

BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
OPEN PUBLIC MEETING
VOLUME ONE

August 22, 2019

9:00 a.m.

Jerry Apodaca Education Building - Mabry Hall
Santa Fe, New Mexico

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1 APPEARANCES
 2 COMMISSIONERS:
 3 MS. PATRICIA GIPSON, Chair
 4 MS. TRISH RUIZ, Vice Chair
 5 MS. KARYL ANN ARMBRUSTER, Secretary
 6 MR. R. CARLOS CABALLERO, Member
 7 MR. MICHAEL CHAVEZ, Member
 8 MR. TIM CRONE, Member
 9 MS. GEORGINA DAVIS, Member
 10 MS. M. SONIA RAFTERY, Member
 11 MR. DAVID ROBBINS, Member
 12 MS. GLENNA VOIGT, Member
 13
 14 PED STAFF:
 15
 16 MR. ALAN BRAUER, Acting Director
 17 Options for Parents and Families
 18 MS. KAREN WOERNER, Deputy Director
 19 Options for Parents and Families
 20
 21 MS. MELISSA BROWN, Training and Support Administrator
 22 Options for Parents and Families
 23
 24 PEC COUNSEL:
 25 MS. AMI JAEGER, Attorney at Law

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1 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. I'm
 2 going to call to order this meeting of the Public
 3 Education Commission. It is Thursday, August 22nd,
 4 and it is 9:06 a.m.
 5 Who changed the -- oh, that clock is
 6 right.
 7 Thank you.
 8 So I'm going to ask Commissioner
 9 Armbruster to do roll call, please.
 10 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 11 Robbins?
 12 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Present.
 13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 14 Voigt?
 15 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Here.
 16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 17 Armbruster is here.
 18 Commissioner Davis?
 19 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Here.
 20 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 21 Chavez?
 22 (No response.)
 23 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: He'll be coming
 24 later, I think.
 25 Commissioner Gipson?

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1 THE CHAIR: Here.
 2 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 3 Raftery?
 4 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Here.
 5 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 6 Crone?
 7 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Here.
 8 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 9 Ruiz?
 10 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Present.
 11 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 12 Caballero is not here.
 13 So we have eight.
 14 THE CHAIR: Eight Commissioners present.
 15 Thank you very much.
 16 I'm going to ask Commissioner Armbruster
 17 to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance, and I'll do
 18 the Salute to the New Mexico Flag.
 19 (Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to
 20 the New Mexico Flag conducted.)
 21 THE CHAIR: So before we do the approval
 22 of the agenda, I have two changes to make. And one
 23 is to the Consent Agenda. And that is removing from
 24 the Consent Agenda Albuquerque Institute of Math and
 25 Science and removing Raíces del Saber Xinachtli

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1 Community School.
 2 It's under "Governing Membership" -- the
 3 Albuquerque Institute of Math and Science is under
 4 B, Change Notifications, Governing Board Membership
 5 Changes. And Raíces del Saber is No. 7 under School
 6 Location Within District. So those two were
 7 removed; and, off of the regular agenda in Item
 8 No. 7-C, removing McCurdy Charter School and Monte
 9 del Sol Charter School.
 10 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Madam Chair, I move
 11 that the agenda be adopted.
 12 THE CHAIR: I'm not done yet.
 13 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Okay.
 14 THE CHAIR: Before we do any of that, I do
 15 need to make another change. Because,
 16 unfortunately, with the transcript of our July
 17 Community Input Hearing, the location was incorrect.
 18 So we have to make a change. And I have to do that
 19 by separate motion; so that I am going to move that
 20 the transcript for the July 17th, 2019, PEC meeting
 21 be amended to show that the location of the PEC
 22 meeting was New Mexico Activities Association, Hall
 23 of Honor, 6600 Palomas, Northeast, Albuquerque,
 24 New Mexico 87109.
 25 MS. VOIGT: I second.

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1 THE CHAIR: There's a second by
 2 Commissioner Voigt.
 3 Do we have to do a roll call on that?
 4 All in favor?
 5 (Commissioners so indicate.)
 6 THE CHAIR: Opposed?
 7 (No response.)
 8 THE CHAIR: Hearing no opposition, the
 9 motion passes. So now I can entertain a motion.
 10 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: I move that the agenda
 11 be adopted.
 12 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I have a
 13 question.
 14 THE CHAIR: Sure. I'm sorry.
 15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I wanted to
 16 change -- but now I'm unable to see it, so maybe it
 17 has been changed. I wanted to change Altura to
 18 after Alma. And I can't find it.
 19 THE CHAIR: Well, we can do that. We
 20 don't need a motion to do that. We have the ability
 21 to move around the -- the agenda when it -- when it
 22 comes up.
 23 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: The only reason
 24 I was saying that is so they don't have to come
 25 today and tomorrow.

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1 THE CHAIR: No. I'm sorry. We made a --
 2 they're not coming -- well, I had a discussion
 3 with -- with the Deputy Director. And we said the
 4 best that we could do at this point in time is we'll
 5 at least give them a heads-up by the early afternoon
 6 as to where we were. Oh, no. Then we decided we
 7 would do it Friday, and that was it.
 8 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Because I told the
 9 school.
 10 THE CHAIR: We had so many conversations
 11 about this, I had to remember the final decision.
 12 So, yes, they've been notified that they're on the
 13 agenda for Friday. And we can just move on with
 14 other pieces of the agenda. Alma and Altura were
 15 both notified that they're on for Friday, okay? So,
 16 thanks.
 17 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Sorry. I just
 18 didn't hear it.
 19 THE CHAIR: No, we've gone round and round
 20 with that; so I think we are finally at a good point
 21 with that.
 22 So there was a motion to adopt the agenda,
 23 as amended, and there was a second by Commissioner
 24 Voigt. And we voted on that.
 25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: No.

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1 THE CHAIR: Yes, we did. The motion
 2 passed. Yes.
 3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Okay.
 4 THE CHAIR: Has anyone signed up for Open
 5 Forum? Do we know?
 6 MS. KAREN WOERNER: No, no one has.
 7 Individuals for the school, but not the Open Forum.
 8 THE CHAIR: Right. And thank you for
 9 reminding me of that.
 10 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Please note that
 11 Commissioner Caballero is in the house.
 12 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Thank you, sir.
 13 THE CHAIR: Thanks. If there is anyone
 14 that wishes to speak in regards to a school today,
 15 there are separate sign-up sheets for each school.
 16 And who has them? (Indicates.)
 17 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Dolores.
 18 THE CHAIR: So please make sure you do
 19 sign up. Obviously, if you're part of the
 20 presenting, you don't have to sign up. But if
 21 there's anyone else in the audience, please sign up.
 22 Thank you very much.
 23 And my phone is ringing. Sorry.
 24 We are on to Item No. 5 -- oh, I'm sorry.
 25 I need a motion to accept the Consent Agenda.

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1 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: So move.
 2 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by
 3 Commissioner Ruiz, a second by Commissioner Voigt.
 4 All in favor?
 5 (Commissioners so indicate.)
 6 THE CHAIR: Opposed?
 7 (No response.)
 8 THE CHAIR: Hearing no opposition, the
 9 motion passes.
 10 We are now on to Item No. 5, which is
 11 Discussion and Possible Action on the Charter
 12 Contracts and Performance Frameworks, Including the
 13 Mission Goals.
 14 And we did have the opportunity, while we
 15 were on the community input hearing tour, to squeeze
 16 in those negotiations. I want to thank the schools
 17 that were incredibly cooperative in working around
 18 our schedules and the Commissioners that
 19 participated. Thank you so much. Because it's --
 20 it's really those nice times that we get to sit down
 21 and talk with the schools and learn a lot more about
 22 what the school actually does when we do those
 23 contract negotiations. So I appreciate that time
 24 for that reason as well.
 25 So -- and I -- we told the schools that

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1 they really didn't have to come up because there
 2 shouldn't be an issue, I hope, with it.
 3 Commissioners have had the opportunity to look at
 4 those mission goals that have -- that were
 5 negotiated.
 6 So do I have a motion to approve those
 7 contracts?
 8 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: So move.
 9 THE CHAIR: There is a motion by
 10 Commissioner --
 11 MS. AMI JAEGER: Hold on.
 12 (Chair consults with Commission counsel.)
 13 THE CHAIR: We need to do one for each
 14 school individually, a motion.
 15 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Okay. So I move that
 16 the Public Education Commission approve the charter
 17 contract and performance framework, including
 18 mission goals, for the Albuquerque School of
 19 Excellence.
 20 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Second.
 21 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Oh. For the years of
 22 2019 through 2020.
 23 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: I'll second.
 24 THE CHAIR: That's good. There's a motion
 25 by Commissioner Ruiz, a second by Commissioner

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1 Robbins.
 2 Any discussion?
 3 (No response.)
 4 THE CHAIR: If not, roll-call vote,
 5 please.
 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 7 Caballero?
 8 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes.
 9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 10 Ruiz?
 11 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.
 12 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 13 Crone?
 14 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes.
 15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 16 Raftery?
 17 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes.
 18 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 19 Gipson?
 20 THE CHAIR: Yes.
 21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 22 Davis?
 23 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes.
 24 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 25 Armbruster votes "Yes."

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1 Commissioner Voigt?
 2 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes.
 3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
 4 Robbins?
 5 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes.
 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: It's a nine-zero
 7 vote. It passes.
 8 THE CHAIR: The motion passes nine-zero.
 9 Thank you very much.
 10 So now, I'll entertain a motion for South
 11 Valley Prep.
 12 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: So move.
 13 THE CHAIR: There's -- we need the school
 14 and the dates in the motion.
 15 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Okay.
 16 THE CHAIR: Thanks.
 17 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: I thought it was
 18 very easy.
 19 THE CHAIR: It's under Item No. 5.
 20 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: No. 5.
 21 THE CHAIR: And it's B.
 22 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Okay. Thank you.
 23 I move that the Public Education
 24 Commission approve the charter contract and
 25 performance framework, including mission goals, for

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p> <p>1 South Valley Preparatory School. 2 THE CHAIR: We need the years. 3 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: For school years 4 2019-2020. 5 THE CHAIR: Thank you. There's a motion 6 by Commissioner Caballero. 7 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Second. 8 THE CHAIR: A second by Commissioner 9 Robbins. 10 Any discussion? 11 (No response.) 12 THE CHAIR: If not, roll call, please. 13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 14 Robbins? 15 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes. 16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 17 Caballero? 18 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 20 Ruiz? 21 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. 22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 23 Voigt? 24 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes. 25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p> <p>1 sit -- 2 (Chair and Commission counsel confer with 3 school representative.) 4 THE CHAIR: So the Charter School Division 5 has 15 minutes to present. 6 MR. ALAN BRAUER: Good morning, 7 Madam Chair, members of the Commission, members of 8 the Polaris Charter School team. I'm going to 9 review the process that the applicants went through 10 with the Charter School Division and our peer 11 reviewers. I'll walk through a quick walk-through 12 around the scores, and then I'll close out with our 13 overall recommendation. 14 So on Page 7, the explanation regarding 15 use of the -- of the score sheets. 16 In the Recommendation and Final Analysis, 17 the Charter School Division has considered the 18 overall score on the written application evaluation 19 and the ratings on responses during the capacity 20 interview, feedback from the community input 21 hearing, and letters of support or opposition. 22 Those components are summarized on the following 23 pages. 24 The written application evaluations and 25 capacity interview scores were provided by an</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p> <p>1 Crone? 2 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes. 3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 4 Armbruster votes "Yes." 5 Commissioner Gipson? 6 THE CHAIR: Yes. 7 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 8 Davis? 9 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. 10 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: It's a 11 nine-to-zero vote. Passes. 12 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: You didn't call on 13 me. 14 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: You're right. I 15 didn't. I'm sorry. Sit up. 16 Commissioner Raftery? 17 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes. 18 THE CHAIR: The motion passes nine-zero. 19 So moving right along, we're on to Item 20 No. 6, which is the -- what will be the bulk of our 21 day, which is the new charter applications. 22 So we have -- our first applicant for the 23 day is Polaris Charter School. So if the folks from 24 Polaris would please come forward, and you can take 25 any of these chairs here. If you want folks to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p> <p>1 external team of four peer reviewers. Those were 2 made up of a licensed New Mexico school 3 administrator, a licensed New Mexico teacher, a 4 licensed New Mexico school business official, and a 5 team leader with administration experience. 6 Also please note two additional 7 considerations. Also please note two additional 8 considerations. First, the community input hearing 9 is not scored, but is referenced in this 10 recommendation and final analysis to summarize and 11 to document any pertinent information offered. The 12 transcripts provide further details. 13 Second, if the applicant school did not 14 answer any prompt or question because that prompt 15 did not apply to the applicant school -- for 16 instance, the applicant school will be an elementary 17 school, and so did not provide responses to 18 graduation-related prompts -- then the Charter 19 School Division adjusted the total possible points 20 in the application section where the nonapplicable 21 items is found, as well as in the score sheet. 22 For this reason, you may see varying total 23 possible points from one application to another. 24 I wanted to -- I'll just briefly share 25 that on Page 4 of the materials that the Commission</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p> <p>1 has, you have the breakdown of the overall score 2 sheet for each of the different components of the 3 application and the capacity interview. 4 And overall, Polaris received 369 points 5 of the 431 points that were available to them, which 6 comes out to 85.61 percent of the total points 7 possible. 8 On Page 5, which is unnumbered, but it's 9 right behind the page that I just mentioned, this is 10 the thorough score sheet that provides detailed 11 scores for each of the different components of the 12 academic framework, the organizational framework, 13 the financial framework, and the evidence of support 14 from Part C of the written application. It also 15 includes the capacity interview responses and 16 school-specific questions that the capacity 17 interviewers asked. 18 Each of those components received either a 19 Meets and Approaches or a Falls Far Below score. 20 Overall, the application submitted by 21 Polaris Charter School is complete, yet inadequate. 22 During both the application review process and the 23 capacity interview, the applicant team did not 24 demonstrate the capacity to implement the 25 organizational plan and governance and the business</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p> <p>1 Education Commission to enter into an implementation 2 year. 3 However, it is also recommended that the 4 school take the feedback provided via the evaluation 5 process and resubmit a stronger application next 6 year in 2020. 7 I also wanted to just close and share that 8 the Polaris team did submit a response to the 9 initial recommendation from the Charter School 10 Division. And that's also in your packet here 11 after -- after the community support or opposition 12 documents here. 13 Thank you. 14 THE CHAIR: You still have about 13 15 minutes. 16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Nine. Nine. 17 THE CHAIR: Nine. 18 Thank you very much. And I would ask you 19 to please identify yourselves and spell your last 20 name. 21 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Good morning, 22 Madam Chair and Commissioners. Thank you very much 23 for -- 24 THE CHAIR: Is the green light on? 25 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Yes.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p> <p>1 plan. The team is not yet prepared to open a 2 charter school at this time. 3 The minimum scoring expectation set by the 4 Public Education Commission, from Page 3 of the new 5 charter school application, are as follows: 6 No scoring area received a score of Falls 7 Far Below the criteria. 8 No more than three responses were 9 evaluated as Approaches the criteria in any one 10 section of the application. 11 And the applicant must earn at least 12 80 percent of the available points in order for a 13 positive recommendation by the independent 14 reviewers. 15 Though the proposal received a score of 16 85.61 percent, there were three indicators that were 17 scored as Falls Far Below the criteria, and four 18 responses scored as Approaches the criteria in the 19 organizational section. 20 In addition, there were nine Approaches 21 the criteria ratings for the response to the 22 capacity interview questions. 23 The Charter School Division recommends 24 denial of this application. The scoring does not 25 meet the minimum expectation set by the Public</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: Okay. You're going to need to 2 be a little bit closer. 3 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Good morning, 4 Madam Chair and Commissioners. Thank you very much 5 for entertaining us today. My name is Bill 6 Hargraves. I'm representing the Polaris Charter 7 School today, and not representing -- let's be 8 clear, I'm not representing the Los Alamos School 9 Board of which I'm also a member. 10 Los Alamos Schools are good schools. 11 They're -- depending on the measure you want to use, 12 they're in the top -- top in the state or the top 13 two or three in the state. One example is the 14 Healthy Schools Initiative which was started about 15 five years ago, which was intended to improve staff 16 and student well-being. 17 That's, I think, a model that could be 18 used in other schools in the state. So there are 19 many things the school does good. Yet many of our 20 students still do not graduate; 13 percent for only 21 the last five years on average, and it's relatively 22 flat. It's not improving or decreasing. 23 And some of those students who do graduate 24 do not have the skills, confidence, and self-esteem 25 to successfully move into the next phase of their</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p> <p>1 lives. And those are the students that I think 2 Polaris School can address. 3 If you'll look at these charts real 4 quickly -- I won't go through the data, 5 specifically, but I want you to see -- this is the 6 PARCC test at the middle for the years 2015 through 7 2017. And you'll see that the best school score is 8 that 55 percent of our middle-school students have 9 been able to pass, for example, the ELA part of the 10 score. 11 The second chart is representative of the 12 Hispanic population, and the scores are even lower 13 in that regard. So I think clearly, there's room 14 for improvement in the proficiency of the students 15 in our school. 16 Secondly, you'll see a series of drafts 17 that come from the Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey 18 that's done by the Department of Health. You can 19 see the numbers here. In some cases -- and I won't 20 go through them all. But in some cases, our numbers 21 are better than the State average. In some cases, 22 our numbers are worse than the State average. 23 What I want to point out, though, is 24 what's disturbing to me is that on each of these 25 charts that go from the 2009 to 2017 surveys, you'll</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p> <p>1 meet these needs. First is the culture. Culture 2 shift is difficult, no matter in the corporate 3 world, education world, or in society in general. 4 To change a culture in a school district would 5 require years and years of work, training, 6 professional development. 7 Polaris can begin a new school from day 8 one with a new culture, a culture that's different 9 than what's currently in the Los Alamos district 10 schools, and a culture that meets individual 11 students where they are in their educational 12 journeys and their self-realization journeys in 13 life. 14 The second is the program delivery. 15 Traditional schools typically implement student 16 support through various and fragmented targeted 17 programs to students. This is effective for some 18 students. But if you look at the charts, again, 19 it's not effective for all the students in 20 Los Alamos. 21 Polaris will take a different approach. 22 Student learning and social emotional focuses are 23 integrated. Students' experiences become a major 24 part of their learning process. Students help 25 direct and plan each of their individual learning</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p> <p>1 see -- you'll see that they're either flat or 2 decreases -- or getting worse in some cases. There 3 is little improvement. And these are very important 4 social emotional measures of our student health. 5 Again, I think there's room for 6 improvement, and Polaris can do that. So let me 7 go -- let me explain a little bit, real quickly, why 8 I think Polaris, I think, can improve on these 9 scores. 10 First of all, I think we need to identify 11 what needs to be done to meet the needs of the 12 50 percent of the students that are not proficient 13 in some of their PARCC scoring in the middle school 14 and how can the social emotional aspects of student 15 lives be included in the learning framework. 16 Right now, Los Alamos has a myriad of 17 additional programs to support students. There are 18 six pages, if you look at them, single-space, of 19 programs that Los Alamos implements to aid at-risk 20 students and students in need. 21 However, you still see from the charts 22 that the -- it's basically a flat line in terms of 23 improvement in these measurements. 24 So how can learning become relevant? So I 25 think Polaris School is designed specifically to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p> <p>1 journeys. Polaris integrates learning with life, 2 developing self-awareness and place in community 3 through experiences. 4 We ask that you give us the opportunity to 5 demonstrate this. Thank you. 6 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: Good morning, 7 Madam Chair and Commissioners. My name is Elizabeth 8 Martineau. Los Alamos is considered an affluent 9 community that some in New Mexico describe as a 10 utopia of high-achieving students. That's a nice 11 picture. But the reality is that the current school 12 system and climate does not meet the needs of all 13 students. 14 You may not hear about our failures, about 15 the 13 percent who do not graduate, our larger 16 proportion of non-fatal suicide attempts, or our 17 students who are struggling emotionally. But the 18 statistics show that they are there. 19 In education, every student matters; not 20 70 percent, not 80 percent, but every single 21 student. 22 We are really excited that Polaris has 23 applied for a State charter, because a student's 24 attendance at our school will not be determined by 25 his or her ZIP code. We're looking forward to</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p> <p>1 serving students who, despite having parents who 2 drive into town to work every day, do not have 3 access to the district school or the resources in 4 Los Alamos.</p> <p>5 We look forward to serving those students 6 wherever they're from, Española, Pojoaque, the Jemez 7 Mountains, who need other options as well.</p> <p>8 Although we scored well on the application 9 overall, the CSD recommendation for denial was based 10 on an incomplete or inadequate application. We 11 strenuously disagree with the review committee and, 12 hence, CSD's Staff's adverse evaluation of several 13 sections of our application.</p> <p>14 Let's start with the three in which our 15 responses were evaluated as Failing to Meet the 16 criteria.</p> <p>17 Section 2C(3). The evaluators seemed to 18 criticize the fact that we include State statutes. 19 Throughout our application, we do consistently 20 mention statutes, because we understand that we are 21 under legal obligation to follow these rules. Many 22 of the rules and statutes leave little room for 23 variation, and we intend to follow those rules, 24 including making sure our school board members take 25 the classes to be on the board.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p> <p>1 specifically addressing our place-based philosophy 2 is addressed through professional development 3 opportunities and our mentoring plan on Page 236.</p> <p>4 The mentoring plan is for teachers new to 5 Polaris, which includes teachers who arrive in the 6 middle of the year.</p> <p>7 Extension 3B(2). The assertion that the 8 operational budget is unbalanced is simply wrong. 9 There seems to be no way to change this score. But 10 not only is it balanced each year, but revenues 11 exceed expenditures, allowing us to build up an 12 operating reserve. CSP grant revenues and 13 expenditures are balanced in the planning year.</p> <p>14 There's a minor error in Appendix G 15 spreadsheet. One cell displays an incorrect SEG 16 revenue in Year 5, but the correct amount is in all 17 calculations.</p> <p>18 Water, sewer and refuse charges were one 19 expense we missed. But this is a relatively small 20 amount that will not require large changes to the 21 budget.</p> <p>22 We believe the application contains a 23 realistic, complete, and balanced budget that does 24 meet the criteria.</p> <p>25 We would similarly disagree with many of</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p> <p>1 The evaluator mentioned that we failed to 2 identify the process for conveying the roles and 3 responsibilities of the head administrator. The 4 roles and responsibilities of the head 5 administrator, including indicators and objectives, 6 are specifically outlined in the next section, C(4), 7 which met the criteria. Maybe this should have been 8 included in C(3) as well.</p> <p>9 Section 2D(3). The evaluator noted that 10 we had incorrect ERB contribution amounts. This 11 year's legislature increased the ERB contribution 12 after this Section D was drafted. The assumed 13 amount is clearly identified and easily updated. 14 The impacted dollar amount is actually relatively 15 small. We clearly understand the budget process and 16 can adapt these to these kinds of changes as the 17 years go by.</p> <p>18 The evaluator asked where we listed life 19 insurance and long-term disability. They were 20 listed in the application on Page 219, Appendix G, 21 Page 239, and Page 298.</p> <p>22 There were questions about training days 23 and on-boarding. Professional development is 24 specifically identified in our calendar and included 25 in our budget. Middle-of-the-year on-boarding</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p> <p>1 the evaluations that asserted the respective 2 sections only Approached criteria. Time doesn't 3 permit us to detail each of those. We hope you have 4 reviewed our written response.</p> <p>5 Despite the evaluators' comments, we still 6 have a high score overall for a charter school 7 application.</p> <p>8 About a facility, we've looked at many 9 potential properties. Some of those properties have 10 become unavailable during the two years of writing 11 this application; so we're careful about publicly 12 committing to a location without a legally signed 13 contract.</p> <p>14 We currently have two potential properties 15 and are working with a Realtor who is committed to 16 helping us secure one of those locations.</p> <p>17 Our team includes a former county council 18 member, an executive director of a nonprofit, those 19 with school board experience, and school leaders. 20 In addition to our main team, we also have a whole 21 group of people who have agreed to be part of our 22 advisory team including a lawyer, Realtor, 23 scientist.</p> <p>24 We have engaged EdTec, a well-respected 25 state expert, to provide budget support to meet our</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p> <p>1 responsibilities.</p> <p>2 We've joined the Place Network to advise</p> <p>3 us about implementing the Place-based framework.</p> <p>4 We've been working on this idea for two years; so we</p> <p>5 are committed. We understand this is an enormous</p> <p>6 responsibility and that we will have challenges; but</p> <p>7 we have the experience and the support network to</p> <p>8 successfully meet those challenges.</p> <p>9 Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham named</p> <p>10 Dr. Stewart as the new secretary of the New Mexico</p> <p>11 Public Education Department. In her introduction,</p> <p>12 she said -- and I quote here -- "I share</p> <p>13 New Mexico's sense of urgency about our schools.</p> <p>14 And it's our responsibility to deliver the</p> <p>15 transformation our students and schools deserve."</p> <p>16 The urgency and transformation that the</p> <p>17 Governor describes require bold initiatives. We</p> <p>18 know that schools need to change. But systemic</p> <p>19 change has proven to be very difficult for schools.</p> <p>20 One of the benefits of charter schools,</p> <p>21 especially Polaris, is that we can be a small</p> <p>22 incubator for change and innovation. Our team is</p> <p>23 experienced and dedicated to this innovative</p> <p>24 Place-based framework that includes personalized</p> <p>25 mastery learning, real-world experiences, social</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: Is that -- that's it? Okay.</p> <p>2 Thank you.</p> <p>3 So thank you once again. And above all</p> <p>4 else, we do appreciate, because we know the time and</p> <p>5 effort and energy that goes into all applications</p> <p>6 and the personal investment that goes into these.</p> <p>7 So we truly do appreciate this.</p> <p>8 So, Commissioners?</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: I have something.</p> <p>10 THE CHAIR: Many of you were at the</p> <p>11 community input hearing. But this is an</p> <p>12 opportunity, as a result of responses that have been</p> <p>13 made and time after the community input hearing, if</p> <p>14 you've had additional thoughts, any questions that</p> <p>15 you have.</p> <p>16 Commissioner Caballero?</p> <p>17 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Thank you,</p> <p>18 Madam Chair. I do have some questions.</p> <p>19 First of all, I would like to thank you</p> <p>20 for providing the visual handouts that you just gave</p> <p>21 us. And, in fact, I had made some comments at that</p> <p>22 meeting in Los Alamos that zero in on Hispanic</p> <p>23 population.</p> <p>24 One of them was my concern that there were</p> <p>25 no community-based organizations that deal with</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p> <p>1 emotional learning, and restorative practices.</p> <p>2 We're proposing a school framework that we</p> <p>3 know can benefit students in Los Alamos and our</p> <p>4 surrounding communities. But we also believe that</p> <p>5 Place-based education could benefit schools in</p> <p>6 Peñasco, Chama, Farmington, Roy, Springer, and Anton</p> <p>7 Chico.</p> <p>8 I visited every one of those places.</p> <p>9 New Mexico has beautiful environments and rich</p> <p>10 cultures. And a Place-based framework uses those to</p> <p>11 engage students. Polaris can demonstrate how this</p> <p>12 works, and then help other communities not to make</p> <p>13 schools that look like ours, but to design schools</p> <p>14 that fit the strengths and needs of their specific</p> <p>15 population.</p> <p>16 We respectfully ask that you give us an</p> <p>17 opportunity to implement this bold initiative</p> <p>18 framework and help us begin changing education in</p> <p>19 New Mexico today.</p> <p>20 We understand the role of the Public</p> <p>21 Education Commission as authorizers; but we also</p> <p>22 view you as collaborators who can help us succeed.</p> <p>23 Thank you.</p> <p>24 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Thank you. That's</p> <p>25 all of our presentation.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p> <p>1 Hispanic, nor Hispanic parents, that there was a</p> <p>2 void of parents. I was a little disappointed with</p> <p>3 that. And I hate to assume that we do things to</p> <p>4 avoid that type of participation.</p> <p>5 However, I do have -- with what you gave</p> <p>6 us in visuals -- and you mentioned that 13 percent</p> <p>7 of Los Alamos School District children still don't</p> <p>8 graduate. And, yes, we do feel that -- that that</p> <p>9 area is very affluent and very successful in their</p> <p>10 education.</p> <p>11 But I would like to know if -- what's the</p> <p>12 breakdown within that 13 percent that doesn't</p> <p>13 graduate? Specifically, how many Hispanic? How</p> <p>14 many Native students do not make it? I'm trying to</p> <p>15 remember the total percentage of students in the</p> <p>16 school -- in the area going to school in the area,</p> <p>17 that are Hispanic.</p> <p>18 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Thank you for the</p> <p>19 question. I don't know the breakdown in terms of</p> <p>20 the graduation rate in terms of the Hispanic</p> <p>21 community. I do know that -- approximately,</p> <p>22 depending on the year, approximately 27 to</p> <p>23 32 percent of the student population is Hispanic.</p> <p>24 We have about 125 Native students who are</p> <p>25 in the district, some out-of-district students that</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p> <p>1 are Native and Spanish both. But I can't tell you 2 off the top of my head the breakdown, and I've not 3 seen one in terms of the actual graduation rate. 4 I think many of the out-of-district kids, 5 which, by the way, the school district will have to 6 stop taking out-of-district kids. And they may have 7 already started this past year, the reason being 8 Los Alamos is a growing school district. We don't 9 even have enough space for the projected enrollment 10 of in-district kids. 11 So the 625 currently out-of-district kids 12 currently enrolled at Los Alamos will hopefully be 13 allowed to continue through the process. But we 14 will not be able to accept, in the school district, 15 additional out-of-district kids, which I think 16 underscores the need for something like a State 17 charter in Los Alamos that can meet the needs of the 18 people we feel like they need to bring their 19 families from off The Hill to school there because 20 they either work at the laboratory or some other 21 organization in town. 22 And there are approximately several 23 thousand of those people who come to work at the Lab 24 or in town every day. Thank you. 25 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Before I ran for</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p> <p>1 schools should be going anyway. 2 I think it's helpful for different -- for 3 the diversity of the state that we use the great 4 resources that these small communities have. I 5 mean, I've been to Anton Chico and some of those 6 locations. And they are amazing. They have amazing 7 places. And I think that we can leverage some of 8 those to make our schools better. 9 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Thank you, 10 Madam Chair. 11 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 12 Commissioner Ruiz? 13 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Good morning, and 14 thank you all again for being here and for all the 15 work and time that you take to put in this 16 application. 17 And I also want to thank you for your 18 responses. I did read through them a couple of 19 times. And just a few things I wanted to just talk 20 to you about. 21 I was thankful that you added -- let me 22 see. You added -- because we did talk about 23 diversity and the lack thereof on the board at our 24 initial meeting with you. And so I was glad to see 25 that you had added Dr. David Olivas and Anna Vargas</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p> <p>1 office for the organization, Public Education 2 Commission, I had heard that Los Alamos School 3 District had a lot of charter schools, but they were 4 very small, multiple very small charter schools. Is 5 there any basis to that? 6 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: No, sir. There are 7 no charter schools in Los Alamos at this time. 8 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: There aren't even any 9 private schools for middle school and high school 10 level, either. 11 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Okay. So that 12 must have been just rumor. Okay. 13 MS. MARTUCCIO: We wish that was true. 14 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: The other thing 15 is she mentioned something about faith-based. 16 What -- can you elaborate on that? I think -- I 17 didn't quite pick up what you mentioned. 18 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: Place-based. Place. 19 THE CHAIR: Place-based, not faith. I 20 think he was panicking. 21 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: I'm speaking way too 22 fast. I just wanted to get through my 15 minutes. 23 Place-based education uses the environment and the 24 community as the basis for learning. So I really 25 believe place-based education is the way New Mexico</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p> <p>1 Gutierrez. 2 I guess the thing is my hope would have 3 been that you would have already thought of that and 4 done that prior -- you know, prior to us having to 5 recommend that; because diversity, again, like I 6 stated then -- you know, we live in New Mexico. 7 This is such a rich cultural tapestry of so many 8 different races. 9 And so I'm glad that you did that, you 10 know. I'm really glad, because we really have to be 11 inclusive of all populations. 12 And I'm glad that you were able to explain 13 the differences. I know that you -- when I read it, 14 I looked down, and it -- you actually did mention 15 some of the things -- because I kept looking for it 16 and I didn't see those. 17 I still think we need some work where it 18 comes to diversity. And that's a -- you know, 19 because we have to service our kids. And, you know, 20 I really want to see that inclusiveness and that 21 consideration of all students and, you know, all 22 ethnicities, also socioeconomic levels. And so I'm 23 hoping that you will continue to consider that. 24 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: And I will say, we did 25 take your comments to heart after that meeting.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p> <p>1 Because diversity, to us, is really important. We 2 had reached out to San Ildefonso and some of the 3 other pueblos around. But these three -- well, 4 these two people were new to our list; so -- but I 5 think we really did take those comments to heart, 6 because one of the reasons we want to be a State 7 charter is because it allows us to accept some of 8 those students from diverse situations. 9 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Thank you. 10 THE CHAIR: And so -- oh, I'm sorry. I 11 want to tail in on that -- 12 MS. VOIGT: Okay. 13 THE CHAIR: -- train of thought. 14 In your application, you did identify 15 somewhere -- and I wrote the page number down, and I 16 can't find it now -- that you still anticipated that 17 most of your students were going to come from 18 Los Alamos. You sort of reinforced that with the 19 comment that you made that Los Alamos is going to 20 have to stop taking students from out of district, 21 because it's growing. 22 So to me, what would compel a family to 23 send their child out of district to a middle school 24 when there's literally no hope that they're going to 25 be able to continue with this cohort of students</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p> <p>1 the time, in Ancon, New Mexico. My wife and I 2 commuted, and with -- our kids commuted with us. 3 Some of those -- we did everything in the car when 4 we commuted. 5 They were still young. We sang and ate 6 doughnuts and all the things you do with your kids 7 when you're driving. And it was actually a nice 8 time to get them ready for the day and then to let 9 them wind down on the way home. 10 What I -- my experience was that parents 11 in Los Alamos, parents outside of Los Alamos who 12 work in Los Alamos, do see the value in bringing 13 their kids with them to school in the town they work 14 in. The reason is if I had my schools in Velarde, 15 for example, and there was a play at 1:00, for me to 16 drive from Los Alamos to Velarde and back would mean 17 I would have to take half-a-day off work. 18 Having them in Aspen School meant I could 19 drive five minutes to the school and attend all 20 their presentations. 21 There are advantages that families do 22 recognize in that regard. It's not uncommon. 23 Los Alamos has a waiting list of out-of-the-district 24 kids whose parents work in town and want to bring 25 their kids there for school. So I don't think that</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p> <p>1 because they're not going to be able to get into the 2 high school? 3 So when we're looking at that rich 4 tapestry, it's -- it's less likely that that's going 5 to happen because of what's happening with the -- 6 with the growth -- I think we've all seen the 7 articles in the paper where -- the new contract and 8 a lot of growth. 9 So if Las Cruces -- "Las Cruces," sorry. 10 If Los Alamos has to restrict who's coming in, 11 what -- you know. Most -- most students kind of 12 want to stay with their friends. That's -- that's 13 one of the reasons, you know, parents make choices. 14 If I'm going to make these friends, I'm not going to 15 be able to keep them, because I have no shot at 16 getting into the high school. 17 So we spoke about this to some degree at 18 the -- at the community input, that -- you know, 19 what's the likelihood that this school is going to 20 offer a diverse experience for the students? 21 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: I have a partial 22 answer. I have a partial answer, and it's partly 23 based on my own experience. 24 My daughter started in Los Alamos 25 elementary schools out-of-district. And I lived, at</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p> <p>1 is a barrier for parents that are really motivated 2 to do that. 3 Secondly, in terms of leaving their 4 eighth-grade school and going to their own home 5 district high school, our intention is to prepare 6 kids to be resilient, to improve their 7 self-awareness and self-esteem to prepare them to be 8 successful in whatever school they need to be part 9 of after they leave eighth grade; because that skill 10 is necessary for them to be able to start their 11 lives after they graduate from whatever high school 12 they go to. So that's our approach there. 13 THE CHAIR: And I appreciate that concept 14 of the resiliency. And I don't -- I'm not 15 dismissing that. But the reality is if I'm a 16 sixth-grader, and I have no shot at getting into 17 that high school, for parents to make that decision, 18 that -- that's a piece of a decision to be made, 19 because the school district is limiting -- or maybe 20 even stopping -- the out-of-district placement. 21 So that's -- to me, that's a significant 22 factor in making a decision for the middle school, 23 because I know my child has -- will have no 24 opportunity to make it into the high school. 25 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: It is. But people do</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p> <p>1 it now. And I think people will choose to do it in 2 the future. You know, I can't argue that the 3 parents may prefer their kids to go to Los Alamos 4 High School. Los Alamos High School currently does 5 not accept anybody -- any kids in high school unless 6 they're in-district and hasn't done that for years. 7 What we do is accept pre-K and K students 8 and work them through the system all the way through 9 high school out-of-district. But we have not, for 10 several years, accepted out-of-district kids, either 11 at the middle school or the high school level. So 12 that's not a new thing. 13 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: I think -- I think 14 you're correct. But that's one thing parents might 15 want to consider. But I think parents should have 16 the choice. And there are some issues with some 17 other surrounding schools as well. And I think 18 there are some parents who will choose to send their 19 students to Polaris for that -- those grade levels, 20 because it's an improvement over their home school. 21 I mean, I think that's going to happen. 22 MR. ROBERT GIBSON: I'm Robert Gibson, 23 G-I-B-S-O-N. 24 Two things. One is we have not had that 25 discussion with the school district yet about what</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p> <p>1 out-of-district kids will have a chance to be 2 friends for three years. And I suspect those bonds 3 will last a long time, as they did in that prior 4 experience. 5 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Madam Chair? 6 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Voigt? 7 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Okay. Thank you. I 8 want to reiterate appreciation for the work that 9 goes involved -- that's involved in completing your 10 application. 11 I just had a question about program. 12 The unique place-based education model, if 13 you could address that and how -- how would that 14 work for a student -- for all of your students, 15 possibly, in your school. How would they address 16 that place-based project, perhaps, that -- for a 17 student in Pojoaque? Would all students be involved 18 in that place-based model, or only those students 19 coming to your school from Pojoaque? 20 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: I'm not sure I 21 understand the question; but -- so the place-based 22 model -- 23 MS. VOIGT: Yes. 24 MS. MARTUCCIO: -- uses your community as 25 a framework for developing projects. So the idea</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p> <p>1 their policy would be with respect to graduates of 2 Polaris and whether they would have any favorable 3 treatment towards getting into the high school. So 4 we don't know for sure that it wouldn't happen. We 5 haven't had the discussion yet. 6 I'd like to address a separate aspect of 7 this, though, from personal experience. My wife 8 lives in Los Alamos, but she worked with the 9 Española Schools for several years before retiring. 10 After she retired, as a volunteer, she set up a 11 program called "Juntos" the purpose of which was to 12 get kids from the Valley, Española in particular, 13 and Pojoaque and Los Alamos, together, to know -- to 14 get to know each other and to work with each other 15 and to bridge some of the cultural gaps that have 16 existed for a long time in that region. 17 It was very successful. The kids really 18 got to know and understand the kids from the other 19 place. It made a huge difference for those kids in 20 how they viewed young people from the other 21 location. Many of them, a decade later, remained 22 friends with each other. 23 So having that mixture, even if the -- the 24 out-of-district kids do not go on to Los Alamos High 25 School, they will -- both Los Alamos and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p> <p>1 that we would engage with our community to come up 2 with -- well, that the students would help to come 3 up with projects that are meaningful to them that 4 meet the standards. There are going to be -- we are 5 going to meet the standards. 6 MS. VOIGT: Can you define "community" 7 then? How do you establish a community within your 8 school that involves the students' communities where 9 they're coming from? 10 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: Absolutely. One of 11 the ways is by giving students choices. So there 12 are choices in what kind of books they read, what 13 kind -- they have some choices related to their own 14 culture, as long as they're meeting certain 15 standards. 16 In terms of the projects, our goal is to 17 start local and kind of branch out from there. So 18 we would have local projects to Los Alamos; but then 19 we would branch out to projects in Alcalde, Velarde, 20 other places in New Mexico. 21 And ultimately, our goal for 22 eighth-graders is to have them take what they know 23 about how things work in New Mexico and help solve 24 problems around the world. So it's this start local 25 and work outward. Does that --</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p> <p>1 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Yeah. I'd also like 2 to comment that we -- we have already discussed the 3 partnerships with several facilities outside of 4 Los Alamos, including the Los Luceros Historical 5 State Park now, which is in Alcalde, New Mexico. 6 We've also discussed the Moving Arts Dance 7 Theater in Española and Roger Montoya's program, and 8 its involvement with our students and their 9 students. 10 We've discussed some options with some 11 Santa Fe organizations, such as the Opera and other 12 facilities that encourage educational opportunities 13 for kids. 14 So we -- our project-based programming 15 will be regional and not local specifically. It 16 will involve both parents and students from outside 17 Los Alamos. 18 MR. ROBERT GIBSON: I think Bill just hit 19 on what I was going to say. Community is not just 20 in Los Alamos. It's certainly the areas from which 21 all of our students come; but even -- ultimately 22 broader than that. We hope to expand into Northern 23 New Mexico. 24 MR. KEN HOLMES: Yes. So this is the 25 beauty of place-based with Polaris. As you all know</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p> <p>1 That, to me, seems like it's a minor area. 2 And if the description is there and the professional 3 development is there, I think at least we could say 4 that it's Approaching, even though it may not 5 achieve. This is my personal opinion. 6 The staffing plan also, it appeared that 7 the staffing plan is termed as Not Meeting or 8 Failed, in part, because some of the percentages are 9 off slightly. 10 Well, one of the things that's really 11 funny is I hear them talking now about PERA and ERB 12 contributions increasing next year or the year 13 after. We can't anticipate what's going to happen 14 in the future. And we understand that, yes, the 15 numbers are off a little bit. But as you mentioned 16 in your response, it's a fairly insignificant 17 amount. 18 And when we look at the five-year budget, 19 they say it's not balanced. Your numbers show that 20 it is balanced and actually builds a reserve, which 21 I think we desire in every school. 22 So, again, how can they say it's not 23 balanced when it's actually showing a surplus? Yes, 24 it's not balanced. You're not spending every penny. 25 Revenues and expenses are not equal. I wouldn't</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p> <p>1 historically, Los Alamos, with the Manhattan 2 Project, was a secret city. And there is this 3 culture of, "We are self-contained." But Polaris 4 really is redefining what community is. And we are 5 a community in Northern New Mexico surrounded by the 6 richness of the hysteric [verbatim] -- excuse me -- 7 Hispanic culture and also the Native American 8 culture. 9 So, again, our community is off The Hill; 10 it is everything that surrounds us. And that's 11 different than this just focusing on ourselves, the 12 Los Alamos community. 13 MS. VOIGT: Okay. Thank you. 14 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Robbins, did you 15 have your hand up? 16 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Uh-huh. 17 THE CHAIR: Okay. 18 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Thank you. I 19 appreciate your responses to the CSD's 20 recommendation and the three areas that they 21 specified, which really leads to their denial, I 22 think. The principal job description, which in your 23 response, you specifically state that the 24 description is in a separate section; it's just 25 maybe not in the correct section.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p> <p>1 want them to be equal. I would expect revenues to 2 be slightly above what expenses are. And I think 3 there's enough cushion in there to cover these what 4 will I consider minor discrepancies in the benefits 5 that can be covered through what you have. 6 So I would look at those three areas as 7 Approaching. Even though they're not perfect, 8 they're Approaching. And I think -- so it takes 9 away a lot of the argument of denial, because if 10 those approaches were included, rather than saying 11 "Fails," you'd probably have a score in the upper 12 80s instead of only 85. 13 And I think, you know, really, the denial 14 is basically -- it looks like it's being denied 15 because of three Fails. 16 I think your responses do address that 17 they are not failing. They may not be ideal; but I 18 don't think they're failing, either. And I think we 19 need to take that in consideration. 20 I, also, at the presentation that we had 21 in July, mentioned the fiscal and how important the 22 fiscal is. And, you know, I think there's 23 recognition by the individuals here. Los Alamos is 24 made up of scientists and a lot of number-crunching 25 and number-calculating individuals. So precision is</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p> <p>1 very, very important. 2 Again, we can't predict changes in those 3 numbers later on. But I think you've demonstrated 4 the ability to anticipate any changes in your 5 surplus. Projected surpluses are there. 6 I empathize with the concern that people 7 have of students from middle school can't be 8 accepted into a high school. 9 High school and middle school students 10 have very different cultures. Most high school 11 students are driving; most middle school students 12 don't drive. So you have a totally different 13 culture and a different makeup. 14 When I was in middle school, I went with 15 kids that, you know, I didn't go to elementary 16 school with. Very few of the students I associated 17 with in middle school I went to elementary school 18 with. And many of the students I dealt with in 19 middle school were going to go to different high 20 schools. I mean, there were three different high 21 schools that were feeding into the middle school -- 22 or at that time, junior high school -- that I 23 started at, and then later on, there were two 24 different high schools that they were -- and then it 25 became three.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p> <p>1 if this Commission -- you know, regardless of the 2 decision they make, stay true to your mission and 3 goal and continue to work on this. 4 I think the one thing that I would be 5 concerned about this time -- I know you have a 6 planning year -- is location. That's so important. 7 And, again, it's difficult. It's difficult to get 8 someone to agree to something without an approval. 9 It's the cart -- the whole chicken-and-the-egg 10 thing. And there's not probably a lot of available 11 locations, and they have probably other alternatives 12 that might be coming up with the projected growth 13 that's happening. 14 But I would -- I would, you know, say that 15 that's one of the things that needs to be addressed 16 in any reapplication, or as you go through the 17 planning year. Thank you. 18 THE CHAIR: So I just have a couple of 19 things. 20 When we had the community input hearing -- 21 now that we're talking a little bit about finances, 22 when we talked at the community input hearing, I 23 felt that one of the significant weaknesses in terms 24 of finances was not -- you know, not the number 25 crunching and your ERB was off a little bit -- I</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p> <p>1 So, again, the fact that you're going to 2 not stay with that cohort from your middle school to 3 a high school I think is less important a 4 consideration than whether or not this school can 5 meet an educational need of the students that it's 6 trying to address. And I'm concerned that if 7 Los Alamos is not addressing the need of high school 8 students and they're having to say, "Well, we'll 9 take you in elementary school, we'll take you in 10 middle school, but we won't take you in high 11 school," well, you know, Los Alamos Public Schools 12 themselves are failing their high school students 13 and their families, I think, by not addressing that. 14 I think with projected growths in 15 Los Alamos and things like that, there's limits, 16 statutory limits -- and I've talked with 17 Commissioner Armbruster about this, as far as how 18 quickly Los Alamos Public Schools are going to be 19 able to add capacity. 20 Their statutory limits, I don't agree with 21 all of those, necessarily, and I think there needs 22 to be some flexibility when they're projecting 23 growth. But I think a charter school of this nature 24 can assist the demand that Los Alamos has. 25 So I would encourage you that, you know,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p> <p>1 understand the fluctuations from year to year with 2 that -- but that too many of your responses in the 3 community input hearing was reliance on a foundation 4 that was going to be able to support the 5 programming. 6 And historically, we don't have 7 foundations of schools in New Mexico that can do 8 that significant support. And that's where, to me, 9 your budget didn't show the support for the ed 10 programming that you truly wanted to implement for 11 your mission, that the answers were too often, 12 "Well, we're going to have a foundation, we're going 13 to have a foundation." 14 And then you gave the example of 15 New Mexico School for the Arts and what they can do, 16 which is -- you know, everyone would love to have 17 half of the budget that that foundation can do. 18 That's not a realistic goal; so that 19 that -- to me, that was a significant shortfall with 20 your responses. And I'll just add in one more 21 thing. The statute is clear with us that the -- one 22 of the criteria for us to vote for an application is 23 an assurance of a facility; not, "We've got some 24 possibilities." 25 And these possibilities didn't even seem</p>

1 that realistic; so that that is -- that is our
2 statutory obligation, not going forward that you've
3 got -- that you can get a plan, but that you
4 absolutely have that plan now.

5 And it is shown to be the most significant
6 weakness and inability of a school to be able to
7 open and open on time is that facility. And the
8 statute is clear in terms of what our obligation is,
9 not that there's a plan for a facility, but there is
10 a facility.

11 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Yeah. I think the
12 budget does cover the cost of implementing our
13 program. And although we emphasize some of the
14 foundation support we'd like to have -- and I think
15 we still would like to have -- I think the basic
16 educational programs are supported by the SEG
17 operating budget.

18 MS. KATIE RARICK: My name is Katie
19 Rarick. I work with EdTec. I helped with finances
20 on this organization. So we use the funding sources
21 we know now to do what we knew had to be done to
22 support this school, to support the program, to make
23 sure that it could operate in the way it needed to.

24 If there are more programs they would like
25 to add to the school to enhance it, depending on the

1 funding sources and the year, we would allocate
2 those to support those programs, whether it's a
3 foundation or whether it's a State-funded or a
4 grant, various different things.

5 Every year, to Commissioner Robbins'
6 point, the budget is going to change. The five-year
7 budget is a snapshot based on what we know and what
8 we needed to make sure the school could do what they
9 wanted to do. And I feel like the budget does do
10 that, giv- -- given the funding streams we had
11 available.

12 And then as things change, unit value,
13 ERB, all of those different things that change every
14 year, including grant applications and foundation
15 revenues, then the team would adjust their budget to
16 meet whatever programming needs they wanted that
17 year.

18 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

19 MR. ROBERT GIBSON: I believe that
20 anyplace the application or our responses to
21 questions in the earlier hearings indicated
22 foundation support, it was for optional items. It
23 was for enhancements to the basic program, not the
24 basic program.

25 The -- obviously, we know that we have

1 certain things we have to do. We have certain
2 things we have proposed to do. And we've identified
3 funding as adequate for those. But obviously,
4 there's a lot of other things that we would like to
5 be able to do. And how much of that we can do may
6 depend, to some degree, on foundation support.

7 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you.

8 Commissioner Armbruster?

9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: It's really
10 embarrassing to be from this area, you know, when
11 you're trying to do this. But I'm going to --

12 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: You should say you're
13 proud.

14 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I am proud. I
15 am proud of you. I wanted to say a number of
16 things.

17 One is that Los Alamos Public Schools, in
18 the ten years that I've been gone, have really
19 addressed a lot of issues. And I'm really proud to
20 see that. I'm proud to see the diversity. I'm
21 proud to see the inclusion of people of color and
22 different religions and backgrounds and cultures.

23 I am also proud that they have worked to
24 work to improve the suicidal ideation, that they're
25 working to build strong people. And I think that's

1 great. I'm really happy that LAPS is doing that.

2 But I want to address a couple of things
3 in addition to that, which is that your concept is
4 pretty unique in terms of our portfolio of different
5 schools. It's a place-based one. It's not a
6 project-based learning, which everyone does some
7 parts of. But this is actually the whole basis of
8 this school.

9 The other thing is, you know, I'm now
10 paying more attention to this diversity issue. But
11 what we say to applicants is, "Does this reflect
12 your community?"

13 And this does reflect our community.
14 Whether that's good or whether that's bad, it is
15 reflective of Los Alamos, which is where you
16 opened -- are hoping to open a charter school.

17 The -- so I like the fact that -- I think
18 at the hearing, I said one thing, and now I think
19 I'm changing my mind, which is that I was thinking
20 that more Los Alamos kids would apply to come to
21 this school.

22 But I actually think now that a number of
23 people, when they look at middle school -- anybody,
24 whether they're on The Hill or they're in The Valley
25 or in Jemez or wherever -- middle school is like the

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p> <p>1 worst two or three years of your life. And that's 2 why I wear a crown given to me by Chairwoman Gipson. 3 So -- so the thing is, I do believe that 4 people would say, "Well, I can -- I know I can get a 5 really good education in Los Alamos," because kids 6 do get a good education in Los Alamos. "So I would 7 rather have my children go to six, seven, eight, 8 middle school, granted that it's not where I live or 9 where I might be, even if they cannot go to the high 10 school, because they can get three years of strength 11 to go and be successful at whatever high school they 12 happen to attend." 13 I think it's -- this is not just 14 Los Alamos or a Pojoaque. It's pretty statewide on 15 middle schools. They just seem to be different. 16 I'll just leave it at that. 17 THE CHAIR: That's a good way of putting 18 it. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I'm trying to be 20 kind here. So I don't think that that is -- so I'm 21 now thinking it is a little different because of all 22 the housing that Los Alamos is building. Because 23 the labs are increasing by thousands a year. And 24 these people are coming in and probably of 25 child-bearing age, as opposed to, you know, 65. So</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p> <p>1 problem with the grant applications at this point. 2 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: But I'd say we're not 3 giving up. And we have a grant writer on our team 4 who is really excited to continue to work that. 5 Because I do think we can -- I do think we can get 6 some grants to get this program going. 7 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Yeah. I think what 8 we'll have -- I mean, this is the way I think it'll 9 play out. 10 As we open the school -- and I think 11 Commissioner Armbruster, you're correct that we will 12 see more out-of-district students applying than we 13 currently expected, just because of the growth in 14 Los Alamos and the needs that exist in other 15 communities surrounding Los Alamos. 16 So I think we will see more out of -- what 17 I would call out-of-district to Los Alamos families 18 applying to our school because it is a State 19 charter. I think the demographics of the student 20 population in our school will be significantly 21 different from the Los Alamos district schools, that 22 we will probably be in a better position to apply 23 and get and receive foundation funding in the 24 future. 25 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: We also have the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p> <p>1 we are going to get more. Okay. 2 So I have a question regarding money, 3 always a question. So I know that you are going to 4 ask for the CSP grant. So did you look at other 5 places to get money or get grant funds? 6 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Yes. We've done 7 extensive work with -- with -- applying for grants. 8 We applied with Excellent Schools New Mexico, with 9 the Walton Foundation, with some place-based rural 10 foundations that support both place-based and rural 11 education. Probably, in total, six or seven grant 12 applications over the past two years. 13 The problem has always been the 14 demographic of the projected student population and 15 the location. So, again, we're located in 16 Los Alamos. Immediately, that's viewed by 17 foundations as an affluent place. They look at the 18 student demographics in Los Alamos, and there's -- 19 within Los Alamos, there's 10 percent of low-income 20 families. They immediately -- and this is kind of 21 what's happened. They immediately reject our 22 application at that point, and we don't proceed 23 further. 24 So even though we have a unique program, 25 the demographics of the community have been the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p> <p>1 Pinocchio problem. So we're not a real school. So 2 when we applied for grants, that's always an issue. 3 "Well, are you authorized?" 4 "Well, no, but..." -- so I think that will 5 help after we're authorized. 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: And I will 7 repeat, just because I've said this in the past. It 8 concerns me that we give children living in poverty, 9 which is a majority of our state, unfortunately, 10 choices of what -- how they can learn. I think it's 11 not necessary -- I think it's just as important to 12 give kids who are just basic run-of-the-mill, 13 middle-class kids a choice. 14 And it seems that the cards are stacked 15 against us, whether it's Los Alamos or another 16 community who is not dealing with the poverty levels 17 that the State is dealing with, that we're saying, 18 "You don't get a chance. You either make it or 19 don't." 20 I'm finding that hard to deal with. And 21 I'm particularly now becoming aware of that, because 22 before, we haven't had any schools, really, who have 23 not had areas of extreme poverty to deal with. And 24 we want them to do better; that's the whole goal of 25 education.</p>

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1 So I thank you for all your time. I know
 2 that you've done lots and lots over the last two
 3 years.
 4 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Caballero?
 5 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Thank you. I
 6 wanted to hit two areas. One is through the
 7 material, there's a mention of the -- the problem
 8 with the school board member, also a founding
 9 member. And the question I'm going to throw out is
 10 how do you -- how are you going to work it out so
 11 that the general view -- and I'm not going to say
 12 that it -- you cannot be in both unless there's a
 13 statute specifically that says you can't.
 14 But how are you going to -- you guys are
 15 going to deal with it so that the perception, at
 16 least, while you're still a board member, you're
 17 going to work it out internally?
 18 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Yes. I -- well, I
 19 have -- I -- being on the school board in one of my
 20 roles, I don't always rely 100 percent on the
 21 attorneys that are available to the school board;
 22 not because they're not good, but because they may
 23 have a position.
 24 I've consulted my own attorney in terms of
 25 conflict of interest. And at this point what I know

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1 is that there's no statutory requirement that
 2 prevents me from serving on both boards. The school
 3 board in Los Alamos has never had a
 4 conflict-of-interest policy.
 5 But there's one that we're now hearing,
 6 and we will implement and document and -- and adopt.
 7 If I read that policy, which was presented at the
 8 last board meeting, my situation does not violate
 9 any of those existing conflict-of-interest criteria
 10 that's in those school board policies.
 11 So my -- and I say this just to say that
 12 my position, from my own homework, is that I could
 13 serve on both boards legally and ethically and
 14 without a conflict of interest.
 15 Now, my personal position -- because I
 16 like to put in as much time as possible. I'm
 17 retired. I would posit that I work harder than any
 18 school board member in Los Alamos, partly because I
 19 am retired and I have the time.
 20 My position personally is that I would not
 21 serve on two boards because I would want to dedicate
 22 my time to one or the other.
 23 MS. MARTUCCIO: Ours.
 24 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: So that I would
 25 not -- if you wanted a decision today, I can give

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1 you that. But my position is that I would not serve
 2 on two boards. If Polaris is authorized, at that
 3 point in time, I would make a decision as to which
 4 service to continue with, and I would withdraw at
 5 least from the other one.
 6 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Okay. Thank you
 7 for your answer.
 8 Now, the -- it's -- I know that it's a
 9 challenge for Los Alamos School District by not
 10 accepting out-of-the-district students. If they --
 11 I don't know if they do it only in the high schools
 12 or they allow some in the middle schools but not in
 13 the high schools.
 14 But I can tell you if you look at the
 15 census track, the trends in the last 10, 20 years,
 16 you have got a reduction of kids, because it's
 17 happening -- El Paso has gotten hard-hit. They're
 18 closing down several elementary schools because
 19 their student population has dropped.
 20 When I went to school, there was just a
 21 tidal wave of children. And I was part of that.
 22 So the competition for students is going
 23 to be rather high. And at some point, Los Alamos is
 24 going to have to attract students if they want to
 25 keep their -- their budget; because the acceptance

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1 of minority students is going to increase budget
 2 tremendously. And so that helps.
 3 But my concern is is whether it's
 4 Los Alamos or a charter school, is if the students
 5 are brought in -- and I know that some high schools
 6 even in El Paso, bring in minority students, but not
 7 necessarily to educate them the best but just to
 8 have them, because they receive additional monies,
 9 and instead of adding to their resources so they can
 10 do better, they spread it out to everybody. To me
 11 that's not quite good.
 12 I mention all this because I think that by
 13 not going after students -- minority students
 14 internally in Los Alamos, and you concentrate on the
 15 outside, it will provide the challenging educational
 16 experience to those kids that come from school
 17 districts that are not doing very well.
 18 That's my primary interest. How many of
 19 those Chicanitos, Hispanos are going to get a better
 20 education?
 21 And I can tell you middle school is
 22 crucial to any success. Middle school is crucial to
 23 any success. I went to one of the best
 24 middle-school experiences that -- for the next two
 25 years in high school, I didn't do anything, because

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p> <p>1 it was already covered in middle school. And the -- 2 all the students that were in my math class became 3 engineers. 4 And that math class stayed constant for 5 three years until we ended up at Jefferson High 6 School. And some left to other high schools, and 7 they still flourished, because they took the 8 middle-school students that were nothing but 9 gangs -- we were nothing but gang members; that's 10 it. That was our calling. We would fight after 11 school every day, every single day. We would choose 12 another guy to fight with. 13 But it was a transformation. And so it 14 was a waste of time in high school for two years, 15 and we coasted. We had a lot of fun, because we 16 were repeating material. And so had we not had that 17 middle-school experience, we probably wouldn't have 18 succeeded, because it was a turning around. 19 So now I am concerned, how are you going 20 to recruit and bring in -- and I know very little 21 about Los Alamos. If you're saying that they're 22 coming in already, that population is coming in to 23 drive to work, and it's easy to just drop them off 24 and that's the answer; but the other thing is 25 recruitment. Recruitment is going to have to be</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p> <p>1 Los Alamos, right now, is set to hire 2 about 1,000, I think -- I think I heard 1,000 3 workers a year over the next five years. So we know 4 the student population is going to -- is going to 5 boom in Los Alamos and in students or people 6 traveling to Los Alamos. 7 So I don't think that's going to be a 8 problem. We actually have a -- a pretty good 9 relationship with Los Alamos Public Schools, and I 10 think we're actually going to be a benefit to them 11 rather than a hindrance in terms of being able to 12 serve the student population. I don't think we're 13 going to be arguing over students. I really -- I 14 don't see that as a problem. 15 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Yeah, I can reinforce 16 that. The school board is now redoing their 17 five-year facility master plan. And they were 18 redoing it a year early because the Laboratory 19 budget had exploded in the past couple of years, or 20 three years. And the projections through the 21 facility master plan final draft will be released in 22 September. But the projection so far is that 23 Los Alamos will grow over the next five years, the 24 student population by 300 to 500 students at the 25 district.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p> <p>1 community-based, down on the ground, as if you were 2 doing a political campaign, knocking on doors, going 3 through all kinds of organizations and bringing kids 4 in. 5 Because the need is great out there, both 6 Hispanic and Native American. And these are the 7 population that if we don't educate them, we're not 8 going to succeed in the state for economic purposes. 9 We cannot. We get tracked solely based on the high 10 percentage of dropouts. That's our draw. And that 11 has to change. Thank you. 12 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 13 Commissioners, any other questions? 14 Comments? 15 Okay. 16 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Do you want us to 17 reply to that as well? 18 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Excuse me? 19 MR. BILL HARGRAVES: Do you want us to 20 reply to that? 21 THE CHAIR: Okay. I'm sorry. 22 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: First of all, we 23 totally agree. Middle school is the critical -- 24 those years are absolutely critical, which is why we 25 chose our grades for Polaris, absolutely.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p> <p>1 Now, what that means is that we don't have 2 enough schools built in Los Alamos to actually house 3 those students. Our elementary schools, with the 4 exception of one, are already over 400 and some over 5 450. The one that's small is about 260. And they 6 still use six portables that they've used since 7 1963. 8 So their proposal -- one proposal to deal 9 with that is the construction of a sixth-grade 10 academy. The school board hasn't made decisions 11 yet. But Los Alamos will have to expand not only 12 their -- their acceptance of in-district students, 13 but their facilities that address that. 14 So that's the other reason that I think -- 15 I just learned about this in the past -- this 16 projection in the past month. But that's another 17 reason I think that the larger community outside 18 Los Alamos, out-of-district kids, will not be 19 accepted anymore in Los Alamos, and they will look 20 at Polaris as an alternative; at least my neighbors 21 do in Ancon. 22 MS. MARTUCCIO: In terms of recruitment, 23 we've done a lot of community outreach; but we know 24 that we will have to do significantly more. We are 25 aware of that and that will start (indicates). We</p>

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1 were already started; but it will ramp up, I think,
2 once we're --

3 MS. KATIE RARICK: Commissioners, the one
4 thing I'll say about recruitment, I've worked with
5 multiple schools in their planning year, their first
6 year. And you're right. The way to recruit
7 students from various communities, wherever you
8 want, is you have to hire someone from the
9 community, and they have to go throughout the
10 community to talk about the school.

11 And that has been the best recruitment
12 strategy at the schools I work with that I have
13 seen. That's through the planning year. Then if
14 you're doing the things you should be doing in year
15 one, for all students, word-of-mouth gets out. And
16 then your year two gets bigger, and your year three,
17 and it snowballs.

18 So if we are authorized and are awarded
19 the CSP grant, which we have applied for, there is
20 significant funding in there for recruitment to hire
21 local community members to go into the various
22 communities in and around Los Alamos to do that kind
23 of recruiting work.

24 MR. KEN HOLMES: My name is Ken Holmes.
25 Commissioners -- Commissioner, I really appreciate

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1 But now when you bring other children in
2 who have different backgrounds, who have had
3 different struggles, who have had poverty, who have
4 had trauma, and you can go on from there, it gives
5 them a look at what is possible. And by the same
6 token, it gives our kids who have parents who are
7 scientists what it's like to not be a child of a
8 scientist and to live that way.

9 And the way that is accomplished is by
10 having models. If in -- you're in school that's
11 total poverty, I don't know how many models you
12 have. Clearly, you have some. But we have a lot of
13 really positive models in Los Alamos.

14 Just even thinking about special
15 education, which you know I taught forever, why do
16 we have our kids in inclusion classes? So they have
17 models of how to act, how to answer, how to behave.

18 So in this same sense, I think what
19 Los Alamos has done in the years that I've been
20 gone, the last ten years, is by bringing in students
21 of different cultures to see what other people are
22 like. And by the same token, it's benefited both
23 sides of that, because it's helped our kids who
24 think they're such hot stuff. Well --

25 MS. LIZ MARTINEAU: Brought them down to

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1 what you said. That really hit home to me, how your
2 mid-school made that much difference to you. And it
3 sounds like you just went back into the regular high
4 school. You didn't go into an exceptional school,
5 as your mid-school.

6 That's what Polaris is all about. Though
7 we don't have gang fighting in Los Alamos, we still
8 have students that are falling through the cracks,
9 that aren't being addressed, that aren't learning
10 with the traditional way of things. And we do
11 believe Polaris is going to make, we hope, the same
12 difference in our children's lives as it made in
13 your life.

14 So, really, we -- I appreciate you
15 bringing that to the forefront.

16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Madam Chair?

17 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Armbruster?

18 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Yeah. So I've
19 obviously been sitting here listening to this. And
20 what came to mind was Brown versus Board of
21 Education, Topeka, Kansas, 1954, Supreme Court
22 decision, that separate cannot be equal. And one of
23 the good things -- and I will say that about
24 Los Alamos Public Schools as well -- is that our
25 kids lived in a bubble. I've used that word before.

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1 earth.

2 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: -- they think
3 they're tough; but it's a little questionable at
4 times. So it shows them both, so they both grow
5 from that. So the fact that you probably have more
6 out-of-district students, for the reasons we've
7 discussed, I think that's a more positive look at
8 what can happen.

9 And, you know, as we said, no one knows
10 what will happen. How fast will those houses get
11 built? Will people live in Santa Fe? Will they
12 bring their kids up? We don't know these things.
13 But we certainly know in Los Alamos, we will get
14 more children. It's going to be a growing district,
15 where it was a declining enrollment for quite some
16 time.

17 So, again, thank you.

18 THE CHAIR: Commissioners, anything else?

19 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I have a question for
20 the Commission. Okay?

21 THE CHAIR: Sure.

22 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So I'm wondering --
23 I'm looking at the possible motions.

24 THE CHAIR: Oh, no. We're not -- we're
25 not even close to that.

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<p>1 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: We're not to that? 2 Okay. 3 THE CHAIR: No, we're not. We're going to 4 go into Closed Session. 5 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Okay. Great. Thank 6 you for answering my question. 7 THE CHAIR: Okay. Okay. I move that the 8 Public Education Commission enter into a Closed 9 Session. The subjects to be discussed are issues 10 pertaining to issuance, suspension, renewal, or 11 revocation of a charter license application, 12 pursuant to NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1(H)(1), is 13 specifically approval, approval with conditions, or 14 denial of the Polaris Charter School application. 15 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Second. 16 THE CHAIR: There's a second by 17 Commissioner Ruiz. 18 Any discussion? 19 (No response.) 20 THE CHAIR: Roll call? 21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 22 Raftery? 23 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes. 24 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 25 Gipson?</p>	<p>1 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 2 Davis? 3 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. 4 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Ten-to-zero. 5 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 6 MS. KAREN WOERNER: 128 is taken all day. 7 THE CHAIR: Do we -- what do we want to 8 do? Is there someplace where we -- or are we going 9 to clear? 10 MR. ALAN BRAUER: I think we can clear. 11 THE CHAIR: Bye. 12 (Closed Session conducted off the record.) 13 THE CHAIR: I move that the Public 14 Education Commission end Closed Session. The 15 matters discussed in the closed meeting were limited 16 only to those specified in the Motion for Closure, 17 and no vote was taken during the Closed Session. 18 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Second. 19 THE CHAIR: There's a second by 20 Commissioner Ruiz. 21 Roll call, please? 22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 23 Robbins? 24 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes. 25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p>
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<p>1 THE CHAIR: Yes. 2 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 3 Crone? 4 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes. 5 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 6 Ruiz? 7 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. 8 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I'm sorry. 9 Cindy, did you get that Michael Chavez came? He 10 came at the beginning of this. I just didn't want 11 you to -- 12 THE REPORTER: Thank you. 13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Sorry. 14 Commissioner Chavez? 15 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes. 16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 17 Caballero? 18 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 20 Robbins? 21 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes. 22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 23 Armbruster votes "Yes." 24 Commissioner Voigt? 25 MS. VOIGT: Yes.</p>	<p>1 Voigt? 2 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes. 3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 4 Armbruster votes "Yes." 5 Commissioner Davis? 6 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. 7 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 8 Chavez? 9 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes. 10 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 11 Gipson? 12 THE CHAIR: Yes. 13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 14 Raftery? 15 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes. 16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 17 Crone? 18 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 20 Ruiz? 21 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. 22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 23 Caballero? 24 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes. 25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Ten-to-zero</p>

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<p>1 vote.</p> <p>2 THE CHAIR: And thank you for standing out</p> <p>3 there. We appreciate it.</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Madam Chair?</p> <p>5 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Robbins?</p> <p>6 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: I would like to</p> <p>7 make a motion.</p> <p>8 I move that the Public Education</p> <p>9 Commission approve the application of Polaris</p> <p>10 Charter School with the following condition: That a</p> <p>11 facility be identified by December 31st, 2019, with</p> <p>12 at least an MOU or stronger commitment in place.</p> <p>13 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I second that.</p> <p>14 THE CHAIR: A motion by Commissioner</p> <p>15 Robbins, a second by Commissioner Davis. Any</p> <p>16 discussion?</p> <p>17 (No response.)</p> <p>18 THE CHAIR: Hearing none, roll call,</p> <p>19 please.</p> <p>20 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>21 Davis?</p> <p>22 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes.</p> <p>23 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>24 Chavez?</p> <p>25 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: No.</p>	<p>1 fails.</p> <p>2 Are you going to make a motion?</p> <p>3 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yeah.</p> <p>4 Madam Chair, I move that the Public</p> <p>5 Education [verbatim] deny the application for</p> <p>6 Polaris Charter School for the following reasons:</p> <p>7 The application is incomplete or</p> <p>8 inadequate. The application does not offer an</p> <p>9 educational program consistent with the requirements</p> <p>10 and purposes of the Charter Schools Act. The</p> <p>11 application is contrary to the best interest of the</p> <p>12 Charter School's projected students, local</p> <p>13 community, or local school district, and that the</p> <p>14 application needs a clear plan for a facility.</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Second.</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by</p> <p>17 Commissioner Ruiz, a second by Commissioner Crone.</p> <p>18 Any discussion?</p> <p>19 (No response.)</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: Hearing none, roll call,</p> <p>21 please.</p> <p>22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>23 Voigt?</p> <p>24 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes.</p> <p>25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p>
Page 79	Page 81
<p>1 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>2 Gipson?</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: No.</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>5 Robbins?</p> <p>6 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes.</p> <p>7 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>8 Voigt?</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: No.</p> <p>10 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>11 Raftery?</p> <p>12 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: No.</p> <p>13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>14 Crone?</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER CRONE: No.</p> <p>16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>17 Ruiz?</p> <p>18 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: No.</p> <p>19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>20 Caballero?</p> <p>21 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes.</p> <p>22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>23 Armbruster votes "Yes."</p> <p>24 So it's a four-to-six vote against.</p> <p>25 THE CHAIR: So the motion -- the motion</p>	<p>1 Chavez?</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes.</p> <p>3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>4 Davis?</p> <p>5 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes.</p> <p>6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>7 Robbins?</p> <p>8 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: No.</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>10 Armbruster votes "No."</p> <p>11 Commissioner Gipson?</p> <p>12 THE CHAIR: Yes.</p> <p>13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>14 Raftery?</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes.</p> <p>16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>17 Crone?</p> <p>18 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes.</p> <p>19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>20 Ruiz?</p> <p>21 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.</p> <p>22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>23 Caballero?</p> <p>24 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: No.</p> <p>25 THE CHAIR: So the motion passes,</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 82</p> <p>1 seven-to-three.</p> <p>2 Thank you very much once again for your</p> <p>3 time, and we do sincerely encourage you to continue</p> <p>4 with the -- with the application process.</p> <p>5 And we're going -- so do we want to take a</p> <p>6 lunch break? Is that what you want to do?</p> <p>7 COMMISSIONERS: (Indicate.)</p> <p>8 THE CHAIR: Up to the will of the folks</p> <p>9 here. But it needs to be reasonably short. If you</p> <p>10 want to take a break, now is a more natural break to</p> <p>11 do it.</p> <p>12 I know folks are here; but I'm going to</p> <p>13 ask Commissioners to -- I'd really appreciate it if</p> <p>14 it was before 1:00, you know. So, you know, I'd</p> <p>15 really appreciate you back at 1:45.</p> <p>16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: 12:45.</p> <p>17 THE CHAIR: 12:45. Sorry. Don't come</p> <p>18 back at 1:45.</p> <p>19 So we're in recess until 12:45.</p> <p>20 (A recess was taken at 11:55 a.m., and</p> <p>21 reconvened at 12:57 p.m., as follows:)</p> <p>22 THE CHAIR: Okay. Bringing back out of</p> <p>23 recess the Public Education Commission. And I would</p> <p>24 like to make a note that Commissioner Chavez was</p> <p>25 here from the beginning of the hearing for Polaris.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 84</p> <p>1 Indian Medical Center.</p> <p>2 I'm from Oakland, California. As you</p> <p>3 know, Jeron is from Detroit. I'm a Black Latina in</p> <p>4 STEM. So I understand how important it is that</p> <p>5 girls and people of color, impoverished students and</p> <p>6 children, first-generation children, really have the</p> <p>7 opportunity to kind of overcome the challenges,</p> <p>8 financial challenges, environmental challenges,</p> <p>9 educational and linguistic challenges.</p> <p>10 And what makes ACES Tech really special is</p> <p>11 not only all of the data and the research that's</p> <p>12 been done in putting together the curricula for the</p> <p>13 students, but the founder and the board members come</p> <p>14 from these varied communities of -- that are similar</p> <p>15 to the challenges that kids in Southeast Albuquerque</p> <p>16 face.</p> <p>17 And so in addition to providing an</p> <p>18 environment that is conducive to learning, we really</p> <p>19 understand the -- the constructs and the exposure</p> <p>20 that's really needed to ensure that the students are</p> <p>21 successful.</p> <p>22 And so I just wanted to reiterate that I'm</p> <p>23 prepared to provide professional and personal</p> <p>24 mentorship to these students, as are many of my</p> <p>25 colleagues in medicine, not only from the standpoint</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 83</p> <p>1 So please let the record note that. Thank you.</p> <p>2 And -- and Commissioner Caballero has not</p> <p>3 rejoined us yet.</p> <p>4 So we are back on our agenda. And we've</p> <p>5 got our second school to hear from. And that is</p> <p>6 ACES. So I would ask those folks, if you want to</p> <p>7 come up now and sit.</p> <p>8 (A discussion was held off the record.)</p> <p>9 THE CHAIR: So there is three people that</p> <p>10 did sign up to speak for the school. So that there</p> <p>11 is 15 minutes allotted for that. So if these folks</p> <p>12 want to take two-and-a-half minutes -- oh, no, more</p> <p>13 than that.</p> <p>14 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Five.</p> <p>15 THE CHAIR: Five. Thank you. I told you</p> <p>16 I wasn't a math teacher. You don't have to take the</p> <p>17 full five minutes. But you do have five minutes</p> <p>18 apiece. And the first person is Stephanie Garcia.</p> <p>19 FROM THE FLOOR: Where should I --</p> <p>20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, the mic?</p> <p>21 THE CHAIR: Is it on green?</p> <p>22 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. So my</p> <p>23 name is Stephanie Garcia Campbell. I'm Jeron</p> <p>24 Campbell's wife. I'm also a physician at</p> <p>25 Presbyterian in Albuquerque, and I do work at Gallup</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p> <p>1 of children that might be interested in going into</p> <p>2 the health-care field, but who would be</p> <p>3 first-time -- or first-generation college students,</p> <p>4 and, really, what that means in pursuing higher</p> <p>5 education, but also being successful in the</p> <p>6 industry.</p> <p>7 (Commissioner Caballero reenters</p> <p>8 meeting room.)</p> <p>9 FROM THE FLOOR: So I think I just have a</p> <p>10 couple of other talking points I want to make sure I</p> <p>11 don't miss. But my eyes are failing and my</p> <p>12 handwriting has devolved --</p> <p>13 THE CHAIR: We all understand that, every</p> <p>14 part of that.</p> <p>15 FROM THE FLOOR: -- over time.</p> <p>16 I think I've hit pretty much all of the</p> <p>17 key points that I -- that I wanted to -- to say.</p> <p>18 Yeah. I think that's it.</p> <p>19 THE CHAIR: So while you're pausing, could</p> <p>20 the record please indicate that Commissioner</p> <p>21 Caballero is here? Thank you.</p> <p>22 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: (Indicates.)</p> <p>23 FROM THE FLOOR: Very good. I think</p> <p>24 that's all for now. Thank you so much for your</p> <p>25 time.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: We appreciate this. 2 Next is Theresa Carson. 3 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon, 4 Madam Chair, and the Commissioners. My name is 5 Theresa Carson. I'm a retired senior manager from 6 Sandia National Laboratories. Currently, I am the 7 president and CEO of the African American Chamber in 8 Albuquerque. 9 I'm here in support of ACES Tech. I was 10 the program manager at Sandia National Laboratories' 11 Hands-On Minds-On Technology Program for eight 12 years, and I had the opportunity to see firsthand 13 the benefits of a focused STEM program. In this 14 ever-changing, increasingly complex world, it is 15 important that -- that we in our nation, as well as 16 our states', youth are prepared to bring knowledge 17 and skills to solve problems, make sense of 18 information, and evaluate evidence to make 19 decisions. 20 These are the types of STEM skills that 21 ACES Tech will actually bring to its students. 22 If we want a state where our future 23 leaders are neighbors, and workers have the ability 24 to understand as well as to solve some of the 25 complex challenges of today and tomorrow, as well as</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p> <p>1 a passion to get out of school, because I didn't 2 want to be in school. 3 And so I -- I did not want to go to 4 college, okay. But as far as advocating for ACES 5 Tech, I would say had I been exposed to some other 6 things, I might have taken a totally different 7 route. And I really believe -- recently, I read the 8 book, the Marva Collins' Way, okay? And most of you 9 probably know of Marva Collins as just being an 10 outstanding educator who had really a passion for 11 education. 12 And that's what I see in Dr. Campbell is 13 someone who has a passion for education, someone who 14 also has a passion for underrepresented children 15 that may not get opportunities that otherwise they 16 could have. 17 And I think that's what we need in our 18 school systems. A lot of times, we have sincere, 19 you know, qualified educators. But I think 20 sometimes there may be that spark of passion that is 21 needed that wants to see each child get a chance to 22 make a difference in this world. 23 And I listened to Mr. Caballero and his 24 story. And here's -- and, I think probably the 25 people surrounding us -- I'm preaching to the choir,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p> <p>1 to meet the demands of the dynamic and evolving 2 workforce, we must make sure that no matter where 3 children live, they have access to quality learning 4 environments. A child's ZIP code should never 5 determine their STEM fluency. 6 Your vote in favor of the implementation 7 of ACES Tech is a good step in helping these 8 targeted students succeed for jobs that have not yet 9 been created and will be needed for the remainder of 10 the 21st Century as well as beyond. 11 But my personal hope for the school is 12 that it will provide future local resources for our 13 three DOE facilities that we actually have here in 14 the state. 15 Thank you. 16 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And finally, is 17 Michael Carson. 18 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon, I'm 19 Michael Carson. I'm a retired Sandia manager, and 20 came up the non-traditional route. I came up 21 through the trades. I'm of the age category where I 22 went through T-VI. But a lot of that that drove me 23 to go to T-VI -- because I was really -- I decided 24 in high school, I wanted to go to trade school. 25 Okay. So I took a non-traditional route. But I had</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p> <p>1 basically -- you-all are here because you have a 2 passion for education, okay? 3 I want to advocate that you would vote for 4 this school so that the passion that is in 5 Dr. Campbell can be transferred to students that 6 would transform them, and maybe they would look at 7 some different opportunities that they wouldn't have 8 otherwise. 9 Had I been exposed to something like this, 10 maybe I would have taken a different career path. 11 But I -- you know, what I was exposed to in school 12 didn't inspire me. I just wanted out. And I knew I 13 had to do something to better myself. 14 Well, it did help me, every time I wanted 15 to advance in my career. I worked in the trades for 16 a while. I did that for about a five-year 17 apprenticeship and three years in the trades. And 18 then I moved on to supervision and management. I 19 worked my way up the rank. 20 Well, it was a spark of being 21 dissatisfied, and I used education to advance me 22 into other areas. 23 And I think that's what this school can 24 do. It can take children from where they are and 25 help them to advance into a technical career that</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p> <p>1 will be very needed in the state and in the world at 2 large, and help them to be citizens of the world 3 that will make a difference in our society. 4 And that's why I really advocate this 5 school. 6 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much. 7 Okay. Now we're on to the CSD portion. 8 MS. KAREN WOERNER: So, Madam Chair -- 9 excuse me -- Commissioners, applicant team and 10 guests, as you know, ACES Technical Charter School 11 proposes to serve Grades 6 through 12 in the 12 Albuquerque area. And I'm going to do similarly, as 13 Alan did earlier, go over the pieces in your packet 14 and explain a little bit, mostly for the audience, 15 since the Commission has it in front of them, about 16 the score, the process, and then, finally, our 17 recommendation from the depart- -- division. 18 So first, if you are looking in the book, 19 obviously, there's -- it's in Item 6, the second 20 yellow sheet is ACES. If you're online, 21 Commissioners, it's Page 309 is where the overall 22 score sheet is. 23 And as indicated, this school earned a 24 total of 353 points out of the possible 399, scoring 25 at 88.47 percent.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p> <p>1 questions; but if they do something not applicable, 2 those points didn't count towards their total 3 overall. 4 So you will see a difference in the scores 5 for each of the schools we're seeing today. 6 On ACES Technical Charter School, I wanted 7 to explain something that might have caused a bit of 8 confusion. 9 The total -- this card with the -- 10 color-coded in your packet is a list of all of the 11 questions in the packet. The first column is the 12 number of points that were possible in the 13 application. The second column is the number of 14 points earned by the school. And, obviously, the 15 color-coded is the score Meets, Approaches or Falls 16 Far Below. 17 I want to point out that the first column 18 has some indicators that are -- numbers written out 19 rather than in numerical format. Those did not 20 apply. If you look at the last column, they're 21 either blank or not applicable for this school. 22 For an example, third-party relationships 23 and third-party contracts. The peer review team 24 didn't score this team on that, because there were 25 none to provide. So those points don't count in</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p> <p>1 And as Alan, Mr. Brauer, explained 2 earlier, in this recommendation and analysis, the 3 CSD has considered the overall application ratings 4 and the responses during the capacity interview, as 5 per the peer review team, as well as feedback from 6 the community input hearing and letters of support, 7 which are included on the pages in your packet. 8 Again, for the sake of the audience, the 9 written application evaluations and capacity 10 interview is actually scored by an external team of 11 four peer reviewers; a licensed administrator, a 12 licensed New Mexico teacher, a licensed New Mexico 13 school business official, and a team leader with 14 administration experience. And then the CSD's job 15 is to put it in a packet for you-all based on that 16 review. 17 Two additional considerations. The 18 community input hearing is not scored; but it's 19 referenced, and it has been provided, as well as the 20 full transcript has been provided to the 21 Commissioners, particularly for those who were 22 unable to attend. 23 And, also, again, if the applicant school 24 didn't answer any specific prompts that were not 25 applicable to the school, of course, they can't skip</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p> <p>1 their total number of points; nor did they earn or 2 lose any points for it. So I wanted to explain that 3 there. 4 The next few pages, Commissioners, are, of 5 course, the sections of the application. And any 6 areas that did not Meets per the peer review team, 7 the peer review comments are what's included here. 8 And all the way to the end, our 9 recommendation is towards the end of this section. 10 Overall, the application is complete and 11 adequate. During both the capacity interview and 12 the community input hearing, the applicant team 13 demonstrated the capacity to implement the 14 educational, organizational, governance, and 15 financial plans as described in the application. 16 The team is strong and represented by 17 experts in the finance, legal, and education arenas. 18 It explains the minimum scoring 19 expectation set by the Public Education Commission. 20 From Page 3 of the new charter school application 21 are: No scoring area received a score of Falls Far 22 Below. No more than three responses were evaluated 23 as Approaches in any one section. And the applicant 24 must earn at least 80 percent of the points. 25 This proposal, as I mentioned earlier,</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 94</p> <p>1 scored 88.47 percent and received no Falls Far Below 2 ratings. 3 On the written application, five responses 4 were scored as Approaches in the organizational 5 section. Five were scored as Approaches in the 6 financial section. And four of their capacity 7 interview questions were rated as Approaches. 8 However, the peer review team determined 9 that the responses by the school during the capacity 10 interview adequately addressed the majority of the 11 concerns identified during the review of the written 12 application itself. 13 The peer review team members commented, 14 both during and after the capacity interview, that 15 the applicant team presented a much stronger 16 proposal than was understood from their reading of 17 the application. The peer reviewers recommended 18 that the school use the purpose in their application 19 that they described in their application as their 20 mission, which would lead to a development of more 21 appropriate mission-specific goals. 22 The Public Education Commission seemed to 23 arrive at the same conclusion at the community input 24 hearing, as is noted in the packet a little bit 25 earlier here on Pages 8 and 9.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 96</p> <p>1 in math class. 2 So -- 'cause I'm -- I'm done with it at 3 this point. But if I could just ask someone, 4 because I can't figure out why there -- where the 5 discrepancy is. 6 MS. KAREN WOERNER: And I absolutely -- 7 Dylan has pulled out his calculator to double-check. 8 THE CHAIR: I'll give you my cheat sheet 9 if you want to compare it. I did it by 2s, 3s, 4s, 10 6s, 8s, 16s and 12s. They -- I added it up that 11 way. 12 MR. DYLAN WILSON: Was it in a specific 13 section? 14 THE CHAIR: No. It was the total for the 15 points earned. Not the possible points, but the 16 total points earned by the school, the total score, 17 I get a completely different answer. 18 So I'm just going to ask that it just be 19 checked so that we have the record clear. That's 20 all. Sorry. 21 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Okay. 22 MS. KAREN WOERNER: He'll check. 23 THE CHAIR: You were done; right? I 24 didn't interrupt? 25 MS. KAREN WOERNER: No, ma'am, you did</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 95</p> <p>1 The applicant team has clearly 2 demonstrated their preparedness to open a 3 high-quality charter school, and the CSD recommends 4 approval of this application. 5 I further want to mention that no letters 6 of support or opposition were received by the 7 Charter School Division; nor did the school choose 8 to submit a response to our recommendation. 9 Thank you. 10 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And I'm just going 11 to ask for a double-check. And it has -- I'm not 12 Looking to -- because I'll qualify this once again. 13 I'm not a math person. 14 But the score doesn't add up for their -- 15 the points. I don't get the score to add up with 16 their points achieved that this does. And that's -- 17 I just want the record to be clear. I'm not looking 18 to affect anything. But I think the record has to 19 be clear. 20 So if I could just ask someone at some 21 point in time to check this out, 'cause I don't get 22 the same number. And I spent too much time last 23 night trying to get it to that number. And I 24 couldn't get it to that number. So I'm going to 25 leave it to a higher authority that paid attention</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p> <p>1 not. 2 THE CHAIR: Thanks. I appreciate that. 3 So now you have your 15 minutes of fame so 4 do with it what you want. 5 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: All right. Thank 6 you, Madam Chair. Again, thank you all for having 7 us here. We're very appreciative of this 8 opportunity, very excited by the possibility of 9 opening this new ACES Technical Charter School in 10 Albuquerque. 11 We've been very pleased with the process 12 up to this point, all the phases. 13 THE CHAIR: Can I just interrupt you and 14 ask you to identify yourself for the record? 15 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Sure. Jeron 16 Campbell, lead founder for ACES Technical Charter 17 School. 18 FROM THE FLOOR: Finnie Coleman, founding 19 board member. 20 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Okay. 21 MR. ALAN BRAUER: All right. 22 THE CHAIR: Dan Hill, Counsel. 23 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: One thing I'll say, 24 Madam Chair, is I actually didn't get the numbers 25 that they had at first; but I did a separate</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p> <p>1 spreadsheet on my own, and have to confirm with the 2 Charter School Division, we were able to get the 3 numbers right. So I agree with what they have now. 4 THE CHAIR: Okay. All right. 5 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: All right. Thank you 6 all once again. I just have a few points in terms 7 of overview. Obviously, you all are very familiar 8 with the application that we wrote. And we did have 9 the other meeting, community hearing. 10 But for the sake of maybe people in the 11 audience who haven't heard us speak, in terms of 12 overall purpose, people would ask me, "Well, why do 13 you want to start a charter school?" 14 And I really have a two-word answer I 15 always give. And it's, "The need"; right? There is 16 a need for better educational opportunities for a 17 lot of students. 18 As my wife indicated earlier, I grew up in 19 Detroit, Michigan, what is -- if you look in NAEP 20 scores, it is the worst large city in the country. 21 It has been ever since the NAEP started. 22 And so I came through a K-to-12 system 23 that I didn't know at the time did not give me a lot 24 of opportunities I really deserved. 25 However, I really liked school as a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p> <p>1 tech-heavy state. There is need for a lot of 2 skilled labor for these wonderful jobs at our 3 hospitals. Our universities are looking for 4 qualified students; our businesses are looking for 5 qualified folks. And our labs, our national labs 6 here that we have been fortunate to have, often have 7 to go out of state to recruit a lot of their talent. 8 That's something we can do a better job of doing 9 something about here in New Mexico. 10 In our targeted area, there are 12 K-to-5 11 schools. I'm looking at three ZIP codes; 106, 108, 12 and 123 in Albuquerque. If you look at the 13 12 elementary schools, the ELA average on our State 14 test ranges from 6 to 42 percent. The math average 15 goes from 9 to 46 percent. So there's not one 16 elementary school out of the 12 where even half of 17 the students are proficient. And this goes on year 18 after year. 19 If you look at the middle schools, the 20 middle schools gets worse. So ELA ranges from 12 to 21 29 percent; in math, 7 to 22 percent. So now you're 22 down to a quarter of the students at the middle 23 school level. They haven't gotten to high school 24 yet, and it's going in the wrong direction. 25 So this is something we really need to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p> <p>1 student. I decided to be an engineer when I was 12 2 years old, and nothing was going to stop me from 3 that goal. I was the first person in my family to 4 ever go to college. My parents didn't know what to 5 tell me to do. But I made it happen, and I 6 successfully graduated, two engineering degrees, and 7 then later, obviously, a doctorate in education from 8 Harvard. 9 So coming from being on welfare your 10 entire youth, coming from Detroit, which, at that 11 time was, and still is, a very dangerous 12 neighborhood, and also being a first generation, 13 that's a testimony that I have not seen repeated 14 often enough; right? 15 I know that if I can do that and I'm able 16 to tell students and look them in the eye at this 17 point and say, "If I did it, you can do it," that's 18 the attitude I bring. 19 ACES Tech will provide a high-quality STEM 20 program to families in this particular city, 21 Southeast Albuquerque. It is the most diverse part 22 of Albuquerque if you look at the data in terms of 23 demographics and also, of course, one of the lowest 24 income areas. 25 As we know, New Mexico is a very</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 101</p> <p>1 address. And so it's something that I have taken on 2 as part of my own personal mission to change as a 3 person who has accomplished and was able to get 4 through my own K-to-12 experience and be successful. 5 We believe that our program will change 6 these statistics. We're going to offer a 7 comprehensive program. A lot of people think when 8 you say STEM, you're somehow anti-art and 9 anti-music. That couldn't be further from the 10 truth. I played cello in school. I understand the 11 value of music, and it will be available for 12 students at ACES Tech. 13 And the same for the arts. I think that 14 visual and performing arts are very important for 15 students to be exposed to in school, and we will 16 have those programs in our school in addition to the 17 four core subjects. 18 We're going to be a very supportive 19 educational environment. So for one, we're going to 20 focus on SEL, social emotional learning. I know 21 that students bring a lot with them. I was one of 22 those kids when I was young. And you look for 23 resources and people who care. So we're looking at 24 training our teachers in character education and 25 mindfulness.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 102</p> <p>1 Another type of support, I intend to 2 develop specific programs for ELL and SpEd students. 3 It won't be just some out-of-the-box, maybe we do 4 it, maybe we don't, we don't have any idea how it's 5 working. It will be a specific targeted program for 6 the kids in our school who come in; because I know 7 we're going to get a strong percentage of ELLs and 8 SpEd students, at least I'm anticipating it. 9 And the third thing is what I'm calling 10 Tech Time. It's one of the innovative features that 11 you saw in my application. And essentially, there's 12 going to be an hour block in the middle of every 13 day, half of which is designated for lunch, half of 14 which is designated to what we call Tech Time. 15 And during this time, students who are 16 below will get mandatory tutoring right there during 17 the school day on a daily basis. 18 Students who are ahead -- because people 19 say, "Well, what about the students doing very 20 well?" 21 They're going to have student-led, 22 project-based projects in their learning in their -- 23 during that time. So the students will be able to 24 have a project. But at first, they won't know what 25 to do; they probably won't be used to that kind of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 104</p> <p>1 put this thing together. That's the hardware side. 2 What about the software, coding? 3 One of the major programs out there is 4 called Python. Instagram, if you're familiar with 5 Instagram, is written in Python; right? So it is 6 fast becoming the most common computer language in 7 the country. 8 And my students will be, at sixth grade, 9 learning Python, right, on these -- in fact, it will 10 be the Kano machines. It's going to start from day 11 one. So whether they know English or not is 12 irrelevant. You can learn Python even if you're an 13 ELL student, even if you're a SpEd student. That 14 doesn't stop you from being able to learn these 15 other skills that are outside the core, but are 16 still very important for preparing you for your 17 future. 18 Community support. As you know from our 19 application, we got community support letters from 20 several neighborhood associations, La Mesa, 21 Kirtland, Singing Arrow. I went to Silver Hills, 22 Elder Homestead, just to name a few of the 23 neighborhoods. And we have support from the 24 neighborhoods on the Southeast side. 25 I went to the Dean of Engineering and he</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 103</p> <p>1 freedom. But we're going to offer it for them. As 2 time goes on, the students will come up with some 3 very interesting projects, and we're going to 4 support them to accomplish those things during that 5 time. 6 So we're going to address low-performing 7 students and high-performing students every single 8 day in our school. 9 And the last thing I want to talk about is 10 in terms of the curriculum, it's going to be very 11 technology-rich. 12 If I can just give you an example, one of 13 the ideas I just had one day was what if our kids 14 built their own computers. So Googled that. Come 15 to find out there is a computer called the Kano PC, 16 a Microsoft partnership. 17 This is a computer that comes in a kit. 18 The students will put them together and they learn 19 Windows 10. So they have Microsoft Office on it. 20 The thing won't even be out until October. But I 21 already know about it. I'm already looking at it. 22 I will be ordering one and learning how to use it 23 this planning year so we can make sure it's ready. 24 So our students will not just be thrown a 25 computer or a Chromebook. They're going to have to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 105</p> <p>1 gave us a letter of support from UNM. And a vice 2 chairwoman of the UNM Health Sciences Center, 3 Dr. Romero, gave us a letter of support. 4 So I'm going not just into neighborhoods, 5 but also into the resources that we have in this 6 community because I want to find ways to get them 7 engaged with the school, and our students as well, 8 as time goes on. 9 We plan to promote strong parent 10 involvement. I absolutely believe you will not have 11 a successful school without strong parent 12 involvement. So we're going to have programs 13 available for parents to be involved and engaged in 14 the school. 15 We did a survey. 86 of the parents agreed 16 that for parents, STEM is important, even for people 17 who may or may not think that STEM is worth doing. 18 And then 96 percent agreed that students will 19 complete a work certification. So as you saw from 20 another one of our innovative features, our students 21 will be completing certifications; not might. 22 They will complete work certifications 23 before they leave, both in the health-care industry, 24 like my wife was speaking about, but also in 25 engineering, like CompTIA certification. There's no</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 106</p> <p>1 reason why high school students shouldn't be able to 2 get those certifications. And they can get jobs 3 with or without a college degree with those 4 certifications. So we will be putting them on a 5 pathway way to earn those. 6 In closing, ACES Tech is built around a 7 belief that all students -- "all" means "all" -- can 8 achieve at high levels. And all students have 9 gifts. So we will expose them to a variety of 10 things. Because you don't know which skill or gift 11 the kid has if you don't expose them. It robs them 12 of the opportunity to start at an early age for 13 developing those gifts. So you will see a very 14 comprehensive -- when I say "comprehensive," it will 15 be very broad -- things we're exposing our students 16 to. Our environment will be one that's welcoming, 17 safe and inspiring, right? It has to be all of 18 those, and it will be. 19 We believe that the structure and 20 academically rich environment will help us to 21 achieve our mission of ensuring that every student 22 is prepared for college and career when they 23 graduate. 24 And so with that, I will let Dr. Finnie 25 Coleman speak.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 108</p> <p>1 So when I came to New Mexico, I didn't 2 come here with the notion that somehow students in 3 New Mexico are less prepared or don't have ability. 4 I came here with a positive understanding of what 5 our students bring to the table. 6 It chafes me when I hear people low-rate 7 the educational system in the State of New Mexico, 8 because I've worked directly with the freshmen every 9 year that I've taught at UNM. I've always tried to 10 make room to teach freshmen. I don't have to teach 11 freshmen. But as a tenured professor, I think it's 12 important that they have that experience. 13 The reason I bring that up is because this 14 school attracted me because it does some things that 15 I think are extremely important to prepare young 16 people to come to the University. Now, I'll be the 17 first to admit that over the last five or ten 18 years -- and I'm sure you all are aware of this -- 19 there has been a significant increase, if you will, 20 in the gap between the students who are 21 well-prepared coming to the University of New Mexico 22 and those who are under-prepared. 23 That's not a dig upon APS or anything 24 else. And that's not a way of saying that ACES is 25 doing something because there's failure other</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 107</p> <p>1 DR. FINNIE COLEMAN: Thank you. Good 2 afternoon. And thanks for this opportunity from the 3 President of the Commission and also from the 4 Commissioners. 5 I am a faculty member at the University of 6 New Mexico. I've been a faculty member since 2015. 7 I came here to direct Africana Studies at UNM. I've 8 served as the Dean of the University College at UNM, 9 our freshman college. And I am currently serving as 10 the president of our Faculty Senate at UNM. 11 I've been asked to talk about my reasons 12 for joining the board, to talk about the board's 13 role in running the institution, and also my 14 experience as a teacher. 15 I actually want to start with a point from 16 Texas A&M University, where I ran the honors program 17 at Texas A&M before I came here to UNM. That 18 program has had a very successful national 19 scholarships program. In fact, we've had multiple 20 Rhodes Scholars, Marshall Scholars, Mitchells, 21 et cetera. 22 One of those Rhodes Scholars was a young 23 man that we were able to recruit from New Mexico. 24 So one of the -- Texas's Rhodes Scholars is from 25 here.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p> <p>1 places. We see remarkable opportunity. And that 2 opportunity is bound up -- I think you see in the 3 passion from -- from Dr. Campbell. 4 I can tell you that that passion is 5 infectious. The role of this board would be to make 6 sure that, of course, the nuts and bolts of running 7 of the school are taken good care of. I'd be 8 serving on that board. I've served on charter 9 school boards here for several years now. I'm on 10 the board of Amy Biehl High School. 11 And I can tell you the passion that Jeron 12 has brought to this process, not only has it 13 energized board members like me, but I think also 14 the community, the people who have come up from 15 Albuquerque to share in this excitement about what 16 we're trying to do at ACES Tech. 17 Initially, I joined because Jeron is a 18 captivating person. He's a -- he's a good guy. But 19 I remained on this project because I became vested 20 in it as well. I bought into -- drank the Kool-Aid, 21 so to speak. 22 This is a remarkable opportunity for our 23 community. As someone who teaches our incoming 24 freshmen, the curriculum that I see here is exactly 25 the kind of curriculum that I want to see young</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p> <p>1 people bringing into my college classroom. 2 And so with that said, thank you all for 3 the positive recommendations that we've had so far. 4 And hopefully, you'll continue to support us, and we 5 hope to have a positive vote this afternoon, and 6 hopefully, ACES Tech can do all of the things that 7 Jeron has convinced us that it's going to be able to 8 do. 9 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Are you done? 10 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Yes, ma'am. 11 THE CHAIR: All right. Thanks. 12 Appreciate it. 13 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Thank you. 14 THE CHAIR: So, Commissioners, any 15 questions? Comments? I -- you know, without a 16 doubt, I want to say once again, thank you for all 17 the time and effort and energy that you -- that you 18 put into this. And I certainly appreciated that 19 community input hearing; because as I indicated 20 then, it was such a different story than what we 21 read on that flat paper, that I had concerns, you 22 know, going in. And the -- the feeling that we 23 walked out with was significantly different, at 24 least for me. So I appreciate that. 25 And I overwhelmingly appreciate the fact</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: And I'm wondering if 2 you could just talk about that. So one was the 3 five-year budget, budget adjustments, financial 4 oversight, financial staff, and governance. Have 5 you -- can you help me out? 6 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Sure. I would say I 7 disagreed with the scoring, all right? 8 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Okay. 9 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: That's putting it 10 lightly. There's nothing about the budget that 11 doesn't add up, all right? I do a lot of math and 12 it adds up, all right? 13 THE CHAIR: God bless you. 14 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: When I looked at, for 15 instance, the point -- the part in the finance that 16 I lost the most points on -- I'm sorry, which -- are 17 you talking about Section 2 or 3? 18 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: 3. 19 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Okay. It is 3. 20 Good. It was B(2), the five-year budget plan; 21 right? And it's half your points. 22 So, again, my complaint -- and I wrote 23 a -- I think it's an eleven-page response to the PED 24 based on the scores arguing for all of my points 25 that I feel that -- I did that within a day, all</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p> <p>1 that we don't have to talk facilities with you, you 2 know? It is so refreshing. And I know programming 3 is what we're here for. But you can't get it up and 4 running unless you've got a building to bring those 5 kids to. And that is the -- unfortunately, that is 6 the hurdle that more and more schools are facing 7 than anything else. 8 So I do appreciate it. And I appreciate 9 the comment about the mission and the purpose; 10 because we did discuss that. And if there is a 11 positive vote, that's certainly something that we're 12 going to have to look at fixing. Because you do 13 have a mission right there in that purpose, and I 14 think that will help the school drive for their 15 performance framework. It'll give it a clearer 16 sense of what you need to do. 17 So, are there any other questions? 18 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I have a question. 19 THE CHAIR: Sure. 20 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So I'm looking at the 21 financial framework. 22 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Got you. 23 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: And there is five 24 approaches: Evaluation -- 25 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Right.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 113</p> <p>1 right? Once I got -- I was so disappointed with 2 what I felt was -- nothing was wrong. They 3 interpreted it differently. And therefore, I'm, 4 like, well, if that's your personal preference, 5 that's fine. But that doesn't make it wrong. I'm 6 sorry. That doesn't make it wrong. 7 So when you look at B(2), I have no idea 8 why I didn't get all my points. It says, in B(2), 9 "Evaluation does not..." -- I know B(2) was one 10 where the -- I don't see their comment. Make sure I 11 get it right. B(2). Okay. 12 So while they have also a kind of a 13 contract services, "...it didn't allocate specific 14 ones such as diagnosticians." 15 So if you think about diagnosticians, 16 that's in the special ed area. So in the special ed 17 area, there is a general line you can use that is 18 not as specific as diagnostician. 19 And so for me, when I put together a 20 budget, I'm very conservative. And the reason is I 21 don't know what kids are going to walk in. So I'd 22 rather put it into General Specialists than 23 diagnostician, because if I put it in Diagnostician, 24 I have to spend it on that. If it put it in General 25 Specialist, I can still get a diagnostician or any</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 114</p> <p>1 service a student might need. 2 I checked out with Mike Vigil, my finance 3 person. He's here in spirit. He said, "That's 4 fine, because you don't know what's going to -- you 5 know, what the students are going to need when they 6 show up." 7 So to me, that's -- an opinion that I 8 should put my money in particular lines. But it's 9 not that I put it -- it's wrong. It's that they 10 feel -- whoever the finance person was that graded 11 it -- that I should have put my money in different 12 lines. 13 Well, I did the budget. It balances. 14 There's nothing wrong with my budget. I have money 15 for special ed. It's just on a different line than 16 you would have done it if you would have done the 17 budget. I did the budget. 18 Nothing is wrong with my budget. I should 19 have gotten my points. We can go back and forth 20 with that; but, you know, that's my opinion even 21 today. So that's one of them. 22 Okay. Yeah. I mean, on B(4), somebody 23 said, you know, I'm pessimistic. I'm, like, you 24 know, did you read my application? I mean, you 25 know, it's, like, I'm going into the poorest, most</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 116</p> <p>1 there's any inadequacies? 2 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Absolutely not. I 3 would challenge somebody to show me inadequacy. 4 Absolutely, yes, ma'am. 5 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Robbins? 6 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: The finance guy with 7 New Mexico -- 8 THE CHAIR: I wish you could really tell 9 us how you feel so we could get to the bottom of it. 10 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: I have a little bit 11 of finance and budget background. So I do 12 appreciate what you had to say, and I will second 13 what you said. 14 A lot of times people have different 15 opinions. And my experience has been a lot of times 16 people think, "Well, your lease payments for your 17 copier should be expenses." But if you have a 18 contract for it, then it goes in your contract area. 19 But it's an expense, for differences of opinion. 20 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Right. 21 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: As I said, in the 22 meeting that we had back in July with the 23 presentation of the public input, the concerns -- 24 the only concerns I had -- and they were more 25 cautionary than real concerns -- is the finance</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 115</p> <p>1 diverse part of town, and I'm a pessimist? It's 2 like, you know, come on, you know. 3 So for me, it's really opinion that was 4 used to judge my budget. There was not one point 5 that said my numbers were off or that there was a 6 required something that I didn't do. I didn't read 7 one comment that said that. So I don't know if you 8 have a particular part of the budget? 9 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: No, I was just 10 wondering -- I just wanted you to address that and 11 explain why it's "Approaches." And so what I'm 12 hearing -- 13 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: I'm looking for that 14 explanation as well. 15 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So what I'm hearing 16 is that when you created your spreadsheet, you put 17 the numbers in this line, and somebody thought they 18 should have been in this line. 19 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: That was the biggest 20 points right there. B(2). I lost half of my points 21 for that. That's just -- well, it's the process. 22 But that was unfortunate, you know. When you think 23 about the time I put into this budget, you know, and 24 it balances, to -- to -- 25 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So you don't feel</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 117</p> <p>1 staff and the governance. These are the issues that 2 tend to cause charter schools, and especially new 3 charter schools, to have issues. 4 And I appreciate your attention to the 5 detail, the fact that you put together this budget, 6 that you are such a numbers person. I have no 7 reason to believe you won't stay on top of that. 8 And I think that's very, very important; and for 9 your governance council and the finance requirements 10 that that council is going to take on, that is very, 11 very important. 12 You know, a lot of times the governing 13 council, they want to get involved -- or boards, 14 they want to get involved in the day-to-day. And 15 it's, like, let the professionals do that. You do 16 the policies; you do the direction; and let the 17 professionals carry out the details. So that would 18 be my thing. 19 But monitoring and managing the finances 20 will continue to be -- and, again, a lot of it is 21 opinion. But those are the cautionary things that I 22 saw in this. 23 But I think given your background, given 24 your dedication and everything, I have every 25 confidence to believe you will stay on top of it.</p>

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<p>1 And I have no reason to believe you won't. 2 So thank you very much. 3 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Thank you, sir. 4 THE CHAIR: And I don't remember. Did you 5 indicate that you have already made any agreement 6 with a management group to do your finances? Or no? 7 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Mike Vigil is where 8 I'm leaning. We have not done a formal signed 9 agreement yet. But he's been supporting me through 10 the application process and will likely be the firm 11 I will continue with. 12 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you. 13 Commissioners, any additional -- okay. 14 I move that the Public Education 15 Commission enter into a Closed Session. The 16 subjects to be discussed are issues pertaining to 17 issuance, suspension, renewal, or revocation of a 18 charter license application, pursuant to NMSA 1978 19 Section D-15-1(H)(1), specifically approval, 20 approval with conditions, or denial of ACES 21 Technical Charter School application. 22 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Second. 23 THE CHAIR: There's a second by 24 Commissioner Ruiz. Roll call, please? 25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p>	<p>1 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes. 2 THE CHAIR: Motion passes, ten-zero. 3 Thank you. 4 (Closed Session conducted off the record.) 5 THE CHAIR: So I move that the Public 6 Education Commission end Closed Session. The 7 matters discussed in the closed meeting were limited 8 only to those specified in the Motion for Closure, 9 and no vote was taken during the Closed Session. 10 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Second. 11 THE CHAIR: Thank you. There's a second 12 by Commissioner Ruiz. 13 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Sorry. 14 THE CHAIR: Roll call, please. 15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 16 Armbruster votes "Yes." 17 Commissioner Robbins. 18 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 20 Voigt? 21 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes. 22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 23 Caballero? 24 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes. 25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p>
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<p>1 Davis? 2 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. 3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 4 Robbins? 5 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes. 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 7 Voigt? 8 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes. 9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 10 Armbruster votes "Yes." Commissioner Chavez? 11 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes. 12 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 13 Ruiz? 14 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. 15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 16 Gipson? 17 THE CHAIR: Yes. 18 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 19 Raftery? 20 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes. 21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 22 Crone? 23 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes. 24 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 25 Caballero?</p>	<p>1 Davis? 2 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. 3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 4 Chavez? 5 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes. 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 7 Crone. 8 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes. 9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 10 Gipson? 11 THE CHAIR: Yes. 12 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 13 Raftery? 14 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes. 15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 16 Ruiz? 17 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. 18 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I think I got 19 everybody. 20 THE CHAIR: Okay. Motion passes, 21 ten-zero. 22 MS. VOIGT: Madam Chair, I move that the 23 Public Education Commission approve the application 24 for ACES Technical Charter School. 25 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Second.</p>

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<p>1 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by 2 Commissioner Voigt, a second by Commissioner 3 Caballero. 4 Any discussion? 5 If not, roll call, please. 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 7 Gipson? 8 THE CHAIR: Yes. 9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 10 Robbins? 11 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes. 12 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 13 Caballero? 14 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes. 15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 16 Voigt? 17 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes. 18 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 19 Raftery? 20 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes. 21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 22 Crone? 23 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes. 24 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 25 Armbruster votes "Yes."</p>	<p>1 interpreter from the New Mexico Public Education 2 Department. Laura Henry will also support us during 3 the public comment. 4 THE CHAIR: I need to know who's available 5 on the phone, because I need to divide this time 6 out. So we need to know, and also, for the record, 7 so we need to have it accurate who is speaking. 8 So -- I've got the people who are here, 9 that I've got. It's the folks on the phone. I need 10 an accurate -- who is actually there on the phone. 11 MS. KAREN WOERNER: So, Elisha, you 12 mentioned to me that Ms. Jaramillo is a board 13 member, but she's not going to be able to stay and 14 talk. 15 MS. ELISHA VARELA: Yeah. She has a 16 client coming in five minutes. She took the morning 17 off for us; but she can't take the afternoon off. 18 MS. KAREN WOERNER: So she will not be 19 speaking. 20 MS. ELISHA VARELA: She won't be able to, 21 no. 22 MS. KAREN WOERNER: But the other board 23 members on the line will be able to speak? 24 MS. ELISHA VARELA: There's one more on 25 the line waiting, yes.</p>
<p>Page 123</p> <p>1 Commissioner Davis? 2 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes. 3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 4 Ruiz. 5 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes. 6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner 7 Chavez? 8 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes. 9 THE CHAIR: Ten-to-zero vote. The motion 10 passes, ten-zero. Congratulations. Thank you very 11 much. You'll be receiving a letter from us 12 confirming that, and we look forward to the upcoming 13 year. 14 DR. JERON CAMPBELL: Thank you. Thank 15 you, everyone. 16 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And I'm going to 17 indulge everyone in a short break so I can run to 18 the ladies' room. Sorry. 19 (Recess taken, 2:09 p.m. to 2:18 p.m.) 20 THE CHAIR: So the third school we have on 21 the agenda for today is Explore Academy-Las Cruces. 22 So folks can come down. And I don't have a sheet, a 23 sign-up sheet. 24 MR. ALAN BRAUER: Madam Chair, members of 25 the Commission, I also want to share that we have an</p>	<p>Page 125</p> <p>1 MS. KAREN WOERNER: These were on earlier 2 but -- eight -- but are not there now. 3 THE CHAIR: This person is there now. 4 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Yes. 5 THE CHAIR: This person is not? 6 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Correct. 7 THE CHAIR: This person is not? 8 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Correct. 9 THE CHAIR: This person is not. 10 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Correct. And these 11 are all -- 12 (Chair consults with Ms. Woerner). 13 MS. KAREN WOERNER: And I don't know if 14 Araceli Milner is still on the phone? Not. 15 THE CHAIR: No? 16 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Okay. 16 divided by 17 13. 18 THE CHAIR: So there are 13 people total 19 who have expressed an interest in speaking. So 20 there's approximately 1.2 seconds -- 1.2 minutes. 21 MS. MELISSA BROWN: 1.15. 22 THE CHAIR: 1.15 minutes. 23 MS. MELISSA BROWN: If someone is speaking 24 in Spanish, I'll pause and let the interpreter -- 25 THE CHAIR: We do not count the time when</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 126</p> <p>1 someone is yes -- yeah. Yeah.</p> <p>2 MS. KAREN WOERNER: So folks on the line?</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: How are we going to notify</p> <p>4 time-up for folks that can't -- well, she always has</p> <p>5 a dinger on; but I don't know if the folks on the</p> <p>6 line will be able to hear as well. But they'll need</p> <p>7 to know.</p> <p>8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: I can change it to a</p> <p>9 louder sound.</p> <p>10 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Folks on the line,</p> <p>11 this is Karen Woerner. I just wanted to let you</p> <p>12 know, because 13 people have signed up to speak,</p> <p>13 both in person and on the phone, each person will be</p> <p>14 given one minute and two seconds to speak. It will</p> <p>15 be timed, and we'll have to interrupt you when your</p> <p>16 time is up if you're on the phone.</p> <p>17 (Interpreter interprets.)</p> <p>18 FROM THE FLOOR: I don't want to talk.</p> <p>19 THE INTERPRETER: Okay. Can he speak now,</p> <p>20 or will you let him know when he can speak?</p> <p>21 THE CHAIR: Is that Salvador? Will it be</p> <p>22 easier to let him go first? We can do that. That's</p> <p>23 no problem. But did I also -- because I can't hear</p> <p>24 from that little box, really, at all.</p> <p>25 But did I also hear someone say they</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 128</p> <p>1 on the line as well, on the list?</p> <p>2 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Yes.</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: Yes.</p> <p>4 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: I don't want to make</p> <p>5 a comment. I just want to listen in if that will be</p> <p>6 okay. I do have other things to attend to.</p> <p>7 THE INTERPRETER: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>8 THE CHAIR: So Maria is not.</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: We're back up to</p> <p>10 69 seconds.</p> <p>11 THE CHAIR: So we're back to the same</p> <p>12 time. Okay. So I'll jump a little out of order and</p> <p>13 Salvador may speak now.</p> <p>14 THE INTERPRETER: Is it okay that you</p> <p>15 can't listen?</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: Yes. Okay.</p> <p>17 We're having challenges because there is a</p> <p>18 record being made of this. So we need to know what</p> <p>19 people are saying.</p> <p>20 THE INTERPRETER: Yes. I will be</p> <p>21 translating for Salvador.</p> <p>22 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: My name is Salvador.</p> <p>23 I'm here in Las Cruces. And along with three or</p> <p>24 four other people, representing the school. I am</p> <p>25 here supporting the Explore Academy. I have two</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 127</p> <p>1 didn't want to speak that was on this list? That's</p> <p>2 what I need to know.</p> <p>3 THE INTERPRETER: Yes.</p> <p>4 THE CHAIR: I thought I heard someone say</p> <p>5 they don't want to speak.</p> <p>6 There isn't. Okay.</p> <p>7 MS. KAREN WOERNER: And also Araceli</p> <p>8 Milner has joined again. She's been on all day</p> <p>9 waiting and just rejoined.</p> <p>10 THE CHAIR: Does she want to speak?</p> <p>11 Because that's going to reduce the amount of time.</p> <p>12 THE INTERPRETER: Oh, I'm sorry. Did you</p> <p>13 want to provide a public comment today?</p> <p>14 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: I did want to say</p> <p>15 that I'm --</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: Not yet.</p> <p>17 THE INTERPRETER: Not yet. But we're just</p> <p>18 trying to figure out how many people are on the call</p> <p>19 so we can divide up the time accurately. So we just</p> <p>20 need to know if you do want to provide a comment.</p> <p>21 Yes?</p> <p>22 THE CHAIR: So we can't add for one school</p> <p>23 and not for another. That, we can't do.</p> <p>24 MS. KAREN WOERNER: So that makes 14.</p> <p>25 FROM THE FLOOR: Do you have Maria Romero</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 129</p> <p>1 children, and there aren't very many options here</p> <p>2 where they can attend school. I want them to</p> <p>3 receive a better education, and I believe that this</p> <p>4 is the place where they can receive that education.</p> <p>5 I believe it will be good for my children,</p> <p>6 but not only my children, but other children to have</p> <p>7 options for a better education.</p> <p>8 That's it. That's it. Thank you.</p> <p>9 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you very</p> <p>10 much.</p> <p>11 So first on the list is Araceli Milner.</p> <p>12 THE INTERPRETER: Araceli? She just</p> <p>13 asked, "Can I begin," and I said, "Yes."</p> <p>14 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: I just wanted to</p> <p>15 share that I also wish that the school passes,</p> <p>16 because here in Las Cruces, there are a lot of</p> <p>17 schools that aren't doing the job that they should</p> <p>18 be doing, especially schools that do the PARCC</p> <p>19 testing.</p> <p>20 THE INTERPRETER: She said that she</p> <p>21 believes that if this school opens up, they</p> <p>22 mentioned that they would not be doing PARCC</p> <p>23 testing. I asked her to repeat the last thing that</p> <p>24 she said.</p> <p>25 She believes that the PARCC testing</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 130</p> <p>1 renders their learning ability versus how they 2 learn. So she's against the PARCC testing. 3 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: And that is why I 4 believe that Explore Academy will be a good option 5 for students -- for children, for all students. 6 THE INTERPRETER: Especially her son who 7 is in fifth grade, that's going to be entering sixth 8 grade this upcoming year. She believes it would be 9 a good opportunity. 10 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. 11 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: That's all. Thank 12 you. 13 THE CHAIR: Thanks. Could we just check? 14 Is there anyone else, as long as you're there, that 15 needs -- 16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: If I could let the 17 Commissioners know, I'm only timing when the person 18 is speaking and not when the interpreter is 19 speaking. 20 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Hello. So sorry. I 21 actually couldn't hear the question. But my name is 22 Clara Graham, and I am the STEM program manager at 23 the College of Engineering at New Mexico State 24 University. 25 THE INTERPRETER: The question was if</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 132</p> <p>1 Rebecca Nelson is going to be first, 2 according to their list. And she is currently 3 muted. Ms. Nelson, can you hear me? 4 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: I can. 5 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Okay. Okay. You 6 have 69 seconds, as they divided up the time among 7 all the speakers. So I'll let you go. Go ahead. 8 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: It's been a very 9 long -- originally, I'll just paraphrase some of it. 10 My three children are entering -- will be entering 11 ninth and sixth grade next year. And they're both 12 very excited about the academy. [Inaudible] allows 13 them to become more engaged in their education. 14 They are both frequently [inaudible] in 15 traditional public schooling, and there's not 16 adequate ways for the teachers to address that in 17 large classrooms. Furthermore, children frequently 18 fall through the cracks as teachers just can't 19 [inaudible] enough to know that bad things are 20 happening. 21 As far as school choice in Las Cruces, we 22 do not have enough options. Even with the four high 23 schools that we have, you can really only go to the 24 school that you're in-district for. And the -- two 25 of the charter schools are pretty specific, like the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 131</p> <p>1 anyone else needed interpretation services. 2 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you so 3 much. 4 MR. ALAN BRAUER: Madam Chair, was Clara 5 on that list? 6 THE CHAIR: She is on that list to speak, 7 yes. 8 MR. ALAN BRAUER: So we're good on the 9 interpretation. 10 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Thank you. 11 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much. We 12 appreciate it. 13 So next I have Rebecca Nelson. 14 MS. KAREN WOERNER: She's on the phone, 15 but she's muted right now. 16 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: If we put the mic 17 closer to this, would that help? 18 THE CHAIR: Not too close. There's an 19 upset child up there. 20 MS. KAREN WOERNER: She's still muted if 21 she's there. 22 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Hi. We're looking to 23 see if Rebecca Nelson is there, and, if so, if she 24 could unmute the phone or her side of the line. 25 Rebecca Nelson?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 133</p> <p>1 Alma d'Arte. J. Paul Taylor has a two-year waiting 2 list. 3 We just -- we don't have enough options 4 other than one-size-fits-all in giant classrooms 5 [inaudible]. 6 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Thank you. 7 THE CHAIR: Thank you so much. 8 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Thank you. 9 THE CHAIR: Kristen Chastine? 10 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Hi. My name is 11 Kristen Chastine. And I am in support of the 12 Explore Academy coming to Las Cruces. I have a 13 second-grader and also [inaudible] who will be 14 entering middle school next year. And I just 15 believe this is a great opportunity for him. He's 16 not a traditional inside-the-box kind of kid, and I 17 think this is exactly what he needs and what so many 18 kids in Las Cruces can benefit from. 19 And I think our community would really 20 welcome and open their arms to a charter school like 21 this. And I just also want to speak on behalf of 22 the few parents that weren't able to be on this 23 call. [Inaudible.] 24 THE CHAIR: Unfortunately, we're -- are we 25 losing the whole connection, or just that</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 134</p> <p>1 individual?</p> <p>2 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Just her. We're good.</p> <p>3 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Thank you.</p> <p>4 THE CHAIR: Yes, sorry.</p> <p>5 Joseph Lang.</p> <p>6 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Is Joseph Lang there?</p> <p>7 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Yes, I am.</p> <p>8 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: All right. You're</p> <p>9 up.</p> <p>10 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. Thank</p> <p>11 you for having me. My name is Joseph Lang. My wife</p> <p>12 and I have four children ranging from 13 to</p> <p>13 21 months old. And [inaudible] Explore Academy, and</p> <p>14 this is exactly what we've been looking for. My</p> <p>15 wife and I have home-schooled; we've put our kids in</p> <p>16 numerous private schools in town and public school</p> <p>17 systems. And Explore Academy is what we've been</p> <p>18 looking for.</p> <p>19 So we are hoping and praying that you guys</p> <p>20 approve it, and looking forward to being a part of</p> <p>21 this academy. [Inaudible] thank you.</p> <p>22 THE CHAIR: Thank you.</p> <p>23 Heather Eyer [ph].</p> <p>24 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Heather Eyer [ph]?</p> <p>25 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: We need to figure</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 136</p> <p>1 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: I am sorry. I am</p> <p>2 very much in favor of the Explore Academy. My son</p> <p>3 has -- the public schools just haven't been able to</p> <p>4 serve him. This is the one school he's been excited</p> <p>5 about. We've gone to the meetings, and there will</p> <p>6 actually be subjects that he can relate to, and</p> <p>7 that's got him excited about learning.</p> <p>8 And so it's good to have it there for more</p> <p>9 opportunities. Otherwise, I'm home-schooling him</p> <p>10 right now, and I can continue. But he'd much rather</p> <p>11 go to Explore Academy.</p> <p>12 THE CHAIR: Thank you. The next is Claren</p> <p>13 Wilson.</p> <p>14 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Claren is on our</p> <p>15 school board. She was going to speak during our --</p> <p>16 during our time; so --</p> <p>17 MS. KAREN WOERNER: She's going to speak</p> <p>18 during the school portion.</p> <p>19 THE CHAIR: Oh, all right. Armando</p> <p>20 Vargas.</p> <p>21 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Armando Vargas?</p> <p>22 MS. KAREN WOERNER: He's got himself</p> <p>23 muted, and I can't unmute him.</p> <p>24 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Armando, it looks</p> <p>25 like you're muted on our end. If Armando Vargas is</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 135</p> <p>1 when we can all go out again. Hey. Have a good</p> <p>2 day.</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: You, too. Oh, that didn't</p> <p>4 sound good.</p> <p>5 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Is there a Heather</p> <p>6 Eyer [ph]? I think it's Eyer [ph]. It looks like</p> <p>7 E-Y-E-R or --</p> <p>8 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Is there a Heather?</p> <p>9 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Is there a Heather?</p> <p>10 Is there anyone there?</p> <p>11 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Hello.</p> <p>12 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Is there a Heather?</p> <p>13 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Hello. Can you hear</p> <p>14 me?</p> <p>15 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Are you Heather?</p> <p>16 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Oh, sorry. Yes, I</p> <p>17 am. Sorry. I do not have it on speaker because I</p> <p>18 was picking up my daughter from school.</p> <p>19 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: No problem. You're</p> <p>20 up.</p> <p>21 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Oh.</p> <p>22 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Yeah. So going down</p> <p>23 the list of speakers, you are up next, and you have</p> <p>24 just over a minute to give a public comment.</p> <p>25 Are you ready?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 137</p> <p>1 there, we need to unmute.</p> <p>2 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Someone else is not</p> <p>3 muted; but Armando is.</p> <p>4 MR. ALAN BRAUER: Maybe just ask him one</p> <p>5 more time?</p> <p>6 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Armando, are you</p> <p>7 there? Armando, we see you on the line, but you are</p> <p>8 muted currently.</p> <p>9 THE CHAIR: Yeah. If -- 'cause he was the</p> <p>10 last person on the list for phone.</p> <p>11 MS. KAREN WOERNER: So since we have two</p> <p>12 that didn't speak, do you want to make sure no one</p> <p>13 else joined?</p> <p>14 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Is there anyone else</p> <p>15 who joined recently who would care to speak?</p> <p>16 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: I would.</p> <p>17 THE CHAIR: They can't; they didn't sign</p> <p>18 up.</p> <p>19 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Armando said his</p> <p>20 computer will not let him unmute, no matter what he</p> <p>21 does.</p> <p>22 MS. KAREN WOERNER: I cannot control that.</p> <p>23 THE CHAIR: If they did not sign up when</p> <p>24 everyone else did, we can't.</p> <p>25 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Okay.</p>

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<p>1 THE CHAIR: Okay. They need to know that 2 they need to mute themselves; because we would like 3 some Pop Tarts as snacks as well. 4 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: All right. We are 5 going to move the public comment to the folks who 6 are here in person. And so they've muted the line. 7 Claren, if you're there, we will unmute 8 you during the school comment portion. How's that? 9 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Do you know the last 10 four of her phone number so I know which person on 11 here that is? 12 FROM THE FLOOR: I have -- 13 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: -8555. 14 THE CHAIR: The first one on the list here 15 is Kim Blanton. 16 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. I'm Kim Blanton. 17 I'm also speaking on behalf of the following 18 Las Cruces parents and families: [Various names 19 read.] 20 As a teacher, it would be a dream to have 21 Explore Academy in Las Cruces for all the creativity 22 and support that the teachers are given. Those 23 teachers produce critically thinking students. 24 Their innovation will be concurrent with completely 25 standards-based outcomes.</p>	<p>1 learn in a different way and for us to teach and let 2 the kids have an opportunity to be creative inside 3 the classroom, outside the classroom, let that 4 creativity grow. 5 For my own children I have elementary and 6 school-age children. The choice is amazing. It 7 seems amazing. The accountability that's there -- 8 as a math teacher, the foundation that will be built 9 in not being able to move on just because it's a new 10 day, but really let them learn. And when they're 11 not there, they get to redo it till they get it, 12 which is big. And small class sizes and flex 13 periods. 14 And I just feel in Las Cruces, we really 15 need opportunities like Santa Fe and Albuquerque 16 seem to have a lot of choices. And down here 17 sometimes it just doesn't seem like we have it all 18 the time. 19 So if we can open that up, that would be 20 great. Thanks. 21 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Next is Jessica 22 Ortega. 23 (A discussion was held off the record.) 24 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is 25 Jessica Ortega. I am speaking on behalf of -- in</p>
<p>Page 139</p> <p>1 This model has a proven track record of 2 excellence for their own students and should not be 3 overlooked. For my own child who is in elementary 4 school, she would benefit most from that transition 5 from middle school to high school and [inaudible] 6 and culture initiative. 7 She will also benefit from the choice 8 offered. 9 Our kids need options. We keep doing 10 things the same way, and we keep getting the same 11 results. So we need a school that can create career 12 and college-ready students and students who can 13 think outside of the box. 14 I drove all the way here because I'm 15 passionate about education and giving students a 16 much higher chance at success. Thank you. 17 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Next is Felicia 18 Blea. 19 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. So I'm Felicia 20 Blea, and I speak in support of a couple of people 21 as well: Deborah Hudson, the Ogas Family, Amy 22 Ramirez, the Roger [ph] family, Linda Davis, Linda 23 Heckler, and Roberta McMillan. 24 And as a teacher as well, I think it's 25 just a great opportunity to give the kids freedom to</p>	<p>Page 141</p> <p>1 favor of Explore Academy, and I'm also speaking in 2 favor of other family friends from Las Cruces: Tim 3 Burns, Heather Edgar, Raphael Lovato, Brittany 4 Ortiz, Joseph Fermi and Cara Sena. 5 And as a parent, I feel that Explore 6 Academy is -- has a very intriguing philosophy. I 7 think the idea of my child attending Explore Academy 8 would be a really great option for her, especially 9 coming and making that transition from elementary to 10 middle school, which is very difficult. 11 Middle school is a hard transition for 12 students. I think the idea of choice in their 13 learning and the idea of learning the standards 14 through different topics and concepts is exciting to 15 her. The idea of having five classes of her core 16 classes and an elective out of the seven and two 17 flex periods in which she could be working 18 throughout the day and work on assignments and gets 19 help during the day at school, and not come home 20 packed with homework and actually have family time 21 is intriguing and exciting to her. 22 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Is -- do we have 23 Armando? 24 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Armando, are you 25 there?</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 142</p> <p>1 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Yes. 2 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Armando is here. All 3 right. Go for it. 4 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: 60 seconds. Okay. 5 Several of my opinions have already been spoken. 6 THE CHAIR: He's already hard to hear. 7 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Can you speak louder, 8 please? 9 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Yes, yes. Is this 10 better? 11 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Go ahead. 12 TELEPHONIC SPEAKER: Yes. Several of my 13 opinions have been already said. We do need more 14 choice in Las Cruces. It does feel like we're sort 15 of like the adopted child down in the south. 16 But one thing that's really exciting is 17 the idea of choice and the idea of learning in 18 something you're interested. And in my experience 19 and work after college, I learned so much more on 20 the job and doing things and getting my hands dirty. 21 And it's when I was interested in the subject that I 22 learned more about it than I ever did in high school 23 or college. 24 And being able to have that sort of style, 25 where I made the choice because I'm interested in a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 144</p> <p>1 and -- let's see -- place -- geez -- and a great 2 opportunity for smaller classes and more of 3 individualized attention for each of the students. 4 Las Cruces needs more choices because 5 everyone needs more diversity. And a lot of people 6 learn in different ways. Children do not learn in 7 the same way. As a city in Las Cruces, Las Cruces 8 needs schools that support families and students in 9 a non-traditional way. 10 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 11 FROM THE FLOOR: Thank you. 12 THE CHAIR: And finally is Karla Ayala. 13 MS. ELISHA VARELA: She had to leave. She 14 only had child care till 5:00 so she had to get back 15 to town. It's a long way back, four-and-a-half 16 hours. 17 THE CHAIR: So that concludes everyone who 18 signed up. Good luck with this. 19 All right. Thank you. So now you've got 20 15 minutes. 21 MS. AMI JAEGER: Don't you want CSD to go 22 first? 23 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. This took so long, 24 I've lost track of what we've done already. I 25 apologize. You'll have your 15 minutes. Thanks.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 143</p> <p>1 particular subject and the way it's taught is 2 appealing to me because it's a hobby and an 3 interest. It's a much better way to do it. 4 I think that the more the school succeeds 5 in Las Cruces, the more the public schools will have 6 to step up their game, or they'll start losing 7 students. So it's sort of a win-win for the 8 community. 9 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 10 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Time's up. Thank 11 you. 12 THE CHAIR: And next is -- first name 13 Beverly. I'm sorry. I can't read the last name. 14 FROM THE FLOOR: That's all right. My -- 15 "Ms. Beverly" is what they all call me. So that 16 works. Beverly Blea. 17 THE CHAIR: Can you wait till you get to 18 the -- so we can hear? 19 FROM THE FLOOR: Beverly Blea. And I am 20 here in representation of a few other families also. 21 That would be the Roma Family, John Hill, Matthew 22 Wallace, Denise Lopez, Leticia Fritz, and Teresa 23 Ybarra. 24 And for the children in the elementary and 25 middle school, Explore Academy would be an amazing</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 145</p> <p>1 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Thank you, Madam Chair 2 and Commissioners. And, of course, you've read all 3 this; so -- but for the sake of the audience and the 4 school, Madam Chair, Commissioners, applicant team 5 and guests, I'm going to go over the packet and 6 recommendation from the CSD, the score and a little 7 explanation. 8 I think most of you were here when we 9 explained for the prior school and then the summary 10 recommendations. 11 Commissioners, it's in your packet, of 12 course another yellow sheet. But if you're looking 13 online it's on Page 327. It's the overall score 14 sheet for Explore Academy-Las Cruces seeking to 15 serve students, obviously, in Las Cruces. 16 The total points earned was 376 out of a 17 total of 420 possible points, earning the school an 18 89.52 percent. And as was explained earlier, this 19 process is, to -- recap, this process is one done by 20 four peer reviewers. 21 The team of -- external team of reviewers 22 is made up of a licensed New Mexico administrator, a 23 licensed New Mexico teacher, school business 24 official, and a team lead. And as indicated 25 earlier, with the other schools, the point totals</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 146</p> <p>1 may vary from other schools' totals based on the 2 parts of the application that apply to each school. 3 In some cases, there is different areas that do not 4 apply. As a good example is the graduation rates 5 wouldn't apply to an elementary school. 6 But, however, on the score sheet, there's 7 a score sheet in your packet. It got a little wet; 8 but it looks like this. It's the list of all the 9 questions on the application, the total possible 10 points the school could have earned, the points 11 earned, and then a score of Meets, Approaches or 12 Falls Far Below. 13 Any of those in the first column that are 14 written out rather than the numeric number are ones 15 that were not included in this school's score. 16 Transportation and food service, the 17 school did earn bonus points for their answers on 18 trying to provide that. 19 Moving forward in the application, all the 20 sections where they did not Meets are described in 21 here. These are actual quotes from the peer review 22 team's evaluation of the written application. 23 Moving over to Page 14 of this 24 recommendation is the summary. And it says, 25 "Overall, the application is complete and adequate.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 148</p> <p>1 And five responses were scored as 2 Approaches in the financial section. 3 All responses to the capacity interview 4 questions were rated as Meets the criteria, and the 5 peer review team determined that the responses by 6 the school during the capacity interview adequately 7 addressed the concerns identified during the review 8 of the written application. 9 The applicant team has clearly 10 demonstrated their preparedness to open a 11 high-quality charter school, and the CSD recommends 12 approval of the application. 13 I just want to make sure on these 14 numbers -- it's four in the academic section. It is 15 eight in organizational, and five in finance. 16 Something was repeated there that's incorrect. 17 Continuing, Page 338 is the cover sheet 18 for the letters of support received from the Bureau. 19 In those three days following the community input 20 hearing, there were 17 in support and none received 21 in opposition. Also, petitions that were provided, 22 both handwritten and then an online petition with 23 101 signatures, are also provided in your packet. 24 After that, there's another yellow sheet, 25 Commissioners, followed by -- and this, online, is</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 147</p> <p>1 During both the capacity interview and the community 2 input hearing, the applicant team demonstrated the 3 capacity to implement the educational, 4 organizational, governance, and financial plans as 5 described in the application. The team is strong 6 and represented by experts in the finance, legal, 7 and educational arenas with strong community 8 support." 9 The minimum scoring expectation set by the 10 Public Education Commission from Page 3 of the 11 application are, "No scoring area received a score 12 of Falls Far Below. No more than three responses 13 were evaluated as Approaches the criteria in any one 14 section. And the applicant must earn at least 15 80 percent of the available points to receive a 16 positive recommendation by the independent 17 reviewers." 18 As I said, this application scored 19 89.52 percent, received no Falls Far Below ratings. 20 On the written application, five were scored as 21 Approaches in the organizational section. Four were 22 scored as Approaches in the academic section. Eight 23 were scored -- how can that be? -- I'll have to go 24 check -- why is that repeated? I have to check 25 this. There's a mistake here.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 149</p> <p>1 Page 362. That's the response from the school to 2 the CSD recommendation packet. Thank you. 3 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Whenever you're 4 ready. 5 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Oh, sorry. Didn't 6 know if there was a segue there. 7 MS. ELISHA VARELA: We were waiting to 8 unmute. 9 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Thank you, members of 10 the Commission. Thank you very much. We appreciate 11 your consideration of the application for Explore 12 Academy-Las Cruces. We appreciate the CSD staff 13 recommendation, are humbled by the high application 14 score awarded by the independent review team. 15 We would like to take today to provide 16 greater insight as to the benefits that Explore 17 Academy would provide to the community. 18 To begin, I'd actually like to discuss the 19 genesis of this entire initiative, as I'm not sure 20 we've mentioned that yet. 21 As a team, we've been approached by 22 Las Cruces parents for a few years, as relatives of 23 students and families who are enrolled at our 24 Albuquerque campus, having seen the innovation and 25 student success within our learning model, they</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 150</p> <p>1 haven't been shy, actually, about asking us if we 2 could open a campus down south to allow them and 3 other families to benefit from the particular 4 innovative model. 5 Coinciding with this was a strategic 6 forecasting initiative that we took part of that was 7 paid through a grant from Excellent Schools 8 New Mexico, where the Bellwether Education Partners 9 group was contacted to help us investigate the 10 potential for an expansion. 11 As a result of the initial interest 12 previously mentioned, we added Las Cruces to the 13 location within this analysis. 14 From the result of this study, which ran 15 across several months, Bellwether reported 16 Las Cruces as having a, quote, unquote, "high 17 support for expansion based on their multifaceted 18 analysis centered around fit, demand, and 19 feasibility." 20 This prompted us to take it a step further 21 and to expand our investigation and pursue a level 22 of outreach to engage parents and to reach out to 23 potential school leaders. We wanted this endeavor 24 to be very much an organic enterprise -- and I want 25 to emphasize that -- with local citizens leading the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 152</p> <p>1 member of the founding governing council. I am, in 2 fact, located up here in Albuquerque. But a 3 Las Cruces campus would be an ideal way to return to 4 old stomping grounds. 5 For a number of years, I was director of 6 immunology and virology on the Primate Research 7 Institute campus on Holloman Air Force Base and had 8 a faculty appointment with New Mexico State 9 University. 10 So this is something of a dream to be 11 reconnected with Las Cruces and participate in the 12 education of kiddos in the city. Thank you. 13 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: And, Claren, 14 Ms. Wilson, is on -- 15 Claren, are you there? 16 MS. CLAREN WILSON: Yes, I am. Can you 17 hear me? 18 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Can you speak a 19 little louder? 20 MS. CLAREN WILSON: Yes, I can. 21 All right. Thank you all for having me. 22 My name is Claren Wilson. I am speaking in support 23 of Explore Academy here in Las Cruces, New Mexico. 24 I'm honored to be able [inaudible]. I 25 [inaudible] many years ago in support of Explore</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 151</p> <p>1 charge in bringing this campus into existence. 2 Our Albuquerque campus was pretty much the 3 same, and we would want to see the same for a new 4 school coming into existence. We spent over a year 5 engaging with families and teachers in Las Cruces in 6 order to better understand if Explore Academy could 7 meet the demands that the families and teachers were 8 outlining for us. 9 These discussions and requests are what 10 led us to this application process and gave us the 11 motivation to envision what may become Explore 12 Academy-Las Cruces. We were also fortunate to have 13 board members who joined our founding team early in 14 the process. 15 Two of the members helped gather 16 information and feedback from the community very 17 early on. We are excited to have one board member 18 who assisted in the entire writing process of the 19 application. And we'd like to take a moment to 20 allow Mr. Lou Loffredo and Ms. Claren Wilson to 21 express their support for the school at this point. 22 MR. LOU LOFFREDO: I'll go first. You go 23 first. 24 Good afternoon, Madam Chair and 25 Commissioners. My name is Lou Loffredo. I am a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 153</p> <p>1 Academy in Albuquerque. 2 Before Justin Baiardo founded Explore 3 Academy, he was a teacher. In fact, he was my 4 teacher. Mr. Baiardo has always had the ability to 5 tailor his teaching style and his message to gain 6 greater interests and comprehension from his 7 students. 8 He has been able to take his students' 9 abilities from a single classroom to an entire 10 class, with the focus of fitting an education system 11 to a child, rather than the child to an education 12 system. 13 As a small business operator here in 14 Las Cruces, I am very excited about what this school 15 can bring to this community. I am an active member 16 of this community. I frequently have the 17 opportunity to engage with a lot of youth. And I 18 see where an academy like this could foster 19 excitement and steepen advances in public knowledge 20 and could catalyze students' untapped potential. 21 I hope you find this opportunity for 22 Las Cruces as exciting as I do, and I hope that 23 excitement is reflected in your votes today. Thank 24 you. 25 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: As founders within</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 154</p> <p>1 this initiative, we felt it crucial to find a school 2 leader who would believe in the cause as much as we 3 would, as much as we once did. Without that, we 4 felt there was no use proceeding, in all honesty, as 5 we firmly believe the success of a new school is 6 largely earned by the people who pull it into 7 existence.</p> <p>8 This led to the illustrious Dr. Toni Hull, 9 who is seated to my right, who is an educational 10 leader of innovative and creativity in Las Cruces, 11 who inspires students and staff to think outside the 12 box when it comes to the learning process. I think 13 it's safe to say that her ideas for the different 14 ways education can look and remain effective align 15 our focus towards the same goal.</p> <p>16 In our initial discussions, it was very 17 exciting to hear Dr. Hull begin to adapt our model 18 to her style of leadership, to her vision of a 19 school community and culture, and to the Las Cruces 20 students that she has come to know through her 21 experience. It was fun to watch a new vision of 22 Explore Academy come to light, as we've really only 23 known the one we've been building for the last five 24 years in Albuquerque.</p> <p>25 And that's the point of what we are doing.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 156</p> <p>1 We're excited to see the personality of 2 the school take shape as the founding team forms. 3 We merely seek to provide the clay.</p> <p>4 With a diverse selection of choice for 5 students in charting their own learning pathways 6 from a near infinite set of choice combinations, a 7 schedule that allows for tutoring and academic 8 support on site during the school day, a level of 9 accountability that promotes standards-based 10 learning and course breakdown which focuses on fewer 11 concepts at a given time, this educational model has 12 the potential to provide a rich educational 13 experience and something truly innovative and unique 14 to Las Cruces students and their families.</p> <p>15 As the founding team, we are simply 16 providing this unique model so it can function as a 17 sandbox in which a diverse curriculum can be built.</p> <p>18 It's a different role for us. But we feel 19 that through our experience and the systems that 20 we've built over the last several years, many of 21 which the CSD staff has seen in action in their site 22 visits, we can provide a level of support that will 23 ensure a smooth start and efficient operational 24 success as the school gets up and running.</p> <p>25 We're happy that our success in operating</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 155</p> <p>1 And I want to emphasize this. We seek to put an 2 innovative model in the hands of a passionate school 3 leader and let them run with it and build something 4 that, in their vision, is best for their students.</p> <p>5 The Explore learning model has a proven 6 track record of success and has helped hundreds of 7 students achieve unmatched levels of academic 8 growth. Teachers are given the freedom and creative 9 license to create customized curricula designed 10 specifically for their own students. This 11 curriculum brings the spark back into education for 12 students and teachers alike.</p> <p>13 And since teachers are able to create and 14 teach through inventive and differentiated 15 practices, students are more engaged than ever 16 before. We've already received over a dozen resumes 17 from teachers who want to join the founding teaching 18 staff and help shape the school. And this level of 19 enthusiasm in the teachers is a huge part of what 20 has made, and hopefully will continue to make, the 21 model successful.</p> <p>22 And the customized curriculum designed by 23 its own teachers is an integral component of the 24 school's model. It is also what will make Explore 25 Academy unlike any school in Las Cruces.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 157</p> <p>1 our Albuquerque campus will afford Explore 2 Academy-Las Cruces with the credit to earn a market 3 bond rating, allowing the school, through its 4 foundation, to design, construct, and own its own 5 building from day one, thereby satisfying 6 requirements set forth in House Bill 283 and 7 allowing for property tax abatements and approval of 8 a lease purchase agreement with the Public Education 9 Department.</p> <p>10 We are fortunate to have a board member 11 who is the director of NAI First Valley, the largest 12 commercial real estate group in Las Cruces, who has 13 helped in allowing the school to choose from six 14 prospective land sites throughout the four corners 15 of the city. I wish we had had this in Albuquerque 16 six years ago.</p> <p>17 Ultimately, however, this school belongs 18 to the Las Cruces community and will evolve its own 19 personality and culture through the influence of its 20 leadership staff and family. Starting today with 21 your vote of approval, we begin the process of 22 handing over the creative reins to the board, the 23 staff, and, ultimately, the students.</p> <p>24 Before I hand it over to Dr. Hull, I'd 25 like to discuss the support we've received from the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 158</p> <p>1 community, as I feel that's been a primary driver in 2 our intent to follow through with the application 3 process. 4 In our time in meeting with Las Cruces 5 families, we've held several family information 6 events where we've focused on gauging interest in 7 the community. After three community events, which 8 had audience filling the venue to capacity with 9 standing room only, I feel confident in saying that 10 there is significant interest in our innovative 11 model. In addition to the in-person turnout, we've 12 received over 100 interest forms online from a 13 diverse sampling of Las Cruces families, bringing 14 together student interest from every corner of the 15 city. 16 I want to express my appreciation for the 17 parents, grandparents, and guardians who drove up 18 from down south today, along with the dozens who 19 pulled away from their jobs to call in and stay on 20 the phone at some point throughout the day. 21 In meeting the parents, the one common 22 theme you repeatedly heard were that there was not 23 enough options for families. The options available 24 are all very traditional in nature. In looking into 25 this, we realized this to be true.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 160</p> <p>1 said, "Yeah. This is my first day as principal." 2 And he says, "Well, I heard you're a 3 pretty good principal." 4 I said, "Well, thanks." I said, "Can you 5 tell me a little bit about your school?" 6 And he said, "Well, I don't know why 7 you're here, because we're the bad kids. Why would 8 you be here with us?" 9 And I said -- well, I didn't know what to 10 say to him at that moment. 11 And I said, "What do you mean?" And I 12 really wanted to know more. 13 And there are so many students that feel 14 unconnected to their learning. They feel like they 15 cannot achieve. Whether it be, you know, the 16 environments, whether it be what they're learning 17 about, whether it be peers, to how the instruction 18 is being delivered, they feel that way. 19 That's my "why." That's why I start with 20 that story and I -- you know, since that day, that 21 student is who I think about every single day. And 22 no matter what, in my school, I make sure that each 23 student feels connected in some way. If they're not 24 connected, I figure out how they're going to get 25 connected.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 159</p> <p>1 The analysis of this was included on 2 Page 3 of the response we submitted to the Charter 3 School Division recommendation, which is included in 4 our final analysis. 5 In summary, Albuquerque and Santa Fe both 6 have an almost equivalent number of charter schools 7 per student within the local district. In contrast, 8 Las Cruces has over twice as many students per 9 charter, meaning that there are roughly half as many 10 options for families proportionately when scaling to 11 the size of the district. 12 We felt this in the massive sentiment that 13 we heard from parents and teachers. With that, I'll 14 turn it over to our school leader, Dr. Toni Hull. 15 DR. TONI HULL: Thank you, Justin. Thank 16 you, members of the Commission, for allowing me to 17 speak. 18 I just want to start off with a story. 19 When I first became a principal, my first 20 day I walked down the hallway -- and this was a 21 school I didn't know a lot about, and I was put 22 there. 23 And I walked over to a student, and I 24 said, "Hi." And I said, "Nice to meet you." 25 And he said, "Are you Dr. Hull?" And I</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 161</p> <p>1 I just want to tell you a little bit about 2 myself before I continue. This is my 27th year as 3 an educator. And I -- I knew I wanted to be a 4 teacher from my -- my own teachers, my science 5 teacher. You know, those students that don't 6 connect to learning, I've always been connected; but 7 there are so many that are not. 8 And so giving students the option is so 9 critical, because they need to find their value in 10 what they're learning and how it connects to their 11 life. And that's what I feel the Explore Academy 12 model does. 13 Now, of course, that student I'm talking 14 about, you can't start without relationships. And 15 so it was my mission to build relationship with 16 students and to figure out how, if they like 17 basketball, there might be a way that I can get them 18 excited about learning math; because there's math in 19 there. 20 And so over the last 12 years, I've served 21 students in Southern New Mexico in the capacity of 22 teacher, instructional specialist. I've served 23 teachers in doing professional development in Deming 24 and in Las Cruces. I currently am the principal of 25 a school in Las Cruces that had 45 students that</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 162</p> <p>1 felt like they didn't deserve a good education. And 2 now there's 96 students that do deserve a good 3 education. It's because we have built a culture. 4 When I met Explore Academy, and I saw 5 their model, it was like a pair -- it was a pair. I 6 am an expert when it comes to the culture and 7 building relationships and students in Las Cruces. 8 They are innovative; they're creative; they're 9 outspoken; they're connected. They're very 10 exuberant. They need a learning -- they need a 11 learning facility that is like that to thrive. 12 Now, of course, the Explore model is the 13 missing piece that I've been looking for. It's the 14 missing piece that goes with the culture piece that 15 I know Las Cruces students want. That's what they 16 want. And we have built connections with them 17 because of those qualities. 18 I want to end with this. I carry this 19 note around from a student, and I carry it around, 20 and I put it in this so it doesn't get messed up. 21 It says, "To Dr. Hull. Thank you for giving me an 22 opportunity to learn the way I learn." 23 Explore Academy will give them the 24 opportunity to learn the way they learn. 25 Thank you.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 164</p> <p>1 level of research and a level of -- we've done our 2 homework on the area and what facility needs we 3 would need. 4 I would refer to sections L(1) and L(2) in 5 that we scored perfectly and met all necessary 6 objectives in the application in terms of what we 7 needed to do for facilities up to this point. 8 That being said, we know that we need to 9 do more than that to have a school open by next 10 fall. And we have. 11 We currently have -- currently have six 12 sites, three of which have letters of interest 13 engaged with -- with the ownership of certain 14 parcels of land. I can go over the exact areas if 15 need be. We have purchase agreements drafted for 16 them, and we have three as backup. 17 We have done our due diligence up to this 18 point to an extent that we can afford, which is not 19 much. Let's be honest, I think. As you go through 20 this process, until we're official, we can't engage 21 an architect or civil engineering to do it. But 22 we've had folks who have engaged the city and looked 23 at permitting and entitlements and the process of 24 timelines behind those. 25 And it's going to be -- it'll be tight.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 163</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: Thanks. Are we good? 2 Okay. Thank you so much. 3 And so as I start with everything, we 4 appreciate all the time and effort and energy that 5 you -- that you put into it and thank everyone who 6 did travel and patience on the phone. 7 These are always difficult days, because 8 people want to know what time; and it's just really 9 difficult for us to figure that out. 10 So we also want to thank you for indulging 11 us in our lack of flexibility in that sense. So I 12 do appreciate that. 13 So any -- any questions? 14 (No response.) 15 THE CHAIR: I have -- well, I obviously 16 still have a concern about facility; because 17 there's -- there is that concern to just say, "Well, 18 we identified six spots" isn't really sufficient for 19 us. It isn't. Sure. 20 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Yeah. I can speak to 21 that in a very specific sense and a general sense. 22 I think in terms of the application, I -- 23 I'd like to start, I guess, with referring back to 24 the application. We -- what's put in front of us as 25 applicants is to provide, certainly, obviously, a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 165</p> <p>1 But given that approvals happen in mid-August, we 2 have to deal with the timelines we're provided. 3 But considering that, with the three 4 areas -- and I guess to back up a couple of steps -- 5 we are intent on building a facility. We are. We 6 feel like we have the -- the investment that we can 7 make or the investment that we can be able to pull 8 in to provide a brand new facility for students in 9 Las Cruces, provide the best type of facility for 10 students. 11 And I think all students deserve that. 12 They deserve to come into a school and feel welcome 13 and feel like their school looks like a school and 14 functions like a school. 15 Granted, I think there's obviously 16 financial compromises there. You have to be able to 17 afford it. You can't build the Taj Mahal. But at 18 the same time, we feel the phased approach that we 19 were planning with our architect team looks at doing 20 an initial phase, which will be ready by next fall, 21 pending approval today, starting work tomorrow with 22 a site plan that we've already mapped out, some of 23 the preliminary work we've already done. 24 We move to a very, very specific site plan 25 right away, which gets us into submitting for</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 166</p> <p>1 entitlements and permits within the next five to six 2 weeks. Dirt work begins first and permits come back 3 just after the first of January, which gets us into 4 the building right at the end of July. 5 It's obviously a very tight timeline. We 6 do have a modular solution as a temporary option in 7 case we have to put students in portables for what 8 we feel like maybe for August and September. It's 9 not ideal. But if -- I think if parents accept that 10 a new facility is being built for their students, 11 you know, six weeks in a portable, I feel like 12 everyone can handle that. 13 So -- but I feel like, yes, we have done 14 everything we need to fulfill the obligations set 15 forth in the application for having this -- we don't 16 have to have a facility identified or, obviously, 17 any occupancy or lease signed until we into the 18 planning year. 19 But more than just what we are required to 20 have by the end of May when we submitted our 21 application, we have what we feel are six pieces of 22 land, three that, like I say, we've already gone 23 through the steps of talking ownership, submitting 24 letters of intent, negotiating on price per square 25 foot, price per acre, making sure the civil</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 168</p> <p>1 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Rinconada one is 2 still there, absolutely. There's one at Pioneer 3 Place, which is on Burn Lane [verbatim] and Amador, 4 about 10 acres, which is southern Las Cruces. 5 Southern Las Cruces -- south and west is a lot of 6 farmland, because that is one we felt as a -- you 7 know, going north with the Rinconada one, we also 8 wanted to find one that was somewhat in the opposite 9 end of town. 10 And so between the Amador and the -- 11 sorry -- the Rinconada, which is a north and a south 12 facility. 13 The other one is more the east side which 14 is on Walnut and Lohman, more like the east-central 15 part of Las Cruces. 16 Those are the ones that we have the 17 purchase agreements drafted for at this point. 18 The other three are the far west part of 19 Las Cruces, which is Motel and Bruin [verbatim] 20 Lane. 21 There is one on the far east, which is 22 near to the Sonoma golf course, Sonoma Ranch and 23 Sonoma Springs. 24 And there is one that's north central on 25 Northeast Street and Solano, which is also one, I</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 167</p> <p>1 engineers and the architects, to the degree that we 2 can have them look at those sites, have done so and 3 done their due diligence, and with purchase 4 agreements drafted for all three ready to go for 5 tomorrow. 6 And so with three as the backup -- and 7 these six, we did feel like we wanted to make sure 8 were representative of the community. So we did 9 actually pick one that's far west Las Cruces, far 10 east Las Cruces, east central, north central, and in 11 southern Las Cruces as well, all of which are, we 12 feel, based on the zoning, the size, price and the 13 availability of utilities, all would be options. 14 We picked the best three that we felt like 15 were -- would lead to the best sense of timeliness 16 in terms of being able to open and be up and running 17 by the end of July for next year. 18 But having six that we've worked and done 19 due diligence on over the last two to three months, 20 we feel like we are in a -- in a place where we can 21 start moving very quickly pending your approval. 22 THE CHAIR: So where are your top three? 23 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: The top three are, as 24 mentioned, the -- 25 THE CHAIR: The Rinconada one?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 169</p> <p>1 believe, with the old golf course, which has since 2 gone belly-up. 3 So those are the six. 4 THE CHAIR: So you've talked to the 5 property folks with the -- that's building the 6 hospital there. 7 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: For the Sonoma Ranch 8 and Sonoma Springs? 9 THE CHAIR: No, the North Main and Solano. 10 That's where they're building -- that's the old golf 11 course. 12 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Correct. That's 13 right. And there's -- that's one that is -- because 14 it's a backup, because they are still trying to 15 figure out where -- what part they would carve out 16 for us. 17 THE CHAIR: It's been a mess, yeah. 18 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: We know the medical 19 center is going up. We've asked for about eight 20 acres. And, of course, if they're not willing to 21 move at our speed, we can't afford to go at their 22 speed, too; so, yeah. 23 THE CHAIR: Just because permitting has 24 been bad for them. 25 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: The architect firm</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 170</p> <p>1 we're working with in Las Cruces has a Las Cruces 2 branch. And so I think they have a good pulse on 3 how entitlements and permitting, the timelines are 4 going. 5 And there's no expedi- -- expedition. 6 Like, in Albuquerque, there's a -- in Albuquerque, 7 you can pay for an expedited permit. It doesn't 8 happen in Las Cruces. So the times are the times. 9 So I feel like that's our due diligence at this 10 point. 11 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Madam Chair? 12 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Caballero? 13 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: This is my 14 concern. This school is pretty much going to be a 15 replica of what's here in Albuquerque. And I do 16 remember looking at your -- the composition of the 17 school and you being here before. 18 And you had some -- some proposed 19 percentages, especially in Hispanic, which never 20 materialized. You were -- you didn't have enough. 21 And I do remember you were in one location here, and 22 you moved to another location. And so I looked at 23 the income in your new location, and you're the -- 24 the charter school way, way north -- northeast. 25 And so I looked at the income around that</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 172</p> <p>1 schools, assuming one can afford tuition and arrange 2 transportation. A large portion of our district is 3 impoverished and just barely scraping by. Private 4 school is not a realistic option for us. 5 Furthermore..." -- and so she goes on to say, 6 "Therefore, transportation..." -- transporting their 7 children to school every day further limits their 8 options. 9 And so what I've heard from you before and 10 at the meeting is the whole notion of options. Your 11 support is in Albuquerque. There's so many charter 12 schools per child. In Santa Fe, there are so many 13 charter schools per child. But I don't think it's 14 just options alone. I don't think it's options 15 alone. 16 I grew up in El Paso. And the only ones 17 with options were the affluent folks, white and 18 Hispanic. The rest of us had no options. We were 19 relegated to the bottom with very little resources. 20 And so I believe that charter schools 21 should provide options and also provide the options 22 to those that need it the most. We have not talked 23 about what are the targets, where is it lacking in 24 Las Cruces, where the most need in Las Cruces. And 25 you had targeted -- or you had mentioned that in</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 171</p> <p>1 area, and it is very high. And so I look at your -- 2 at your breakdown. And my contention has been that 3 there's charter schools amongst us that do whatever 4 needs to with done to be well-balanced, so they're 5 not heavy-laden with -- with the challenges of -- of 6 kids at the very low end, kids that need a lot of 7 people, kids that are bilingual only. 8 Those schools -- you can see them in 9 downtown and in the minority areas, minority 10 districts. And they're heavy-laden. And some of -- 11 we've lost some of those charter schools. 12 But the schools in the more affluent -- 13 and we can say that people can find us, can get to 14 us. But it's not that real. That is not that real. 15 Because I went through that. I was able to take my 16 son to a magnet school. But not everybody else. 17 I had the means to do it. And so it 18 became a school just for the affluent. I didn't 19 have the money; but I sure had the time and energy 20 and the flexibility for me and my wife to be taking 21 him there. 22 I do have a letter here by one of your -- 23 your folks that says -- and this is from Devega [ph] 24 Nelson -- that says that it isn't much of a choice 25 at all. "There's, of course, several private</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 173</p> <p>1 your meeting in Las Cruces. But then you decided 2 that you were going to go elsewhere. 3 I don't know where all these other options 4 are. But I'm concerned that families that really 5 need it are not going to have a realistic option to 6 go to your school because of transportation. 7 So the closer you are to them, the more 8 satisfied we are going to be, to be able to offer 9 options to the very, very poor. And those folks are 10 the ones with limited resources, and those are the 11 kids that really are going to need your new system 12 of education. 13 If you do again what you did in 14 Albuquerque, you're in a section of Albuquerque, 15 they don't need it. Yes, you're providing options 16 to those affluent families. It's fine, fine. And 17 we look at your statistics, your breakdown, your 18 scores. They're wonderful. They're wonderful 19 scores. 20 And so I don't want a repeat of that. I 21 want to be able to see somewhere close -- even if 22 it's in the periphery of low income, where you're 23 going to get slapped around with Spanish-only kids 24 at a good percentage. 25 And I don't want to inundate your school</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 174</p> <p>1 with just that, because I know that the schools that 2 have 100 percent are having difficulty. 3 But it should be a school where kids with 4 money and kids with no money, Anglo, Hispanic, 5 Native, Black, all converge and learn from each 6 other. Because the learning that kids have when 7 they have other type of children is tremendous. You 8 take it everywhere when you grow up. 9 So that's my main concern, Madam Chair. 10 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. 11 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: I don't know if 12 there's any solution to that. 13 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you, I appreciate 14 it. 15 DR. TONI HULL: I'd like to speak to that. 16 So currently, I'm the principal of a school in 17 Las Cruces that is a school of choice; and, yes, we 18 do have transportation. But half of the students -- 19 so out of that 96, about half get picked up. 20 And so our school is Title I. Everyone 21 gets free lunch and breakfast and is a variety of 22 backgrounds when it comes to ethnicity. 23 And so you're right. I mean, I definitely 24 agree. We want kids to -- diversity is so important 25 and actually is one of our tenets at the school.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 176</p> <p>1 compared to our Albuquerque campus when --. 2 THE CHAIR: Oh, I'm sorry. Could you 3 introduce yourself? 4 MS. ELISHA VARELA: Elisha Varela. It's 5 hard to keep getting compared or criticized about 6 our Albuquerque campus when it's not the school 7 we're talking about in this moment. 8 Our Albuquerque demographic, when compared 9 to the schools directly around us, is strikingly 10 different, because we do represent the district. We 11 have kids from all corners of the city. We have 12 eight buses. Sometimes kids come from 75 minutes 13 away from the South Valley or from the pueblos. 14 We do not do anything that would 15 discourage it. In fact, we promote it. Our 16 technology is available, so that if technology is an 17 issue, that is not an issue. And that's the same as 18 what we will do for the Las Cruces campus. 19 Part of this did come from parents. Even 20 some of the parents who actually talked today, their 21 biggest concern is not transportation; it's 22 supplies. They want to know, "Can you help us with 23 the Chromebook? Can you get us uniforms?" Those 24 are the things that are 90 percent of their concern. 25 They'll be happy to bring the kids to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 175</p> <p>1 The problem is that -- the resources to 2 grow that. I mean, right now we have 96 kids. I 3 could have 296, but I can't because of -- you know, 4 just lack of resources when it comes to what we need 5 to expand and staffing and things like that. And 6 there are just some limitations. 7 But the district has done everything they 8 can, you know. 9 And so we do have that. And we've 10 moved -- this is our third location. So I did want 11 to speak to that, too. It's just -- so the third 12 location. And kids are so resilient and parents 13 have found us in all those locations. So that group 14 of students that I'm the principal of kind of is in 15 flux and finding different places. And that is the 16 group, very diverse group. And they find us and 17 they do get to us. 18 And I do have some students that we 19 luckily have a bus stop right there. So that's kind 20 of handy, too, that they can take the bus as well. 21 But I agree with you. We do want a mix, 22 definitely. 23 MS. ELISHA VARELA: I guess -- I think 24 I -- also, I want to start my response to this 25 with -- it's really difficult to keep getting</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 177</p> <p>1 school, a lot of them. And we also mapped the 2 addresses. We looked at all our interest forms from 3 Las Cruces. And with Toni's help, we mapped them 4 out and looked at where the families are coming 5 from, and where the families -- where are the 6 schools -- particularly in middle schools, where 7 there is a big drop in proficiency between middle 8 and high school, where are the more [inaudible] 9 ones, and are those students needing more options. 10 And so a lot of thought goes into that. 11 And, yes, we are [inaudible] at facilities. 12 Everybody is, I think, to an extent. It's 13 frustrating. But our goal, and our goal for 14 Albuquerque, since, apparently, that's also called 15 into question here, and Las Cruces, is always going 16 to be, "Do you look like the district around you?" 17 Because -- and I think I said this at the 18 community input hearing. Because if you don't 19 represent the district around you, your demographic 20 will look wildly different. 21 In that sense, we can't look at the 22 Albuquerque school's demographic and then say, 23 "That's what Las Cruces will look like," because 24 Albuquerque and Las Cruces do not look alike. They 25 don't have the same demographic.</p>

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<p>1 So I think that that's important to look 2 at is the facility that we have here and the campus 3 we have going here is very different, because 4 Albuquerque is very different than Las Cruces. 5 They're not the same place. 6 But as far as diversity when looking at 7 programming, actually inundates us with ELLs. This 8 model is actually perfect for it. It can completely 9 be tailored to a school that's 50 percent ELL. It's 10 kind of the beauty of the model that attracted me in 11 the first place six years ago, something that can 12 really be tailored to meet the needs of the students 13 that walk in the door and then change year to year 14 if need be. You don't get that pretty much 15 anywhere. 16 So that's one of the things that I think 17 makes this model the most special and that Dr. Hull 18 will be available to kind of run with, because the 19 whole school should be tailored to the kids. And it 20 should match the district around it. 21 If we come into a school and have 22 60 percent Caucasians students in Las Cruces, I 23 would be wondering what's going on in the school, 24 when Las Cruces is very different population-wise. 25 But 40 or 50 percent Caucasian in Albuquerque, that</p>	<p>1 about an Albuquerque expansion into Las Cruces. And 2 I fail to see where that's organic. 3 And then your own words just a second ago 4 stated that, "If we come in." And so it's hard -- 5 you're expressing concern about being compared to 6 Albuquerque and what goes on in Albuquerque; yet 7 some of the things that -- even that you're 8 communicating is expressing that, "if we come in." 9 And I have a real concern with that. 10 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Can I speak to that? 11 THE CHAIR: Yes. 12 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: All right. I would 13 like to address this, this fundamental 14 misunderstanding. And I think it goes back to the 15 specifics of our model, which were outlined in the 16 application. Because our model is non-traditional, 17 to say the least. 18 What Explore Academy -- or what we've 19 called the Explore Learning Model -- is a framework. 20 And I mentioned in my speech, it is sandbox in which 21 a school can be built with its own personality. 22 I would echo the same sentiment for 23 Dr. Hull. We feel like she is the perfect fit for a 24 school leader in that community, and exactly the 25 kind of culture that she envisions is one that we</p>
<p>1 looks like the district schools around us. 2 And not everything in the center of town 3 is affluent. If you walk down Montgomery, which the 4 closest high school to us is Del Norte, not the same 5 picture as La Cueva. 6 So it's definitely depending on where 7 you're looking. Las Cruces is not Albuquerque. 8 We're aware of it, and that is one of our biggest 9 goals is representative population. 10 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 11 Commissioner Chavez? 12 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Madam Chair. Gosh, 13 where do I start? Let me just start with I have the 14 utmost respect for Dr. Toni Hull. And she's an 15 incredible leader. I've known her for about 16 15 years now, and just a remarkable person. And so 17 I have no doubt in her leadership ability and being 18 able to run a successful school. I think her record 19 shows that and speaks for itself. 20 However, I want to just kind of echo 21 Commissioner Caballero's concerns, and with -- with 22 the whole school. And I have a hard time 23 understanding -- I've heard this before, even the 24 community input hearing. This term about organic. 25 This is an organic situation, and yet we're talking</p>	<p>1 feel would meet well with our model. 2 What exists in Albuquerque is a function 3 of the teachers that teach in Albuquerque. And I 4 want to be very, very clear about that. What the 5 teachers have brought into existence in Albuquerque 6 with the flavors and the community and the 7 curriculum that they have built is all within a box. 8 Our box just happens to be really big, where they 9 have a lot of flexibility and latitude in what they 10 teach, as long as they're anchoring to the 11 standards. 12 This curriculum, the beauty of it, if you 13 get down into the weeds -- and it does require -- 14 our application does specify this -- in terms of 15 what the curriculum is. We've had a couple of 16 Commissioners visit the school. We have -- CSD 17 comes every year. And it's something that it's cool 18 to see in action; but at the same time, we are not 19 replicating. 20 We are not replicating at all. This is a 21 framework that can be applied to a novel environment 22 with novel students, with a passionate leader, to 23 make it what he, or she, in this case, feels is best 24 for that community. And so filling in that box and 25 filling that frame and that framework is going to be</p>
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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 182</p> <p>1 up to the staff and the leader and the teachers that 2 bring it into existence.</p> <p>3 What it's going to look like is going to 4 be phenomenally different than what is in 5 Albuquerque. The culture in Albuquerque is largely 6 driven by our founding staff. The staff that came 7 on that initial year largely created the personality 8 of what is now the -- the school moving forward.</p> <p>9 That is not what we're bringing to 10 Las Cruces. What we're bringing is a framework that 11 can be applied with an innovative and passionate 12 leader and innovative and passionate teachers to 13 fill in all of that information, to engage students 14 and create a culture in that community that works 15 for those students.</p> <p>16 And so I want to be very clear on that, 17 because that is not a replication in any sense. 18 This is us -- we are experts on the framework. We 19 are not experts on Las Cruces. Dr. Hull can create 20 a community that we are excited to watch come into 21 existence within that.</p> <p>22 And what it gives her and her teachers the 23 ability to do is to create again. What they create 24 is going to be best for their students. And when 25 you compare, let's say, five years down the road,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 184</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: One other concern 2 I'd like to bring to the table is I appreciate your 3 Spanish-speaking parents that you had on the phone, 4 which you didn't have any during the community input 5 session. But going back to the review sheet, it 6 specifically states here, the response that you gave 7 to letter C, "Bilingual, multicultural, Indian 8 education and Hispanic education," "The response 9 does not indicate where or how students' families 10 will be involved or give an indication of the 11 supports to be given to help students with the home 12 language that is not English achieved at a high 13 level."</p> <p>14 And so we keep talking about -- you know, 15 you're trying to make this some type of model or for 16 success; yet -- yet it's even in the review here 17 that it lacks in that area.</p> <p>18 And so I'm thinking about the 19 Spanish-speaking parents that you just -- that you 20 had speaking in support. And yet my question is how 21 are you going to meet the needs of those kids?</p> <p>22 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: Give me a second. I 23 will -- before Ms. Varela takes the microphone on 24 this, I would like to at least point out that the 25 application, in conjunction with our capacity</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 183</p> <p>1 you compare the two schools, ultimately, they should 2 look different. They should be absolutely 3 different, because they are tailored to two student 4 populations.</p> <p>5 And that's the beauty of the model. As 6 Ms. Varela said, if it is 50 percent ELL, the model 7 can support that. It can have a significant ELL 8 component. We have the flex times built into the 9 academic support, the different flavors of classes 10 that can lend themselves to dual language; all of 11 that is within a frame that can be filled in by 12 those who bring the school into existence.</p> <p>13 We are at the very, very infancy stage of 14 creating the school. The framework is what it is. 15 But what's going to happen over the next year is the 16 creation of a brand new culture and personalities of 17 a school that fits perfectly for the school leader, 18 the staff, and the students who come to enroll in 19 that model.</p> <p>20 I do want to say that this is an 21 application for Las Cruces. And I want to make sure 22 that we do remain tethered to that in a sense. 23 We're proposing a school -- yes, we have not touted 24 our track record in Albuquerque, because this is a 25 novel endeavor altogether; so...</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 185</p> <p>1 interview -- this was asked by our review team. It 2 was one thing that was asked specifically of us, 3 because it was an area in the application where 4 obviously, there was some scoring deductions that 5 took place.</p> <p>6 But as in the final recommendation, the 7 review team determined that the responses by us, the 8 school, during the capacity interview adequately 9 addressed the concerns in that section of the 10 written application.</p> <p>11 So, I mean, we did address it. 12 I'll let Ms. Varela address it again right 13 now. But I did want to say that inclusion with 14 the -- what was packaged as our final application 15 with the -- with the capacity interview included, we 16 feel like that was addressed.</p> <p>17 And I'll let you address it some more. 18 MS. ELISHA VARELA: Yeah. During our 19 capacity interview, some of the reviewers actually 20 mentioned that the rubric in the section was 21 identical to the rubric in another section, which is 22 something that we always pointed out, because the 23 rubric didn't 100 percent match what the section 24 questions were. 25 But in talking with them, I think part of</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 186</p> <p>1 it had to do with when they read our application, 2 there were certain things that they made assumptions 3 on that when we -- they asked us directly, we were 4 like, "Well, that was an assumption." 5 So one of them was the idea of input. So 6 when reading it, they didn't take into account the 7 PTO, or the parent organizations, or the teachers 8 creating their flavors, and the surveying that we do 9 for parents. They didn't take any of that into 10 account when they read it. And then when we brought 11 it, they were like, "Oh, yeah, we did see that." 12 And so the other part that I think either 13 was not stated heavily enough, but then I -- at the 14 community input hearing, I felt I was slightly 15 criticized for really pounding it home that 16 everything should be equitable -- the ELD component 17 that works within our school and that can be 18 expanded is really, really effective in getting 19 students to not only develop academic English but 20 simultaneously not lose content. 21 I think that is a misstep that I see in so 22 many schools, where they focus so hard on developing 23 the English language, they forget these are also 24 children that are at grade level, and they deserve 25 the science and the math and the social studies and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 188</p> <p>1 quickly exit ELL, partially because we don't let 2 them just kind of flail in an ELD class and get 3 English language arts credit. They also need to 4 know English language arts and grade-level biology 5 and grade-level quadratics. All of those things are 6 super-important. 7 That is part of the reason why, when we 8 discussed this section and they looked at the 9 different things that we had stated, I think that 10 was some of the confusion. And it was one of the 11 things I was most hurt about when I read the 12 reviews, because I worked so hard on that section, 13 and we did so much work together to make sure we 14 were conveying what the school can do and what it 15 can do in the population that we are anticipating. 16 But it is not something that is brushed 17 off in any way. And I don't want that to be a 18 perception. Because it's a focus. And our flex 19 periods and our support work so well for it that 20 it's one of the things actually, I'm the most proud 21 of the school model. 22 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: You keep using the 23 word "equitable." But there is a difference between 24 being equitable and having equity. 25 MS. ELISHA VARELA: Correct.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 187</p> <p>1 the language arts to be on par. 2 That takes a lot of finesse, really, 3 because you have to look at their level of academic 4 English, pair it with where they have to be 5 grade-wise and not let those slip. 6 And I know that is definitely not a 7 perfect science for anyone; but it's crucial and 8 it's part of the thing that we've kind of woven into 9 the model for our flex periods. 10 We don't like pulling students who are not 11 sufficient in English from their content classes. 12 Having a structure where we can accommodate and 13 modify and make sure they're able to access the 14 information, everything is accessible in their home 15 language, which in Las Cruces, majority will be 16 Spanish, and then simultaneously receive the English 17 language development instruction; those two 18 components are so crucial. 19 And maybe it was not stated clearly enough 20 in the application section. But during the 21 interview, when we were discussing this, it was one 22 of the things that was kind of the most positive 23 outcome. 24 We like that model for that reason. The 25 students who enter Explore Academy-Albuquerque very</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 189</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: I mentioned, even at 2 the community hearing, that even Lau v. Nichols is 3 all about "equitable" versus "equity". So I have a 4 concern with still the focus on "equitable." 5 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Chavez, do you 6 have a mic? 7 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes, I do. Can you 8 hear me now? 9 THE CHAIR: This gentleman is having great 10 difficulty in hearing. 11 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: I'll just repeat my 12 comment. There is a difference between being 13 equitable and equity. That's what Lau v. Nichols is 14 all about. And my concern is that we continue to 15 use the word "equitable" as opposed to "equity." 16 MR. JUSTIN BAIARDO: I think the 17 difference between equality and equity -- 18 Ms. Var- -- we do function to support students in a 19 way that is suitable for -- which is focusing on 20 equitable, yes, which -- giving every student the 21 same level of support does not benefit students that 22 some need more support than others. That is equity. 23 Equality means you give everyone the same 24 thing. 25 We have mentioned, and she has mentioned</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 190</p> <p>1 equity. That is our model; equity. Not every 2 student needs the same level of support as another 3 student, which is why our support systems are very 4 personal to the student, okay? 5 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Caballero? 6 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes. I don't 7 want you to misunderstand my -- my point that I'm 8 trying to get across. I'm not making any negative 9 judgments of your teaching methodology, your 10 approach teaching children. 11 What I'm concerned about is -- and the 12 comparison to Albuquerque, whether you resent it or 13 not -- is that you had a goal to meet for -- the 14 language learners, and you didn't meet that. You 15 didn't have hardly any of those here in Albuquerque. 16 And you lost a lot of those when you moved from one 17 side to the other. 18 So my position was, these guys moved away 19 from that population. And so when I was in 20 Las Cruces, I expected targeting areas. And I 21 brought it up a little while ago. "Where are you 22 going to be located? How are you going to solve 23 this? You're moving away? How can you be in the 24 periphery of the very poor?" 25 And I didn't hear a word on how you're</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 192</p> <p>1 El Paso got involved. They put a lot of money. It 2 ended up a school for the affluent, because it was 3 put into a place where nobody could reach it other 4 than people that had cars. 5 And so 80 -- 60 percent were from Juarez, 6 very, very affluent, the rest of us, middle 7 class-ish from El Paso. 8 So I don't want that to happen again in 9 Las Cruces. We're at an early stage where I can say 10 no. I can say no, because I brought -- I brought it 11 up in Las Cruces, that I don't hear anything about, 12 "This is the area that needs, we're going to do it 13 here," or, "This is our closest site to be -- to 14 have a bigger impact on where the need is very 15 great." 16 I don't hear that. I just hear options, 17 options for the affluent, options for the rich. 18 Options. 19 It's not all. Charter schools in this 20 state was made to -- to offer options for those that 21 really need it and offer the public schools an 22 option to new methodology. 23 You're providing an option for new 24 methodology. But at the same time, you've got to 25 show that you can get kids that really need it and</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 191</p> <p>1 going to approach that. You have a bunch of sites. 2 A bunch of those, I don't know if they're in there 3 somewhere. 4 So my concern is really that when we 5 finished the meeting, there were two ladies, 6 Spanish-speaking ladies in the crowd that didn't 7 speak. And I went over, and I said, "How do you 8 think..." -- well, they were excited about the 9 Explore. They understood it was coming to the 10 community. 11 And so they were a little confused as to 12 the discussion of -- that you were going to go 13 somewhere, that they kind of understood that you 14 wanted to buy. 15 So I don't know whether -- when you got 16 support from parents, especially Hispanic parents, 17 they were fully aware that you were going to be 18 located in northeast Las Cruces or where. 19 And people get excited. But very poor, 20 limited folks that -- that need your -- your type of 21 charter school are not going to be able to -- to 22 reach your school. 23 There's a lot of good intentions. My son 24 went to a magnet school, and it was done with a lot 25 of good intentions. Some of the key people in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 193</p> <p>1 are at the bottom and bring them up to the top. 2 Those are real options. And then you prove it, and 3 then our public schools can replicate. 4 Otherwise, we're just financing private 5 schools for the affluent at public expense if we 6 don't push for service to those that really need it. 7 You could have said -- are we going to 8 provide transportation to 60 percent of the 9 students? I don't know how you're going to do that. 10 But that's about the only way, if you go into a very 11 affluent part of Las Cruces. You managed it in 12 Albuquerque. It's there. Nobody's put a stop to 13 it. Nobody said anything. 14 But it's early enough in Las Cruces -- for 15 me, I'm the only one of ten that can say no, this is 16 not going to happen, unless you provide this option 17 to those that really need it. 18 Thank you, Madam Chair. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Madam Chair? 20 THE CHAIR: I'm going to be brief. 21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I wanted to ask 22 you a question. That's fine. 23 THE CHAIR: And I'm -- this is going to be 24 quick. My concern has always been that in the 25 application and at the community input hearing,</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 194</p> <p>1 there was no indication that there truly was 2 community participation in the application. 3 And there obvious -- this school is the 4 first school whose community input hearing that I 5 have participated in, that there was not the 6 founding -- there wasn't anyone locally sitting 7 there on the founding team that was part of the 8 community. 9 So that when Commissioner Chavez makes a 10 reference to this school being organically grown, I 11 don't -- I absolutely did not see it in the 12 application, and it certainly was not representative 13 at that community input hearing. It was completely 14 lacking. 15 And I'm sorry if I'm -- if I'm offending 16 you or anything at this point in time, but... 17 DR. TONI HULL: No, no, no, definitely 18 not. 19 THE CHAIR: But it's just a statement. 20 It's just a statement. It's a statement. 21 DR. TONI HULL: Okay. 22 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Armbruster? 23 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I just have a 24 question to ask you, because I have no idea about 25 Las Cruces.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 196</p> <p>1 tell them where to locate. 2 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: I just want to 3 know, are all of these in the super-rich part -- 4 THE CHAIR: They're not. They're not. 5 But until we know that that's where they're going to 6 be, it's just pure conjecture. 7 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Okay. Because I 8 don't know anything about Las Cruces. 9 THE CHAIR: Right. And I understand that. 10 But we're talking in what-ifs at -- because we don't 11 know where they're going to be. And that's the 12 concern that's being raised. 13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: So in 14 Las Cruces, in general, I guess -- because it's not 15 every school -- what is the free and reduced lunch 16 kind of rate that Las Cruces, in general -- we're 17 talking about a community; right? 18 THE CHAIR: It's high. It's high. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: High as in, 20 like, over 50? 60? 80? 21 THE CHAIR: I can tell you that each one 22 of our charter schools has -- I think every one of 23 our charters has 100. It is -- yeah. Yeah. 24 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: How many charter 25 schools are in Las Cruces?</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 195</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: Oh. I'm sorry. 2 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: And my question 3 is, these places that Mr. Baiardo just talked about, 4 which I have no idea, are all of those upper income 5 areas? 6 THE CHAIR: Well, no. But I'll also say 7 this. Until a site is absolutely identified, it's 8 too hard to say -- and I'll agree. I have an issue 9 with that, because we've had -- Las Cruces is 10 smaller. We get it. And it's not Albuquerque. And 11 I am not comparing Albuquerque and Las Cruces. 12 However, it's large enough that there -- 13 that there are certain communities that you would be 14 serving. And without knowing the location -- and 15 we're dealing with schools, as Commissioner 16 Caballero mentioned; not necessarily this school, 17 but also other schools that might have moved. 18 So without saying -- knowing the intention 19 of where it's going to be built, it is impossible to 20 say who they're going to be serving. But they're 21 not -- but we don't know. Until they tell us where 22 they're going to be, we're conjecturing. 23 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: But are these 24 three -- 25 THE CHAIR: They're not all. But we can't</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 197</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: We have five. I always have 2 to count them. We have La Academia Dolores Huerta 3 which is a middle school. We have J. Paul Taylor 4 which is K-through-8. We have Alma d'Arte, which is 5 a high school. We have La Montañas, which is a high 6 school. And we have New Americas, which is a high 7 school. 8 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So is there -- 9 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Raíces. 10 THE CHAIR: And Raíces, which just opened. 11 I think they're opening. But they just currently 12 opened, which is an elementary. 13 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: So is there a need 14 for another charter school? 15 THE CHAIR: That's a -- that's a question 16 to be answered. 17 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: To be determined? 18 THE CHAIR: Right. Right. 19 Are there any other questions? If not -- 20 okay. 21 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Is there someone in 22 the audience? 23 THE CHAIR: No, I'm sorry. The 24 opportunity for public comment has -- has already 25 expired.</p>

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1 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm just asking a
2 question about what do you mean by organic? You can
3 plant a seed in Position A and Position B.
4 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. We can't.
5 FROM THE FLOOR: Okay. Well, I don't
6 think you understand what the whole principle --
7 THE CHAIR: I -- I'm going to move that
8 the Public Education Commission enter into a Closed
9 Session. The subjects to be discussed are issues
10 pertaining to issuance, suspension, renewal, or
11 revocation of a charter license application,
12 pursuant to NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1(H)(1),
13 specifically approval, approval with conditions, or
14 denial of Explore Charter School application.
15 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Second.
16 THE CHAIR: There's a second by
17 Commissioner Ruiz.
18 Roll call, please?
19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
20 Raftery?
21 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes.
22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
23 Gipson?
24 THE CHAIR: Yes.
25 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner

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1 THE CHAIR: So I move that the Public
2 Education Commission come out of Closed Session.
3 The matters discussed in the closed meeting were
4 limited only to those specified in the motion for
5 closure -- excuse me -- and no vote was taken during
6 the Closed Session.
7 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Second.
8 THE CHAIR: So second by Commissioner
9 Ruiz. Roll call, please.
10 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
11 Robbins?
12 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes.
13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
14 Voigt?
15 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes.
16 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
17 Armbruster votes "Yes."
18 Commissioner Davis?
19 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes.
20 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
21 Chavez?
22 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes.
23 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
24 Gipson?
25 THE CHAIR: Yes.

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1 Crone?
2 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes.
3 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
4 Chavez?
5 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes.
6 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
7 Ruiz?
8 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.
9 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
10 Davis?
11 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes.
12 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
13 Caballero?
14 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes.
15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
16 Armbruster votes "Yes."
17 Commissioner Voigt?
18 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes.
19 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
20 Robbins?
21 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes.
22 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Ten. Passes.
23 THE CHAIR: Motion passes, ten-zero.
24 Thank you.
25 (Closed Session conducted off the record.)

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1 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
2 Raftery?
3 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes.
4 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
5 Crone?
6 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes.
7 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
8 Ruiz?
9 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.
10 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner
11 Caballero?
12 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes.
13 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: We are out,
14 ten-to-zero.
15 MS. KAREN WOERNER: Can I just check if
16 they can hear us?
17 Can those of you on the line hear us? I'm
18 not seeing this phone on that display.
19 (A discussion was held off the record.)
20 THE CHAIR: Okay. Are we --
21 MS. KAREN WOERNER: We can't seem to get
22 it.
23 MR. ALAN BRAUER: I think we should just
24 move on, Chair.
25 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Madam Chair?

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<p>1 THE CHAIR: Yes.</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: I move that the Public</p> <p>3 Education deny the application for Explore Charter</p> <p>4 School for the following -- the Public Education</p> <p>5 Commission -- I'm sorry -- deny the application for</p> <p>6 Explore Charter School for the following reasons:</p> <p>7 The application does not offer an</p> <p>8 educational program consistent with the requirements</p> <p>9 and purposes of the Charter Schools Act.</p> <p>10 The application is contrary to the best</p> <p>11 interests of the Charter School's projected</p> <p>12 students, local community, or local school district.</p> <p>13 And the application does not offer a clear</p> <p>14 plan for facilities.</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Second.</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by</p> <p>17 Commissioner Ruiz, a second by Commissioner Crone.</p> <p>18 Any discussion?</p> <p>19 (No response.)</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: Roll call, please.</p> <p>21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>22 Gipson?</p> <p>23 THE CHAIR: Yes.</p> <p>24 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>25 Davis?</p>	<p>1 seven-to-three.</p> <p>2 Okay. Thank you. And we do absolutely</p> <p>3 thank you for the time and effort that you've --</p> <p>4 that you've put in.</p> <p>5 So are we done?</p> <p>6 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: He's done.</p> <p>7 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: I'm done.</p> <p>8 THE CHAIR: So we're in recess until</p> <p>9 tomorrow morning at 9:00.</p> <p>10 (Proceedings in recess at 4:45 p.m.)</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>
<p>Page 203</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yes.</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>3 Voigt?</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: No.</p> <p>5 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>6 Chavez?</p> <p>7 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Yes.</p> <p>8 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>9 Raftery?</p> <p>10 COMMISSIONER RAFTERY: Yes.</p> <p>11 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>12 Armbruster votes "No."</p> <p>13 Commissioner Robbins?</p> <p>14 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: No.</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>16 Crone?</p> <p>17 COMMISSIONER CRONE: Yes.</p> <p>18 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>19 Ruiz?</p> <p>20 COMMISSIONER RUIZ: Yes.</p> <p>21 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Commissioner</p> <p>22 Caballero?</p> <p>23 COMMISSIONER CABALLERO: Yes.</p> <p>24 COMMISSIONER ARMBRUSTER: Seven to three.</p> <p>25 THE CHAIR: The motion passes,</p>	<p>Page 205</p> <p>1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION</p> <p>2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>6</p> <p>7 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE</p> <p>8 I, Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR, CCR #219, Certified</p> <p>9 Court Reporter in the State of New Mexico, do hereby</p> <p>10 certify that the foregoing pages constitute a true</p> <p>11 transcript of proceedings had before the said</p> <p>12 NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION, held in the</p> <p>13 State of New Mexico, County of Santa Fe, in the</p> <p>14 matter therein stated.</p> <p>15 In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my</p> <p>16 hand on August 30, 2019.</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p>Job No.: 2364N (CC)</p>

1 RECEIPT
2 JOB NUMBER: 2364N CC Date: 8/22/19
3 PROCEEDINGS: OPEN PUBLIC MEETING, Volume One
4 CASE CAPTION: In re: Public Meeting of the Public
5 Education Commission
6 *****
7 ATTORNEY: MS. BEVERLY FRIEDMAN - PED
8 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other _____
9 DATE DELIVERED: _____ DEL'D BY: _____
10 REC'D BY: _____ TIME: _____
11 *****
12 ATTORNEY:
13 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other _____
14 DATE DELIVERED: _____ DEL'D BY: _____
15 REC'D BY: _____ TIME: _____
16 *****
17 ATTORNEY:
18 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other _____
19 DATE DELIVERED: _____ DEL'D BY: _____
20 REC'D BY: _____ TIME: _____
21 *****
22 ATTORNEY:
23 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other _____
24 DATE DELIVERED: _____ DEL'D BY: _____
25 REC'D BY: _____ TIME: _____

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