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BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE MATTER OF:

TAOS INTEGRATED SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
CHARTER SCHOOL PUBLIC INPUT HEARING

August 28, 2009

2:04 p.m.

Taos Convention Center, Civic Plaza Drive Avenue,
Taos, 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. 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
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1 THE CHAIR: I call this meeting to order.
2 of the Public Education Commission charter school --
3 charter school public input hearing in -- I've got
4 even the wrong page here; here we go -- in Taos,
5 New Mexico, on August the 28th, 2009. And I am
6 going to ask that we do what we have been doing the
7 last few days -- all week, as a matter of fact -- as
8 far as roll call is concerned, and I'm going to ask
9 Commissioners to introduce themselves, and we will
10 be able to ascertain the roll from that.
11 Ms. Shearman, would you begin, please?

12 MS. SHEARMAN: I'd be happy to. Good
13 afternoon. I'm Carolyn Shearman I represent
14 District 9, which is the far eastern edge of the
15 state. And I live in Artesia.

16 MS. KRIVITZKY: Good morning -- good
17 afternoon. Sorry. I'm still on the bus. My name
18 is Kathryn Krivitzky, and I'm from District 3, which
19 is central Albuquerque.

20 THE CHAIR: Andrew?

21 MR. GARRISON: Good afternoon, everybody.
22 Andrew Garrison. I'm District 1, which is the west
23 side of Albuquerque. And I live in Albuquerque.

24 THE CHAIR: And I'm Catherine Smith,
25 District 6, which is the southwest corner of

1 New Mexico, with the exception of Doña Ana and
2 Sierra Counties. And then we do have a quorum
3 necessary for the presentation of -- of this hear --
4 presentation at this hearing.

5 This is the first time this week that we
6 have not had a quorum of the Commission. We became
7 very acutely aware, over the last two years, that we
8 perhaps would have difficulty having a quorum. The
9 Attorney General verbally gave us an opinion that a
10 quorum was based on the full contingent of ten
11 members of the Commission, whether we had ten
12 members seated on that Commission or not.

13 We got down, I believe, to seven members
14 once, and we were having real strong thoughts about
15 whether we were going to be able to find six people
16 who would stay with us all week long. So the
17 legislature was very kind and recognized that as a
18 potential problem for all of us, for the folks who
19 were going to make the presentations for the -- the
20 charter schools and for us as Commissioners. So
21 they changed the law.

22 The law has changed this last year saying
23 that we could have a minimum of three people. And
24 we are exceeding that this afternoon by one. We
25 had -- we met earlier in Santa Fe. And I think we

1 had seven people there. At any rate, we do have
2 what is required by the law. And so our roll call
3 is complete. I'm going to -- let's see. Has
4 everybody done the pledge that's here?

5 MS. SHEARMAN: I have not.

6 THE CHAIR: Would you lead us, then,
7 Ms. Shearman? All of us please rise for the Pledge
8 and the salute to the New Mexico flag.

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

11 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

12 Dr. Duran, at this time, I would be very pleased for
13 you to introduce your staff.

14 DR. DURAN: Thank you, Madam Chairperson.
15 It's always a pleasure to be up here. Taos is a
16 favorite place of all of us, so thank you for your
17 hospitality. I'd like to introduce Sam Obenshain,
18 who is over there; our attorney who is Rudolph
19 Arnold, Marjorie Gillespie from Albuquerque, the
20 infamous Dr. Michael C de Baca, the electric fingers
21 of Cindy Chapman, who will be taking all this down,
22 and the attorney for the PEC, Ms. Bustamante.

23 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Dr. Duran, very,
24 very much. At this time, I'm to Item 4 of the
25 agenda. It is a statement for the hearing.

1 The purpose of this hearing is to solicit
2 both written and oral input on the proposed charter.
3 In accordance with the Charter Schools Act, "The
4 Commission shall receive applications for initial
5 chartering and renewals of charter for charter
6 schools that want to be chartered by the State and
7 approve or disapprove those charter applications."
8 End of quote. This is a citation from 22-8B-16,
9 New Mexico Statutes Annotated, 1978.

10 In addition, the Charter Schools Act
11 states that, quote, "The chartering authority shall
12 hold at least one public hearing in the school
13 district in which the charter school is proposed to
14 be located to obtain information and community input
15 to assist in its decision whether to grant a charter
16 school application. Community input may include
17 written or oral comments in favor of, or in
18 opposition to, the application from the Applicant,
19 the local community, and, for State-chartered
20 schools, the local school board and school district
21 in whose geographic boundaries the charter school is
22 proposed to be located." End of quote. And this is
23 a citation from 22-8B-6, New Mexico Statutes
24 Annotated, 1978.

25 The Applicant for today -- for this

1 afternoon will be the Taos Integrated School of the
2 Arts. In a moment, I will ask the applicants to
3 make a presentation. And please, for the record,
4 state the name of the school, the name or names of
5 the founder or founders of the school, the proposed
6 grade levels to be served and membership projection
7 of the school. We ask that you state for the record
8 a brief description of the school, the reasons you
9 believe this school will benefit the children and
10 the citizens of this community, and any other
11 information that you would like the Commission to
12 know about your application. You will have 15
13 minutes, so please be as precise as you can during
14 this time.

15 You may now begin -- well, actually, in
16 just one moment. I have one more direction to give
17 you, please. And my direction will hold for the
18 entire hearing. And that is when you make a
19 presentation or make a comment, initially, that you
20 give to our recorder your name and spell it for her,
21 please, so that there's not any question in the
22 record.

23 So at this time, I'm going to ask the Taos
24 Integrated School of the Arts to come forward.

25 Thank you.

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1 MS. SETO: Thank you. My name is Linda
2 Seto, S-E-T-O. I am one of the founders, along with
3 Nina Matysiak of the Taos Integrated School of the
4 Arts. We propose to have a five-year phase-in
5 period. We would start with the first year would be
6 120 students from K through fifth, growing to a
7 school population of 180 in five years of K through
8 eighth grade.

9 We are planning to be located here in Taos
10 County, preferably within the Taos municipal
11 district. Anything else I need to give you on that
12 score, I don't know.

13 Members of the Public Education
14 Commission, members of the Charter School Division
15 and community members. My name is Linda Seto, and
16 I'm a founding member of the Taos Integrated School
17 of the Arts. I've been an educator for over
18 25 years in both the public and private spheres.
19 I'm also presently enrolled in a master's level
20 program with Lesley University, specializing in
21 integrated arts curriculum. I will have completed
22 this program in July 2010.

23 Taos has been my home for the past
24 26 years. My husband and I have raised three
25 children here. Our youngest is now a senior at Taos

1 High School. As you are aware, the Taos Integrated
2 School of the Arts proposes to be a tuition-free
3 public school using an integrated arts curriculum.
4 Our mission, in partnership with parents and
5 community, is to provide K through eight students in
6 the Taos Municipal School District with the
7 opportunity to reach their maximum potential through
8 a standards-based, multicultural, thematic and
9 art-integrated curriculum.

10 Arts integration creates more meaning of
11 learning through using the arts, visual art, drama,
12 music, and dance as a catalyst to create broad and
13 deeper learning experiences. Taos is a
14 multicultural community steeped in artistic
15 tradition. We wish to found a school that provides
16 students with a multicultural worldview while
17 utilizing thematic units and the arts to facilitate
18 academic learning. Our mission is to educate the
19 whole child in order to cultivate in young people
20 the skills, knowledge, and values they need to reach
21 their highest potential.

22 There is a definite need for an arts
23 integrated public school here in Taos County. Taos
24 is a community, as I've said, with a tradition of
25 art and crafts. Long before Taos was an artist

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1 colony, there were local crafters and artisans from
2 the traditional Hispanic and Native American
3 cultures. We wish to continue in this tradition
4 through the founding of a school that has a strong
5 focus on utilizing the arts to facilitate academic
6 learning.

7 Taos Integrated School of the Arts, TISA,
8 will be the only school offering an arts integrated
9 curriculum in the Taos area. We have received
10 strong support, as evidenced by the petitions
11 submitted with this application. While there are
12 already two charter schools for our target age group
13 in the Taos community, parents are still seeking
14 alternatives and are very interested in our proposed
15 arts integrated school.

16 The lottery held for one K-8 charter
17 resulted in 208 students applying for 20 open slots.
18 At the second charter school, 85 students applied
19 for 35 open slots. As a result, many Taos families
20 remain on charter waiting lists, and their requests
21 for educational choice remain unanswered.

22 In Taos, there is a strong home-schooling
23 network serving over 100 students. Many of these
24 families have expressed interest in our proposed
25 schools art curriculum if it were to become

1 available to them. The numbers demonstrate the need
2 for more schools of choice in Taos.

3 A multicultural, thematic, arts integrated
4 curriculum is not currently available in any public
5 school in Taos. TISA will offer such a curriculum
6 as a charter school. An additional note of
7 importance is that a private school serving
8 110 students closed in February 2009 due to
9 financial difficulties. Our school would attract
10 these families, with its arts-based thematic
11 curriculum and parent-friendly atmosphere.

12 We believe the present economic downturn
13 will bring more families to our school from the
14 private sector. We feel we are offering many
15 families the unique opportunity to bring their
16 children into the public system. For some, this
17 will be a return to the public schools they left
18 disenchanted. For others, it will be a new and
19 rewarding experience.

20 Instead of removing students from public
21 schools, we aim to bring families back into the
22 public system, thus benefiting them all.

23 We believe our program offers a unique
24 approach to education that will fill a niche that
25 remains empty in our community. Our arts integrated

1 school will use all the arts to show students new
2 ways to touch the wonder of the world and to use all
3 their powers of observation and creativity in the
4 pursuit of knowledge and self-expression. In a
5 recent letter from the federal Secretary of
6 Education, Arne Duncan, he states, "I bring to your
7 attention the importance of the arts as a core
8 academic subject and part of a complete education
9 for all students. The Elementary and Secondary Act
10 defines the arts as a core subject, and the arts
11 play a significant role in children's development
12 and learning process."

13 In June, we received the 2008 national
14 assessment. I was reminded of the important role
15 that art education plays in providing American
16 students with a well-rounded education. The arts
17 can help students become tenacious, team-oriented
18 problem-solvers who are confident and able to think
19 creatively. These qualities can be especially
20 important in improving learning among students from
21 economically disadvantaged circumstances.

22 However, recent NAEP results found that
23 only 57 percent of eighth-graders attended schools
24 where music instruction was offered at least three
25 or four times a week, and only 47 percent attended

1 schools where visual arts were offered that often.

2 The Secretary goes on to talk about the
3 funding that is available to schools that support
4 the arts in education. We are very encouraged by
5 the Secretary's words and feel that now is the
6 opportune time to bring this unique approach to our
7 community.

8 Our educational philosophies and
9 approaches were selected based upon our experiences
10 as educators in the classroom and through our master
11 level studies in education. Our educational
12 philosophies and curricular approaches include the
13 following ideas:

14 Teaching is an art. An integrated,
15 thematic curriculum facilitates learning.
16 Arts integration is the thread that holds integrated
17 thematic instruction together. A multicultural
18 curriculum is vital to students in the 21st century.
19 And all children can learn.

20 Our governance structure is a traditional
21 one, with the governing board as the governing body
22 of the school. The governing board's major roles
23 and responsibilities will include approving all
24 major educational and operational policies,
25 approving all major contracts, approving the

1 school's annual budget, overseeing the school's
2 fiscal affairs and selecting and evaluating the
3 administrator.

4 The governing board will delegate
5 operational responsibilities primarily to the
6 administrator and financial operations
7 responsibilities to the business manager. The
8 business manager will have operational
9 responsibility for his/her own area, but will carry
10 out his or her respective duties under the general
11 supervision of the administrator, who will function
12 as the governing board's chief operating officer.

13 The administrator supervises the faculty
14 and support staff and oversees the program of
15 instruction. The administrator is the point source
16 of leadership for day-to-day school operations. He
17 will -- he or she will attend monthly governing
18 council meetings and make a report at the meeting,
19 but he's not a member of the governing council.

20 As far as budget and finance goes, we are
21 very happy to know that now, the New Mexico
22 Coalition for Charter Schools is offering the
23 services of Michael Vigil & Associates. He is a
24 school business manager of many years of experience,
25 and he has at his disposal a staff of qualified

1 experts in various departments of financial and
2 fiscal management. He's currently -- they're using
3 his services at the Taos Academy Charter School here
4 as well.

5 We are very excited about this service and
6 feel that the service will help us to insure that
7 the business side of our school management will be
8 in capable hands.

9 In short, we believe our approach will
10 uniquely meet the needs of Taos families and the
11 community as a whole. We believe we have the
12 capacity to found this school and to bring in those
13 with the expertise needed to operate an efficient
14 thriving educational institute. We ask that you
15 please vote yes on September 10th for the Taos
16 Integrated School of the Arts.

17 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

18 MS. SETO: Thank you.

19 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you very
20 much. Did you other ladies introduce yourselves for
21 the record?

22 MS. ADKISON: My name is Sarah Adkison,
23 S-A-R-A-H. And the last name is A-D-K-I-S-O-N. I'm
24 the secretary of the board.

25 MS. WOODALL: My name is Katie Woodall. I

1 am a long time Taoseño, 26 years as well. I have
2 been teaching integrated arts in the high school for
3 15 years. I have also designed curriculum for
4 integrated arts during the summer in Grants, between
5 an older organization called TANF, and New Mexico
6 museums. I have a great deal of affiliation in the
7 arts community as well. I have raised five children
8 here.

9 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. We are
10 to Item 7 of the agenda. And that's local school
11 board and district representatives. So if you would
12 find a seat for just a moment, please. We will ask
13 you to come back in just a few minutes.

14 At this time, we would like to hear from
15 the local school board and/or district
16 representatives. Good afternoon.

17 MR. GONZALES: Hi. How are you?

18 THE CHAIR: Please state your name and
19 title for the record. We would request that you
20 state your reasons this charter school application
21 should be approved by the Commission and/or reasons
22 why this charter school application should be
23 denied. You have ten minutes, so please be as
24 precise as you can during your time. You may now
25 begin.

1 MR. GONZALES: Okay. Good afternoon. I'm
2 Roberto "Bobbie" Gonzales, R-O-B-E-R-T-O, B-O-B-B-Y,
3 middle initial J., G-O-N-Z-A-L-E-S, at the present
4 time, interim superintendent for the Taos Municipal
5 Schools. And I'm over here on both parts, support,
6 but I also have a few questions. And one of them
7 would be --

8 THE CHAIR: Would you speak a little
9 louder please, Mr. Gonzales.

10 MR. GONZALES: One of the questions would
11 be the location that is being looked at, you know.
12 That is one. And you can ask, you know, some of the
13 members that are here.

14 THE CHAIR: I'm still having people back
15 there that are indicating they're having trouble
16 hearing. Can you speak a little louder.

17 MR. GONZALES: Sure. I can turn around if
18 you want me to.

19 THE CHAIR: No. You need to address this
20 Commission. But I want them to be able to hear,
21 because they did do us the courtesy of coming here
22 today.

23 MR. GONZALES: The question that I would
24 have is the location of the site proposed. And
25 within that, one of the reasons is transportation.

1 As we are right now, being that it is not the
2 numbers and miles, but just the congestion in Taos,
3 that right now, as far as from one charter school to
4 another charter school and then servicing our
5 district facilities, timewise, our drivers, this
6 year, we had to adjust by 15 minutes. So then
7 that's also creating scheduling problems within the
8 system, middle school, high school, and also our
9 elementary schools. That's one part.

10 The other one that -- cafeteria. I would
11 say that that's fine, you know. That will work.
12 And another question that I would have is the part
13 of our SB-9 monies. That is our levy. We're at the
14 point that it's barely to what is in place by the
15 voters of Taos Municipal Schools District. You
16 know, it's stretching it very, very thin to keep in
17 the maintenance of the buildings that we do hold.
18 So that's another question, to see if there's going
19 to be requests for those funds.

20 As far as what was mentioned, Taos
21 Integrated for the Arts, I think it's a very good
22 concept, and I feel that something in the area of
23 Taos with as much of the arts that we have, that
24 that would be a very good choice for many students,
25 you know. So, you know, for those parts, you know,

1 you know, I would say that that is -- that I do feel
2 that, you know, they will attract a lot of students.

3 So, mostly, those were my questions, is
4 SB-9 monies, bond monies, and also transportation.

5 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Is there
6 anybody else here from the school district or a
7 school board member?

8 MR. GONZALES: Madam Chair, I don't
9 believe so.

10 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much. I
11 wanted to recognize them, at least, if -- if they
12 were here, Mr. Gonzales. And Representative
13 Gonzales is a longtime friend.

14 DR. DURAN: Ma'am -- yes, I was going to
15 say he's one of our esteemed legislators as well.

16 MR. GONZALES: Thank you.

17 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Dr. Duran. We are
18 to the place, No. 8, of community input. Public
19 comments and observations regarding the application
20 will be heard at this time. There will be a
21 four-minute time limit per presenter. Persons from
22 the same group and having similar viewpoints are
23 asked to select a spokesperson to speak on their
24 behalf. Multiple and repetitious presentations of
25 the same view will be discouraged.

1 Is there anyone from the community who
2 would like to come forward at this time? Yes,
3 ma'am.

4 MS. DAVIS: My name is Audrey Davis.
5 A-U-D-R-E-Y, D-A-V-I-S. I have a business called
6 Taos Suzuki Violin School. I've been teaching
7 violin, cello and viola in the community for
8 26 years. I'm also a contracted teacher for the
9 high school, teaching -- in the past, teaching
10 mariachi, violin, and, in Peñasco, teaching mariachi
11 violin, and Questa, teaching mariachi violin. I
12 presently teach six classes at the Country Day
13 School, starting the third grade through the eighth.
14 I also have two orchestras that -- well, I have one
15 orchestra that meets on Wednesday for younger
16 children.

17 And I still have students coming from --
18 when they were very little. And they're -- have
19 already graduated from high school. I have children
20 in the high school that are still coming to private
21 lessons.

22 I feel that music should be a part of
23 every child's education. Back in the Greek times,
24 there were three disciplines: Math for the mind,
25 gymnastics for the body, and music for the soul.

1 Nowadays, music is often looked upon as a fun,
2 extracurricular activity. I believe it should be
3 part of the curriculum, as important as math or
4 science.

5 It has been proven that you use more of
6 the brain in playing music than you do any other
7 activity. It incorporates emotion, mathematics,
8 history, language, and it certainly does improve a
9 child's focus. Children who play an instrument tend
10 to perform better academically. Therefore, it
11 should be part of a child's daily activity.

12 Any fine art form like dance or music
13 should be developed young, when the muscles are
14 developing and the mind is quick to absorb new
15 information. It doesn't matter whether or not a
16 child goes into music professionally. What matters
17 is that they develop mentally, physically, and
18 emotionally, and that they develop a true love and
19 appreciation for music for the rest of their lives.
20 Thank you very much.

21 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I would like to
22 recognize Mr. Jeff Carr, Commissioner in District
23 10, who has just joined us. Good afternoon,
24 Mr. Carr. I'm going to take the man in the yellow
25 shirt over here.

1 MR. COOK: My name is Gary Cook. That's
2 without the "E." And I'm a professor at the
3 University. I've been teaching 36 years in the
4 arts, mostly in the university level. So I have a
5 great experience with what the arts do for students.
6 And my experience is that they perform better. The
7 arts combine so many things that contain all of
8 their education, writing skills, group interaction,
9 creative thinking, you know, oral skills.

10 And my experience here so far is that the
11 community is very, very interested in the arts and
12 that the high school does have the arts program --
13 does have some art programs, but it really doesn't
14 really cover the arts very well, you know.

15 Governor Richardson recently has decided
16 that film-making and the media arts is very
17 important to the economy of the state. And we just
18 finished teaching classes at the high school that
19 were screen writing classes. And, again, that
20 includes writing, filming, technical skills,
21 physical skills, group skills, creative thinking,
22 right across the board, everything children ever had
23 to learn in school.

24 And those classes, 60 to 70 percent of the
25 students decided they would go on to a film career.

1 So, I mean, we do have some possibility for jobs to
2 come out of this, too. So I think this is a very
3 important kind of school to develop, a school of the
4 arts. And also I think, in our town that loves the
5 arts, we just need more -- more availability for the
6 students. So --

7 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I think I had a
8 lady over here. Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. KELTZ: Hi. My name is Iris Keltz,
10 K-E-L-T-Z. And I came to Taos in the late '60s from
11 New York City, where I had already been a teacher.
12 So I've been a teacher now for over 35 years. And
13 in Taos, I taught at Donna Halsey (ph), which became
14 the Taos Learning Center. And then after a period
15 of time, I moved to Albuquerque, where I've been a
16 reading specialist for the Title I reading program.
17 And as a reading teacher in that program, I had to
18 deal with kids who were really struggling in
19 literacy.

20 And I've been doing this for 35 years, and
21 I can say unequivocally that the arts have saved
22 many lives and brought kids back to the love of
23 learning, because reading -- after all, it actually
24 is an act of critical thinking. It's not a matter
25 of just reading the words. In this day and age,

1 there's so much information in the world, the most
2 important thing we need to teach our kids is to
3 think critically and be able to absorb the
4 information and restate it. And I think the arts
5 are incredible with this.

6 I can think of two examples specifically
7 that really stand out in my mind. One is a little
8 boy who I worked with for years as a Title I teacher
9 who was really struggling to learn reading. And I
10 started a weaving project with him. And it turns
11 out that weaving was an incredible way for a visual
12 to get really clarity, the under-over visual
13 discrimination. And I had no idea that this child
14 actually was related to the Chimayo weavers. And
15 after he started weaving, which he incredibly
16 excelled at, way beyond all the other kids, with
17 patterning and the careful way he did the weaving,
18 his self-esteem rose and kids started asking him for
19 help. And it was very soon after that that he
20 actually learned how to read.

21 And then there was the case of my own son
22 who was a struggling reader, who I was, like,
23 shocked at because I'm a reading teacher. But his
24 problem was very different than the kids I was
25 working with. He was a megasocial kid who could not

1 sit down and learn how to read, which, after all, is
2 a quiet, reflective, solitary activity. But,
3 however, the way he learned how to read was when he
4 wanted to try out for a play, he seemed to have very
5 little difficulty reading the part and learning
6 about the character and being able to discuss it and
7 analyze it. And so he came to reading through the
8 arts.

9 And I can say that my son now, actually,
10 is teaching the humanities. He's an English teacher
11 in a junior high school. And he was a really
12 struggling reader. And I know that he would be the
13 first to admit that theater and the arts saved his
14 life and brought him back and inspired him, as I
15 think that the arts can do.

16 And I think there's no way to say how
17 important they are to our humanity. And thank you
18 for your time. I'm so excited that there's a
19 possibility of a school like this happening in Taos.
20 And I plan to do everything I can to support it.
21 Thank you.

22 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, sir.

23 MR. JONES: My leg went to sleep. My name
24 is Yale, Y-A-L-E, Jones, J-O-N-E-S. And I am what
25 is called a newcomer to Taos. I've been a

1 permanent, full-time resident here for about five
2 years, and we've had our house for about nine. I'm
3 a retired attorney, after spending 35 years laboring
4 in that familiar vineyard in San Francisco.

5 And since I've retired, I've devoted
6 myself to supporting public education in Taos County
7 in every -- and to supporting children. I'm on the
8 advisory board of the Public Education Fund of the
9 Taos Community Foundation. I'm on the advisory
10 board of the UNM Literacy Center, and I've mentored
11 a child -- two boys reading up at one of our public
12 elementary schools, the Arroyos del Norte. And so
13 I'm getting to know the schools and the situation.

14 And I enthusiastically support the
15 application that's before you. I also want to say
16 that my support is not premised on any criticism of
17 the teachers and administrators in the public
18 school. We have some amazing teachers. I've come
19 to know them through the grant application process
20 that they make to the community foundation. And in
21 no way is my support -- my personal support critical
22 of the public schools or the administration that
23 Mr. Gonzales is leading at this time.

24 But I do think that as -- Iris said, I
25 believe, different children approach learning in

1 different ways. And the more options we can offer
2 kids and their parents in Taos County, the better.
3 And think this one that will attract a segment of
4 the child and adult population that -- that our
5 schools just cannot serve as well as perhaps the
6 charter school will, just because of lack of funds,
7 lack of time and all the pressures on the public
8 schools. So I urge -- I urge approval of the
9 application.

10 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Over here on this
11 side? Is there anybody? Yes, ma'am. I'm trying to
12 alternate between sides of the room.

13 MS. TEMPLETON: Hi. My name is Rachel
14 Templeton, R-A-C-H-E-L, T-E-M-P-L-E-T-O-N. So --
15 I'm a senior in high school. And last year, as a
16 junior, I learned about the Constitution and the
17 founding of the United States. The First Amendment
18 includes the rights to freedom of speech and freedom
19 of the press, because our founding fathers
20 understood the significance of an educated, critical
21 thinking population.

22 We, as a nation, call ourselves a
23 democratic society. Yet our present public
24 education system does not serve the purpose of
25 nurturing and helping the future leaders of America,

1 the students, to acquire the proper skills that are
2 necessary to sustain a free and democratic society.

3 We live in a world in which the enormities
4 of the problems we face are unprecedented. The
5 children of now are the future leaders who will have
6 to solve the problems, such as climate change, clean
7 water shortage, and economic depression. Schools
8 that empower students to be imaginative, critical
9 thinking human beings are essential to our very
10 survival.

11 Many people do not acknowledge the value
12 that the different art forms have on education.
13 They write art off as a frivolous entity that cannot
14 help them accomplish the only seemingly important
15 goal, passing AYP. The truth is that we cannot
16 afford to lose art. It is universally an essential
17 component of cultural identity and social
18 progression.

19 Art gives students passion, the drive to
20 succeed, the creativity to make a better reality and
21 the courage to imagine a better world. I have lived
22 in Taos, New Mexico, my whole life, and I have
23 attended both private and public schools. I had the
24 privilege of attending a private elementary school,
25 only because my mother worked there, and she could

1 pay -- that enabled us to pay the tuition because we
2 got a better deal. Right?

3 So the foundation of my elementary
4 education was through the arts rather than being
5 pumped with facts until a permanent state of
6 regurgitation was provoked. The different art forms
7 have taught me a deeper level of understanding and a
8 vast amount of real-life skills.

9 I have learned discipline and the value of
10 practice and hard work by playing violin. I have
11 developed self-confidence, public speaking skills,
12 and an understanding of the necessity of hard work
13 through drama. And I have experienced the beauty of
14 mistakes. And I have developed critical and
15 imaginative thinking skills through a diverse array
16 of art forms.

17 These aspects of my education are an
18 outright privilege that have given me a higher
19 quality of education than most people can say they
20 have had. However, quality of education is not
21 something that should just be a privilege. It is a
22 universal right that all humans, particularly all
23 children, should experience, no matter their race,
24 class, or social status. And that is why I'm here
25 to endorse the Taos Integrated School of the Arts.

1 Thank you.

2 THE CHAIR: Thank you. The gentleman in
3 the turquoise shirt over here on the --

4 MR. LaVALLEY: Yes. My name is Michael,
5 M-I-C-H-A-E-L, LaValley, L-A, capital V-A-L-L-E-Y.
6 I am currently the director of a private high school
7 here in Taos, Chamisa Mesa High School. Our motto
8 is, "Arts, Awareness and Academics." We value all
9 three equally. And I'm here to support a school for
10 the arts. I find that a couple of things that -- I
11 also spent 40 years in the theater, 20 years working
12 in and out of professional theater, singing in both
13 Los Angeles and New York before I came here. And
14 I've been teaching for about 14 years in the Chamisa
15 Mesa High School. And I became the director about
16 three -- this is my fourth year as director of the
17 high school.

18 Arts have saved a number of kids from
19 dropping out of school. I find this to be a very
20 strong motivator for -- for children who -- they
21 have a -- they develop a passion for a particular
22 art or particular way of expressing themselves
23 through writing, through theater, through music,
24 even through judo.

25 And I believe very strongly in people's

1 ability to transform themselves. That has kept many
2 of us over the years at Chamisa Mesa -- it's the
3 arts program that kept many students in school when
4 they were willing to give up because they just
5 couldn't take another math class or another science
6 class that they had no interest in and no feelings
7 for. But it's the arts that brings them back and
8 makes them passionate.

9 Arts also gives them a sense of how --
10 that working really hard for yourself and learning
11 how to express yourself empowers them in a way that
12 other subjects do not empower them.

13 I also remember reading a few years ago an
14 interview with the superintendent of schools in
15 Singapore. And Singapore has a very good school,
16 and they get very high grades in science and math
17 every year. And he was lamenting the fact that even
18 though that they beat the United States in math and
19 science every year, when it comes to innovation on
20 creating new technology, it's the Americans who come
21 up with the new innovations. And he attributed that
22 to our ability to be creative and our -- and the
23 fact that we have a strong arts program, and it
24 allows us to be more creative than learning just the
25 science and math by rote methodology.

1 So I'm here to support the school for the
2 arts. And I would just like to support it all the
3 way up through high school and college levels.
4 Thank you very much.

5 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Did I have
6 somebody over here? And I know I have a couple of
7 people over here. Yes, ma'am.

8 MS. ADKISON: Again, my name is Sarah
9 Adkison, A-D-K-I-S-O-N. And I am a teacher. In the
10 last 20-plus years, I've taught public schools, in
11 public schools, in private schools, and in a charter
12 school. I've also raised two children, solo, and
13 I'm thankful that I happened to be teaching in a
14 private school during my daughter's early years.

15 I feel that each of my daughters received
16 a solid foundation in the basic necessities of
17 education. But, more importantly, they each
18 received the support of community, of a community of
19 engaged individuals. They received a love of
20 learning.

21 In the past year, I've tutored children
22 here in the Taos Public Schools district. I have
23 experienced the shortcomings and the frustrations of
24 both the children and the parents regarding the
25 public education system here.

1 I'm familiar with the proposed charter of
2 the Taos Integrated School of the Arts, and I
3 believe that each child is a unique individual. Not
4 every child responds positively, nor has a
5 successful experience with a one-size-fits-all
6 public school curriculum. I'm familiar with this
7 charter. And I believe that the school will offer
8 an alternative and a positive experience to the
9 parents and the children of Taos. So I want to urge
10 all of you to charter this school and to offer our
11 community the opportunity for a successful
12 alternative. Thank you.

13 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And I have a
14 gentleman here.

15 MR. LONG: I don't have a lot to say. My
16 name is Dennis Long. D-E-N-N-I-S, L-O-N-G. I'm a
17 grandfather. And my kids are real bright kids. My
18 son is an executive at Microsoft, and my daughter,
19 Goldberry, is a novelist, and my daughter Keisha, is
20 the head of the -- the science department at Brawley
21 High School. And my son, Danny is a photojournalist
22 who just bought property up at Llama Foundation.
23 And he's currently touring in Africa with his wife.

24 And I know that -- that my grandchildren
25 in that marriage would really appreciate an

1 integrated arts program. And I just wholeheartedly
2 recommend that you -- that you accept this proposal.
3 That's all.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, ma'am. And
5 I'll come back over here.

6 MS. WOODALL: I'm, again, Katie Woodall.
7 I'm an educator, an artist, and a designer of
8 curriculum. I want to speak to the importance of
9 having an arts education as a young child, to where
10 from a cultural context, the magical child can
11 evolve into a multifaceted individual with lots of
12 skills so that as he meets the future, which is a
13 very changing phenomenon these days, children
14 growing up today are going to need the flexibility
15 of variety and different tool use.

16 This school not only allows for a larger
17 time frame to -- to be involved in classroom
18 situations during the day, the time schedule. It
19 also allows for a relationship with all of the
20 talent in the community. It allows for exchange and
21 creative collaboration with individuals. That often
22 doesn't happen here because the schools are so,
23 primarily, academically oriented. And it allows for
24 him to adapt to the computer as a tool user.

25 So, in these ways, I feel like it's very,

1 very important in our Northern New Mexico community
2 for traditional peoples to be allowed the
3 opportunity to choose these ways of learning.

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

5 MS. MATYSIAK: My name is Nina Matysiak.
6 N-I-N-A, M-A-T-Y-S-I-A-K. I come as a parent. I
7 have four children. Two of them are too old for
8 this school if it were approved. But the bottom
9 two, I support another choice for a charter school,
10 mainly because we've tried to get in charter schools
11 in this community. And both of my children are
12 No. 14 in one waiting list, 15 in the other. And
13 it's -- it's sad for my little one. The second one,
14 she really doesn't mind.

15 We're home-schooling using an arts-based
16 curriculum. And we like it as the parents. But our
17 children want to go to school, be with other
18 children. Our fourth-grader has some learning
19 difficulties. She was born prematurely. She was a
20 pound and a half when she was born. But she's an
21 amazing artist. So if weren't for the arts, she
22 would have a very hard time in school and very low
23 self-esteem, because that's how she gets her --
24 that's what she's good at.

25 And she has learned a lot of math by doing

1 the arts. And I would really support a school --
2 another charter school, because Taos really does
3 need another option in this community, again, as a
4 parent who would put her children in charter school,
5 but there is no room. So I would like to support
6 this school. Thank you.

7 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Is there anyone
8 else? Seeing no one, then we will go to Section 9
9 of the agenda. At this time, the Public Education
10 Commission reserves time to address any questions
11 that the Commissioners may have of the applicant or
12 applicants. And the Chair would ask the applicants
13 to come back up. I guess -- are you going to be
14 assisted by your other ladies there?

15 MS. SETO: Yes.

16 THE CHAIR: Please keep your responses as
17 brief as possible to allow for questioning from our
18 Commission members. Commissioners, please be
19 recognized by the Chair. Is there anybody who wants
20 to start?

21 MS. SHEARMAN: Why don't you start, if you
22 don't ask a budget question.

23 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Ms. Krivitzky?

24 MS. KRIVITZKY: Okay. I just have a
25 couple of budget and salary questions, just kind of

1 nitpicking details here. But I'm just curious.

2 On your 910-B --

3 MS. SETO: Uh-huh.

4 MS. KRIVITZKY: -- it shows the SEG to be
5 \$823,471.99. But in your budget revenues, you're
6 showing almost -- was it \$10,000 more than that,
7 \$838,000. So I'm wondering why the discrepancy
8 between the two.

9 MS. SETO: I think if you look at the
10 revenue section, it shows that there are other
11 revenues we are hopeful of getting. And that's --

12 MS. KRIVITZKY: That showed as your SEG.

13 MS. SETO: I don't know, because this form
14 was --

15 MS. KRIVITZKY: I checked, because I
16 thought, well, maybe there's another one.

17 MS. SETO: The SEG was calculated
18 electronically. We just plugged in the numbers and
19 that was what --

20 THE CHAIR: Perhaps you will look that up
21 for her and respond?

22 MS. SETO: And, yeah. And I'll respond in
23 writing to that. Can you clarify your question?

24 MS. KRIVITZKY: If you look at your
25 910-B --

1 MS. SETO: Yeah.

2 MS. KRIVITZKY: -- and then if you look in
3 your budget, under Revenue, it's different.

4 MS. SETO: Okay. I'll check on that.

5 MS. KRIVITZKY: It's just your SEG. I
6 looked to make sure it didn't include other
7 revenues.

8 MS. SETO: So the SEG is not the same on
9 both areas.

10 MS. KRIVITZKY: I know that we've noticed
11 this a lot. But your expenses are less than your
12 budget and revenue.

13 MS. SETO: That, I just want to make a
14 point that the handout that I gave Dr. Duran,
15 Michael Baca, that you will all get, has the answers
16 for all the questions that are posed on the
17 preliminary analysis. And that's one of those
18 questions. And we were working on adjusting the
19 budget to equal that. Yes.

20 MS. KRIVITZKY: Okay.

21 MS. SETO: Thank you.

22 MS. KRIVITZKY: And then the other thing
23 that I was curious about is your salaries in your
24 budget. I sort of did an average, because you said
25 the first year, you'd have 5.5. And for the amount

1 that you have there, that gives an average salary of
2 about \$38,000. Just, in my experience, that seems
3 kind of low. But then I looked farther into your
4 narrative, and you talk about having six teachers in
5 your first year. And that makes it even lower.

6 And so then I went to your salary
7 schedules. And your Level 1 teacher is all you
8 would get with that. Because if I looked at your
9 Level 2 and Level 3, they're -- one's at
10 40-something and the other one, of course, is at 50.
11 So I guess you were looking at just Level 1 teachers
12 the first year?

13 MS. SETO: Well, I think we were -- we are
14 trying to get a variety of levels. So I'll look at
15 that salary situation. I know that, in Taos, we
16 have a lot lower salaries than other places.

17 MS. KRIVITZKY: These are State-mandated.

18 MS. SETO: Uh-huh. So I'll take a look at
19 it.

20 MS. KRIVITZKY: And then just as -- maybe
21 you need to look at this. I don't know. But you
22 have Level 1 teachers going for ten years. And you
23 can't be a Level 1 teacher for ten years, as far as
24 I know. I think -- what is it? Three?

25 MS. SETO: It's three, and then you submit

1 your --

2 MS. KRIVITZKY: It's five. You have them
3 up to ten years, and that actually tops out at the
4 \$38,000. I thought, well, you can't even be that.

5 MS. SETO: Oh. You mean in our salary
6 schedule. So I'll adjust the salary schedule.

7 MS. KRIVITZKY: So you need to adjust the
8 salary schedule to reflect only five years at
9 Level 1. And then -- I don't know -- maybe look
10 into your budget a little bit for your salaries.

11 MS. SETO: Okay. Uh-huh.

12 MS. KRIVITZKY: So that was all I
13 really -- otherwise, it sounds really wonderful.

14 MS. SETO: Thank you very much.

15 MS. KRIVITZKY: Yeah. Thank you.

16 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mr. Carr?

17 MR. CARR: Yes, Madam Chair. I -- I guess
18 my general -- you don't have to convince me that
19 arts -- you know, I'm a musician. I actually taught
20 in an art magnet school in Kansas City for two
21 years. And I think it's a great idea and
22 everything.

23 But what you need to do, of course -- and
24 I'm sorry I wasn't here for the beginning. And I
25 have read the documents that you've -- that you've

1 sent us. Specifically, what -- you know, so what
2 kind of programs can you offer that are not already
3 being offered now? Or what -- so if you can clarify
4 that.

5 MS. SETO: Well, if -- you may not be
6 clear in what an arts-integrated program looks like.
7 Is that what you're saying? Because an
8 arts-integrated --

9 MR. CARR: No. I am clear about that.

10 MS. SETO: You know what an
11 arts-integrated program is?

12 MR. CARR: And I know the schools -- a lot
13 of people don't do that. I try to do that in my
14 classes, to the best of my ability. But I -- but
15 beyond that, the integration into the overall
16 curriculum, I understand that part. What are --
17 what else are you offering that -- besides that.

18 MS. ADKISON: Could I speak to that?

19 MS. SETO: Sure.

20 MS. ADKISON: I think there are two
21 things. One thing is that art will be the base of
22 all the subject matter. I mean, art will be the
23 sort of thread that goes through all of them. The
24 second one is that all of the teachers will be
25 teaching -- say, you have one subject that you're

1 working on or one theme that you're working on.
2 Soviet Union. Then that will go through math,
3 through writing, through reading. They will all be
4 unified in the same area -- I mean, they'll all be
5 working in the same areas, but using their own --
6 you know, their own -- you know, their own --
7 they'll be doing reading in that area. They'll be
8 doing writing in that area. So there will be a
9 unified sort of theme throughout the school. That's
10 what I thought.

11 MR. CARR: But above and beyond that -- I
12 know -- I mean, as a -- as a musician myself, and
13 I've -- and I've been to music school myself. I --
14 above and beyond all of that, I know -- are you
15 going to get into specifics? Are you going to give
16 individual lessons? Are you going to offer
17 specifics in music, art, all the different art
18 forms?

19 MS. ADKISON: Sure.

20 MS. SETO: So let me just give you a
21 picture of what we're thinking of. There's two
22 components. There is the integrated arts classroom,
23 where the actual classroom teacher is using the
24 arts. And the arts we're talking about here, just
25 for clarification, are the visual arts, drama,

1 music, and dance. You know, those are in the
2 standards in New Mexico.

3 And so the classroom teacher is going to
4 be really permeating the curriculum with that. So
5 looking at that and saying, How can I present this
6 in an artistic way? How can I -- what kind of
7 projects? What kind of lessons am I going to
8 present to these students that are -- you know, that
9 I can use these with? That is not being a
10 question -- that is not a question that's asked at
11 the moment in any schools here that I know of.

12 The arts -- traditionally, the arts here
13 in this community in the schools, that I've
14 observed, it's more that it's put on top of the
15 curriculum. It is not infused into the curriculum.
16 We're talking about infusing it in there.

17 And the other component to it is also
18 wanting to bring artists into the schools of the
19 various subjects and actually working with them and
20 having some trainings that actually train teachers
21 and artists to work together. So it would be on
22 the -- in the vein of programs like CAPE, which is
23 the Chicago Arts Partnership project, where they
24 actually have artists here, they have teachers here.
25 They train them to work together, where the artists

1 are actually enriching the curriculum, what the
2 curriculum is.

3 They're not bringing in work, for example,
4 into a second grade, where it has no relation to
5 what the children are learning. It's really
6 relating, motivating, you know, and, in that way,
7 enriching of the curriculum.

8 MS. WOODALL: I have one more piece. The
9 thematic nature allows the artist to assist in a
10 very functional way for the artist himself. In
11 fact, it allows the artist to be working on his own
12 career and style, because it's his -- something he's
13 very excellent at. So having an opportunity to do
14 an exchange with children allows him to get feedback
15 as well. It's a very copacetic situation.

16 MS. ADKISON: May I just say one more
17 thing?

18 THE CHAIR: Let's not just keep on
19 elongating this, please.

20 MR. CARR: That -- I'm through, Madam
21 Chair.

22 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you.
23 Ms. Shearman?

24 MS. SHEARMAN: If we can go back to the
25 budget just for a minute, please. Under Property.

1 I don't know how your printout is.

2 MS. SETO: What page number are you on in
3 the application?

4 MS. SHEARMAN: I've got a line number.
5 It's 286, if that'll help you.

6 MS. SETO: I don't know if that'll help
7 me.

8 MS. SHEARMAN: We've been doing this for
9 days. Yes.

10 THE CHAIR: We're having trouble with line
11 numbers and pages, and we're making suggestions to
12 the staff about what next year's application is
13 going to look like to help clarify this, because it
14 has been a weeklong problem with us trying to get
15 everybody on the same page and the same line.

16 MS. SETO: Are you looking at the
17 narrative, or are you looking at --

18 MS. SHEARMAN: No. The actual spreadsheet
19 budget.

20 MS. SETO: Okay. That's what I need to
21 know. I don't know what line that is.

22 MS. SHEARMAN: Do you have line numbers,
23 or do I need to tell you the code numbers?

24 MS. SETO: Let me find the budget here.

25 And we're looking at the expenditure sheet. Is that

1 what you're looking at?

2 MS. SHEARMAN: Yes. Yes.

3 MS. SETO: Okay. And what section are you
4 looking at?

5 MS. SHEARMAN: Under Property, 11000,
6 2400, 57331.

7 MS. SETO: Property, 11000 -- okay. And
8 what was it?

9 MS. SHEARMAN: It's Fixed Assets More Than
10 \$5,000.

11 MS. SETO: That's the place. Purchased
12 Property? Or it's after that?

13 MS. KRIVITZKY: She's in 2400.

14 MS. SETO: Oh. You're in 2400. Okay. I
15 understand those numbers. Okay. 2400. And --

16 MS. SHEARMAN: 57331.

17 MS. SETO: Yes. I'm there. Fixed Assets.

18 MS. SHEARMAN: Right. First year at
19 \$65,000. Then a dramatic drop the second year to
20 \$7,000.

21 MS. SETO: That's because we are looking
22 towards purchasing a lot of those fixed assets with
23 the implementation grant, and so hoping to do a lot
24 of purchasing with that so that we won't have as big
25 expenditures in those later years.

1 MS. SHEARMAN: Okay. The other thing I
2 noticed is you have nothing budgeted for speech,
3 occupational therapy, physical therapy, any of
4 those. Or if you do --

5 MS. SETO: I think there's a line that
6 has -- has some monies put aside for Special --

7 MS. SHEARMAN: Is it that 87 --

8 MS. SETO: Contracted Services.

9 MS. SHEARMAN: Is that \$8,700?

10 MS. SETO: \$8,750 on Page 2 of this?

11 MS. SHEARMAN: In the 2100s?

12 MS. SETO: Yes. 5218. What we are
13 hoping -- we are going to be a very small school out
14 of 120 to 180 students. And we are hoping to
15 collaborate with some of the other charter schools
16 in the district to attract that.

17 MS. SHEARMAN: That was one of my other
18 questions. I noticed that you talked about that in
19 your application.

20 MS. SETO: I talked to one school. But
21 since -- nothing definite can be talked about until
22 you're chartered. But I'm really pushing for that,
23 that we would be collaborating. That's the only way
24 I see that we could do it.

25 MS. SHEARMAN: Because if that

1 collaboration doesn't come out, I'm not sure \$8,700
2 is enough for those kinds of pretty expensive
3 specialists.

4 MS. SETO: Right. Exactly.

5 MS. SHEARMAN: Have to turn the paper.
6 I'm out of the budget. I'm back to have you
7 collaborated yet with the other schools? They -- in
8 the -- in the preliminary analysis, they had a
9 question about your audit, your understanding of the
10 audit process.

11 MS. SETO: Uh-huh.

12 MS. SHEARMAN: Have you reviewed that and
13 clarified that process?

14 MS. SETO: Yeah. Yeah. Let me read you
15 what we wrote on that one. That would be in the
16 fiscal section that they questioned? Is that
17 correct?

18 MS. SHEARMAN: Uh-huh. Annual Audit of
19 Financial Operations.

20 MS. SETO: The annual audit is identified
21 as being contracted. Yeah. We are going to have a
22 yearly audit, as we stated, performed on its
23 financial records as required by Section 12-63 NMSA
24 1978. The school is budgeted for an outside
25 auditor, and the financial reports required by the

1 Public Education Department will be submitted to
2 them on a timely basis. And we will be talking to
3 our school business manager about that and making
4 sure that we're in compliance with the State.

5 MS. SHEARMAN: That goes through PED;
6 right?

7 MS. SETO: Right.

8 MS. SHEARMAN: And you're aware of that.

9 MS. SETO: Yeah. And I wrote that it will
10 be a component of the PED.

11 MS. SHEARMAN: And I have just one more
12 question, and it has, again, to do with a question
13 that was raised in the preliminary evaluation. And
14 it has to do with food service and counseling and
15 all those kinds of things.

16 MS. SETO: Yeah.

17 MS. SHEARMAN: In the preliminary finding,
18 it says there's no mention of providing Title I
19 services, and yet this is where the free and reduced
20 lunch program is generally generated from. So is
21 that a consideration for the school?

22 MS. SETO: Yes, it is.

23 MS. SHEARMAN: Do you plan to offer food
24 service?

25 MS. SETO: To those students that qualify

1 for that. We're going to -- we're going to apply
2 for the Provision 2 Natural School Lunch Act program
3 for our students. In the event that our facility
4 has no provisions for preparing hot lunches, we will
5 proceed in the following manner. TISA intends to
6 contract and purchase products and nutritional
7 snacks through a certified and local outsource lunch
8 provider at the school site for those students who
9 qualify for free or reduced lunch. All other
10 students will be required to bring their own lunches
11 or have the opportunity to purchase lunch.

12 This is the -- what the other charter
13 schools do here. Anansi is -- has a location that's
14 near the Arroyo. So what they do is they share --
15 they share the cafeteria services. It's about a
16 half mile between the schools, I think, half to a
17 mile.

18 So what happens is the Arroyo del Norte,
19 which is a regular public school, has a cafeteria
20 and a certified commercial kitchen. They prepare
21 lunches there. They bring them over by bus or van
22 or something --

23 MS. SHEARMAN: But you're not doing that?

24 MS. SETO: -- to Anansi. And the children
25 there who qualify for free or reduced lunch get hot

1 lunch there. And the other children, if they
2 choose, if their parents choose, they buy lunch. Or
3 they bring lunch.

4 MS. SHEARMAN: Doesn't that identify your
5 free and reduced lunch student children --
6 students -- doesn't that identify them to everybody
7 else? And I thought you couldn't do that.

8 MS. SETO: I don't know. That's how they
9 do it at Taos Charter as well. Their lunch is
10 brought in.

11 THE CHAIR: At Taos Pueblo? Is that what
12 you said?

13 MS. SETO: There are two charter schools.

14 DR. DURAN: There is nothing in the
15 statute that would limit the -- you're not outwardly
16 identifying them. Those students who can buy -- you
17 can have a free lunch person who would buy lunch.
18 You can have someone who would not buy lunch. So if
19 they pass through, whatever identification you have,
20 it would not matter.

21 MS. SHEARMAN: As long as it's not
22 obvious.

23 DR. DURAN: Yes.

24 MS. SHEARMAN: I just --

25 MS. SETO: I understand what your point

1 is. No.

2 MS. SHEARMAN: Yeah. I don't want to
3 single out a child.

4 MS. SETO: Yeah. I agree with that.
5 That's totally relevant.

6 MS. SHEARMAN: My last question concerns
7 counseling. If you need counseling services, is it
8 going to be in that \$8,700 or in the consortium,
9 whichever one works out?

10 MS. SETO: In the consortium that we're
11 going to try to work out.

12 MS. SHEARMAN: But one way or another,
13 you're going to have counseling services?

14 MS. SETO: Yes.

15 MS. SHEARMAN: That's all, Madam Chair.

16 THE CHAIR: Mr. Garrison? Mr. Carr?

17 MR. CARR: No, ma'am.

18 THE CHAIR: I guess I have one question
19 concerning Mr. Gonzales' comment for you about the
20 transportation services. Have you taken his concern
21 into -- into consideration?

22 MS. SETO: Yeah. We have the same -- I
23 mean, we've heard that a lot. That is a problem
24 here in Taos, I think, in Taos County, for both the
25 charter schools and the regular public schools. And

1 at this -- that is why I know he's talking about
2 congestion and, et cetera. So I don't know at this
3 moment where the facility will be.

4 And we do want -- on the one hand, you
5 need to provide transportation for those students
6 who can't get to the school. And, on the other
7 hand, transportation is so hard here. So that is a
8 quandary.

9 At the moment, we have said we are not
10 going -- we are not planning to provide
11 transportation. It depends on where the facility
12 is. If, again, we can collab -- ideally, you know,
13 if you can collaborate with some of the other
14 charter schools, or if you're in a location near the
15 public schools where they can ride that bus, and it
16 won't be any -- an additional bus, and use that
17 transportation that way -- I don't know.

18 THE CHAIR: I can understand that at this
19 particular moment, when you do not know exactly
20 where you will be --

21 MS. SETO: But we will definitely take his
22 points into consideration.

23 THE CHAIR: I'm appreciative of that, and
24 it sounds like the community is appreciative.

25 MS. SETO: We don't want any more

1 congestion here in Taos. We've got plenty.

2 THE CHAIR: I understand that perfectly.
3 I don't know of a time of year one can come to Taos
4 that there isn't congestion anymore. It's not the
5 good old days anymore, Bobby.

6 MS. SETO: We actually need some good
7 public transportation here. Because I know I've
8 read some of the other charter applications. And
9 the ones in Albuquerque, they have that choice. At
10 least for the high school kids, they can ride public
11 transportation, and they don't have to consider bus
12 service. And that's, I think, a great thing. Here
13 in Taos, we don't have that situation.

14 THE CHAIR: Okay. Well, thank you very
15 much. We appreciate your application and appreciate
16 your willingness to respond to our questions in the
17 manner in which you have.

18 The Commission encourages continued public
19 input in writing until September 1, 2009, at
20 5:00 p.m. Written comments should be sent to Public
21 Education Commission, in care of Beverly Friedman,
22 300 Don Gaspar Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87501.
23 Or you may e-mail comments to Ms. Friedman at
24 bev.friedman@state.nm.us. Do you need that again?

25 MS. SETO: We have -- okay. Go ahead.

1 THE CHAIR: You have it?

2 MS. SETO: I do, but maybe she doesn't.

3 THE CHAIR: Bev.friedman@state.nm.us.

4 MS. WOODALL: Thank you.

5 MS. SETO: Thank you so much for your
6 time, Commissioners, and Charter School division.

7 THE CHAIR: The Commission would like to
8 thank the community of Taos for their hospitality.
9 You've always been very kind to us, and we
10 appreciate that. In particular, we would like to
11 thank the Taos Convention Center for the use of
12 their facilities and for working so cooperatively
13 with our staff.

14 And at this time, the Commission is
15 adjourned. We have concluded our weeklong series of
16 hearings.

17 (Proceedings concluded at 3:12 p.m.)
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