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BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE MATTER OF:

NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR ARCHITECTURE, CONSTRUCTION
AND ENGINEERING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
CHARTER SCHOOL PUBLIC INPUT HEARING
August 26, 2009
9:35 a.m.
5600 Eagle Rock Avenue, NW
Albuquerque, 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:

- MS. CATHERINE SMITH, Chair
- MR. M. ANDREW GARRISON, Vice Chair
- MS. MILLIE POGNA, Secretary
- MS. KATHRYN KRIVITZKY
- MS. CAROLYN SHEARMAN
- MR. VINCE BERGMAN
- MR. JEFF CARR

STAFF:

- DR. DON DURAN
- MR. SAM OBENSHAIN
- MR. MICHAEL C DE BACA
- MR. RUDOLPH ARNOLD, Attorney for PED
- MS. PATRICIA BUSTAMANTE, Attorney for PEC
- MS. MARJORIE GILLESPIE
- MS. CORINA CHAVEZ

1 THE CHAIR: Commissioners, I have just
2 asked Dr. Duran. We anticipate being able to
3 accomplish this hearing and another one this
4 morning. And then we'll be on our own for lunch.
5 And then we will accomplish two this afternoon. So
6 we'll work with that kind of a time frame.

7 At this time, I would like to state the
8 purpose of the hearing, which is to solicit both
9 written and oral input on the proposed charter. In
10 accordance with the Charter Schools Act, the
11 Commission shall receive applications for initial
12 chartering and renewals of charter for charter
13 schools that want to be chartered by the State, and
14 approve or disapprove those charter applications.
15 And that's a citation from 22-8B-16, New Mexico
16 Statutes Annotated, 1978.

17 In addition, the Charter School Act states
18 that, quote, "The chartering authority shall hold at
19 least one public hearing in the school district in
20 which the charter school is proposed to be located
21 to obtain information and community input to assist
22 in its decision whether to grant a charter school
23 application. Community input may include written or
24 oral comments in favor of, or in opposition to, the
25 application from the applicant, the local community

1 and, for State-chartered schools, the local school
2 board and school district in whose geographic
3 boundaries the charter school is proposed to be
4 located." End of quote. And this comes from
5 22-8B-6, New Mexico Statutes Annotated, 1978.

6 The Applicant, at this time, will be the
7 New Mexico School of Architecture, Construction and
8 Engineering. In just a moment or two, we would like
9 to hear from the Applicant. And you are here now at
10 the table. And thank you. When you get a turn, for
11 the record, please state the name of the school, the
12 name or names of the founder or founders of the
13 school, the proposed grade levels to be served, and
14 membership projection of the school.

15 We will request that you state for the
16 record a brief description of the school, the
17 reasons you believe this school will benefit the
18 children and citizens of this community, and any
19 other information that you would like the Commission
20 to know about your application.

21 You will have 15 minutes to make your
22 presentation, so we ask that you be as precise as
23 possible during this time. Following that, we will
24 hear from the local school board and/or district
25 representatives and then we will have community

1 input with a four-minute time limit. And then we
2 will have the opportunity for Public Education
3 Commissioners to ask questions or make comments to
4 the Applicant.

5 So, at this time, the Chair recognizes the
6 Applicant. Good morning.

7 MR. MONFILETTO: Good morning. Madam
8 Chair, my name is Tony Monfiletto. T-O-N-Y,
9 M-O-N-F-I-L-E-T-T-O.

10 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: And I'm Tori
11 Stephens-Shauger, T-O-R-I, S-T-E-P-H-E-N-S, hyphen,
12 S-H-A-U-G-E-R. And we're the cofounders of
13 New Mexico School for Architecture, Construction and
14 Engineering.

15 MR. MONFILETTO: Our school will have a
16 maximum enrollment of 430 students serving grades
17 nine through twelve.

18 Madam Chair and members of the PEC, we'd
19 like to thank you very much for the opportunity to
20 be here this morning to present our charter and also
21 to provide written feedback that we gave earlier
22 this week to the questions posed by the PED staff.
23 I'd like to start by giving you a little bit of
24 context or background about how we came to be
25 involved with the charter and about the purpose and

1 mission of the work that we'd like to do.

2 About eight months ago, I began doing some
3 volunteer work for an organization called the
4 New Mexico Building and Education Conference. It's
5 a group of construction industry professionals,
6 leaders in the construction industry that are
7 looking to work with public education to create a
8 more better prepared workforce for the future.

9 And in those deliberations, I was struck
10 by the interest of the construction profession in
11 working with schools, and the schools simultaneously
12 having such a really difficult time around
13 graduation rates across the state. And the more I
14 listened to the folks that were part of the Building
15 and Education Conference Board, the more I realized
16 that what they do in their companies every day and
17 on every job site across the state is exactly the
18 kind of thing that we need to be doing in schools;
19 relevant, hands-on, complex thinking that happens on
20 the job site.

21 If we could figure that out, how to take
22 those experiences from work and make them part of a
23 school, we could engage kids in a whole new way that
24 would keep them in school, get them graduated, and
25 get them prepared for a career in the construction

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1 profession. That's how I got here. I got here
2 because I saw what they had to offer was exactly
3 what children needed in our community.

4 Our school has the singular purpose of
5 addressing the graduation issue in New Mexico. We
6 have a vision of establishing a school that will
7 push the boundaries, create a new context for a
8 public-private partnership to work with young
9 people, very hands-on, very involved in
10 participation by the construction industry itself,
11 through community agencies that we have partnered
12 with to grow the institution, and through a network
13 of national support that we think are the
14 ingredients that will be necessary to not only
15 visualize what a school could be, but to grow that
16 institution over the next five to ten years to
17 become the best career and technical education
18 school in the country. That's our ambition. And I
19 think that we have the resources in place and a
20 vision in place to make that happen.

21 Before I partnered with Tori to create
22 this charter and submit it to you for your approval,
23 I was the executive director and cofounder of Amy
24 Biehl High School, which is a school here in
25 Albuquerque. It was the first -- it was one of the

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1 first schools chartered in the state. I led that
2 school through its formative, start-up phase through
3 its viability stage, and now into its sustainability
4 stage, where it is now.

5 I have a high level of expertise in
6 financial management, budgeting. I'm a certified
7 business manager. The school, while I was the
8 director there, established expert financial control
9 processes. There have never been audit issues at
10 the school. I also led the school through acquiring
11 a permanent facility that has no debt through a
12 partnership with the federal government. And it
13 meets the adequacy standards set out by the Public
14 Schools Facilities Authority.

15 Most importantly, over the past six
16 months, I haven't taken anything for granted. We
17 have a team assembled that is committed to growing
18 the best technical and career education school in
19 the country, and I have utmost faith that we're
20 going to make that happen. Tori?

21 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: Thank you. One --
22 Tony asked me to come found the school with him
23 because of the program development that I did at Amy
24 Biehl High School as their special education
25 director and as a science team leader. I built

1 programs, created systems, and trained teachers to
2 support kids in doing things they were told they
3 could not do.

4 Young people were told they would never go
5 to college and have done so because we have
6 developed their potential to do that. We need
7 schools that will literally change the lives of
8 their students, and that is what we intend to do.
9 We know that the stakes are high for the state in
10 general, and we are here because we think that we
11 have something to offer our community, a school that
12 will develop a young person's capacity to realize
13 his or her potential.

14 Our students will graduate with diplomas
15 that have currency in the marketplace. We have
16 partnerships with community-based organizations,
17 post-secondary institutions, and the construction
18 profession that will give us the ability to evaluate
19 expectations that are directly applicable to the
20 well-being of our neighborhoods, work, and college
21 communities.

22 What's more, our partners will be with us
23 when we evaluate the performance of our students to
24 insure that the expectations are real and relevant.
25 Some of them are here today, and you will hear from

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1 them during public comment. They have told us what
2 they need to prosper in a dynamic and changing
3 profession, and we responded with this charter
4 application.

5 This school is envisioned to be a ninth
6 through twelfth grade high school with an evening
7 reengagement program. The educational program will
8 be built upon the latest understanding of the future
9 direction of the construction profession. Tony?

10 MR. MONFILETTO: Tori is going to get you
11 a handout that I'd like to take you through what I
12 think is really at the core of the vision for the
13 school itself. About -- I don't know -- five months
14 ago, I took a trip to visit a very high-performing,
15 career, technical education charter school in
16 another state. On that visit, I observed what they
17 were doing at that school, was really impressed by
18 the work that was happening there. Yet, through
19 that experience of visiting that school, I saw some
20 areas where I felt like the institution was lacking.

21 What I'm -- would like to talk to you
22 today is about how what we are going to do is
23 different than what a traditional trade school
24 offers the young people. On the left-hand side of
25 this chart is a description of a traditional trade

1 school and what a young person might say about that
2 school if they were attending. On the right is a
3 description of what our school intends to do and
4 what a young person might say about their education
5 when they're there.

6 In regards to their career preparation, a
7 young person in a traditional trade school might
8 say, "My education is specific to my specialty. I'm
9 good at what I do, and I've been trained well to do
10 it."

11 At our school, a student would say, "My
12 education prepares me to understand the entirety of
13 a project and the way that my specialty contributes
14 to finishing that project, on time, under budget."

15 The time horizon that a young person would
16 think about in a traditional trade school is, "I'm
17 being trained to take advantage of the jobs that
18 exist now." In reality, they might be the jobs that
19 existed last year. But that young person
20 understands that their job -- that their preparation
21 is about now.

22 Our school, the preparation is about five,
23 ten years from now. It's about getting young people
24 ready for an uncertain future, a future where they
25 have to be adaptable to the changes in the industry

1 and the changes in the companies that they will
2 ultimately be working for.

3 The knowledge that a young person has in a
4 traditional trade school, what they say is, "I
5 understand math and science and the humanities. And
6 I understand my construction specialty."

7 In our school, they'll say, "I understand
8 construction through math and science. I, through
9 the lens of construction, understand math, science,
10 and the humanities."

11 In the area of expertise, a young person
12 in a trade school might say, "I can read, write, and
13 compute at a high level, which enables me to be
14 excellent in my specialty."

15 At our school, they'll say, "I can
16 synthesize and analyze new information which allows
17 me to solve problems and adapt to new
18 circumstances."

19 In regard to the community, a young person
20 at trade school might say, "I'm highly skilled, and
21 I contribute to the well-being of my community by my
22 hard work and by my commitment to excellence."

23 At our school, they'll say, "I'm highly
24 skilled, and I understand why my profession is
25 critical to the well-being of my community. And I'm

1 able to build relationships with those who can help
2 me keep my profession strong."

3 In a trade school, people say, "Not
4 everybody is ready for college. Thank God we have a
5 trade school," which is really a back handed
6 compliment. What we say is, "Hey. Construction is
7 a complicated, sophisticated profession, and the
8 future requires that we're capable of nuance and
9 multidisciplinary thinking."

10 Our school, like I said, is singularly
11 focused on the dropout issue in the state. We want
12 to help get those 10,000 students back in the high
13 school that Governor Richardson talked about a
14 couple of weeks ago. And that's part of our
15 mission. Tori?

16 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: So high
17 expectations requires high levels of
18 social/emotional support. This school will use its
19 partnerships to support students towards earning a
20 diploma by eliminating need for trade-offs. A major
21 strategy is providing vital services for our
22 students, keeping them from foreclosing on their
23 futures by choosing to drop out.

24 This can be done through a structure, such
25 as a student support center, where social workers

1 are in the hallways, not in an office waiting for
2 crisis. Staff are sitting on the steps waiting for
3 students as they come in in the morning, welcoming
4 them, asking them how their night was, asking them
5 if they're ready to learn that day, asking them if
6 they had breakfast, training advisers and parents to
7 collaboratively discuss and problem-solve their
8 students' issues in meetings as opposed to just
9 listen to what their student is doing wrong or
10 right, and providing community networks that support
11 students and their families as they address concerns
12 and issues outside of school that may affect how
13 well they succeed in school.

14 MR. MONFILETTO: At our school, we'll have
15 a professional development center. And in that
16 professional development center, we'll be developing
17 the expertise to help other people around the state
18 deal with the same issues that we're dealing with.
19 We're ready -- we want to build the capacity to
20 share what we learn with other people around the
21 state, and we think that's a really critical
22 contribution that we'd like to make.

23 We want to exercise our expertise in
24 establishing public and private partnerships and
25 help others establish those same kinds of

1 partnerships in their communities to make sure that
2 kids have jobs when they leave their schools and
3 that they get the support from the community to be
4 the best trained, well prepared professionals.

5 Last -- over the summer, we did a
6 prototype class, where we had 20 students from the
7 Native American community work with us through a
8 week of hands-on learning. And we test-drove our
9 curriculum. We observed the students. We had
10 outsiders come in and observe the students,
11 interview them to see if our theory about learning
12 by doing every day in every class was indeed
13 achievable.

14 What we found was that we're on the right
15 track. We have a lot of work to do, but we're on
16 the right track, and the kids told us, and we
17 learned a lot from that experience. So I feel
18 really good about the fact that we've done the prep
19 work to do this school and have it be a high
20 functioning, meaningful institution in the
21 community. Tori?

22 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: So in conclusion of
23 our presentation, we would like to provide you all
24 with copies of letters of support from community
25 members. We would also like to thank our supporters

1 in the audience and acknowledge that many of them
2 will not be able to stay for the duration of this
3 hearing. So we would like to ask that they stand at
4 this time and be recognized. Thank you, Madam
5 Chair, and members of the PEC.

6 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

7 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you.

8 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. We'll
9 ask you to come back up here in a little while.

10 MR. MONFILETTO: Yes, ma'am.

11 THE CHAIR: We'll work from there. Okay.
12 We have now heard from the charter school applicant.
13 At this time -- I've been shuffling paper here, and
14 I haven't done very well. At this time, we will
15 hear from the local school board and district
16 representatives. Some of you who were here earlier
17 know that Dr. Gallegos of the Albuquerque Public
18 School system was here for the initial hearing.

19 We confirmed with the legal counsel for
20 the PEC and for the Charter Schools Division that
21 Dr. Gallegos did not have to read his letter, but
22 that it would be read into the record as such. And
23 I will state, in essence, by reading the first
24 paragraph, at least, of his letter.

25 "The Albuquerque Public Schools cannot

1 support authorization of any of the new charter
2 applications within our district boundaries. We
3 have reviewed each of the eight new charter
4 applications to the New Mexico Public Education
5 Commission, and we want to acknowledge the
6 Applicants' desire to create new charter schools.
7 It is clear that they have worked hard to identify
8 what they believe to be unique needs and unique
9 responses to those needs. The Albuquerque Public
10 Schools extends an invitation to them to present
11 their ideas to us as possible inspiration for future
12 magnet schools within the district."

13 And it continues on for another five or
14 six paragraphs. And so that will be -- and I don't
15 know whether he gave you a copy, Ms. Chapman, or
16 not. Well, at the conclusion of all of these
17 Albuquerque hearings, then, I'll give you the
18 letter. Would that be appropriate to do it that
19 way, Dr. Duran?

20 DR. DURAN: Yes, ma'am.

21 THE CHAIR: Okay. Now, we have heard, I
22 think, from the local school board and our district
23 representatives. But I will ask, is there anyone
24 present from the local school board or as a district
25 representative? Seeing none, other than

1 Dr. Gallegos' statement, we'll move on to community
2 input.

3 Public comments and observations regarding
4 the application will be heard at this time. There
5 will be a four-minute time limit per presenter.
6 Persons from the same group and having similar
7 viewpoints are asked to select a spokesperson to
8 speak on their behalf. Multiple and repetitious
9 presentations of the same view will be discouraged.

10 And Dr. Duran has a podium set up for
11 those folks. We want you to come forward and speak
12 in support or in opposition to the application.
13 Please be certain to give your name and spell your
14 name for our recorder.

15 At this time, the Chair will recognize
16 anyone who wishes to speak on the application. Yes,
17 sir.

18 MR. HILL: Good morning. Thank you, Madam
19 Chair, members of the PEC. My name is Everette
20 Hill. E-V-E-R-E-T-T-E. Last name, H-I-L-L. It
21 felt like a test.

22 For the past five years, it has been my
23 distinct and austere pleasure to serve as the
24 executive director of the New Mexico Forum for Youth
25 and Community. The New Mexico Forum is a statewide

1 systems-change intermediary organization that is
2 focused on changing the paradigm of seeing young
3 people as problems to be fixed and beginning to
4 engage them as experts in their own experience who
5 have assets to bring to bear in partnership with
6 adults to ameliorate many of the concerns that they
7 deal with daily.

8 We've also been working to build broad
9 constituencies of networks and partners who see
10 young people in similar ways and are committed to
11 working with young people in those ways, as well as
12 providing tools, training, and technical assistance
13 in very practical ways to move from paradigm shift
14 to sustained quality practice.

15 I stand here before you today in support
16 of this charter, because there is a very distinct
17 element in it that speaks to what our organization
18 has been working on for the past five years. Within
19 this charter application, there is a very robust and
20 comprehensive social and emotional support
21 structure, as well as a secondary professional
22 development structure, that would allow young people
23 and practitioners who are delivering the educational
24 curriculum to them to engage in a much more
25 cooperative and collaborative way so that learning

1 is actually not only active, so students aren't
2 passive participants in their own education, but
3 have an opportunity to be full participants in how
4 they are being educated and trained.

5 We look at all of these ways of engaging
6 young people in terms of our kind of jargon. These
7 are all asset-based approaches to education and
8 youth development. The terminology that we use is
9 called "positive youth development." And it is
10 fairly straightforward, in that the work is about
11 finding ways to overcome challenges with positive
12 means.

13 There are programs that can be built to do
14 that as well as strategies that can be undertaken.
15 We are very confident in how this school will be
16 able to deliver, in very positive ways because
17 they've inculcated these kinds of strategies into
18 the very system and framework of the school itself.

19 So we are very happy to be supportive of
20 this charter, and I thank you for the time to stand
21 before you in support of it.

22 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

23 MR. LANGLEY: Good morning, madam
24 Chairman, Commissioners, Assistant Secretary Duran.
25 My name is Larry, L-A-R-R-Y, Langley, L-A-N-G-L-E-Y.

1 It does feel a little bit like a test, Everette.

2 I serve as the president and CEO of the
3 New Mexico Business Round Table for Educational
4 Excellence. The New Mexico Business Round Table
5 represents a little over 250,000 employees in the
6 State of New Mexico. We have been working on
7 education reform, education policy, since 1999. We
8 have pretty much been involved in every piece of
9 education legislation since that time.

10 I actually remodeled my home a few years
11 ago. I actually bought a house, and then I flipped
12 it and sold it. So I have a few skills in the areas
13 of building trades. I also have a bachelor of
14 science. I have a master's in education. I have an
15 MBA, and I finished my Ph.D. work at Yale
16 University. So I have a few degrees. If I were to
17 go into commercial building trades in this day and
18 time, I would have to go back to school, and I would
19 have to get a lot more skills.

20 To have a charter school in our community
21 that is going to funnel kids into a school where
22 they can really look at their passion and their
23 dream of what they want to do vocationally and then
24 have a full integrated curriculum from math and
25 science and English and language arts that focuses

1 in that direction is a wonderful thing to happen,
2 not only to this community, but to the state of
3 New Mexico.

4 If you drive anywhere -- and,
5 Ms. Shearman, I know you've driven all over this
6 state lately. I've seen you everywhere, and I know
7 the entire Commission has. Every city you go to in
8 New Mexico, now you see commercial building going on
9 everywhere. If you drive around the Albuquerque and
10 Rio Grande Valley right now, one of the things that
11 is keeping our economy in place is commercial
12 building. It's happening everywhere.

13 We need students to be put into that
14 pipeline learning an integrated curriculum that's
15 moving them into the direction of building trades.
16 This is a good thing. And to the Commission, thank
17 you for considering this charter this morning. Your
18 every consideration is not only appreciated, but
19 very, very smart. Thank you.

20 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

21 MR. ROUNDS: Good morning. Thank you very
22 much for hearing us. My name is Gerald Rounds.
23 That's G-E-R-A-L-D, R-O-U-N-D-S.

24 I hold the AGC Endowed Chair at the
25 University of New Mexico. And, as such, I'm

1 responsible for leadership in the construction
2 programs at the University. And let me start by
3 saying we're delighted at the prospect of this
4 proposed school and totally supportive of the -- of
5 the effort and the school.

6 The construction industry suffers from
7 chronic labor shortages, chronic workforce
8 shortages. We have, over decades, not had enough
9 people to work in the industry, either the craft
10 level or at management and supervisory levels. This
11 ebbs and flows with the economy.

12 This is one of the worst economies that
13 I've seen in my professional lifetime, which, as you
14 can tell from looking at me, has been a few years.
15 And yet several weeks ago, I got an e-mail from a
16 young lady who is coming into the state from another
17 school, had graduated, spent a couple of years
18 working. She said, "Can I get a job in construction
19 in New Mexico?" And I was anal to connect her with
20 several contractors. She e-mailed me yesterday.
21 She said, "Thank you. I now have a job. I will be
22 working for one of your contractors."

23 And what that means is that even in one of
24 the worst economies any of us have seen, there are
25 still needs in our industry for well-prepared,

1 well-qualified people to go into the industry.

2 As the economy grows, as it moves forth,
3 one of the first areas that's going to grow forward
4 is the construction industry. And those chronic
5 needs will again become acute as they do
6 periodically. People enter our industry from a
7 number of ways. They come in by accident, many of
8 them, and, all of a sudden, find themselves in the
9 industry. Some by design.

10 Some say, "I want to be a craft person, I
11 want to be an electrician, I want to be a
12 carpenter," and they'll seek out an apprenticeship
13 program. Others say, "I want to go to college but I
14 still want to be a college educated carpenter."
15 That's my background. And so they'll go into the
16 university and seek out a university program.

17 Many people come into our industry by
18 transfer, and they will transfer into the industry
19 because they were someplace else and didn't like it,
20 or the opportunities are not there, and they say,
21 "I'm going to end up -- I'm going to go into
22 construction."

23 But what this proposed charter school does
24 is to provide a new avenue into the industry for
25 people that we have not been able to take advantage

1 of before.

2 It will provide a couple of things.
3 Number one, it will help us in recruiting young
4 folks into the industry. I have a number of
5 grandkids, and I work on each one of them to try to
6 get them into the industry. I'm not too successful
7 yet. But as little kids, they love construction.
8 They like to watch it. They're very interested in
9 it.

10 And they -- but we lose them as they grow
11 older. What this school will do will be able to
12 give us access to younger folks who still have that
13 enthusiasm for construction, and we can help them
14 understand the unique opportunities in our industry,
15 wonderful opportunities and great needs. It will
16 also give them preparation, because we lose a lot of
17 people who come into our industry that want to come
18 into our industry, and they simply don't have the
19 maturity or the preparation to go into either an
20 apprenticeship program or an academic program in the
21 university, and we lose them.

22 This school will build that strong
23 foundation to enable them to move on into the craft
24 side or the professional side. UNM has started
25 working with -- I talked with Tori the other day.

1 We started working with people at the school so that
2 we can make our curricula consistent so that we can
3 work with bringing those students who might want to
4 go into the academic side seamlessly into the
5 university. (Bell rings.) That's very effective.
6 To get a professor, who's used to 50 minutes, to
7 stop. We love the concept. We very much support
8 it. Thank you very much.

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

11 MS. MORA: Madam Chair, members of the
12 Commission. My name is Vicki Mora. That's
13 V-I-C-K-I, M-O-R-A. I'm CEO of Associated General
14 Contractors, and vice chair of AGC of America's
15 executive committee.

16 I'm here to talk about the school's
17 capacity to deliver a high quality education for
18 students. I don't want to presume that you know
19 anything about AGC. I respect the weightiness of
20 your decision. I want you to understand that we
21 bring years of experience and credibility to support
22 the school's initiative.

23 You were introduced to the sponsoring
24 organization, which was -- is the New Mexico
25 Building Education Congress. And, actually, that is

1 AGC's education foundation. We transitioned into
2 that name January 1 of this year. So although the
3 Congress is a new entity, the education foundation
4 has a long history in working with apprenticeship
5 programs in the -- that was the entity that endowed
6 the chair in construction management that you just
7 heard Dr. Rounds speak.

8 We have served on CNM's foundation board
9 and various advisory boards. And in your packets
10 that were distributed, you have a background on AGC.
11 So, again, my intent is to introduce you to
12 capacity.

13 AGC is a very diverse statewide
14 organization. We have members all over the state.
15 We have a diverse population of both open shop
16 contractors and union builders. We represent
17 general contractors, specialty contractors, and
18 suppliers.

19 AGC is the largest and the most diverse
20 commercial construction organization in the state
21 and in the United States. AGC is an award-winning
22 chapter. Our approved charter for the New Mexico
23 Building Education Congress is a result of 15 years
24 of lessons learned. We've been responsible for
25 designing and implementing several construction

1 profession training programs.

2 In '89, we endowed the chair at the
3 University in construction management. We foster
4 secondary and post-secondary education in
5 construction-related fields, including the awarding
6 of scholarships and fellowships leading to a unique
7 agreement and articulation agreements between CNM
8 and UNM, which resulted in 17 transferable credits.

9 I'd like to quote Tim Ward, who was dean
10 at the University when that happened. He commented
11 that it was like moving the Titanic. I highlight
12 that because we persevere in all of our initiatives,
13 particularly with regards to workforce development.
14 So we're here to stay.

15 I would like to now have you understand
16 that we have been involved in school-to-work
17 initiatives. AGC was of the organizations used as
18 New Mexico's eligible component for the national
19 School-to-Work grants received in the '90s. All of
20 those initiatives, all of those cumulative efforts
21 in apprenticeship, lifelong learning for
22 construction principles, have led to today and our
23 support. I ask that you consider us for approval.
24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

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1 MR. JAMES: Madam Chair, members of the
2 PEC. My name is Shad James. S-H-A-D, J-A-M-E-S. I
3 am an executive vice president for the Jaynes
4 Corporation. We're a large commercial contractor
5 here in the State of New Mexico and across the
6 Southwest.

7 I'm also the president of the New Mexico
8 Building Education Congress. We've spent the last
9 couple of years, as an entity, thinking about this
10 issue of our industry and the new trend towards
11 public-private collaboration and what makes a
12 successful construction project, and, at the same
13 time, thinking about the integrity and just the
14 attitude of people that are in our profession.

15 We are a very complex profession, and we
16 like to think of it as a profession. And it takes a
17 great deal of collaboration. And we've spent the
18 last two years, and, specifically, the last several
19 months, preparing for this endeavor to help support
20 the charter school and to help provide the backup of
21 our profession through knowledge and resources.

22 And we're prepared to do that. We're
23 prepared to help with providing insight on
24 curriculum that matters to the graduate from our
25 school, providing insight that allows that student

1 to see our industry from all aspects; from an
2 architectural standpoint, from an engineering
3 standpoint, and from a construction standpoint, and
4 make a decision for themselves at the end of their
5 time at our school on where they would like to go.

6 They could be a carpenter. They could be
7 an engineer. They could be an architect. They
8 could be a construction project manager. Again, we
9 are a very diverse profession with very well-paying
10 jobs that provide challenges to people. And what we
11 see in our vision of our industry is a trend towards
12 collaboration and the ability to work together. We
13 see it in the projects that are being successfully
14 constructed now across the state.

15 And we know that, even in the economic
16 times that we're in today, it's going to come back,
17 and our state will boom. Our state, we believe,
18 will boom more than others because of where we are
19 and the things that we'll need in the future. And
20 the way we can prepare for that today is to see past
21 the issues of the current economy and have the
22 vision to proceed with a school that will provide us
23 graduates that understand the uniqueness of our
24 profession and understand what the future will hold.

25 I appreciate you allowing us all to be

1 here today and encourage your consideration of our
2 charter school. Thank you.

3 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, ma'am. Right
4 through there.

5 MS. VAVRUSKA-MARCUM: Thank you, Madam
6 Chairman and committee. My name is Gail
7 Vavruska-Marcum. I'll spell that, definitely.
8 G-A-I-L, V-A-V-R-U-S-K-A, hyphen, M-A-R-C-U-M.

9 I'm the Director of Strategic Workforce
10 Planning, Staffing and Learning at PNM Resources.
11 And you've heard many already speak to the workforce
12 and the learning issues. I'd like to also add to
13 that title I'm a Certified Public Accountant and a
14 Certified Investments and Derivatives Auditor. I'll
15 be serving as the treasurer on the board of the
16 New Mexico Architecture, Construction and
17 Engineering School.

18 And from the workforce side, the skills
19 that they're discussing are transferable to other
20 organizations, such as the PNM or an Intel. From
21 the learning side, learning by doing is really
22 80 percent of us are kinesthetic learners, and
23 that's how we learn. We learn by doing. From the
24 Certified Public Accountant side, I will be keeping
25 very close eye as their treasurer on those

1 financials and any of the financial activities that
2 occur within the organization.

3 So thank you for your consideration today.
4 I fully support this school, and thank you very
5 much.

6 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

7 MR. MAY: Madam Chair, members of the
8 Commission, good morning. My name is Mike May,
9 M-I-K-E, M-A-Y. I'm the executive director of Amy
10 Biehl High School. And I'd like to just take a
11 couple of minutes to provide you more of a
12 testimonial from a personal relationship and a work
13 experience with the two founders of this school.

14 As the executive director, I've had the
15 benefit, at Amy Biehl, of inheriting the foundation
16 that they laid for a viable school that is fiscally
17 sound, that is programmatically sound and whose
18 foundation is going to serve students for years to
19 come. So I'd like to attest to that.

20 I'd also like to speak to the specific
21 goal that this institution is proposing, because my
22 institution now had a similar goal ten years ago
23 that was quite ambitious. Every student would take
24 college classes while they were in high school, and
25 then they would be successfully admitted to college.

1 So it was a very specific goal. And it was
2 something that a lot of people, at the time, looked
3 at through the lens of that's above and beyond.
4 Right? It's a bridge too far.

5 In a similar vein, this school, with its
6 focus and high level of expectations, you could view
7 it through the same lens. But I'm here to report to
8 you that, ten years later, our school has made good
9 on that promise that we set out. And given the
10 track record of these founders, I have every
11 confidence that they're going to be able to do the
12 same in the interest of the students in this
13 school's program.

14 The second piece is that my school is not
15 the answer for all students, nor for families. And
16 so one of the other roles that I play outside of Amy
17 Biehl High School is I happen to be a PTA president
18 at a local APS elementary. And one of the things
19 that our PTA addresses, and we sort of picked up on
20 a couple of years ago, was the large amount of
21 confusion and concern that parents and families had
22 as they looked to the future for their children.

23 And that happens, concern at every
24 transition point. And it's not too early to have
25 those concerns at kindergarten. So what we saw was

1 parents with a lot of questions. And they were
2 concerned about where their kids were going, and
3 they knew the statistics of the success in this
4 locality. So out of that grew a transition fair,
5 where they now invite over 17 schools to come in and
6 present their programs to young families as they are
7 leaving elementary school looking at middle and high
8 school. And that program has now grown to over
9 120 families in just three years, participants from
10 eleven -- over eleven elementary schools.

11 So the question for me is if there's the
12 need -- and I would refer to something that was
13 referenced earlier. The APS framed it as a unique
14 need, these schools, we would like to work with them
15 to address their unique needs. From a parent
16 standpoint from my position as a PTA president, the
17 dropout rate, as Mr. Monfiletto cited, is not a
18 unique need. We have a very common need, and the
19 community needs to support unique approaches to
20 address that.

21 So I'm pleased to offer my support to the
22 school as an innovative and creative way to address
23 a common need that we all have in an innovative and
24 unique way.

25 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

1 MR. MIRABAL: Good morning, Madam Chair,
2 members of the committee. My name is Jose Abran
3 Mirabal. J-O-S-E, A-B-R-A-N, M-I-R-A-B-A-L. I come
4 to you as a member of the community. I actually
5 have a small business, and I do employ the sorts of
6 people that we're talking about utilizing -- or
7 actually serving in this program.

8 I find it a bit appalling that the
9 Albuquerque Public Schools would dismiss this
10 meeting by just delivering a letter that basically
11 summarizes that they do not support this. In
12 reality, what it just means to me is that they --
13 they haven't had time for the students, and the
14 failure rate is sufficiently appalling that it
15 should be -- it should be a matter of concern for
16 every member of this community.

17 And because a monolith like APS decides
18 that a charter school presents some sort of a
19 challenge to them, then it -- they don't even have
20 time for the students that they're dealing with now,
21 and they don't have time to deal with this
22 community.

23 That is surprising to me. I grew up in a
24 humble community called Los Duranes in the North
25 Valley in Albuquerque, and I come from a collection

1 of people who serve this state working construction.
2 My family has all been involved in construction.
3 And although I have my bachelor of science in
4 biochemistry and my BA in history from the
5 University of New Mexico, I've elected to do what I
6 do today because I'm reaching out to my community
7 and helping my fellow community members vis-a-vis
8 the workers -- one of them is with me today --
9 because it's the only way that I see that anything
10 is ever going to change.

11 The story about an old woman who was
12 walking along the beach -- and I'm sure some of you
13 have heard it, but I'll recount it just so that we
14 can all be on the same sheet of music here. She's
15 walking along the beach, and she's tossing starfish
16 into the ocean. And there's miles and miles of
17 them. And people look at -- a man walks up to her,
18 and he says, "You know, you're tossing these
19 starfish into the ocean." He said, "What are you
20 doing?"

21 She says, "I'm trying to save them."

22 And he looks at the beach and he sees that
23 the entire shore is filled with starfish. And he
24 says, "You're not really going to effect very much
25 of a change by doing this."

1 And she picked a starfish up, and she
2 tossed it into the ocean, and she said, "I just
3 changed that one's life."

4 That's what I'm doing. But I can't do it
5 by myself. And there are many people in the
6 community doing the same thing. I can see it with
7 AGC. I can see it with people with high education,
8 people who have very lofty ideals and ambitions for
9 this sort of program. But the reality is that the
10 community is not being served. And the people who
11 are, by and large, falling into this kind of work,
12 this line of work, are marginalized. And I think
13 it's time to forget about marginalizing people and
14 giving them a sense of -- of value.

15 There's an intrinsic value in every human
16 being, and it's incumbent upon us, as a community,
17 not to write letters to a community or to a
18 membership here to dismiss the value of these
19 children, because the reality is they are the
20 backbone of this country. They're the backbone of
21 this community, and they need to be given someplace
22 where they can actually be legitimized.

23 And I don't think that anybody should fall
24 into construction because they have to. They should
25 do it because they want to. That is why I'm here.

1 That's why I'm not a physician, and that's why I'm
2 not in law enforcement anymore. I'm retired from
3 law enforcement as a police officer and as a
4 probation parole officer, and I have witnessed the
5 sorts of experiences that people have come up
6 against.

7 By and large, the people in the offender
8 population work construction. And it's because they
9 have no place else to go. The reality is we need to
10 do something to effect those changes, and if we
11 don't, then it's going to be bad for each and every
12 one of us.

13 I thank you for your time, and I certainly
14 hope that you seriously consider doing something of
15 value for the community and giving to those children
16 what they really need. Thank you.

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

18 MS. HALL: Good morning, Madam Chair,
19 members of the PEC. My name is Ann Lyn Hall.
20 A-N-N, space, L-Y-N, space H-A-L-L. And I run a
21 program at Central New Mexico Community College
22 called Center for Working Families. It's a
23 comprehensive student support program, which has
24 been a model for what the student support program
25 that this charter is looking to take on.

1 We've been doing this work for the past
2 five years. And yesterday, I had the opportunity to
3 talk to two students who dropped out of APS in the
4 past five years. And when I talked with them about
5 why they had chosen to drop out of school, the
6 reasons they had elicited were things that had to do
7 with kind of having some comprehensive services
8 available to them as a student.

9 One of them was forced to drop out because
10 he needed to provide some income to his family. The
11 second person had some personal issues that were
12 going on that didn't allow her to continue to go to
13 school.

14 I fully support this charter in being able
15 to provide these kinds of services to students as a
16 means of reaching two goals; one, of being able to
17 retain students in a quality educational system;
18 and, second, for the students to be able to reach
19 their academic and career goals of being able to
20 graduate from high school and having quality career
21 skills at that graduation time as well.

22 What they are proposing to do in the
23 dropout reengagement program is an alignment with
24 nationally recognized comprehensive support service
25 programs out there that, again, meet both retention

1 and graduation goals. In addition, CNM has a
2 40-year history of providing quality career
3 technical education programming with many of the
4 folks in the room here. And, in addition, we have a
5 quality dual enrollment program that could be
6 accessed by this charter. Thank you so much for
7 your time.

8 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

9 MS. KAY: Good morning, Madam Chairperson
10 and Commission. My name is Beth Kay, B-E-T-H,
11 K-A-Y. I'm here this morning -- I flew in from
12 Sacramento last night to be able to come here and
13 speak to this Commission about this particular
14 charter school.

15 My background is in school reform. I've
16 been at it for, oh, 15 years now, originally in
17 Boston area, a school within a school, so a district
18 school. In Sacramento, I started and ran a charter
19 school that was also connected to a school district.
20 So I've had 15 years of experience teaching in
21 innovative schools, running small schools within
22 schools, founding starting schools.

23 And, most recently, I've been spending my
24 time training and helping other charter schools get
25 started across the state of California. In that

1 time, I have not yet witnessed, until this point,
2 such an enormous outpouring of support for a single
3 school. Both, support and the requisite capacity to
4 make sure that the school really happens the way it
5 needs to.

6 The vision is clear. The capacity is
7 clear. And the commitment is there. And I'm here
8 because I really want to encourage you and ask for
9 your support for the school, that you vote yes,
10 because I would really love to apply to be the
11 principal for this school.

12 So thank you for your consideration. And
13 I'm glad to be here today.

14 MR. MacRUNNELS: Hello. My name is Keven
15 MacRunnels, K E V E N, M-A-C-R-U-N-N-E-LS. I
16 support this charter school because, over the
17 summer, I did their demo classes. And I feel that
18 for students like me that have trouble doing normal
19 reading and writing can be helped by hands-on
20 activities, and they can get ahead when they
21 graduate to be in the workforce.

22 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, ma'am. In
23 the back.

24 MS. GUY: Good morning. My name is Maria
25 Guy, M-A-R-I-A, G-U-Y. I'm a parent, part owner in

1 a construction company here in town, JB Henderson
2 Construction, and I'm also a board member. My
3 interest in this school is twofold. One is very
4 personal. I identify with the population that we
5 are trying to serve here. And I know the difference
6 it can make when a bunch of adults get together to
7 nurture and help and invest in the futures of young
8 people.

9 Also, professionally, as a business owner,
10 I'm very concerned about the caliber of student, of
11 people that are entering our profession, both in the
12 trade and in the administrative side. And I want to
13 be able to have an influence over that and be able
14 to provide some other support and expertise that we
15 have, that my construction company brings and many
16 of the other construction companies that are
17 interested in seeing this school be successful.

18 I was blessed in my life to have a lot of
19 adults who recognized something and said, "There's
20 something. You know, we need to get around this
21 student and support and provide resources and
22 opportunities and help."

23 And I think that's exactly what we can do
24 here is provide resources and opportunities, because
25 success is more than just the knowledge or having an

1 interest or intellect. It's really the
2 opportunities that these students are given. And at
3 this age, it is critical to provide that to them.
4 And we're hoping to make an impact, not only on
5 80 students our first year, or 400-and-something
6 students in the life of the school, but in the State
7 of New Mexico, where this program can be copied and
8 taken to other parts so that other students will
9 have the same opportunity.

10 I hope that you will support this school.
11 I have a passion for construction. I didn't stumble
12 into construction. I have a bachelor's degree in
13 construction engineering and management and a
14 master's degree in civil engineering with a
15 construction emphasis. And it has just been the
16 best career. And I just want to share that joy and
17 that love that I have for construction with other
18 students, because it is an amazing career.

19 And you never do the same project twice.
20 And it is just a great opportunity that I think
21 students don't recognize, don't realize that it can
22 be very technical. It could be very hands-on, and
23 it could be something that you'll love for the rest
24 of your life. So I really ask for your support and
25 I ask that you say yes to our charter.

1 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir. And
2 then you.

3 MR. APODACA: Good morning, Madam Chair,
4 members of the Commission. My name is Robert,
5 R-O-B-E-R-T, middle initial J, Apodaca,
6 A-P-O-D-A-C-A. I'm the executive director of the
7 New Mexico Community Foundation. And in the last
8 eight years, we have raised in excess of
9 \$60 million, mostly from out of the state. And I
10 would say about \$40 million of those dollars have
11 gone in the field of education.

12 We have a lot of nonprofit partners around
13 the state, statewide grant-making organizations.
14 And a lot of our projects have been directed at
15 performing in education. We, too, believe that
16 workforce education should begin at an early age,
17 almost at birth, quite frankly. And we've made a
18 big investment in the area of early childhood
19 education.

20 But right now, we're focused on a very
21 exciting demonstration project called "Elevate."
22 And that's -- we're working with middle schools. So
23 we need this charter school because we have some
24 students here in the Albuquerque area that will be
25 moving out of middle school, and we want them to

1 have a great option that this charter school will
2 offer.

3 But let me just tell you just briefly
4 about this middle school. People talk about
5 transitions. At the middle school area, this is
6 almost about the last transition point where you can
7 catch a student and redirect them and have them
8 focus on their education. And we're doing that in
9 three ways. We purchased and moved in portable
10 buildings to offer them primary medical care,
11 dental, and behavioral counseling.

12 And then we have some very structured,
13 extended learning programs after school. We want --
14 we want them to continue learning and want them off
15 the streets. And then because of today's economic
16 crisis, we're working with the families, helping
17 them get back on their feet and also working to
18 empower parents to get involved because the parents
19 can hold schools accountable for their actions.

20 And so we've already seen dramatic results
21 in the last two years. Attendance rates are up.
22 Achievement has increased. And one school district
23 in Southern New Mexico, the biggest accomplishment
24 was there were no pregnancies in the middle school.
25 That was very major. That's what everybody was

1 talking about.

2 So we're working in these schools here at
3 Grant and Wilson Middle School and also at NACA. So
4 we will have some graduates for you. So I urge you
5 to approve their application, because children
6 need -- they need to be engaged, and they need to
7 express their passion, and I think this school will
8 do exactly that. Thank you.

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

10 MS. BEERY: Good morning, Madam Chair,
11 Commission. My name is Sandy Beery, S-A-N-D-Y,
12 B-E-E-R-Y. I would just like to speak to the need
13 of our children in this country and in this state to
14 have a choice and options about where they go to
15 high school so that we can better meet the needs of
16 all of the children in our state, not just a few.

17 And I have experience in public school,
18 private school, rural school, K through 12, public
19 charter school. I'm the principal at Amy Biehl High
20 School presently. I've been assistant principal at
21 Rio Grande, Valley High School, Moriarty High
22 School, small schools in Texas. I have a lot of
23 experience in the public school system and have
24 really struggled within that system to be able to
25 provide the appropriate education for all of the

1 students, because there wasn't enough options for
2 them to be able to take advantage of those.

3 I feel that it's really important for this
4 charter school to be approved so that students have
5 yet another choice to be able to learn in a way
6 that's best for them as a learner, and so that we
7 may do something about this horrendous dropout rate
8 that we have in our state. Thank you very much for
9 your time.

10 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

11 MR. CHAVEZ: My name is Victor Chavez.

12 V-I-C-T-O-R, C-H-A-V-E-Z. I was asked to talk about
13 public support for the school, and I'd like to start
14 by telling a story from 1991, but I'll save it to
15 the end, in case I have time. That built a fire.

16 I really started getting involved in 1998
17 when I was asked to be chairman of the Greater
18 Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce following Cathleen
19 Avila, who had started the Chamber on the path of
20 trying to do something about education.

21 As a result, for the next four years, all
22 of the efforts from the Chamber of Commerce were
23 directed to trying to improve the outcomes at APS.
24 We went to trips to other cities. We raised money
25 to create organizations to support APS. Larry was

1 one of those individuals who works for one of those
2 organizations, helped develop or get the money to
3 build this building to assist the kids in this
4 community.

5 And you know what's happened over the
6 years. You know, the numbers continue to head the
7 wrong direction. It continues to be a failed
8 system. At the same time, as an engineer, and one
9 of the cofounders of Chavez-Grievess Consulting
10 Engineers, I had an opportunity to work with Tony to
11 help him decide whether a building could house the
12 school that he wanted to start. And he got his
13 hooks into me.

14 I'm still involved with Tony. I'm still
15 involved with Amy Biehl High School, and that's
16 fine. Because, in that process, I learned that
17 there is an alternative. It doesn't have to be the
18 same old thing over and over again with increasing
19 failure rates and dropping scores. He has developed
20 a process that's sensitive to the kids.

21 It's small. It's attentive, and it gets
22 results. Most of all, it's because he's a person
23 that cares about the kids. I watched him agonize
24 over the fact that his graduation rate was not
25 improving above APS's the first couple of years.

1 And now the graduation rate is above 90 percent, and
2 all of them with two college classes completed and
3 passed.

4 And when I saw that, I thought here's an
5 opportunity. And when AGC came up with the idea of
6 this high school, I wanted to be a part of it. Not
7 only has it been successful in other communities,
8 but we have a chance to make this AGC 2.0, to do it
9 better than other communities have done.

10 What Tony has come up with and what he's
11 teaching these kids and the results he's getting is
12 phenomenal. I don't think we can pass up the
13 opportunity to do this, and not only develop this
14 school, but the potential to develop other schools
15 like it throughout the state. We need this in this
16 state. We need it desperately. You keep trying the
17 same old thing, you keep getting the same old
18 results. And I haven't seen the one minute yet, so
19 what really got me interested in this is I had three
20 boys. And they all graduated from St. Pius High
21 School. So I didn't have an intimate connection
22 with APS. I went to St. Mary's High School. And
23 one of my youngest son's friends was graduating from
24 West Mesa the same day he graduated from St. Pius.
25 He came over and said, "Oh, you're going to have a

1 huge graduation class today; right?"

2 He said, "Oh, yeah. There are going to be
3 about 350."

4 I said, "Three hundred and fifty. I
5 thought your school was, like, 2,400 students."

6 He said, "My freshman class was 950." And
7 350 were graduating.

8 At that point, APS refused to acknowledge
9 what was going on in the school system, said it was
10 impossible to measure the results of graduation.

11 And I became interested. And I find
12 here's an opportunity to make a difference. And I
13 hope you'll support it. I think you'll get good
14 results.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I'm thinking I
16 still had somebody. Didn't I? I have two
17 somebodies.

18 MS. BOBROFF: Good morning, and thank you
19 for your time. My name is Kara Bobroff, and I'm the
20 principal at the Native American Community Academy.
21 And earlier, Tony was talking about how they, this
22 summer, worked with some of our students, about 20
23 of them, who would love to be here but they're in
24 class right now. So I'll try to tell you a little
25 bit about their experience.

1 I think the thing that this summer I saw
2 from those students, that they were really
3 reflective in what they were doing. When we talk
4 about capacity in school, always talk about the
5 student first and really think about what the
6 student is telling about how they're learning what
7 they're learning, are they interested or not. That
8 was evident from the kids that were participating in
9 this program.

10 We also had a teacher who worked with our
11 students at our school to implement this curriculum,
12 and he found that he immediately knew where students
13 had gaps and where they had strengths and was able
14 to accommodate and adjust his lesson for the next
15 day.

16 And I think on a larger scale, you're
17 talking about building capacity. Tony has helped us
18 a lot with establishing our school, and that's been
19 an amazing thing, as well as Tori. And you can just
20 see it being stronger and stronger, the more you
21 bring educators together around kind of a common
22 vision for providing schools that are centered on
23 students' interest and centered on the best --
24 what's going to be best for them long-term. So I
25 just want to say I hope you support the school.

1 Thank you for your time. I hope you guys have a
2 good morning.

3 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

4 MR. MORA: Good morning, Madam Chair,
5 council members. Ralph Mora. R-A-L-P-H, middle
6 initial A, M-O-R-A. What sold me -- I'm with AGC
7 New Mexico Building Branch. I'm also the NCCER,
8 which is the National Center for Construction
9 Education and Research, the sponsor realm for that
10 branch.

11 What sold me on the idea of the New Mexico
12 ACE charter was its approach to learning. I,
13 myself, growing up had problems with learning, and I
14 thought it was me. As I grew older and grew to
15 understand, it was how I learned. When I first read
16 the charter application, what intrigued me the most
17 was i's competency-based curriculum, its hands-on
18 approach to learning, and how it provides options
19 for the students, both for college and trades
20 professions, to enter the workforce, not just as
21 thinkers, but also as problem-solvers.

22 This school will provide the students with
23 options, a more complete understanding of the trades
24 professions and industries here in New Mexico.
25 Working with trades apprentices on a day-to-day

1 basis and also as well as working with construction
2 leaders and industry leaders on a day-to-day basis,
3 it has been brutally clear that young people today
4 are not prepared for the workforce needs, for
5 today's workforce needs.

6 I'm 100-percent confident in the
7 New Mexico ACE Charter School, that it will not only
8 meet, but exceed, these needs. As we move forward
9 and New Mexico continues to grow, the need for well
10 prepared and competent workers is great. So,
11 remember, as you notice, all my colleagues are
12 wearing the same button. It takes new thinking to
13 build tomorrow. So I appreciate your time. Thank
14 you.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Did we have
16 someone else? Then this concludes the community
17 input. At this time, we'll move to the Public
18 Education Commission, and we will ask Tony and Tori
19 to come forward again. The chair will recognize
20 Commissioners who want to make comments or ask
21 questions.

22 MR. CARR: Madam Chair?

23 THE CHAIR: Yes, sir.

24 MR. CARR: Seems like I never lack a
25 question or something to say. And, again, I've been

1 telling everybody this. I commend you on your
2 desire, and even if you have a background in
3 education, to help our youth. It's always a great
4 thing to see.

5 I had -- the first question I had was on
6 Page 19. On your curriculum with humanities.
7 Humanities 10 and Humanities 11 at the tenth and
8 eleventh grade. My question is how is it possible
9 for you to cover the standards and benchmarks and
10 curriculum for language arts and history in one
11 unit?

12 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: Sir, are you asking
13 a clarifying question about what humanities look
14 like?

15 MR. CARR: Yeah. How are you going to
16 cover that huge curriculum, dealing with reading,
17 writing, citizenship, history, all of the things
18 that are included in that one class?

19 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: I can tell you what
20 my experience has been, both at Amy Biehl, but also
21 as a student, who, when I attended Los Lunas High
22 School, participated in the humanities curriculum
23 for eleventh and twelfth grade.

24 Usually, humanities classes are in double
25 blocks, so that there's ample time to cover the

1 knowledge and concepts that need to be covered with
2 regards to language arts, reading, and humanities.
3 The beautiful thing, I think, about having a
4 humanities combination is that you can make direct
5 connections to texts that students read.

6 So they're working on reading, to
7 historical concepts, historical events that they
8 need to be aware of. And then you can build in the
9 grammar, the writing skills, as they demonstrate
10 what they know and what they've learned by doing
11 that. So that's an example.

12 MR. MONFILETTO: The only thing I would
13 add is we think we have ample time in the schedule
14 to cover all the benchmarks and standards.

15 MR. CARR: Are you telling me that that's
16 going to be a double block?

17 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: It would need to
18 be. Yes.

19 MR. CARR: Okay. I would think so, too.
20 One of my major -- I have an eclectic background
21 myself. I was in the Army Corps of Engineers. I've
22 engaged in heavy -- all kinds of heavy construction.
23 I teach history, you know, and all these things.
24 And one of my major concerns is, yes, we all need --
25 we need -- we need all of these things. We need to

1 create a holistic individual who's going to be a
2 good citizen of our country, be able to support
3 himself and his family, all those things.

4 And all those things are very important,
5 equally important. So I just wanted to -- I wanted
6 to -- that's the reason why I wanted to bring --
7 that's always a big concern of mine, that we're
8 actually giving equal attention to these core areas.
9 To me, they're all equally important.

10 The -- and the other concern I always
11 have, you know, we do need, of course, to prepare
12 our students to take a job. And, of course, being
13 able to communicate properly, verbally, in writing,
14 all those things, all those skills are going to not
15 only enable that student to work well with others,
16 it's also going to enable them to learn another
17 skill, if that skill is outmoded at some point.

18 I remember telling my students just
19 yesterday that you -- if you drop out of school and
20 you think you're going to be able to flip burgers at
21 McDonald's, robotics is coming around. We'll
22 probably have robots flipping hamburgers pretty
23 soon, a lot of these menial tasks that are being
24 done. So it's important for us to be holistic human
25 beings and well-educated.

1 The other question I had, have you looked
2 at working with APS on doing a magnet school? They
3 mentioned that in the concern in their letter. Most
4 of my experience has been in rural education. And
5 APS is a different animal than what I'm used to
6 working with. But have you looked at that?

7 MR. MONFILETTO: Madam Chair and Mr. Carr,
8 we haven't. To be honest with you, the -- I have a
9 deep-seated belief that accountability and autonomy
10 come hand in hand. And I think that in order to be
11 accountable in the way that we want to be
12 accountable, we need to be -- we need to be
13 autonomous. And so I have a -- that's a
14 philosophical standpoint that I come from. And I
15 think that that requires that we're chartered
16 independently by the State.

17 MR. CARR: Okay. All right. That's all
18 for me, Madam Chair. Thank you.

19 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Carr.
20 Ms. Shearman, did I see your hand?

21 MS. SHEARMAN: Yes, ma'am. I always go
22 straight to the budget. And I -- there are some
23 problems here. You're not going to spend your
24 money. Now, on a serious note, there is nothing in
25 the expenditure budget it looks like.

1 MR. MONFILETTO: We -- I'm sorry, Madam
2 Chair and --

3 MS. SHEARMAN: Pardon me. Expenditure
4 budget. There's nothing in it.

5 MR. MONFILETTO: We submitted an
6 expenditure budget. We submitted one, Madam Chair,
7 Mrs. Shearman.

8 DR. DURAN: That's me that's squeaking,
9 not the chair.

10 THE CHAIR: Did you find it, Ms. Shearman?
11 Did you? Are you all right with it?
12 Mr. Monfiletto, is he all right?

13 MS. SHEARMAN: If you want to go ahead to
14 someone else and come back to me?

15 THE CHAIR: Is there anybody else who
16 wants to --

17 MR. BERGMAN: I want to.

18 THE CHAIR: All right, Mr. Bergman. If
19 Mr. Monfiletto is ready to go ahead and answer while
20 she finds her place.

21 MR. BERGMAN: I wanted to explore a little
22 bit beyond what Commissioner Carr did. Given that
23 it's a full-time job in a regular public high school
24 to teach all the core requirements that are required
25 for graduation, and that it was noted in the

1 preliminary analysis that there was some concern
2 about how the full alignment is going to be
3 accomplished with these core courses, plus all the
4 technical, construction-type things we're talking
5 about, are there going to be enough hours in the day
6 to do this?

7 MR. MONFILETTO: So, Madam Chair and
8 Mr. Bergman, I'm going to start with -- with a
9 theoretical answer, and then I'll give you a
10 practical answer.

11 If you go to a traditional career academy
12 school in a traditional school district, what you
13 find is three or four classes a day of the standard
14 class, English, math, science, social studies. Then
15 on top of that is layered a trade class, a
16 vocational class.

17 If you're in a career academy, what
18 happens is you go to school 75 percent of the day,
19 and then you have your career academy class at the
20 end, your trade class at the end.

21 What we have decided is that that really
22 is not a relevant experience for kids for 75 percent
23 of the day. Our challenge is to make the core
24 classes of the day relevant to students. So those
25 core classes teach the benchmarks and standards that

1 the State requires through the lens of construction.
2 So it's not that they're teaching construction.
3 They're teaching English through the lens of
4 construction, math through the lens of construction,
5 because the problem that we have with the graduation
6 rates right now is that the experience of most of
7 the day is irrelevant to the kids who are going to
8 school.

9 The Gates Foundation just did a study, it
10 was published two years ago, that asked students,
11 "Why have you left high school?" The number one
12 reason cited is that, "The experience of school is
13 irrelevant to me."

14 Our challenge is to make the core classes
15 relevant. The way we're going to do that is by
16 teaching those core classes through the lens of
17 construction and hands-on experiences every day in
18 every class, because our job is to appeal to the
19 kids and engage them in a way, for the reason that
20 they came to school. The reason they came to school
21 was to learn about how to work in the construction
22 profession. And our job is to take those classes
23 and make them relevant to construction. So that's
24 the theoretical answer to your question.

25 The practical answer is we're going to

1 spend this year figuring out, through the planning
2 process, about how to make that happen.

3 MR. BERGMAN: You're talking about blended
4 classes, then? You're talking about the technical
5 and the core in a single class?

6 MR. MONFILETTO: Right. Because in
7 construction, you do all of those things; right?
8 And so our job is to figure out how to teach it so
9 it's applied within the school.

10 MR. BERGMAN: And you believe you'll be
11 able to align these with the standards, then?

12 MR. MONFILETTO: Absolutely.

13 MR. BERGMAN: Thank you.

14 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mrs. Shearman, are
15 you ready then?

16 MS. SHEARMAN: You gave me too many
17 options on the budget.

18 MR. MONFILETTO: Oh. I'm sorry.

19 MS. SHEARMAN: I went through the first
20 three, and I thought you were doing one year at a
21 time. But expenditures were still blank. And it
22 was midnight, and I went to bed. So I apologize. I
23 don't have questions yet. Let me look at this a
24 little bit.

25 THE CHAIR: Do you want me to come back to

1 you in a minute?

2 MS. SHEARMAN: Yes, please.

3 THE CHAIR: Anybody else here? I want to
4 ask you.

5 MR. MONFILETTO: Yes.

6 THE CHAIR: Facilities. Expand that more
7 for me, please.

8 MR. MONFILETTO: Madam Chair and
9 Commission, I -- facilities are -- right, they're
10 the hurdle that all of us face. We have a line on
11 two -- on a temporary and a permanent facility. I
12 feel good about those two unfolding for us. But I
13 don't leave anything to chance. And so that's the
14 reason why we have the New Mexico Building and
15 Education Congress board that has contractors,
16 finance experts, all of those folks on that board
17 supporting the school and finding the ultimate
18 location.

19 So if I -- if the real estate project that
20 I'm hopeful about doesn't happen, I have full
21 confidence that there's enough expertise and
22 capacity on the people that care about the school --
23 with the people who care about the school -- to make
24 that happen. But I'm -- I've done this before. I
25 know what it means to be able to do -- to be able to

1 get a permanent facility. And I think -- and I'm
2 confident that we have the capacity to make it
3 happen.

4 THE CHAIR: When we look at the New Mexico
5 adequacy standards and we're looking at this type of
6 school, and you're saying to us, "Well, I have a
7 unique mission." And so how, then, does that impact
8 the facility picture?

9 MR. MONFILETTO: Madam Chair, is the
10 underlying question is it more expensive to build
11 the school that we're thinking about?

12 THE CHAIR: I'm not understanding exactly
13 what you envision your school would be that -- that
14 whatever the unique curriculum is going be, then how
15 does that integrate with what your buildings needs
16 are. Because it looks -- it appears to me the needs
17 are going to be so different from anything else that
18 is out there, that I'm wondering how you're going to
19 finance it, quite frankly.

20 MR. MONFILETTO: Okay. So, Madam Chair,
21 let me take one step back.

22 THE CHAIR: Okay.

23 MR. MONFILETTO: As part of the capacity
24 answer that I gave to the last question,
25 Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, the architectural firm, has

1 given pro bono services to the school to figure out
2 the building program.

3 THE CHAIR: And that's a tremendous gift.

4 MR. MONFILETTO: It sure is. Particularly
5 because what do I know about school -- other than
6 having done it, I'm not an architect. And so having
7 them serving the school in a voluntary capacity has
8 been really helpful, because helping us
9 conceptual -- we can conceptualize what we want.
10 It's another story to plan it out. They've donated
11 their time, and we've provided all those documents
12 about their critique and their initial plan about
13 how to do it.

14 We don't believe it's going to cost any
15 more than a traditional high school to build the
16 building. I think the equipment is a different
17 story. But I think the building won't cost any more
18 than a traditional high school.

19 THE CHAIR: And what does a traditional
20 high school cost today, Tony?

21 MR. MONFILETTO: About \$160 a square foot
22 is what an elementary school, a current elementary
23 school costs.

24 THE CHAIR: About 160,000 square feet is
25 what you're looking at?

1 MR. MONFILETTO: \$160 a square foot.
2 We're talking about 35,000 square feet, something
3 like that.

4 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. And then I
5 have another quick question that concerns -- oh, I
6 guess for want of a better term, I'm going to use
7 ancillary services as it. How do you see that this
8 unique population is going to be served in this
9 fashion? How are you going to do counseling
10 services? How are you going to do -- if you have
11 special education and those things? I --

12 MR. MONFILETTO: Let me answer the
13 counseling part. And then I'm going to have Tori --
14 Tori's an expert in special ed, so I'll have her
15 address the second part. Part of the reason why we
16 have a partnership with Everette Hill at the
17 New Mexico Forum for Youth and Community, and part
18 of the reason why we hope for a partnership with Ann
19 Lyn from the Center for Working Families, the reason
20 why those partnerships exist is because Everette's
21 folks are going to help us train our people about
22 how to -- in good, positive, youth development
23 principles.

24 All of our teachers are going to have
25 those advisory responsibilities with kids, and they

1 all need to be trained about how to work with young
2 people in a positive and constructive way, where
3 they're not thought of as being deficits to the
4 school, but they're appreciated for the assets that
5 they bring. So the philosophy of the school is to
6 engage and nurture young people. And they will be
7 helping us with training young folks to make sure
8 that all of us are not just technical experts, but
9 we're adolescent development experts as well.

10 Ann Lyn from the Center for Working
11 Families, their expertise is in bundled services.
12 So if things are beyond our capacity, things that we
13 need support with that are outside of school, Ann
14 Lyn's organization, we will be developing a
15 partnership with them so that they can serve the
16 extraordinary needs of kids, supporting that so that
17 we can serve them in that way.

18 Regarding special ed --

19 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: Well, I'll speak
20 from my experience building a very successful
21 special education program that really focuses about
22 insuring that students access the general education
23 classroom and general education curriculum as much
24 as possible with the appropriate supports. And it
25 is showing a great success.

1 And one of the big pieces of that is
2 breaking down this special ed versus regular ed
3 dynamic that is often present in traditional special
4 ed service models. The most powerful thing that I
5 think I have done through that experience was
6 engaging regular education staff, who often have the
7 content knowledge and understand what it needs to
8 look like in a general ed classroom, engaging them
9 in helping the special education staff, the family,
10 and the student problem-solve how that student is
11 going to access the class, together with all of
12 their schoolmates, as opposed to in a segregated
13 setting.

14 So I think when you think about ancillary,
15 to speak specifically to ancillary services, that is
16 the same for them. They are on the same team of
17 people that would be breaking down that regular
18 ed/special ed dynamic and helping the teachers, the
19 regular teachers and special ed teachers, think
20 about how that student is going to access that
21 curriculum. And sometimes that may be in the
22 general ed setting. Sometimes they might need to be
23 pulled out.

24 But it will always be focused on helping
25 that student access the general ed curriculum,

1 whether that's because of social-emotional barriers
2 that need to be overcome, whether that's speech and
3 language barriers that need to be overcome, or
4 occupational issue or occupational type issues.
5 It's a general statement.

6 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mr. Bergman.

7 MR. BERGMAN: Is anyone else --

8 THE CHAIR: No. Go ahead.

9 MR. CARR: I do, too. I have another one,
10 too. But go ahead.

11 THE CHAIR: Okay. Where am I? Who needs
12 to speak?

13 MR. CARR: Mr. Bergman.

14 THE CHAIR: Mr. Bergman. Okay.

15 MR. BERGMAN: You may have already
16 addressed this issue in your interview with the
17 Charter Division staff. But you note in your
18 application you have 172 instructional days, and
19 State law mandates 180. I expect you're already
20 aware of that. And this is kind of almost for my
21 own personal. It says in the analysis, the question
22 was raised about whether high school students under
23 18 can be in pre-apprentice and apprentice programs.
24 Can they?

25 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: They can

1 participate. Yes, sir. They can participate in the
2 pre-apprenticeship programs, and then for
3 apprenticeship programs, they can only participate
4 to a certain extent. So that would be some
5 conversation that we would have with the
6 apprenticeship coordinators.

7 MR. BERGMAN: There would be some
8 limitation on there?

9 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: There would be, at
10 this point.

11 MR. BERGMAN: And the question was also
12 raised about liability issues, taking high school
13 students onto active job sites. Can you comment on
14 that?

15 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: I think that would
16 be part of the same conversation.

17 MR. BERGMAN: Okay. Thank you.

18 MS. SHEARMAN: I think I'm ready.

19 THE CHAIR: All right.

20 MS. SHEARMAN: I apologize for the
21 confusion. Under Personnel Services in the budget,
22 you have guidance counselors, social workers. First
23 year, one and a half FTE for \$78,000. Second year,
24 one and a half FTE for \$130,000.

25 MR. MONFILETTO: Let me find that.

1 THE CHAIR: Can you help him tell where
2 you're citing that?

3 MS. SHEARMAN: I'm on Personnel Services
4 Compensation, the 2100 series.

5 MR. MONFILETTO: Oh.

6 MS. SHEARMAN: Oh, okay. Line No. 71.

7 MR. MONFILETTO: Yeah. Madam Chair, I
8 might have to respond to that in writing. I don't
9 know.

10 THE CHAIR: Then could you respond to that
11 in writing? That might be a way.

12 MR. MONFILETTO: I don't know that I'm
13 going to be able to get through -- yeah. Can I do
14 that?

15 THE CHAIR: Pardon me?

16 MR. MONFILETTO: I'd rather respond to
17 that in writing, if that's okay.

18 MS. SHEARMAN: And if you would add the
19 third year also, because, in the third year, you go
20 from one and a half FTE to three FTE for an
21 additional \$26,000. And that sort of seems --

22 MR. MONFILETTO: Yes, ma'am. I'll take a
23 look.

24 MS. SHEARMAN: -- not right. Let me go
25 down to the line where you have principal's salary

1 of \$95,000.

2 MR. MONFILETTO: Uh-huh.

3 MS. SHEARMAN: That's a lovely salary, but
4 I believe it's the highest I've seen. I just -- is
5 that just -- does the principal have additional
6 duties or something to -- that just seems high for
7 all the budgets that we've looked at.

8 MR. MONFILETTO: Well, Madam Chair and
9 Ms. Shearman --

10 DR. DURAN: Let me respond to that. I
11 think it's not unusual for charter schools to go as
12 high as \$110,000, because charter school principals
13 are also superintendents and do additional
14 responsibilities. So I'm not sure that pinpointing
15 the high salary of a charter school depends if
16 there's one being advertised for \$102,000, that I
17 hear that Mr. Obenshain will be applying for. So I
18 think that's the responsibility of the governing
19 council to look at their budget and to determine
20 whether that fits it. So it's not unusual.

21 MS. SHEARMAN: I was curious, though, if
22 it included extra duties, as you pointed out. Okay.

23 My other question is -- I hope I'm looking
24 at this right -- your budget doesn't balance.

25 Expenditures and revenue don't balance.

1 MR. MONFILETTO: Madam Chair, there's --
2 and Ms. Shearman, there's \$100,000 each year,
3 roughly, of unexpended revenue. We've done that
4 because we're predicting that we're not going to
5 know all the expenses going forward. So we decided
6 we're not going to spend -- we're not going to
7 budget for every potential cost and leave no margin
8 of error.

9 So as -- I heard in the last
10 presentation -- I'm sorry, I don't remember who said
11 it -- but I don't know what's going to happen with
12 the State budget. I don't know -- what we don't
13 know now, I'm not sure about. And so we've left
14 some money on the table in case -- or God forbid, we
15 didn't have the enrollment, we were five students
16 short. We need to make sure that we have enough
17 revenue to cover all the expenses.

18 MS. SHEARMAN: I'm just concerned. It's
19 been my experience that you budget everything, that
20 there's no money that's floating around that could
21 ever be questioned. What did you do with it?

22 MR. MONFILETTO: So, Madam Chair, I'd like
23 to answer that directly. The budgets we submit when
24 we submit in March or April, whenever that is, will
25 be balanced. Right now, my job is to make sure that

1 the school's viable. It's going to be able to pay
2 all its bills. And I don't know all the costs right
3 now. So I want to give myself until March to make
4 sure that we've got everything covered. And it will
5 be when we submit.

6 MS. SHEARMAN: Okay.

7 DR. DURAN: Let me also -- because that
8 question seems to be coming back up again. And
9 remembering that this is a budget plan. This is not
10 the budget. So just keep that in mind, that this is
11 not the budget. This is a budget plan. And,
12 obviously, when they submit it to the Public
13 Education Department, then, at that point, the PED
14 will certify that it is balanced.

15 MS. SHEARMAN: Thank you. And I note in
16 the preliminary review that the staff did that you
17 had a couple of areas that were questionable whether
18 or not they met statutes. Have you addressed those?

19 MR. MONFILETTO: Madam Chair and
20 Ms. Shearman, we have.

21 MS. SHEARMAN: Thank you. Thank you,
22 Madam Chair.

23 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Was there somebody
24 else? Mr. Carr?

25 MR. CARR: Yeah. I have a couple of

1 comments and one question. When salaries come up --
2 I know, comparatively speaking, that's a pretty high
3 salary in education compared to the business world.
4 We're -- it's my firm belief that anyone who is
5 truly doing their job as an educator/administrator
6 today is grossly underpaid.

7 The other comment was there's an excellent
8 U.S. history -- AP U.S. history textbook called
9 Inventing America that I think would fit into your
10 program. And my question is do you intend to have
11 any online classes, to cover any of the core areas,
12 especially?

13 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: I guess my initial
14 response would be one of our key pieces to this
15 charter is the learning by doing. And that means
16 that students need to be doing something with their
17 hands every day in every class. And there are very
18 few computer programs that would allow them to do
19 that.

20 MR. CARR: Exactly.

21 MS. STEPHENS-SHAUGER: So I don't want to
22 say no, because we might find a great one out there.
23 I would say that whatever experience we give our
24 kids, it needs to be hands-on, every day in every
25 class.

1 MR. CARR: Okay. I'm done, Madam Chair.

2 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you.

3 Anybody else? Well, with that, then, I would remind
4 you that public input in writing is acceptable until
5 September the 1st, 2009, at 5:00 p.m. Written
6 comments should be sent to the Public Education
7 Commission in care of Beverly Friedman, at
8 300 Don Gaspar Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87501,
9 or an e-mail address to Beverly Friedman at
10 bev.friedman@state.nm.us. And thank you very much
11 for your presentation today.

12 MR. MONFILETTO: Thank you.

13 (Proceedings concluded at 11:09 a.m.)

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1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO

3
4 IN THE MATTER OF:

5 NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR ARCHITECTURE, CONSTRUCTION
6 AND ENGINEERING

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 Bernalillo, 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
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24 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

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