procedures,"
7 refers to Page 54 of the application, "Board of
8 Directors' members can bring grants they may
9 personally manage to the ASK Academy and will not
10 have to depend on the Board of Directors' reports to
11 know what is being built at the ASK Academy. Not
12 sure how this will affect the role of the financial
13 oversight by the board of directors, or whether it
14 is legally admissible, including potential conflicts
15 of interest."

16 MR. BARBOUR: Right. So what we've done
17 here is we anticipate our board of directors being
18 actively involved within our school. We are going
19 to ask them if they're able to help us bring in
20 grants for our school. We want them to be able to
21 support our mission. If there becomes any conflict
22 of interest, then, at that point, before we move
23 forward -- because we did not consult legal counsel
24 on this. We're a little poor at the moment on that
25 one.

1 But we wanted to know that if there was a
2 conflict of interest, we'd decide whether we'd move
3 forward, or, with that particular board member,
4 whether they would step down, because that's an
5 interest in the academy to move the mission forward.

6 MR. STEPHENSON: With that conflict being
7 present.

8 MS. SHEARMAN: Okay. Okay. Let's go to
9 the budget, please; 11000, 157331, Fixed Assets.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: In what year?

11 DR. DURAN: I think that's a -- that's a
12 line item that Ms. Shearman is --

13 MR. STEPHENSON: In any specific year, or
14 just throughout the -- in any year? In year one or
15 two or --

16 MS. SHEARMAN: Year two. 11000, 157331.
17 And now I've got to find it.

18 THE CHAIR: Do you want us to come back to
19 you in a minute?

20 MS. SHEARMAN: Would you, please? I don't
21 want to hold us up. I apologize.

22 THE CHAIR: Ms. Krivitzky, while she looks
23 for that --

24 MS. KRIVITZKY: Hello. I just had a
25 couple of concerns, I guess, in general. One of

1 them, I think you probably could get back to us with
2 this information in writing. But several people
3 spoke and stated that the special ed students had
4 benefited from the PLTW program. And I was
5 wondering if you could provide us with any data that
6 shows us actual growth of special ed students in
7 these programs, rather than having it just --

8 MR. STEPHENSON: Be anecdotal?

9 MS. KRIVITZKY: Yeah. Because --

10 MR. STEPHENSON: We possibly could ask the
11 special ed department to do that. I think what was
12 being referenced that you may have misunderstood, we
13 have had inclusion students in Project Lead The Way
14 courses. As a matter of fact, when we first started
15 the program, we had a small group every single year.
16 And we trained the special ed teacher to impact
17 those kids, those special ed kids in the program.

18 Now, it was modified for those children,
19 small group children. But what was being referenced
20 was just the teaching methodology that seems to work
21 for special ed children as well. And that is
22 hands-on. When you can allow that engagement and
23 allow that -- instead of just cerebral type of
24 learning environment, the hands-on environment that
25 Project Lead The Way provides, or many other

1 programs provide, it assists those special needs
2 seemingly incredibly well.

3 I can -- I don't know in the time frame
4 that you may be wanting to hear this. But I can go
5 do some investigation and try to pick up some
6 archive data that would indicate specific
7 individuals in the special needs population that
8 this type of teaching methodology, and even the
9 Project Lead The Way program, because, Bob, didn't
10 Deb go with you to the training? And she was
11 wonderful with those kids doing many of the things
12 we do with the general ed students as well.

13 I would like to say, yes, I would. And
14 we've got Mr. Gordon does many Project Lead The Way
15 things with his group. When he spoke about doing
16 projects, having them live the learning, not just
17 hear and read and see it. Would that suffice?

18 MS. KRIVITZKY: Yeah. I mean, just my
19 concern is about your ELL students and your special
20 ed students and how their needs will be met within
21 your program. And that -- it sounds like it's a
22 very high-end program with a lot of rigor. And I --
23 which is wonderful. But I know you'll get special
24 ed students applying.

25 MR. STEPHENSON: And we will.

1 MS. KRIVITZKY: You will. And their needs
2 have to be met within that program.

3 MR. STEPHENSON: We have experience of
4 doing that. And what I'll do is go back to Deb
5 Raymond, the teacher that was teaching that small
6 group special ed, with the Project Lead The Way
7 curriculum, and see if I can -- now, that program
8 went away, again, from structural choices and things
9 that made it difficult. We haven't had that for a
10 couple of years. But the first couple of years that
11 we had the program --

12 MS. KRIVITZKY: So they may have some
13 information about that?

14 MR. BARBOUR: And one of the things that
15 it's true that a weakness in our application is
16 about providing for special needs students and for
17 ELL students. But what we know is we know how to go
18 out and find those people that can help us out. And
19 so where we know where our weaknesses are, one of
20 the things that we plan on having for our group --
21 for our school is that we bring in those people that
22 provide that expertise.

23 And so there's a lot of expertise. This
24 year I'm actually on an ELL team, and I'm learning
25 as much as I can from the ELL, from the budget, the

1 home language surveys, all the things we're going to
2 need to do, psy-op instruction. I'm learning some
3 different ideas about how we can take our curriculum
4 and go into the ELL population.

5 We're also learning that with our special
6 ed population. But I think, while this is not an
7 expertise of ours, it's something that we are aware
8 of, and we know we have to bring somebody in that
9 has that expertise.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: And the ELL, I'd like to
11 voice since you asked it. One of our students I saw
12 him at the freshman orientation at UNM. He's in the
13 program of engineering. Fernando Rodriguez Guzman.
14 He's a first-year generation from Mexico, a
15 brilliant kid, but ELL. And we had to bring him
16 through that language development to be able to
17 succeed like he's doing in the program. So we do
18 have experience with that as well, to some degree.
19 (Speaks Spanish language.)

20 MS. KRIVITZKY: I also had just a couple
21 more things. One, in your -- in the analysis, they
22 asked a question about -- it said something about
23 the subject matter specialist will be responsible
24 for curricular budgets. Can you give me a little
25 more idea of what a curricular budget is and how

1 this -- these specialists will be responsible for
2 what part of it? What were you referring to there?

3 MR. BARBOUR: We looked at a school that
4 one of the things that we've gleaned from the way a
5 school operates is that there's an administrative
6 side and there's an educational side to the way the
7 school operates.

8 MR. STEPHENSON: And a curriculum side.

9 MR. BARBOUR: And a curricular. So they
10 operate in tandem, to do the best job that they can
11 for the students. So we've taken the approach that
12 while an administrative side supports the education
13 of the students, the curricular -- the subject
14 matter specialists are in there arguing and fighting
15 for the money to be spent on the dollars that need
16 to go into the classroom.

17 And when we look -- our administrators are
18 going to put money in the classroom, but our
19 administrators have a lot of other activities that
20 take them away from the classroom from running the
21 school. So we wanted to make sure when the budget
22 came to the school and we developed our dollars,
23 that we sat down and looked at what are our
24 administrative side costs and what are our
25 curricular side costs and how they fit together to

1 support the mission of the school.

2 MR. STEPHENSON: And the curriculum
3 director as being the expert in that curriculum.
4 They are making dollar choices for the program, for
5 the staff, and for the kids.

6 MS. KRIVITZKY: Okay. And I guess just
7 one final sort of comment. And I think it's sort of
8 what Commissioner Shearman was talking about. It
9 sounds like the program at Rio Rancho High School
10 has been very successful. And my concern is the
11 replication of a program that's already successful.
12 And I guess your answer was that sometimes it didn't
13 get to stay, or that it was going to go away, or you
14 didn't think it was going to be supported in the
15 future. Is that what you were saying?

16 MR. STEPHENSON: We're uncertain of --
17 based on, respectfully, the decisions that are being
18 made in Rio Rancho, what the future for those
19 programs are, it's uncertain to us, enough to drive
20 us to want to provide a program despite the future
21 health of the current programs.

22 MS. KRIVITZKY: Okay. Thank you very
23 much.

24 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Ms. Shearman, did
25 you find what --

1 MS. SHEARMAN: I found myself. Yes, I
2 did.

3 THE CHAIR: I'm so pleased that you did.

4 MS. SHEARMAN: Thank you. I'm looking at
5 57331. It's under Property in your budget, Fixed
6 Assets. There's nothing in year one. In year two,
7 it's \$120,000. Year three, it's nothing. Year
8 four, it's \$25,000. And year five, no amount is
9 showing. What is that?

10 THE CHAIR: Have you been able to locate
11 that?

12 MR. STEPHENSON: Not yet.

13 MS. SHEARMAN: I'm sorry. If there was a
14 page number, I'd share it with you.

15 MR. BARBOUR: 11000, 1000, 57331.

16 MS. SHEARMAN: 11000, 57331.

17 MR. BARBOUR: I don't see it. Mr. Vigil,
18 can we ask you --

19 THE CHAIR: Mr. Vigil, I think you
20 probably -- I don't believe it would be appropriate
21 for you to help, sir. I appreciate it. But I don't
22 think it would be appropriate.

23 MR. STEPHENSON: So say the numbers again.

24 MS. SHEARMAN: In year two, \$120,000.

25 THE CHAIR: Dr. Duran, is there anybody

1 that can help him?

2 MS. SHEARMAN: Would it help to look at my
3 screen?

4 DR. DURAN: It would probably be in the
5 best interests -- you've asked a great question --
6 if the applicant can respond in writing.

7 MR. STEPHENSON: So give us the numbers
8 again?

9 MS. SHEARMAN: 11000, 1000, 57331, Fixed
10 Assets More Than \$5,000. In year two, it's
11 \$120,000. Year four, it's \$25,000.

12 MR. STEPHENSON: Right.

13 MR. BARBOUR: Okay. What we'll have to do
14 is we'll have to go back and look at our notes about
15 why we coded it that way.

16 MS. SHEARMAN: Then let me just ask the
17 rest of it, and perhaps you want to handle it the
18 same way, because it's the next line, 57332, which
19 is Supply Assets of \$5,000 or less -- \$5,000 or
20 less. Okay. Year two, right underneath the
21 \$120,000, it's \$70,000.

22 MR. STEPHENSON: Right.

23 MS. SHEARMAN: Then in year four, right
24 underneath the \$25,000 -- no. Pardon me. In year
25 three, it's \$10,000. In year four, right under the

1 \$25,000, it's \$57,000.

2 MR. STEPHENSON: And we can respond as to
3 our justification and thought process to you in
4 writing?

5 MS. SHEARMAN: What is it, though?

6 MR. BARBOUR: I'm going to have to go back
7 and look at my notes. But I believe that supports
8 the phase-in of the Project Lead The Way assets as
9 we move forward in our curriculum plan.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: We'll respond in writing.
11 But the curriculum is going to phase in as the
12 students phase in. So there are dollar figures that
13 bring in equipment, training, materials for the
14 Project Lead The Way program, I think, is reflecting
15 those numbers. But let us go check.

16 MS. SHEARMAN: That probably goes along.
17 Because your textbooks in year two are \$65,000. You
18 have nothing for textbooks in the first year. So
19 I'm assuming it all tracks. Let me just ask you one
20 other question.

21 THE CHAIR: Just one second before you
22 proceed, Dr. Duran, now, help me understand what
23 process we're going to do to get this question
24 resolved.

25 DR. DURAN: The process is that they have

1 until September 1st at 5:00 p.m. to respond in
2 writing to any questions that the Commissioners have
3 asked them.

4 MR. STEPHENSON: If we're not answering
5 them now.

6 DR. DURAN: If you're not answering them
7 now.

8 THE CHAIR: Now, Ms. Shearman.

9 MS. SHEARMAN: If we could go back to your
10 revenues. I'm confused between your years on your
11 budget and your school years. I'm --

12 MR. BARBOUR: Yes. When we were putting
13 our application together, there was some -- there
14 was some confusion about what was a school year and
15 what was a planning year. We are planning on being
16 open for five years.

17 And so what you're seeing here is we have
18 a planning year that's not reflected here at the
19 moment. But we have our projected Year One for our
20 enrollment, our projected Year Two. But we are
21 planning on being open for five years on this
22 charter.

23 MS. SHEARMAN: So you're showing, on your
24 final enrollment of 600 students is actually
25 projected in Year Four?

1 MR. BARBOUR: Yes, ma'am. Where you see
2 the large jump in the dollars, because there's a
3 tremendous amount of growth units that show up in
4 that particular year.

5 MS. SHEARMAN: That's in Year Four.

6 MR. BARBOUR: Right. That's in Year Four.

7 MS. SHEARMAN: Why does it go down so
8 dramatically next year?

9 MR. BARBOUR: That is something we found
10 out, when we go from 350 students to 600 students.
11 In the State Equalization formula that we were
12 working with, there's a growth factor in growth
13 dollars that are associated with that. And then in
14 the 600, from there on out, there's no more growth
15 dollar factor that's associated with that formula.

16 MR. STEPHENSON: From 600, there's no
17 growth. So we're getting hit with our revenue.

18 MS. SHEARMAN: You've taken care of my
19 questions. Thank you.

20 THE CHAIR: Anybody else? You?

21 MR. BERGMAN: Yes.

22 THE CHAIR: Anybody else?

23 MR. CARR: Yeah, both of us. You can go
24 ahead.

25 MS. LOPEZ: I think it's a fabulous idea.

1 And I have a daughter who's a scientist with MIT, so
2 I'm very proud of her, what she's doing. She got a
3 bachelor's and master's from MIT. I can't resist
4 saying that in public. So I think this is a
5 fabulous idea. But I really think your governing
6 structure, I'm still confused. Where it says, "The
7 principal is hired by the board" -- and that may be
8 my fault -- "but is also a member of the board"?
9 Did you guys? That's --

10 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. All of a sudden, I
11 think you realize I'm having a problem. I have the
12 most stopped-up head all of a sudden I can hardly
13 hear, and I apologize.

14 MS. LOPEZ: It's in the analysis under
15 "Governance." And it says, "Principal is hired by
16 the board but is also a member of the board." And
17 this appears to be in contrast with State law.

18 MR. BARBOUR: The model we were basing it
19 on when we first saw that is we found out that the
20 principal is not allowed to be a member of the board
21 when we wrote our application. That was something
22 that we learned later, upon -- but we know that our
23 board will be our voting members, and that we see
24 our principal will be making our presentations to
25 the board. They are not actually --

1 MS. LOPEZ: Your board hires the
2 principal, and your principal is accountable to the
3 board, basically?

4 MR. BARBOUR: Correct. Yes.

5 MS. LOPEZ: Okay. That's it for me.

6 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mr. Carr, did you
7 have a question?

8 MR. CARR: Yes. I always love to hear --
9 my passion is education and has been for a long
10 time. And I really would like to commend you on
11 your passion for educating our children. And, you
12 know, I always love to see that.

13 I just have one question. And do you
14 intend to hire part-time faculty, and if so, what
15 percentage?

16 MR. BARBOUR: Well, I've looked at the FTE
17 analysis. And the way we're going to have to cover
18 some of our classes, we'll be looking at probably
19 multiple certifications for some of our staff, or
20 we'll be looking at some part-time employees,
21 depending on how -- depending on what we are able to
22 find as we move forward with the staffing of the
23 school.

24 MR. STEPHENSON: As we go through that
25 interview process, we have to take endorsements as

1 they come in the door. We'll just see what shakes
2 out. I would venture to say the percentage of part
3 time would be pretty small.

4 MR. BARBOUR: I think it will be very
5 small. I know I have some wonderful part-time
6 teachers that they've worked for me. And bless
7 their hearts, they give me full-time efforts.

8 MR. CARR: It's your intention that you
9 would want to keep that to a minimum?

10 MR. BARBOUR: Yes.

11 MR. STEPHENSON: The innovative
12 environment, we really have to have lots of
13 training. And those full-timers are what we're
14 going to depend on to create that environment.

15 MR. BARBOUR: We want to work with the
16 individual. Some families may want to work
17 part-time. We want to keep that to a minimum. This
18 is a cooperative venture where we want to set our
19 goals together. You know, the individuals realize
20 it impacts them on retirement, on benefits, and on a
21 lot of things. So that's something that's worked
22 out cooperatively as we move forward. But the
23 intent is to keep it very small. Thank you.

24 MR. CARR: Thank you.

25 THE CHAIR: I think Mr. Bergman? You

1 had --

2 MR. BERGMAN: Yeah. I'm just sitting here
3 waiting.

4 THE CHAIR: Oh. You're so kind.

5 MR. BERGMAN: Maybe I'm going to be last
6 from this side.

7 THE CHAIR: Maybe. And if anybody else
8 wants to be last, I'll allow them to do that.

9 MR. BERGMAN: That's fine. I don't want
10 to be last. You have an impressive list of partners
11 that you've listed and you noted, in the analysis, a
12 lot of vagueness about that. And I understand at
13 this stage why that might be.

14 MR. STEPHENSON: Vagueness in their
15 involvement?

16 MR. BERGMAN: Yeah. And in the grants and
17 things like that. I see Stanford University Design
18 Institute listed there, and UCLA. What are
19 institutions that are a thousand miles away, what
20 are they going to bring to the table, or can you say
21 at this time?

22 MR. STEPHENSON: I certainly can. It's a
23 great question. Stanford University, their design
24 institute is going to provide for us professional
25 development. They've already committed to that in

1 writing. They would have a K-through-12 program
2 where, just briefly, they've started a design
3 thinking model that is impacting in a positive way
4 their School of Engineering at Stanford, their
5 School of Business, their School of Medicine, where
6 they're showing these departments how to sit
7 together and -- using the phrase -- "radically
8 collaborate." I mean, learn how to listen, learn
9 how to value each voice. This is a very challenging
10 thing.

11 Lots of people talk about collaboration.
12 Lots of people talk about sitting down and creating
13 together. Very few people really pull it off. They
14 are pulling it off. We found them as a success.
15 They're doing it at the university level.

16 So I contacted them in the spring and over
17 the summer. And they've committed to help us make
18 our venture successful in collaboration between
19 disciplines to create a great learning environment
20 for our students. Does that answer Stanford?

21 MR. BERGMAN: So it's professional
22 development for your teaching staff so that you can
23 get the results from the students as they're
24 obtaining out there.

25 MR. STEPHENSON: And we're not going to

1 limit them. If they want to collaborate with the
2 students, too -- really, the students are going to
3 be as big a contributor to the environment as our
4 managers, as our teachers, for lack of a better
5 phrase.

6 UCLA has a professor out there that I had
7 established contact with over the last seven, eight
8 years. She was formerly at UNM. She does
9 nano-technology education at UCLA. She is so jacked
10 up about our vision that she had to be part of it.

11 As a matter of fact, she wanted to be on
12 our board. And I said, "No. I'm sorry. You don't
13 live in the state of New Mexico, so you can't be on
14 our board of directors."

15 But she wants to be a nonvoting member of
16 the board. So she's going to help us shape project.
17 She's going to help us create opportunities of
18 learning. Shoot. We may be -- we may be going to
19 Disneyland. Who knows what she's going to do for us
20 in California? But she's going to do some great
21 things as a collaborator from UCLA and her programs.

22 She has NSF grants. We may be a partner
23 of one of her many NSF grants which she's successful
24 at getting. She was at UNM, and she's doing the
25 same thing there at UCLA.

1 MR. BERGMAN: Thank you. That's all I
2 have.

3 THE CHAIR: Well, I have a couple of
4 documents from which I'm working. I felt sorry for
5 myself and my daughter's printer. And so I only ran
6 off pages from which I had some -- some questions or
7 concerns and things of that sort, not only on your
8 application, but on the PED, the Charter Schools
9 division, on their analysis. And so I'm assuming
10 that you have seen the analysis --

11 MR. STEPHENSON: Yes, ma'am.

12 THE CHAIR: -- and do know that, in some
13 respects, you can respond to it in writing if you so
14 choose.

15 MR. STEPHENSON: Right.

16 THE CHAIR: And so, I guess, perhaps, I
17 should ask Dr. Duran. Is there a time limit on
18 that? Is that that September 1 also?

19 DR. DURAN: It is the same time limit.

20 THE CHAIR: Okay. Just so we're clear on
21 that, if you want to.

22 MR. STEPHENSON: So we're clear, all our
23 responses will go to the same place?

24 DR. DURAN: They go to Beverly Friedman.

25 THE CHAIR: To Beverly Friedman. But you

1 do have a few days.

2 MR. STEPHENSON: Sure. Right. And we've
3 been working on their responses for a while. Yeah.

4 THE CHAIR: And I hope that all of us
5 recognize how very critical these time lines are.
6 Most of them are established in law. And we have
7 nothing really to do about it except to say, "Oh,
8 my. It's difficult for everybody." But we hope
9 that you appreciate that you can respond to the
10 analyses, as well as to individual questions or
11 comments from -- from the Public Education
12 Commission people.

13 I -- I would -- I, too -- I guess I had
14 some problems at different times in trying to
15 establish what you did about the school year and
16 where you were with that. But I think that that was
17 probably pretty well taken care of.

18 I'm on Page 56 your -- of your
19 application. And I -- it is a -- it's a recurring
20 question with me. Down in paragraph 3, in --
21 towards the center of the paragraph, "ASK teachers,
22 in collaboration with industry and university
23 representatives."

24 And then what, really, then, happens to me
25 are the -- are the partnerships. And I have a

1 number of places throughout the documents that I --
2 that I looked at some of those. And I went back,
3 then, to the -- to the -- I believe it was
4 Appendix -- Appendix C. And you had listed the
5 partners. And I just will suggest to you that we've
6 been -- is this our third year that we're doing
7 this?

8 DR. DURAN: It seems like 15. But I
9 think --

10 THE CHAIR: It's our third year. And in
11 the process of doing this, although in such a very
12 short time frame, we have discovered that many
13 applicants -- and I hate to use that word, "many" --
14 but many applicants have said they had a
15 partnership, or thought they have a partnership.
16 And when we started checking, we discovered that the
17 other half of the partnership had no idea that
18 anybody was using their good auspices as a
19 partnership.

20 MR. STEPHENSON: Yes.

21 THE CHAIR: And so I just ran off one page
22 of it, and that was Page 69, where you listed -- I
23 don't know -- one, two, three, four, partners here.

24 MR. STEPHENSON: Right.

25 THE CHAIR: But I was looking to see,

1 could I find that these entities knew that you were
2 seeking their collaboration?

3 MR. STEPHENSON: Did you call them?

4 THE CHAIR: And I truly believe it's
5 important for us to know whether you really have or
6 not. And it's not necessarily that we're doubting
7 your veracity. It's just that we've discovered
8 that --

9 MR. BARBOUR: No. It's a great question,
10 and it's a great concern. As we embarked upon this
11 project, we got letters of support from all of those
12 partners that you see there willing to help us as we
13 move forward. We anticipate them helping us with
14 our project development, with our products, with our
15 services, with our internships.

16 We do -- like we say, the letters of
17 support came. The level of support from each of
18 these partners is the comfort level at which those
19 partners feel that they can contribute. So we've
20 taken that very, very seriously as we move forward.
21 But what we wanted the Commission to know is that we
22 have an incredible amount of resources that we can
23 leverage as we move forward.

24 Will all of them pan out? I would venture
25 to say not. But are there some in there that will

1 be a larger player than others, yes. But by this
2 idea of design thinking, when we bring all of our
3 players to the table, we're going to get a lot of
4 different perspectives as we move forward.

5 THE CHAIR: Surely. I just wanted to call
6 this to your attention, because the problem we've
7 found is frequently, the partner didn't know he was
8 being included.

9 MR. STEPHENSON: To respond to that
10 directly, we sent out letters to scores of partners
11 that we had developed over the last seven, eight
12 years. We did not put anybody's name in this
13 application that we did not physically get a letter
14 of commitment from. We -- since then, we have
15 gained many more, since the application went in.

16 But if -- with the numbers of requests
17 that we sent out, if they did not send a letter
18 back, we did not add their name to the application.
19 Does that not mean that they're -- for example, we
20 got -- Sandia National Labs sent me an official
21 letter after the application went in. But other
22 partners didn't send me a letter. Does that mean
23 they're not going to? Of course, we are, or we
24 expect them to. But the role that they play will be
25 wide and varied. And that's really what we want and

1 what we need to get the needs met.

2 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Because
3 one or more places, you indicated that the partner
4 might be not only a partner in the learning
5 environment, but in the job --

6 MR. STEPHENSON: That's right. In
7 different roles, different facets.

8 THE CHAIR: Help in employing students and
9 so on. So I was very muchly interested in that.
10 And I will tell you, I -- somewhere here, you had
11 Appendix B. And that turned out -- as far as I
12 could tell, when I was going through this on the
13 computer, it turned out to be the discipline matrix
14 rather than something about partnerships. So it
15 could be my -- my error or something.

16 So you might want to -- you might want to
17 check on that and just -- and just see. I do have a
18 question -- a question to ask you. In the process
19 of -- of doing this, New Mexico has been very
20 heavily involved with the National Association
21 for -- let's see. It's NACSA. Charter Schools --

22 DR. DURAN: National Association of
23 Charter School Authorizers.

24 THE CHAIR: Authorizers. I can never
25 remember the "Authorizers" part of it. We hope

1 we're up for an award in that field this year,
2 because we -- our staff has done such an outstanding
3 job, in my estimation, in this very short time
4 putting these kinds of -- of things together so that
5 we can do certain things.

6 And among those things, one of them is
7 having the workshops. Did any of your people attend
8 any of those PED workshops, CSD workshops?

9 MR. STEPHENSON: Many of us did; and some
10 of us, every single one.

11 THE CHAIR: Good. Because I didn't see
12 any reference to it in here. And I'm not suggesting
13 that it's not there. But, you know, when you get to
14 reading at midnight, sometimes you miss some of
15 those. I was particularly concerned, because when I
16 got over here to Page 89 of your application -- and
17 we're talking about facilities -- now, again, I will
18 tell you that, as Commissioners, we all have a
19 number of jobs. And I'm not talking about jobs for
20 hire or for pay. I'm talking about number of jobs
21 on the Commission.

22 So we have -- one of our Commissioners,
23 who is not here today, serves on the New Mexico
24 Public School Insurance Authority. And so she
25 usually is very muchly interested when we get to

1 that particular section of an application to see,
2 Uh-oh, did these people -- have they really been
3 looking at what takes place with the insurance.

4 I happen to serve on the Public School
5 Capital Outlay Council. And I have been very
6 interested in what happens with adequacy standards.
7 And, again, that's been another innovative program
8 that has taken place in New Mexico in the last six
9 or seven years.

10 I couldn't find any reference to adequacy
11 standards in your material. And one of the
12 problems -- and I bring up specifically the
13 New Mexico School Insurance Authority and the Public
14 School Capital Outlay Council is because, seemingly,
15 when the charter school movement started in
16 New Mexico, at least the sponsors of those charter
17 schools were so enthusiastic about what they wanted
18 to do for children that many times, they didn't put
19 those children in a safe place. And nobody really
20 checked it out very carefully.

21 And suddenly, the New Mexico School
22 Insurance Authority came along and discovered that
23 those children were not -- and staffs -- were not
24 being housed in places that had safe environments
25 for children.

1 And so I just would caution you on this,
2 because I -- I believe that while you are talking
3 here, on Page 89, about your need for 60,000 to
4 80,000 square feet to adequately accommodate the
5 maximum of a 600 population, I also believe that you
6 need to know that there are adequacy standards in
7 New Mexico, and they certainly have to be met or
8 there has to be a waiver granted by the Public
9 School Capital Outlay Council. And you may --

10 MR. STEPHENSON: Would you like for us to
11 respond?

12 THE CHAIR: -- find that that's not hard
13 to accomplish. It's just that it has to be a matter
14 of record that it was addressed. And so I would
15 caution you to do that, because we want our children
16 and our teachers and other staff members to be
17 housed in places that are not only safe, but they
18 are -- I have a goal in New Mexico. And that's for
19 every child to go to a school building that is as
20 good as that bank building down the street.

21 MR. STEPHENSON: You got it.

22 THE CHAIR: I'm not --

23 MR. BARBOUR: One of the things that I'd
24 like to put on record is that Rio Rancho Public
25 Schools has been incredibly good to us. We're -- we

1 spoke with Dr. Cleveland, and we've let her know we
2 want this to be a cooperative effort. Part of
3 designing the schools -- and I've been impressed
4 with their processes, and you'll see many of these
5 things that we've modeled off of what we've learned
6 in our career of education with the Rio Rancho
7 Public Schools from some of the smaller schools that
8 we came from -- is that I learned that adequacy
9 standards exist. We know a little bit about how
10 science labs have to be 150 students per science
11 lab.

12 I know a little bit -- we know a little
13 bit about the required minimum square footage for
14 how many students going to class. There's a lot
15 more out there that we know we're going to have to
16 research. We're going to be bringing, as we move
17 forward from the design with our architects or
18 design when we get a building, and when we're moving
19 into, we know that those have to be addressed. And
20 in our application, we wanted you to know that we
21 had an idea that they were there.

22 They're probably -- they're a lot more in
23 depth than either one of us can speak to off the top
24 of your head. But we know that we're going to be
25 putting our own children there. And I would agree

1 with you that it has to be a safe place. Rio Rancho
2 High School and the entire district has done a great
3 job at teaching us about things like that.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you. Okay.
5 Let's see. And -- that was a question. I had a --
6 oh. I was also concerned about the ancillary
7 services, starting over here on Page 91,
8 Transportation, no transportation services, no food
9 services. I don't know how you anticipate, when
10 you -- and this is, I guess, where I had the
11 question about what was the second year here on
12 Page 92.

13 In the second year, the ASK Academy will
14 hire a full-time counselor on staff. Up until that
15 time, you will -- will try to contract with CES and
16 in an effort to try to do that. And I -- I just
17 haven't followed up that closely in recent years
18 over whether CES really helps the more urban schools
19 in that kind of activity or not.

20 I know that in rural New Mexico, CES has
21 been very, very instrumental in helping school
22 districts share counselors, helping school districts
23 share school nurses and all of those and that sort
24 of thing. But I'm having -- I'm having a hard time
25 looking at this and trying to see when you're going

1 to anticipate having a counselor. Is it -- is the
2 service going to be available that very first year
3 that you're going to have students?

4 MR. BARBOUR: The first year -- in fact,
5 this came from our workshops about -- in the first
6 year with our enrollment, our budget is very lean.
7 So we were looking at how we were going to
8 prioritize our dollars. And contracting services
9 for ninth- and tenth-graders, we felt was a good
10 idea.

11 We're starting -- we know we have a
12 five-year plan and some things to put in place along
13 those lines that we're aware of that we thought we
14 could do with our staff. For something more in
15 depth, the counseling services would be contracted.
16 In fact, the other night, we actually had a
17 discussion about maybe reprioritizing the budget to
18 bring a counselor on the first year.

19 But we know in the second year, when we
20 bring in the eleventh-graders, we're going to need
21 heavy-duty academic advising, because
22 eleventh-graders are exploring their college
23 choices. So in the second year of students, that
24 we'll have a counselor on board to assist with all
25 of those duties that we have. And that's full-time.

1 MR. STEPHENSON: And even when the numbers
2 get larger in that second year, more numbers of
3 students, more emotional needs are going to need to
4 be met, where we thought, in that first year, with
5 just 150, we could contract those situations up when
6 they arose and have that done by CES. As the
7 numbers got larger, we thought we might need a
8 person on campus.

9 MR. BARBOUR: And then the year we go to
10 600, we also bring on another counselor. And that
11 follows with the ASCA model for keeping ratios right
12 around 350 to 1 for a counselor.

13 THE CHAIR: Sometimes if you haven't asked
14 for a waiver, New Mexico regulations kick in on that
15 and tell you you have to have certain of those kinds
16 of things. So you need to be certain.

17 MR. STEPHENSON: Okay.

18 THE CHAIR: I'm looking at Page 26 of your
19 application. And I'm down here under Graduation
20 Requirements, that you're going to require
21 28 credits for a student to be graduated. And this
22 is the note I wrote to myself, probably midnight
23 some night. Throughout the document, the assumption
24 seems to be that more is better, a longer schoolday,
25 a longer school year, more -- more hours and things

1 of that sort. And so I'd like for you to address
2 why -- why is more better here.

3 MR. BARBOUR: In a project-driven
4 curriculum, when you're -- when it's not didactic
5 and it's not lecture -- probably lecture is the most
6 efficient way to deliver information. But when you
7 start bringing in a project-driven curriculum,
8 there's time for setup. There's time that the kids
9 are going to be engaged. There's going to be some
10 thinking time.

11 So we felt that the longer schoolday would
12 allow that timing for the kids to be able to work on
13 those projects, to get into those and to work that
14 way. You'll see our longer school year. We took
15 on -- most of the longer school year, we have an
16 imbalance in the fall and the spring. We have more
17 days in the spring than we have in the fall. One of
18 the things is that in the spring, there's a lot more
19 testing mandates on us.

20 MR. STEPHENSON: Which takes the kids out
21 of the class.

22 MR. BARBOUR: Which takes them out. So we
23 thought if we put more days in the spring than we
24 put in the fall, we'd be able to accommodate the
25 testing, but still be able to have almost an equal

1 amount of instruction in the fall and the spring.
2 That was our thought process behind being able to
3 accommodate the compliance with testing, but to help
4 integrate the ideas of the curriculum that we wanted
5 to bring forth.

6 MR. STEPHENSON: And I wanted to address
7 your thoughts of 28 being more. In our way of
8 thinking, that was less. For the majority of our
9 time in Rio Rancho, and personally, in teaching at
10 Rio Rancho, we had 32 credit opportunities for a
11 nine-through-twelve student, eight classes each of
12 the four years. Graduation requirements were 29.
13 You had to get 29 credits to graduate from
14 Rio Rancho.

15 That's changed over the last couple of
16 years. But we -- we -- another reason for that is
17 we want to provide -- when you shorten the
18 requirements to graduate, you're shortening the
19 richness of elective offerings that the students can
20 take in the program. And just by sheer -- there's
21 not enough numbers; right? Not enough number of
22 offerings, slots for them to take a course and a
23 program and develop through that. So we wanted to
24 keep it at 28.

25 You know, that may be more in some

1 mindsets, because it's more than the State
2 requirement. But in the world we've been living in,
3 we didn't really see it that way as 28 being more.
4 And we wanted to make sure we offered -- had enough
5 slots that the students could take the program,
6 Project Lead The Way, and the core curriculum as
7 they're integrated together.

8 THE CHAIR: Okay. So I'm going to go now
9 to Page 23. And it's almost another thing very
10 similar to that. But I'm looking up here at your --
11 at your time line for the day. And I'm looking, and
12 I'm multiplying seven -- a seven-hour classroom day,
13 if you will, I guess is the way to express it.

14 MR. STEPHENSON: Right.

15 THE CHAIR: And seven times four is 28.
16 And that doesn't give that student any opportunity
17 to stub his toe? What happens if he stubs his toe?

18 MR. STEPHENSON: Correct.

19 THE CHAIR: You're talking to an old high
20 school teacher.

21 MR. STEPHENSON: Absolutely. The -- what
22 will happen with that is to be able to plug into
23 programs -- we're kind of a -- we've been high
24 school teachers for a long time, too. And we found
25 in the model where we offered 32 classes for a

1 student to be able to take in four years and you
2 only have to have 29 to graduate, that sort of had
3 an embedded complacency that it created in the
4 learner.

5 I'm in geometry as sophomore, and I may
6 not -- I know that if I don't take it, I can take it
7 again next year. I don't have to go to summer
8 school. I don't have to do other things that are
9 going to cost me personally as a learner. And,
10 therefore, I can opt out that way. So we saw that
11 creating that kind of environment.

12 But we feel that if we raise that bar of
13 expectation, that our students will rise to it. And
14 again, if they don't, if they stub their toe, we're
15 going to be flexible with that. We're going to be
16 flexible in creating opportunities for them to learn
17 it during the summer, summertime opportunities and
18 making up those needs. And E-school. They can
19 create an electronic means by which they could make
20 up that credit, again, in other means and other
21 ways.

22 THE CHAIR: Okay. So you really are
23 offering some other ways that that student can --
24 can overcome without sitting there for another whole
25 year?

1 MR. STEPHENSON: Oh, no.

2 MR. BARBOUR: And we're also looking at
3 front-end loading with the relationships ideas. We
4 want to make sure that one of the most valuable
5 programs, we felt -- it's called a credentialing
6 program. but it's a program where one person
7 follows a certain amount of kids all the way through
8 their educational career. They develop that
9 relationship.

10 They're the inside person for that school.
11 They know the system, and they are quick to make
12 that contact with the parents or with the kids or to
13 be their advocate within the school, so that if we
14 front-end load, that we think that we can minimize
15 those issues. For when those issues do come up, we
16 would look at our creative ways for online learning
17 or offering summer school programs that maybe some
18 of our other school partners offer that allow our
19 kids to get caught back up.

20 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I'm not going to
21 spend, I don't think, any more time on this. And
22 I'm not certain if you're going to respond to this.
23 I'm not certain that there's any point in my going
24 back -- back through the analysis. I mean, we would
25 just be -- let me just look very quickly, because I

1 did write some things sometimes. I might not still
2 have an answer, even, though. But I think that you
3 have answered my questions.

4 Anybody else have any questions or
5 comments now? Okay. Madam legal counsel, we've got
6 some -- we have some legal things to read, don't we?
7 Dr. Duran?

8 DR. DURAN: Madam Chair and members of the
9 Commission. Just for clarification, CES has
10 expanded, and it does serve urban as well as rural
11 districts.

12 THE CHAIR: Okay. I just didn't know it.
13 Thank you very much.

14 DR. DURAN: And, in fact, they did present
15 at the workshop. There's that possibility.

16 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I'm appreciative
17 of knowing that. For years, they were doing well to
18 help rural New Mexico. And it's wonderful that they
19 have been able to offer those services to -- to the
20 larger places in New Mexico.

21 Okay. I think we are down here to Item
22 No. 10. And the Commission encourages continued
23 public input in writing until September 1, 2009, at
24 5:00 p.m. Written comments should be sent to the
25 Public Education Commission in care of Beverly

1 Friedman, at 300 Don Gaspar Avenue, in Santa Fe,
2 New Mexico, 87501. Or she has an e-mail address,
3 bev.friedman@state.nm.us. And so that just really
4 makes the record-keeping by 5:00 p.m.

5 Thank you again. And thank you people in
6 the audience for coming and being supportive of a
7 program that it's obvious you feel very strongly
8 about. The Commission appreciates your being here
9 with us this afternoon. Oh. I have something else
10 to read? Oh. He shouldn't give me two pages. I
11 can't turn the page. Thank you, Dr. Duran.

12 Okay. Yes, ma'am. By all means, we want
13 to thank the community of Rio Rancho for their
14 hospitality; in particular, the Meadowlark Senior
15 Center, for the use of their facilities and for
16 working so cooperatively with our staff.

17 The Commission will recess until tomorrow
18 morning, August the 26th, and we will reconvene at
19 8:00 a.m. at the CNM Workforce Training Center in
20 Albuquerque, New Mexico. And so that's over across
21 the way. So at that time, we will -- I think --
22 isn't the Sign Language the first one?

23 DR. DURAN: Yes. That is correct.

24 THE CHAIR: The Sign Language Academy is
25 the first one. Again, thank you, ladies and

1 gentlemen, very much. And Rio Rancho, thank you
2 very much. And I will tell you, I was on the State
3 Board of Education when we did the Rio Rancho school
4 district. And I, too, have watched Rio Rancho as it
5 has progressed over the years.

6 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

7 (Proceedings concluded at 6:40 p.m.)
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1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO

3
4 IN THE MATTER OF:

5 THE ASK ACADEMY

6
7
8 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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

16 In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my
17 hand on September 2, 2009.

18
19
20
21 _____
22 Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR, CCR #219
23 201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630
24 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

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