

BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
OPEN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL HEARINGS

C. Altura Preparatory School  
D. Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School  
E. Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School

December 13, 2022

8:30 a.m.

CNM Workforce Training Center  
5600 Eagle Rock Ave., NE, Room WTC101  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

AND

Via Zoom Webinar Video Teleconference

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

Bean & Associates, Inc.

Professional Court Reporting Service

201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

JOB NO.: 6335N (CC)

2

1 APPEARANCES  
 2 COMMISSIONERS:  
 3 REBEKKA BURT, Chair  
 4 GLENNA VOIGT, Vice Chair  
 5 MELISSA ARMIJO, Secretary  
 6 STEVEN CARRILLO, Member  
 7 PATRICIA GIPSON, Member  
 8 KT MANIS, Member  
 9 DAVID ROBBINS, Member  
 10 PED STAFF:  
 11 CORINA CHAVEZ Director  
 Charter School/Options for  
 Parents and Families Division  
 12 BRIGETTE RUSSELL Deputy Director, Options for  
 Parents and Families  
 13  
 14 MISSY BROWN Technical Assistance and Support and  
 Training Administrator  
 Charter School/Options for  
 Parents and Families Division  
 15 LUCY VALENZUELA Technical Assistance and  
 Training Coordinator  
 Charter School/Options for  
 Parents and Families Division  
 16  
 17 COUNSEL TO THE PEC:  
 18 JULIA HOSFORD BARNES, ESQ.  
 Barnes Mediation and Law, PC  
 200 W. DeVargas Street, Suite 7  
 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25

4

1 THE CHAIR: All right. Good morning. It  
 2 is 8:30 a.m., and I'm going to go ahead and call  
 3 this meeting to order.  
 4 Secretary Armijo, if you could call roll?  
 5 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Good morning. Yes.  
 6 Melissa Armijo is here.  
 7 Chair Burt.  
 8 THE CHAIR: Here.  
 9 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner  
 10 Carrillo.  
 11 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Here.  
 12 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Chavez  
 13 is not here.  
 14 Commissioner Davis is not here.  
 15 Commissioner Gipson.  
 16 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Here.  
 17 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Manis.  
 18 COMMISSIONER MANIS: I'm here.  
 19 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Okay. Good.  
 20 Commissioner Robbins.  
 21 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Present.  
 22 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Taylor,  
 23 not here yet. And Commissioner Voigt is not here.  
 24 So we have two, three, four, five -- six  
 25 Commissioners present.

3

1 INDEX TO PROCEEDINGS  
 2 PAGE  
 3 CHARTER RENEWAL HEARINGS, CONTINUED  
 4 C Altura Preparatory School 5  
 5 D Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School 69  
 6 E Cottonwood Classical 158  
 Preparatory School  
 7 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE 239  
 8  
 9 ATTACHMENTS:  
 10 A. Attendance Sheet - Altura Preparatory  
 11 B. Attendance Sheet - Albuquerque Collegiate  
 12 C. Attendance Sheet - Cottonwood Classical  
 13  
 14  
 15  
 16  
 17  
 18  
 19  
 20  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25

5

1 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Secretary Armijo.  
 2 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: That is a quorum;  
 3 correct?  
 4 THE CHAIR: That is a quorum.  
 5 All right. So that will take us to Item C  
 6 on our agenda, which is Altura Preparatory School  
 7 Renewal.  
 8 C. Altura Preparatory School  
 9 First, we'll start by having you on the  
 10 panel introduce yourselves. And then we're going to  
 11 go over to the Public Education Department  
 12 Evaluation.  
 13 Yeah. So there's a button on the bottom  
 14 of your box. Yeah. You'll push that on and --  
 15 MS. LISSA HINES: Okay. It's on.  
 16 Perfect. Sorry.  
 17 Good morning. My name is Lissa Hines.  
 18 I'm one of the co-directors at Altura Preparatory  
 19 School.  
 20 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: I'm Meaghan Hindman.  
 21 I'm the other co-director at Altura Preparatory  
 22 School.  
 23 MR. DAN HILL: Madam Chair, Commissioners,  
 24 I'm Dan Hill, counsel for the school.  
 25 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

6	<p>1 All right. That will take us to Item A, 2 which is the Public Education Department Evaluation. 3 And Director Chavez. 4 COMMISSIONER CHAVEZ: Good morning. Look 5 at the room full of people. Wonderful to have you 6 all here. Yesterday we had very few people in the 7 audience. So it's good to see the school support, 8 and love the T-shirts. 9 I would like to first start by expressing 10 my gratitude to the board's -- everyone that works 11 so hard in the process: the school, the community, 12 all the Public Education Commissioners, and the PEC 13 staff, the Charter Schools Division team in 14 particular, and those who are part of the site visit 15 and those who contributed behind the scenes. That 16 was a coordinated effort of many. 17 And this year, it was complex, because we 18 started out in -- well, you started out on day one 19 of approval. They say that renewal starts at day 20 one of approval. So for this particular school, 21 renewal has been happening for the past four and a 22 half years. 23 This is the school's first renewal. The 24 CSD sent to the school Part A in August. Additional 25 information was sent September 2nd that included</p>	8
7	<p>1 some preliminary proficiency data. 2 As you all know, the State is working with 3 some new academic assessment results, and data has 4 been slow to come in, and, as a result, it's been 5 hard for us to have final information. And so 6 between the CSD and the schools, we've been dealing 7 with a lot of preliminary information, including 8 finalizing the Annual Report from last year, which 9 was sent to the school September 12th. 10 Part B was sent from the school to the CSD 11 on September 15th. And we visited the school and 12 sent preliminary analyses to the school 13 November 1st. 14 November 15th, we received the school's 15 response. 16 And December 1st, we sent out the final 17 recommendation. 18 Renewing schools, as I said before, is a 19 complex process, and circumstances particular to the 20 past four years made this renewal process even more 21 challenging. 22 For one, policies and practices have 23 evolved at the PED. So some of what you see in the 24 Performance Framework is no longer applicable, which 25 is why we are revising the Performance Framework.</p>	9
6	<p>1 And I encourage everybody in the room to 2 be involved in that process. We are seeking 3 feedback on a Draft Performance Framework. I have 4 copies right here if anybody would like to see the 5 draft academic Performance Framework. 6 Also, the global pandemic created new 7 challenges for all schools. So in my opinion, each 8 and every teacher, the head administrators, 9 everybody at the school are my heros for showing up 10 every day and really plowing through these difficult 11 times. 12 But it did create challenges for us all. 13 And, lastly, there is always a balancing 14 act between holding charter schools to the same, if 15 not more, rigorous standards as traditional schools, 16 and to honoring schools' autonomies as unique 17 entities. 18 The Charter Schools Division diligently 19 reviewed what was promised in each charter school's 20 contract. We take that contract seriously between 21 the school and the Public Education Commission. 22 The terms of that contract were at the 23 core of the renewal process. Essentially, our ask 24 is, "Did the school implement what was promised in 25 the contract, and was the implementation of those</p>	8

<p style="text-align: right;">10</p> <p>1 the recommendation, either renewal, non-renewal, or 2 renewal with conditions.</p> <p>3 A very specific indication of 4 recommendation was not provided in the preliminary 5 analyses. However, the ratings provided in Part B 6 do provide insight into the -- how the CSD 7 understood the school's performance.</p> <p>8 And, finally, during this process, it 9 became clear that many school leaders were unclear 10 as to what would be covered in the renewal or what 11 feedback and commentary would be included in the 12 preliminary analyses.</p> <p>13 To that point, CSD would like to reiterate 14 that the school is responsible for implementing with 15 fidelity the terms agreed to in the contract and to 16 complying with all state and federal regulations, 17 rules, and statutes.</p> <p>18 Untimely -- excuse me.</p> <p>19 Ultimately, the renewal process is a time 20 for making serious decision about whether to renew a 21 school's contract, but it is also a time for 22 reflection. The preliminary analyses are meant to 23 offer an opportunity for each school and the PEC to 24 reflect about what is happening in the school; 25 specifically, how the successes can be sustained,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">12</p> <p>1 For the educational program, financial 2 compliance, equity and identity, and other 3 performance indicators, it demonstrates Substantial 4 Progress.</p> <p>5 For governance responsibilities, it Meets 6 the Standards.</p> <p>7 We like that, don't we? 8 And so with that, I am done with my 9 report.</p> <p>10 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you, 11 Director Chavez.</p> <p>12 So that brings us to B, which is the 13 School's Comments. This will be no more than 14 30 minutes, and I'll let you go ahead and start.</p> <p>15 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: So we have a 16 presentation that I'm going to share my screen, and, 17 hopefully, we'll be able to figure out how to do 18 this.</p> <p>19 Let me check one more thing. Make sure 20 the audio works.</p> <p>21 There we go. Okay. All right.</p> <p>22 So good morning, Madam Chairwoman and 23 members of the Commission. Thank you so much for 24 having us here today. We're excited to share a 25 little bit more about Altura Prep with you.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">11</p> <p>1 and how the areas in need of improvement can be 2 improved.</p> <p>3 The Charter Schools Division recommends 4 that Altura Prep be renewed for a term of five years 5 with no conditions.</p> <p>6 (Applause.)</p> <p>7 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: We did not 8 observe that the school has violated any terms of 9 the New Mexico Statutes, that the educational 10 program is being implemented, and that the school 11 outperforms both district and state in reading, 12 math, and science proficiencies.</p> <p>13 (Applause.)</p> <p>14 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: The preliminary 15 analysis contained an error in regards to the 16 science proficiency. And when we received that 17 information from the school, we corrected it, so 18 that the student proficiency in science is actually 19 86 percent, not 47 percent.</p> <p>20 People make mistakes, and it's nice to 21 acknowledge.</p> <p>22 All the renewal ratings and annual ratings 23 remain the same. Despite the response and the 24 correction on the science proficiencies for student 25 outcomes, the school Meets Standards.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">13</p> <p>1 We are a K-5 charter school in 2 Albuquerque, and our first graduates are now 3 finishing their first semesters of sixth grade.</p> <p>4 We hope to just give you a snapshot of 5 what we do at Altura Prep, what it looks like on a 6 daily basis, and give you an opportunity to hear 7 through a video from some of our students and 8 families and teachers.</p> <p>9 MS. LISSA HINES: All of our students have 10 STEAM class, integrating science, technology, 11 engineering, arts, and math. And our STEAM class is 12 also used as a platform for launching Genius Hour 13 and inquiry projects for our students, which give us 14 ample opportunities for hand-on, minds-on inquiry, 15 problem solving, and critical thinking activities.</p> <p>16 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Our teacher 17 specialization model is unique to Altura Prep, which 18 is a situation which allows all of our grade-level 19 students from kindergarten through fifth grade to 20 receive specialized instruction in content areas.</p> <p>21 So each of our teachers teaches one or two 22 content areas. And this allows our students to 23 benefit from exposures to different teaching styles, 24 movement throughout the day, when they move from 25 class to class, and they benefit from being in</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">14</p> <p>1 classes where teachers have more time to prepare 2 more robust lessons, because they're focusing on 3 only one or two content areas instead of being 4 expected to teach every single required subject 5 throughout the day. 6 MS. LISSA HINES: Our students have many 7 opportunities to participate in blended learning 8 within their classes. All of our students have 9 access to a Chromebook that they can use daily. And 10 they have adaptive customized platforms that 11 consolidate the best of both traditional and digital 12 methods of teaching and learning and help our 13 students have more of a customized educational 14 experience in math and literacy. 15 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Our student-driven 16 inquiry-based learning/Genius Hour allows our 17 students in kindergarten through fifth grade to have 18 opportunities to think critically, develop problem 19 solving skills, develop project management skills, 20 and it motivates students to extend their curiosity 21 beyond the lesson of the topic of the day, because 22 they're able to spend their learning in a way that 23 they choose. 24 MS. LISSA HINES: So our REACH values -- 25 REACH stands for respect, empathy, agency,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>1 and learning in person, we have not had many 2 opportunities to welcome visitors to campus since 3 many of you were elected. So we'd love to have you 4 come by this spring, and we want to share a glimpse 5 of life at Altura Prep through a brief video. 6 (Video played.) 7 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: So our students 8 hopefully are able to say they love what they do at 9 school. Our students come from 17 different ZIP 10 Codes in the Albuquerque metroplex and beyond. 11 We have students coming from Belen, 12 Placitas, Los Lunas, Rio Rancho, and Tijeras. We 13 are committed to student diversity, and our diverse 14 enrollment and our plans for increasing our diverse 15 enrollment speak to that charge. 16 MS. LISSA HINES: We believe that 17 academics is our number one priority at Altura Prep. 18 For our students to experience success in the 19 workforce of the future, our students' academic 20 learning skills have to be top-notch. 21 Our academic results from the '21-'22 22 school year are a testament to the incredible 23 teamwork and synergy of our teachers, students, and 24 their parents. 25 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: We're relentlessly</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">15</p> <p>1 curiosity, and hard work. 2 We believe that values-based educational 3 approaches create a strong learning environment that 4 enhance academic achievement and develops both 5 social and relationship skills. 6 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: And we build on our 7 REACH/social-emotional learning/values education 8 with a mindfulness based social-emotional learning 9 program. It builds on our social emotional 10 framework, and it emphasizes a daily mindfulness 11 practice as a foundation to strengthen students' 12 critical brain networks that are associated with 13 learning. 14 We believe that fostering students' 15 ability to be able to self-regulate during moments 16 of stress or adversity will have a lasting impact on 17 their lives and is something they can carry beyond 18 the classroom. 19 MS. LISSA HINES: So it's one thing for us 20 to tell you about our program. But we believe that 21 life at Altura Prep must be seen and heard from 22 those who live it each day: our families, our 23 teachers, and our students. 24 Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and our 25 strong desire to keep our students and staff healthy</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">17</p> <p>1 committed to educational excellence at Altura Prep, 2 which means that we can never settle. We must 3 continue to work harder and smarter and continue 4 working at delivering only high-quality solutions 5 and results that will impact the lives and futures 6 of our students and families. 7 We're grateful for what we have 8 accomplished, but will not be satisfied until 9 100 percent of our students perform at grade level. 10 MS. LISSA HINES: And we also want to take 11 a moment just to thank the Commission for allowing 12 us this opportunity to serve our families and our 13 students for the last four and a half years. We are 14 humbled and grateful for your support. Thank you so 15 much. 16 THE CHAIR: All right. You still have a 17 little bit more time available. And I know you have 18 a lot of people. I don't know if there's -- how 19 many people are signed up to speak. 20 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We have three people 21 signed up to speak. 22 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you. Okay. 23 MS. MELISSA BROWN: They each have ten 24 minutes. 25 MS. LISSA HINES: Sorry. We told them</p>

18	<p>1 they have one minute. Sorry.</p> <p>2 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Our first speaker is</p> <p>3 Sara Fitzgerald, and I'm promoting her to the panel.</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Chair Burt?</p> <p>5 If you all need more chairs, I believe</p> <p>6 across the hall there's a room with a lot of chairs,</p> <p>7 and they can help you at the front desk.</p> <p>8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: So, Sara, please state</p> <p>9 your name and spell your last name for the record</p> <p>10 and then go ahead and make your comment.</p> <p>11 FROM THE PUBLIC: Good morning,</p> <p>12 Commissioners. My name is Sara Fitzgerald.</p> <p>13 F-i-t-z-g-e-r-a-l-d. And I'm speaking on behalf of</p> <p>14 the Board of Directors of the Greater Albuquerque</p> <p>15 Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>16 We're in strong support of Altura Prep's</p> <p>17 renewal. The school's model declares that every</p> <p>18 student, no matter their background, can be</p> <p>19 successful in school and beyond.</p> <p>20 That's exactly what we believe, and we</p> <p>21 think we need more schools whose leaders believe</p> <p>22 this, too, because that belief has enabled</p> <p>23 Altura Prep to get amazing results for its students</p> <p>24 who are outperforming most of their peers across the</p> <p>25 state.</p>	20	<p>1 leaders promised excellent teaching. And they've</p> <p>2 certainly delivered. Teachers specializing in a</p> <p>3 subject from kindergarten on allows the school to</p> <p>4 attract great teachers and allows our kids to learn</p> <p>5 from a team of great teachers, each teaching what</p> <p>6 they know and what they like best.</p> <p>7 They promised individualized instruction,</p> <p>8 and they've delivered. Month by month, parents know</p> <p>9 exactly how our children are doing in each subject,</p> <p>10 and teachers and leaders work to have a plan to help</p> <p>11 every child learn and grow. Every child is seen.</p> <p>12 No child gets lost.</p> <p>13 They promised a safe campus and a</p> <p>14 supportive, engaging learning environment, and</p> <p>15 they've delivered on that, too, with enrichment like</p> <p>16 engineering and art and chess. They're challenging</p> <p>17 and fun.</p> <p>18 And they promised academic growth would be</p> <p>19 their North Star. And by any measure -- by any</p> <p>20 measure -- this school, which ranks at the top of 1</p> <p>21 percent of schools on every subject, has delivered</p> <p>22 and exceeded expectations.</p> <p>23 The leaders and teachers at Altura have</p> <p>24 delivered on their promises to us, Altura Prep's</p> <p>25 families, and they've earned, in our opinion, an</p>
19	<p>1 Almost every single one of their</p> <p>2 third graders are reading and doing math on or above</p> <p>3 grade level.</p> <p>4 We want to congratulate Altura Prep's</p> <p>5 entire team for their hard work all year round, and</p> <p>6 we urge the Commission to give this outstanding team</p> <p>7 the green light to do this work for another five</p> <p>8 years.</p> <p>9 Thank you.</p> <p>10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: All right. I'll move</p> <p>11 you back to a panelist -- I mean, an attendee.</p> <p>12 Our next speaker is in person. And if you</p> <p>13 can please come up to the table and then, again,</p> <p>14 state your name, spell it, and then press the mic</p> <p>15 button, state your name, and spell it, and then make</p> <p>16 your comment.</p> <p>17 We have Scott Darnell.</p> <p>18 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning, Madam Chair</p> <p>19 and Commissioners. My name is Scott Darnell,</p> <p>20 D-a-r-n-e-l-l.</p> <p>21 My wife and I have two sons who attend</p> <p>22 Altura Prep, one in the fourth grade and one in the</p> <p>23 second. And we were one of the families who chose</p> <p>24 to attend Altura in its very first year.</p> <p>25 And at the beginning, Altura's school</p>	21	<p>1 eager renewal of their charter, and we hope that you</p> <p>2 all are as proud of them as we are.</p> <p>3 Thank you.</p> <p>4 MS. MELISSA BROWN: And next we have</p> <p>5 Felicia Boatman.</p> <p>6 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is</p> <p>7 Felicia Boatman, B-o-a-t-m-a-n.</p> <p>8 Good morning, everybody. I'm here to talk</p> <p>9 in favor of Altura Prep.</p> <p>10 I'm really excited. I've been in</p> <p>11 education for over 20 years, and I'm really excited</p> <p>12 what's happening at Altura Prep.</p> <p>13 My son is a third grader. His name is Max</p> <p>14 Boatman.</p> <p>15 And I asked him yesterday -- I sat him</p> <p>16 down, and I said, "All right, what -- tell me</p> <p>17 everything."</p> <p>18 And he's, like, "My favorite part, Mom --</p> <p>19 I probably shouldn't say this first -- but it's</p> <p>20 recess."</p> <p>21 And I said, "Of course, it is. Of</p> <p>22 course."</p> <p>23 He goes, "We get to do so many things</p> <p>24 there. We have scooters, we have football, we have</p> <p>25 all kinds of things."</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p>1 Have you ever been there? They have a 2 parking lot. And what they make out of that parking 3 lot for these kids -- they don't even know what they 4 don't have. They feel so lucky for what they have. 5 But it's because of the environment. It's 6 because of the teachers. It's because of these 7 people right here in front of us that make them 8 believe what's in front of them is everything they 9 need. 10 And so, for me, I was, like, "Oh, my gosh. 11 All I see is a parking lot. Like, this is really 12 cool." 13 And then his second thing was electives. 14 He loves his electives. 15 This Thanksgiving, we saw our family, and 16 he played chess with them. He's eight years old. 17 And the most impressive part is he taught all these 18 people to play chess as an eight year old, like, not 19 being intimidated, just showing them so patiently 20 how to do it, what each piece does and why he could 21 or couldn't do that move, and then he continually 22 beat them all, which was amazing. 23 And I'm like, "Ooh, proud mom." 24 It was great just to see him do it, and, 25 again, not be intimidated by these older, like,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p> <p>1 education, my favorite part -- I'm a math teacher. 2 My favorite part is the split of the ELA and the 3 math. I see in the high school levels that students 4 really struggle a lot in math. And this separates 5 it. 6 And, for me, I see people who love to 7 teach math teaching math, and people who love to 8 teach English teaching English at a lower level. 9 And so it continues to grow, so they get the 10 specialty of it. So, for me, I really love that. 11 And let's see what else. 12 And so important to me, the efficiency 13 they have, their communication with parents, 14 students. These group -- this group right here, the 15 way they communicate with us, it's very concise; 16 it's to the point. 17 And my favorite part is the pickup line. 18 I'm not going to lie. The pickup line. 19 They get out at 3:00. If you're there at 20 3:05, you're late. Your kid is, like, the last kid 21 in line. I have never experienced that in my life. 22 And so, for me, like, that -- it's the little 23 things. I'm a details person. And it's the little 24 things that we don't know, but they take the time to 25 figure it out.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>1 50-year-olds just learning for the first time. 2 And he was, like, "It's okay. You can 3 learn." 4 Let me go through my list of lots of 5 things he said. 6 And then teachers. He said his -- even 7 though recess was his favorite, as he goes, he goes, 8 "Okay, Mom. Let me tell you my most favorite part. 9 My most favorite part is actually helping others. 10 When we are done with our work, our teachers let us 11 go and talk to other people and help them with 12 things that they're struggling with." 13 And for me, like, that -- that hits my 14 heart like no tomorrow, because that's just what you 15 want. In this world of today, we want our children 16 to be kind and helpful and just reach out to those 17 in need. And that's his favorite part of the day. 18 So, for me, I was like, "Oh, my goodness. 19 Good God. I should have asked you this earlier." 20 And then the last thing he said was his 21 teachers. He said they're so happy. His teachers 22 are always happy, no matter what's going on. 23 They're there for him, and he likes to see them 24 happy and all that stuff. 25 So for me as a parent and being in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p> <p>1 And so that's why -- I know I, again, have 2 been in education for over 20 years, and I know the 3 stuff that goes on behind the scenes and how hard 4 they work and how hard they come together. 5 But they make it seem to us that it's, 6 like, "Oh, this is easy. Here we go," you know. 7 So that's the -- that's -- this is what I 8 love about it. This is what my kid loves at about 9 it. 10 So thank you, and I'm in favor of the 11 renewal. So thanks. 12 THE CHAIR: All right. That'll move us to 13 Item D, which is PEC questions. 14 Commissioner Gipson, then Commissioner 15 Carrillo, Commissioner Robbins. 16 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: So thanks for that. 17 I always say, the elementary school renewal videos 18 are always game changers. As opposed to the high 19 school videos, it's, like, "Oh, you can't beat those 20 little five-year-olds with their squeaky little 21 voices." 22 I also always appreciate Albuquerque 23 schools, because I'm from the southern part of the 24 state. I don't get identifying with ZIP Codes. I 25 just don't get it. So you're always, "We serve</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">26</p> <p>1 these ZIP Codes."</p> <p>2 It's like, what? I don't even know all</p> <p>3 the ZIP Codes in Las Cruces. It doesn't -- I don't</p> <p>4 quite get it, but I appreciate it.</p> <p>5 So -- and I absolutely appreciate the</p> <p>6 statement that was made that your goal is to develop</p> <p>7 just good people.</p> <p>8 I mean, that's -- that's all we really can</p> <p>9 ask. We want the core of you to be good, and then</p> <p>10 everything either is just the plus, that we want to</p> <p>11 make good, kind people, and we'll all thrive then.</p> <p>12 So on that note, you know, I hate to keep</p> <p>13 going back to the pandemic conversation. But it's</p> <p>14 still here. And it was challenging. And I'd just</p> <p>15 appreciate if you could talk a little bit about not</p> <p>16 only the kids -- because I heard a lot -- or I read</p> <p>17 a lot with the kids -- but in terms of the family.</p> <p>18 Is there anything that you've implemented or</p> <p>19 struggled with in terms of coming back and trying to</p> <p>20 help families that were equally as impacted with the</p> <p>21 changes that happened and family dynamics during --</p> <p>22 during this time?</p> <p>23 MS. LISSA HINES: I had to make sure this</p> <p>24 is on.</p> <p>25 We did our very best to try to keep our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p> <p>1 Like, we needed to get our kids back in front of us</p> <p>2 as soon as we possibly could.</p> <p>3 And our parents were amazing. And I know</p> <p>4 it was hard on them, too. I mean, to have your kids</p> <p>5 attend in person Monday/Tuesday, and then be</p> <p>6 responsible for remote learning and at-home learning</p> <p>7 Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday was difficult.</p> <p>8 And, you know, parents that had kids home</p> <p>9 Friday, Monday, Tuesday, and then their kids were at</p> <p>10 school on Wednesdays and Thursdays, that was</p> <p>11 difficult.</p> <p>12 But, again, they just did such a great job</p> <p>13 of letting us know what their kids' needs were. And</p> <p>14 there were parents that reached out and said, "You</p> <p>15 know, I need my child to be there more often,</p> <p>16 they're struggling."</p> <p>17 And we would meet as a team and say, you</p> <p>18 know, "Can we get more kids in, especially our</p> <p>19 students that are struggling?"</p> <p>20 So parents were super communicative with</p> <p>21 us, which made, I think, all the difference in the</p> <p>22 world.</p> <p>23 And our teachers were so observant of what</p> <p>24 was happening during remote learning, too, that we</p> <p>25 were able to get kids back on track, I feel like,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">27</p> <p>1 kids in school as much as possible. So we thought</p> <p>2 to that August that we were going to be able to --</p> <p>3 to start right away with kids. And that didn't</p> <p>4 happen. So we did have to go online from August</p> <p>5 until October.</p> <p>6 In October, we started doing an A-A-B-B</p> <p>7 model. So as much as possible, we had our kids</p> <p>8 there every day.</p> <p>9 Our students that were in special</p> <p>10 education actually did not have -- didn't miss any</p> <p>11 class, because we had them there on campus from day</p> <p>12 one.</p> <p>13 so it really made, I think, a huge</p> <p>14 difference, our commitment and our teachers'</p> <p>15 commitment to have our kids in person to the extent</p> <p>16 that we could -- that was possible.</p> <p>17 I think that we noticed right away -- we</p> <p>18 always laugh. When our kindergarteners took</p> <p>19 assessments that August, these scores that were,</p> <p>20 like, 900, which -- you know, a Lexile level of 900,</p> <p>21 which is what you would typically see for a fourth</p> <p>22 or fifth grader, because parents were helping their</p> <p>23 kids with their assessments.</p> <p>24 And so we knew from the get-go that this</p> <p>25 was just -- this was not going to work, right?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p> <p>1 really fast.</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thanks.</p> <p>3 And I know the Director mentioned in her</p> <p>4 report that the school is probably not -- and you</p> <p>5 also, I think, mentioned in your application -- the</p> <p>6 school is not necessarily as diverse as you'd like</p> <p>7 it to be. I don't -- you know. And it's a</p> <p>8 challenge.</p> <p>9 I went to a national conference. And, you</p> <p>10 know, a number of the sessions were, "How do we --</p> <p>11 how do we make schools more diverse?"</p> <p>12 And "schools of choice," so you can't</p> <p>13 force people to go to a school. And we don't want</p> <p>14 to do some kind of -- you know, at least I don't --</p> <p>15 some kind of, you know, mandatory quota systems.</p> <p>16 That just doesn't -- it doesn't work. It doesn't</p> <p>17 set a good environment there.</p> <p>18 So could you just talk a little bit about</p> <p>19 that struggle and what you've -- what you've done?</p> <p>20 And I know we can only do the best that we can do.</p> <p>21 And we can't, you know, knock on doors and force</p> <p>22 people to put in a lottery application.</p> <p>23 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Yeah. No, that's</p> <p>24 obviously a very good question and something that's</p> <p>25 top of mind in our conversations regularly.</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">30</p> <p>1 We think about this in two ways:  2 First our school is very diverse in  3 several ways. We have, you know, geographical  4 diversity across Albuquerque, like we mentioned.  5 Our racial and ethnic diversity is pretty incredible  6 if you look at the demographics of Albuquerque and  7 how our school kind of narrows those demographics in  8 terms of race and ethnicity.  9 Our focus recently has been on, you know,  10 students, economically disadvantaged students,  11 English Language Learning students, and students  12 with disability. And we think about those in a  13 couple of ways.  14 I mean, primarily -- we talk a lot about  15 recruitment, because that's the input that we can  16 control for the most part. And then we talk about  17 removing barriers. And so what are we doing as a  18 school to make sure our environment is a welcoming,  19 inclusive community, that we're being equitable in  20 our practices in the classroom, in our communication  21 with families, and in our outreach process?  22 And so, you know, our transportation is  23 one of our efforts to remove that barrier of access  24 to families across Albuquerque.  25 Our bus goes from the San Pedro Public</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">32</p> <p>1 into our system and access families that way.  2 We're a National School Lunch Program  3 school. So we offer free and reduced priced meals.  4 We've participated in uniform donations and  5 discounts for family supplies.  6 Our school provides all of the supplies  7 that a student will need to attend Altura Prep.  8 Families do not have to pay for pencils or scissors.  9 And then we have families who are  10 wonderful community-oriented people, and the  11 majority of families that can do also help by  12 providing materials to the schools when they can.  13 And so we do -- I mean, we do a number of  14 things. I think we've talked about it from the  15 beginning, as this is something that's always going  16 to be a focus for us. What can we continue to do to  17 make sure that we're reaching out to families and  18 providing the excellent opportunity that we know our  19 kids are getting to more students across  20 Albuquerque, and that's always been one of our focus  21 areas.  22 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: So thanks. One more  23 thing. It looked from the numbers that I think were  24 submitted in your application that your kindergarten  25 enrollment was down? Was that correct? Or --</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">31</p> <p>1 Library, which is right around the corner from our  2 first facility, across -- stops at Tony Hillerman  3 Public Library, and then comes over to our school,  4 which is on Alameda just a little east of here. So  5 that's one piece.  6 Our enrollment timelines. You know, there  7 are several schools that have earlier enrollment  8 timelines which kind of mirror some of the private  9 schools. We've moved ours later in the spring which  10 aligns more with public school, district school  11 re-enrollment and enrollment processes, so thinking  12 about when families are typically looking for  13 schools.  14 Our language support. We have bilingual  15 staff in our office. Those staff members are well  16 trained in all of our recruitment and enrollment  17 processes. We give bilingual tours.  18 And then for the actual enrollment process  19 our lottery application can be delivered in Spanish,  20 but it also -- Miss Cynthia in our office, as  21 everybody knows, she will drop everything to help a  22 family. And that extends to families who are not  23 yet enrolled. So she'll spend half an hour on the  24 phone trying to get family information, trying to  25 put it into our lottery application, so that can get</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">33</p> <p>1 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: I -- I don't mean to  2 interrupt you.  3 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: No. That's --  4 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: So our  5 kindergarten -- so the way that our kindergarten  6 enrollment that flowed is we've always enrolled two  7 classes. And our classes are 22 apiece. So that's  8 44 kindergarten students.  9 Our first two years we had fewer than  10 44 kindergarten students in the grade level.  11 In 2020-2021 -- so that's the year we  12 closed school in March and we came back -- over the  13 summer of 2020, it was very clear to us, after our  14 experiences in the spring with remote learning, that  15 in-person was going to be the most effective and the  16 best option for our students' learning, if at all  17 possible.  18 And we communicated that belief to our  19 families. And word got out that that was our  20 priority coming into the fall of 2020. And our  21 waitlist was incredible, and especially for  22 kindergarten.  23 And so that year, we opened up a third  24 cohort for kindergarten. So we had 66 incoming  25 kindergarteners.</p>

34

1 Looking at our kind of long-range  
 2 trajectory and facility, we went back to the two  
 3 cohorts of 22 in the '21-'22 school year. And that  
 4 has been full with a waitlist ever since.  
 5 So that's kind of that -- there was a  
 6 bump-up, and then kind of a back to the equilibrium,  
 7 if that makes sense.  
 8 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Okay. Have you  
 9 ever -- is there any part of a conversation about a  
 10 pre-K?  
 11 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Yes. Yes, there is.  
 12 And we actually applied for the NM Pre-K funding  
 13 last year.  
 14 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Okay.  
 15 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: And because of some  
 16 staffing -- I mean, we need to have a teacher who is  
 17 going to do right by the kids in the program. And  
 18 that didn't come into place for us to put that  
 19 program in place. It's not off the table for  
 20 upcoming years, but it didn't end up being able to  
 21 be possible this year.  
 22 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: But you have space.  
 23 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: We can make that  
 24 work.  
 25 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Okay. Thank you.

35

1 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Yes.  
 2 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo.  
 3 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Thank you. Thanks  
 4 very much, all of you, for being here. For me, just  
 5 seeing this room and feeling the joy that all of you  
 6 have for your school speaks volumes as to what's  
 7 happening.  
 8 And I'm -- I'm -- I don't use the A-word  
 9 very much -- "Awesome" -- because it's just  
 10 overused. If everything is awesome, absolutely  
 11 nothing is.  
 12 My son would -- you know, this ham- --  
 13 he'd say, "It's so awesome."  
 14 I said, "No, it's not."  
 15 The Grand Canyon is awesome. Childbirth,  
 16 awesome. Landing a man on the moon, awesome. That  
 17 hamburger, not awesome.  
 18 Anyway, this is just -- it's fantastic.  
 19 So I'm looking at student outcomes here.  
 20 And we had some schools here yesterday. We were  
 21 applauding them for their growth and everything else  
 22 because they had maybe percentages for reading at  
 23 around 48. And it was certainly well above the  
 24 state. Or they might have had 23, well above the  
 25 state for math.

36

1 I'm like, really? Is that where the bar  
 2 is? What are you going to do to get to 52, to 56,  
 3 to 70, to whatever? Because I've lived here  
 4 32 years almost. And I've never ever, ever  
 5 understood the acceptance of mediocrity as the norm  
 6 in our public schools, and in our legislature and  
 7 everything else. And, clearly, neither do you.  
 8 So you excel in these areas. When I look  
 9 at reading as 74 up there, it's just -- because  
 10 reading -- and I know that Commissioner Robbins will  
 11 speak -- it's the cornerstone of absolutely  
 12 everything.  
 13 And, you know -- and I was -- somebody was  
 14 asking me the other day about -- I'm not trying to  
 15 wax -- about what would I do if I was, you know, not  
 16 in charge, but could take an elementary school in  
 17 Santa Fe that had maybe really poor scores. What  
 18 would I do?  
 19 I said, "Basically, all you're doing every  
 20 day is reading. That's all. We're going to make it  
 21 fun, we're going to do different things. But you're  
 22 going to be reading, because that's going to lead to  
 23 everything else."  
 24 Unfortunately, that's not happening up  
 25 there.

37

1 And -- but, anyway, I wanted to say that  
 2 first.  
 3 You mentioned uniforms. So it seemed  
 4 like -- there are uniforms. So they all look sharp.  
 5 And even though they're wearing different colors and  
 6 everything -- so everything has a collar, and  
 7 everyone looks put together. Okay.  
 8 MS. LISSA HINES: Yes.  
 9 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: And, you know,  
 10 where I went to elementary school a long, long time  
 11 ago in California, there were no uniforms. But  
 12 there were definitely codes, where you couldn't look  
 13 all schleppey. I remember when they instituted pants  
 14 day for the girls on Friday. Whoo, you could wear  
 15 pants, or jeans day for our high school on Friday.  
 16 But I think that makes a huge difference  
 17 when everyone is looking at everyone else, and  
 18 everyone else is super sharp.  
 19 And I imagine it's the same thing for  
 20 teachers. There's kind of a -- you know what? You  
 21 may not have to wear a blazer or a tie or whatever.  
 22 But you can't look like you're working at Trader  
 23 Joe's -- I love Trader Joe's -- you can't look like  
 24 you're working at wherever, all right? I'm very  
 25 impressed by that.

<p style="text-align: right;">38</p> <p>1           What is the waitlist kind of now 2 generally? 3           MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: It varies by grade 4 level. We have probably between five and 5 fifteen students per grade level on the waitlist for 6 this current school year. 7           COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Okay. And as I 8 understand it from learning from -- from CSD -- so 9 you started out further on the west side and then 10 moved over there? 11          MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Yes. We started out 12 in Southeast Albuquerque and then had to move. 13          (Commissioner Voigt enters hearing.) 14          COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: And you were able 15 to maintain that diversity, it sounds like. 16          And then I love the idea of students 17 moving instead of teachers having to be responsible 18 for teaching every subject. 19          I don't know why that hasn't kind of 20 clicked with public schools nationally, because 21 you -- with reading, alone, it's such a special 22 skill to teach that it's disappointing it hasn't 23 caught on. 24          I love the Genius Hour, the commitment to 25 children -- the children's inquiry, the team</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">40</p> <p>1           three grades and building our culture. 2           And we were very intentional. Everything 3 that we do is super intentional. 4           So you spoke to everyone being seen. 5 Every child, when they get out of the car in the 6 morning -- I think the parents can attest to this. 7 We know every child's name. 8           We ask them how their evening was. We 9 chat with them on their -- you know, as we get them 10 out of the car. It's in -- that's all been part of 11 our plan. Like, that's important. That is, like, 12 setting them up for success from the minute that 13 they get out of the car. 14          Then they are greeted again by their 15 teachers as soon as they go put up their backpacks 16 and their -- and their coats and greeted again by 17 name when they go to the cafeteria. 18          You could shadow a child, and people know 19 who they are. 20          And so I think when you have that kind of 21 personal relationship with your kids, like, you can 22 go really far, because you're another set of 23 parents. You're another, like, adult in their life 24 that cares about what they do. And they know that 25 there are people that are watching them and that are</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">39</p> <p>1           teaching approach. 2           I just had some notes here. 3           Scott, when you said every child is seen, 4 you know, I -- social-emotional learning now. You 5 know, there's so much jargon in education. And SEL 6 has been around for a while. 7           But it's so obvious some of these things, 8 if you just let someone know you care about them. 9 Every morning when they walk in the door -- even the 10 high school, whatever it is -- "You're looking down 11 today. What can I do for you?" 12          It's just -- and you're doing it. And it 13 just seems -- it's just -- for you, it's almost this 14 natural thing as well. It's not something you have 15 to, like, strive for. 16          So I would have a question for you. 17          If you were -- if -- had the opportunity 18 to take an Albuquerque district school, elementary, 19 and try to help them become more like Altura, what 20 would you do? What would you suggest? What holds 21 them back? Besides the union. What holds them 22 back? 23          MS. LISSA HINES: It's a good question. 24 I'm -- you know, I think we were given the luxury of 25 starting, you know, with just three -- you know,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">41</p> <p>1           going to hold them accountable for their actions. 2           And we do it in a loving way. 3           And so, you know, when we started this 4 off, my goal was to create -- I always say I want to 5 have a school where I would send my own children. 6 This was where I wanted to send my daughter, but we 7 ended up doing K-3 and didn't get to do that. 8           But that's -- you know, every staff member 9 at our school that has a school-age child has their 10 child at Altura Prep. And I think that says a lot 11 about our school. 12          COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: No. Exactly. 13          THE CHAIR: Sorry, Commissioner Carrillo. 14 If I could interrupt you a little bit, I wanted to 15 state for the record that Commissioner Voigt is here 16 and present. Sorry. 17          COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Have there ever 18 been discussions about having another Altura in 19 another -- because it's a sprawling community -- in 20 another part of the community? We have other 21 charters that have -- 22          MS. LISSA HINES: Yes. But it's a 23 bandwidth thing. It's -- I mean, it's -- you know, 24 I don't know if our families would appreciate it. 25 It takes up a lot of our time.</p>

42	<p>1 That's my husband back there nodding.</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: The last thing --</p> <p>3 the only last thing I would say -- because I know</p> <p>4 others have questions -- I have more praise and</p> <p>5 observations than anything else. Clearly, what</p> <p>6 you're doing, you're doing well.</p> <p>7 Your commitment to in-person learning is</p> <p>8 astonishing and admirable and clearly has affected</p> <p>9 your community and your kids in such a positive way.</p> <p>10 And we have some challenges with schools that don't</p> <p>11 have that commitment, and we're seeing the results</p> <p>12 in what's happened with their kids.</p> <p>13 And I really applaud you for that. It</p> <p>14 just makes all the difference -- it's every kid</p> <p>15 being seen, not on a monitor, but in a classroom,</p> <p>16 and when they're greeted. And that's huge for me,</p> <p>17 and I'm sure it's going to come up really big later</p> <p>18 in the week.</p> <p>19 So thank you very much for all that you</p> <p>20 do. You are why -- I'm new to charter schools being</p> <p>21 on this Commission. You are why there are charters,</p> <p>22 and we just hope, for other people, especially for</p> <p>23 me, because I'm committed to the district in</p> <p>24 Santa Fe and everything else, I just wish that we</p> <p>25 would have the will to reach out and learn more and</p>	44	<p>1 that you asked this question.</p> <p>2 Our main challenges stemmed from our</p> <p>3 first -- our school's first year of operation.</p> <p>4 We were a very small school. We had under</p> <p>5 60 students, which is not, as anybody would imagine,</p> <p>6 financially sustainable. A robust growth plan was</p> <p>7 part of the plan from the beginning, and that first</p> <p>8 year was challenging, especially because the school</p> <p>9 relied for a significant portion of our funding on</p> <p>10 Charter School Program Grant money. And that was a</p> <p>11 new grant fund for the State of New Mexico that</p> <p>12 year. And so the processes behind requests for</p> <p>13 reimbursement and grant letters were challenging to</p> <p>14 navigate.</p> <p>15 Our business manager at the time was new</p> <p>16 to New Mexico, that firm, and so there were some</p> <p>17 very, very steep learning curves there.</p> <p>18 And that year FY19, those issues carried</p> <p>19 into FY20. And so we had a few audit findings in</p> <p>20 the FY20 related to some of the challenges with cash</p> <p>21 flow and carryover from that FY19.</p> <p>22 Since FY19, the school has had two or</p> <p>23 fewer audit findings every year. And we are excited</p> <p>24 to have the new results public when they are. But I</p> <p>25 think those -- that was a very significant challenge</p>
43	<p>1 ask more and pilot more in terms of what works and</p> <p>2 things like you're doing. So thank you very much</p> <p>3 for your work.</p> <p>4 MS. LISSA HINES: Thank you.</p> <p>5 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Thank you.</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Robbins?</p> <p>7 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Thank you.</p> <p>8 Commissioner Carrillo took a lot of the praise that</p> <p>9 I wanted to give to the school. So I'll add that</p> <p>10 also, at the end, because I have one question.</p> <p>11 And many of the Commissioners and people</p> <p>12 who know me -- in terms of your performance and the</p> <p>13 ratings from CSD, one of the areas that the school</p> <p>14 has struggled with over the years has been the</p> <p>15 financial area.</p> <p>16 Again, that's an important area to me.</p> <p>17 Although that's not the goal of the school, it is an</p> <p>18 important area, since we're dealing with public</p> <p>19 funds.</p> <p>20 What are you doing, and what is the</p> <p>21 governance council doing in order to support the</p> <p>22 school to ensure adherence to financial standards,</p> <p>23 auditing, things like that?</p> <p>24 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: No, that is an</p> <p>25 excellent question and certainly valid. We're glad</p>	45	<p>1 for the school in that first year.</p> <p>2 The second major challenge that we had</p> <p>3 financially was also related to enrollment and</p> <p>4 student numbers.</p> <p>5 In FY21, we doubled in size. And so we</p> <p>6 went from 90 students to 180 students. And that was</p> <p>7 the year that we talked about with that bump in</p> <p>8 kindergarten enrollment, that 2020-2021 school year.</p> <p>9 And the way that the funding works, our SEG, or</p> <p>10 State Equalization Guarantee operational funding</p> <p>11 for -- for example, for this current year is based</p> <p>12 on enrollment from last year, plus a projected</p> <p>13 growth amount that we project in October of the</p> <p>14 prior year.</p> <p>15 So all of that comes together. And in the</p> <p>16 2020-2021 school year, we doubled in size, doubled</p> <p>17 our staff, and were operating on a very, very small</p> <p>18 operational budget.</p> <p>19 And we, again, were working with grant</p> <p>20 funding, working with requests for reimbursement</p> <p>21 for -- to shore up the cash flow. But it was a</p> <p>22 difficult year -- that was a difficult year in terms</p> <p>23 of cash flow because of that growth.</p> <p>24 And so that was one of the more recent</p> <p>25 audit findings, where we had a late fee for a late</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">46</p> <p>1 payment, because we were making our payroll and 2 making our rent payments and making our, you know, 3 insurance payments and retirement payments. And, 4 you know, vendor payments were slightly delayed 5 until that SEG advance that we were able to request 6 ended up coming through. 7 So those -- those were kind of the big -- 8 what I would say were the biggest challenges that 9 we've had in terms of financials. 10 Those -- those two years, I would say, you 11 know, have ripple effects. But I think right now, 12 our enrollment is -- you know, we're increasing, but 13 it's steady. We're able to project a little bit 14 more consistently. 15 So our SEG is a little bit more 16 consistent. We're able to project out a little bit 17 better. And we've, since that first year going into 18 our second year of operations, switched business 19 management firms. So our business firms have a 20 long-standing track record in New Mexico. They're 21 able to help us navigate the requests for 22 reimbursement more fluidly. And so that has not 23 been an issue on our end. 24 I will say some of the procedures that 25 we're trying to navigate right now at the state --</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">48</p> <p>1 that throughout all of our schools and actually 2 require that?" 3 The question is has anyone from APS, in 4 terms of the administration, ever contacted Altura 5 to say, "What are you doing? Would you come and 6 talk with us to show us how we could improve the 7 results in our elementary schools?" 8 Because that's the foundation. First 9 through third grade reading, if we can get that 10 started, we're going to see results throughout. 11 Has anyone ever contacted you from APS or 12 any other district? 13 MS. LISSA HINES: We've only had one APS 14 school come out to see us. And that was when they 15 couldn't believe that we were in-person, and they 16 were having to go back in-person doing COVID and 17 wanted to see all the systems that we had put into 18 place. And they came out to see -- like, they were 19 just in awe at how we were able to function as long 20 as we had been with kids in the building. 21 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: And, you know, 22 that's -- it's nice. But, you know, that's more 23 of -- of the administrative-type side rather than 24 the education. You know, what are you doing 25 education- -- because, you know, that's one of the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">47</p> <p>1 for example, we haven't received a Request for 2 Reimbursement Fund since June or July. And that's a 3 challenge for a school that's growing and a 4 challenge for a school that's still relatively small 5 compared to some of the others. 6 We're still relatively new compared to 7 some of the others, with a cash balance that exists 8 but isn't as robust as, you know, a district or a 9 larger, more, established charter school. 10 So those are some of the bigger challenges 11 that we're still navigating financially. 12 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: I appreciate that. 13 I appreciate that the size of the school starting 14 off and then growing rapidly can cause some issues. 15 And, again, I don't want to harp on that, because, 16 obviously, the educational results of the school 17 have been outstanding. 18 Without duplicating what everyone else has 19 asked, but getting to what Commissioner Carrillo was 20 kind of getting at, the purpose of charters is to 21 try different educational schemes, different 22 pedagogy to use. 23 What you're doing, taking excellent 24 teachers and letting them focus on that subject 25 area, is something that I've said, "Why don't we do</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">49</p> <p>1 things where I believe the Legislature needs to 2 focus, and PED needs to work with districts to say, 3 "Guys, we have some excellent charter schools. 4 Let's take some of those things and push them down 5 into the district schools and start setting up some 6 things requiring them to do some of the same 7 things." 8 Because you have 180 or so students. 9 That's a fraction of the number of students in 10 public education in Albuquerque. And, you know, if 11 we have a half-dozen charter schools that are having 12 the results of Altura, that's still just a fraction 13 of the number of students that we would like to 14 reach. And, you know, that's sad that a school like 15 Altura doesn't necessarily get the public 16 recognition that you deserve. 17 And so I want to second what Commissioner 18 Carrillo and Commissioner Gipson have said. I 19 applaud you. I am so in admiration. I have so much 20 admiration for the school, for the programming that 21 you're doing and the way it works. 22 And you can see it in the students. You 23 can see it in their faces and things like that. 24 This is what education for our children should be. 25 So you will have my unanimous support,</p>

50	<p>1 even though I'm leaving the Commission the end of 2 this month. You know, I wish you the best. And if 3 ever I could ever help you in the future, please do 4 not hesitate to contact me, because I think the 5 leaders in our state need to look at schools like 6 Altura to say, "This is how we can improve education 7 in New Mexico." 8 You know, we're about 15th, 17th in terms 9 of funding to education, but we're 51st in results. 10 Altura and programs like yours, results like yours, 11 could move this state, and not in ten years, but it 12 could do it in three to four years. 13 Thank you. 14 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Armijo. 15 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank you. 16 Actually, Commissioner Gipson already touched on 17 some of the questions that I had. 18 And I also want to applaud you all. You 19 guys are doing an excellent job, and you can see it 20 in the faces of the students. That video was 21 really, really impactful. 22 And one of the things that I noticed -- I 23 wrote down the mindfulness portion, where they're 24 sitting there taking a deep breath. We should all 25 do that more as adults; right?</p>	52	<p>1 other community members or anybody else to serve on 2 that council so you get other perspectives from your 3 community? 4 MS. LISSA HINES: It's definitely 5 something that we'll probably expand upon. We 6 just -- you know, it is -- it's been -- with renewal 7 and everything this year it's been -- you know, 8 there's a lot. There's been a lot. 9 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: The other question 10 that I had was just about social-emotional just in 11 general. I was reading a little bit about some of 12 your tactics and just seeing it in the video. But 13 can you expand just a little bit more, just what 14 you're providing to the kids, if they have needs 15 of -- you know, if there's bullying issues, if there 16 are any sort of issues that they're having around 17 anything? 18 MS. LISSA HINES: So I think 19 social-emotional learning is just a huge part of our 20 school. We do a Value of the Month. Like, for 21 example, this past month it's been Good Judgment. 22 And we recognize students weekly at our -- we have a 23 Friday morning circle. 24 And so on Fridays, we -- we have a K-2 25 ceremony, and then, like, a 3-5 ceremony. And the</p>
51	<p>1 But I did want to touch on -- I was 2 reading about the equity council in your school. I 3 wanted to see where you guys are on that. It seems 4 like you're still trying to get that started a 5 little bit more. 6 MS. LISSA HINES: We started a little bit 7 later than we initially wanted to this year. I 8 think it's just -- again, there are a lot of asks at 9 the beginning of the school year from NMPED. And we 10 do that as a team. 11 So it was -- you know, there are certain 12 things that have to get done, like making sure that 13 all of our kids have been dyslexia-screened, that 14 we've given them the WIDA. There's just a lot at 15 the beginning of the school year. 16 So we had our first meeting in October, 17 and we've had one in November, and we just had one 18 last week. So we're having them on a monthly basis, 19 but late to get started. 20 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: The council had met 21 in the prior school year. It was just the first 22 meeting date of that year was in October. 23 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: And do you have, 24 like -- there's three staff and three parents that 25 are on the council. Is there any thought of asking</p>	53	<p>1 students come in, and they're recognized for -- by 2 their teachers for different things that they've 3 accomplished. And they get little tags -- little 4 "brag" tags that they can wear. 5 And it's not like -- even though we have a 6 focus, for example, of good judgment, there are 7 other things they can get it for. Bringing up 8 grades, we call it our BUG award. 9 And the kids are enthusiastic in their 10 applause for all of their friends. We recognize 11 birthdays. We recognize just their commitment to 12 excellence in all of their subject areas. 13 As far as, like, any issues that, like, 14 happen between kids, there are always going to be 15 issues that happen with kids. And we do sit down 16 and talk to them about it. And we often will do 17 like a mini restorative justice circle, and we'll 18 have them, like, face each other, like, knee to 19 knee, and they talk about their feelings. And we 20 give them that time. 21 We actually have them write letters of 22 apology. It really depends on what the situation 23 is. 24 And our discipline issues are -- we are -- 25 we've been blessed. They're very few and far</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">54</p> <p>1 between. But I think it's also because of all the 2 work that we've done since the time that they've 3 been in kindergarten to kind of foster these skills 4 that -- you know, these values that we think are 5 super important. 6 And the minute that something comes up 7 that -- that we weren't expecting, you know, with -- 8 let's say, like, for example, we -- in first grade, 9 two weeks ago, we had an issue with -- with personal 10 bubbles and minding our personal bubble spaces. 11 So we read a book, "Don't Hug Doug, He 12 Doesn't Like It." 13 So I'll go in there, and I'll, you know, 14 have a class meeting with the kids, and we'll have a 15 response to it. And the kids will -- you know, will 16 make it a literacy-based project as well and get the 17 kids just talking about their feelings. 18 And I think that's -- that's the most 19 important thing, that kids are able to get things 20 off their chest and feel heard and seen. And when 21 you have kids that are heard and seen, a lot of the 22 other stuff diminishes. 23 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Absolutely. Yeah. 24 I'm the touchy-feely one on the council. I 25 appreciate that. I just like to hear more of what</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">56</p> <p>1 future of this school. 2 How are you going to serve up to your cap? 3 Like, what are challenges that you have in the next 4 five years to get more kids to come to you? 5 I know, like, especially after this first 6 contract term, going into your next five, word of 7 mouth is just going to keep going; right? 8 I know you're doing recruitment efforts. 9 I appreciate that. First, I want to tell you thank 10 you for your responses to all the questions and 11 comments that we had. Very, very detailed. Great 12 responses to those. So I'm not going to belabor any 13 of that stuff, because you already took the time and 14 effort to answer completely all those things. 15 I just want to know, how are we going to 16 get more kids to your school? How are we going to 17 keep more kids, and you keep those 80 percent 18 proficiency rates, get as high as you want, great, 19 love that. But, like, if -- if you have 188 kids 20 right now and 80 percent, how are we going to get 21 400 kids and 80 percent? 22 That's what I see; right? I want more 23 kids in your school, because you're serving them, 24 and the results are coming for them. So I want them 25 in your school.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">55</p> <p>1 you all are doing to -- and you can see it. I'm 2 going to echo what was said before. We can see that 3 you guys are doing great work, and we thank you for 4 that. 5 MS. LISSA HINES: Thank you. 6 THE CHAIR: So I'll say that it's -- the 7 only -- the only thing that I was going to bring up 8 was financial stuff, because it's the only thing 9 that I could see that was maybe more of a struggle 10 than anything else, you being a new school. 11 I saw it was more of a struggle when you 12 first started than now. Now, it seems like every 13 time you see something, you fix it. 14 This is a problem. That was a problem; 15 right? Let's fix it. 16 And you do it. I have no concerns about a 17 future with this school. My only question for you 18 is how are you going to serve more kids? Genuinely, 19 that's all I'm -- the results -- for me -- I mean, 20 the Commission hears this all the time from me. 21 I just want to see the outcomes. The SEL 22 work you do, the family engagement work you do, all 23 that is supposed to lead to outcomes for your kids. 24 And that's what's happening. So that's why I -- 25 like I said, I have -- I am so excited about the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">57</p> <p>1 So what challenges -- what's your plan for 2 getting to your cap? What challenges are going to 3 prevent you from getting there in the way that you 4 want to? What do the next five years -- that's what 5 I'm more focused on now. What do your next five 6 years look like? 7 MS. LISSA HINES: We'd love for Jeff Bezos 8 to throw some money our way, honestly, if anybody 9 knows him, and would like an Altura Prep at the Jeff 10 Bezos Campus. 11 We're really restricted by our building 12 size and -- I mean, kind of where we are right now. 13 But, I mean -- 14 THE CHAIR: What is your building capacity 15 right now? 16 MS. LISSA HINES: I don't know what -- 17 it's 400-something for the building, yeah. 18 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: Functionally, it'll 19 be able to fit around 300 kids. 20 THE CHAIR: But that's not -- is it your 21 idea for it to continue being a temporary location? 22 Are you -- what are you-all thinking? 23 MS. LISSA HINES: We haven't gotten that 24 far. 25 MS. MEAGHAN HINDMAN: I think this -- you</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">58</p> <p>1 all know that charter school facilities is an 2 incredible pain point for schools. And that has 3 been true for us since before we opened. 4 And I think it definitely -- we agree with 5 you. We think we're -- our teachers are doing a 6 wonderful job. We think our staff is phenomenal. 7 Our families are obviously very supportive. And we 8 want more kids to be able to have the type of 9 program that we're offering. 10 But it's the -- there's -- honestly, it's 11 a building issue, definitely not one that we've 12 given up on, but one that is going to have to be a 13 next-five-years project. 14 THE CHAIR: Now that you're at this point, 15 you can start thinking that way? 16 Actually -- so I guess the other -- one of 17 the things that I've heard from several great school 18 leaders is they do keep really high -- like, the 19 hiring of specific teachers for their specific 20 school is, like, priority, like, a huge priority. 21 And I can see -- I saw that, not only just from 22 reading through your things and hearing, but also 23 when the teachers were talking on the video, I can 24 tell they're -- like, I love -- I don't know if 25 teachers here that talked about, "I'm so glad they</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">60</p> <p>1 it's going to turn out. But you make sure that 2 they're, you know, given lots of opportunities for 3 professional development and to grow. 4 And our -- you know, one thing that's 5 really important for us is that we want to make sure 6 that we have a super cohesive team. We always say 7 teachers that play together stay together. And they 8 work well together, and -- and we watch that from, 9 you know, day one. 10 It's -- and we -- we provide a lot of 11 opportunities for them to -- to bond and become, 12 like, a really cohesive group. 13 And I can say that -- I mean, that's our 14 staff right now, like, you know, all for one and one 15 for all. And so when we have -- which makes all the 16 difference in the world when you have, you know, 17 students that are struggling or you have a pain 18 point area in your data. It's all hands on deck, 19 and you have to, like, problem-solve together. 20 And if you don't have a cohesive team, 21 it's -- it's not going to work. So that's -- it's 22 super important for us. And thank you for noticing 23 that, because that -- like, we have amazing 24 teachers. 25 THE CHAIR: Well -- and I -- my hope is</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">59</p> <p>1 asked me that. I'm honored to be asked back next 2 year." 3 That's a great environment for your 4 teachers to be, like -- like, "They hold such high 5 expectations. So if they're telling me they want me 6 back, they're telling me I'm a good teacher. Like, 7 I know, like, that gives me the fulfillment to me, 8 like, I know the bar is high, they're not letting 9 people slack." 10 But I think it takes a lot of courage when 11 you're hiring to hire the right people, not take 12 whoever walks through the door. 13 So how has your recruitment of teachers 14 who are interested in this model, but are the right 15 fit for your school, how is that? Because we all 16 know it's difficult to find teachers. When you're 17 looking for specialties in elementary, we always 18 have -- I know -- middle school/high school, science 19 and math, special education, like, those are 20 difficult subjects to recruit for. 21 So how does the recruitment and retention 22 of your teachers play into how you-all manage the 23 school as well? 24 MS. LISSA HINES: I mean, I think -- you 25 often hire. And sometimes you don't know, like, how</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">61</p> <p>1 also -- I know the first four years, word of mouth 2 is -- it's just harder. Like, you're just getting 3 started. The community is, "I don't know, I've 4 never even heard of this school." 5 And teachers are the same way. Like, this 6 is a brand new school. "I don't know if I'm going 7 to get myself into it." 8 My hope also is, in addition to your 9 families, you're getting more kids, more kids, the 10 teacher community does the same thing with word of 11 mouth; right? All the teachers here have teacher 12 friends that are still in schools that are teaching 13 fifth grade all day and having to teach all the 14 subjects, even though they really just want to teach 15 history and language arts. 16 Like, "That's what I like to do. I have 17 to teach math because they make me, but I hate doing 18 math." 19 That has an effect on kids, too. I mean, 20 it does. Like, if you're a teacher -- like, I was a 21 language arts teacher. "I don't want to teach math. 22 You told me to teach" -- also, I also taught middle 23 school purposely so I wouldn't have to teach math; 24 right? It's no different for elementary teachers, 25 either. We all like certain subjects as well.</p>



62

1 So, hopefully, word of mouth spreads for  
 2 your teachers, too, and you get teachers who are,  
 3 "Ooh, I want to do that for elementary school."  
 4 I can just imagine how confident your  
 5 students feel going from Altura and going to a  
 6 middle school, because they are going to have done  
 7 that kind of system already. It's not new.  
 8 Like, I remember when I was in middle  
 9 school, I knew the sixth graders. Not only were  
 10 they all shorter than the rest of them, they were so  
 11 scared. They've had the one teacher. Now they have  
 12 to wander the halls and move around. It's scary, so  
 13 scary.  
 14 And I can just imagine your kids are,  
 15 like, "Wait. You guys didn't do that? This is new  
 16 for you? Like, that's weird..." -- if they've been  
 17 in Altura their whole elementary career, it's going  
 18 to be strange to meet other kids who didn't do that.  
 19 I think it's a great idea and model. And  
 20 what I like about now having your first contract  
 21 done is you've -- it's a proven model now. I think  
 22 you get to really move forward with confidence and  
 23 say, "We thought this would be good."  
 24 But you have data to support you, so,  
 25 hopefully, now that you're moving into your next

63

1 contract, this is a great time to reach out to Jeff  
 2 Bezos and show your data. I'd be, like, "Hey, not  
 3 only do we have more time now for sure, but look at  
 4 what we did in the first four years."  
 5 I mean, it's incredible. It's honestly  
 6 incredible. I'm so happy. This is an easy one for  
 7 me. Like, this is very simple, clear-cut and dry  
 8 for me. So -- Commissioner Carrillo.  
 9 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: You mentioned  
 10 math. I have a few notes.  
 11 Your math is off the charts relative to  
 12 other schools, whether it's district, state. What  
 13 are you doing that's so different that -- literally,  
 14 it's 74, and most schools are, like, 20 on a good  
 15 day.  
 16 What are you doing to get these kids  
 17 excited about being great at math?  
 18 MS. LISSA HINES: We have amazing  
 19 teachers. We have parent support.  
 20 But I think -- and also, like, trying to  
 21 find the right curriculum and programming is huge.  
 22 And it has to be fun. It has to be hands-on. It  
 23 has to be engaging, and so that when you walk into  
 24 any of our math classes, you are hearing math talk  
 25 all the time.

64

1 And that's what's happening.  
 2 We also have what -- we've had looping  
 3 with our K-1 and then our 2-3, and then our 4-5,  
 4 which makes a big difference, too. Because if  
 5 you're already walking in as a fifth grader on day  
 6 one, and you have Mr. Montañó, and you've already  
 7 had him for a year, he knows where your skills are,  
 8 and he's going to take you where you need to be.  
 9 Same with Ms. Ellington and with Ms. Roth,  
 10 and now with Mr. Nuñez.  
 11 So it makes a big difference when you know  
 12 your kids and their skill levels, and you can take  
 13 off from -- from the first day of school.  
 14 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: And that's part of  
 15 having the team approach and the -- wow. You know,  
 16 what's interesting is there's a subject that has not  
 17 come up this morning that usually always comes up,  
 18 and especially with newer schools.  
 19 And that's your board, because we often  
 20 find that there are a lot of missteps for schools in  
 21 the beginning with their boards turning over a lot,  
 22 not completing their -- and I haven't seen that  
 23 here -- not completing their trainings.  
 24 Is there anybody here from the board?  
 25 Terrific. That's why I recognize you. Okay.

65

1 So what are you doing -- and maybe the  
 2 board would like to speak to this -- to maintain the  
 3 strong board and also build for -- the word I'm  
 4 trying to use -- somebody coming in to replace you.  
 5 The word just -- thank you. Sustainability on the  
 6 board.  
 7 THE CHAIR: If you -- can you move to that  
 8 microphone? And if you could introduce yourself,  
 9 first and last name for the record as well? Thanks.  
 10 FROM THE FLOOR: Did I get it on? I'm  
 11 Christine Sargent. I'm the board chair. Last name  
 12 is S-a-r-g-e-n-t.  
 13 So I've been on the board since the  
 14 founding, along with Pam, who's been on the board  
 15 since the founding. We have had turnover since.  
 16 So we have term limits. But I think one  
 17 of the things that we did really well at the  
 18 beginning is come up with our board packet, our  
 19 bylaws, how we wanted to operate as a board. Lissa  
 20 and Meaghan did a great job kind of getting  
 21 everybody bought into the mission of this school.  
 22 So I think we just have had a lot of sort  
 23 of consistency of board, board meetings. We talk  
 24 very openly about all of the issues. So that isn't  
 25 something that we brush under the table. We ask a

66	<p>1 lot of questions.</p> <p>2 Lissa and Meaghan are very forthcoming.</p> <p>3 If there's something not going well, we talk about</p> <p>4 it, we problem-solve for it. So I think that's</p> <p>5 definitely -- that's been a real strength.</p> <p>6 We've definitely talked about what would</p> <p>7 happen if either Lissa or Meaghan decided to leave</p> <p>8 the school. We haven't figured out, like --</p> <p>9 hopefully, that's not happening.</p> <p>10 So we do a lot to say, "Don't leave."</p> <p>11 But we definitely talk openly about that</p> <p>12 every year to say, "How are you doing? Are you</p> <p>13 good? Are you in for another year," just so that</p> <p>14 we're not having -- we're not surprised about any of</p> <p>15 that.</p> <p>16 So I'd say that -- that's been a real</p> <p>17 strength. Anything, Pam, you would add?</p> <p>18 Missy and her team have been great, just</p> <p>19 with our trainings. I think we're all very good at</p> <p>20 keeping up with those. And, just, we even come back</p> <p>21 after the trainings and board meetings and say,</p> <p>22 "Hey, like" -- there was one issue where we weren't</p> <p>23 always saying that Pam reviewed the financial</p> <p>24 statements. We didn't know that was a thing. We</p> <p>25 went to a training. We learned that was a thing.</p>	68	<p>1 Any other comments by Commissioners?</p> <p>2 (No response.)</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: All right. Seeing none,</p> <p>4 Secretary Armijo, if you could call roll.</p> <p>5 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Yes. Chair Burt.</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: Yes.</p> <p>7 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner</p> <p>8 Carrillo.</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Yes.</p> <p>10 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Gipson.</p> <p>11 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yes.</p> <p>12 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Manis.</p> <p>13 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes.</p> <p>14 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner</p> <p>15 Robbins.</p> <p>16 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes.</p> <p>17 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Voigt.</p> <p>18 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes.</p> <p>19 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: And Commissioner</p> <p>20 Armijo votes yes.</p> <p>21 That passes -- excuse me -- seven to zero.</p> <p>22 THE CHAIR: Congratulations.</p> <p>23 (Applause.)</p> <p>24 THE CHAIR: All right. All that, and now</p> <p>25 you're -- now go get more kids.</p>
67	<p>1 Now we do it every month. We're okay, again,</p> <p>2 admitting our -- yay, Missy -- admitting our</p> <p>3 mistakes and figuring out.</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: It sounds like</p> <p>5 you're always thinking ahead of the game and not</p> <p>6 having to be reactive. And that was certainly the</p> <p>7 case with the COVID thing, not being combative, but</p> <p>8 thinking, okay, what can we do? What's best for</p> <p>9 kids?</p> <p>10 FROM THE FLOOR: We even voted on this.</p> <p>11 We had a very rich discussion about, "Does that make</p> <p>12 sense? Is that the right way to go? There's pros</p> <p>13 and cons."</p> <p>14 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: That's terrific.</p> <p>15 This is like Bekka said. This is a no-brainer.</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Gipson.</p> <p>17 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Are we ready?</p> <p>18 I move that the Public Education</p> <p>19 Commission renew the charter for -- for Altura</p> <p>20 Preparatory for a term of five years with no</p> <p>21 conditions.</p> <p>22 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Second</p> <p>23 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Second.</p> <p>24 THE CHAIR: Thank you. There's a motion</p> <p>25 and a second.</p>	69	<p>1 All right. We will adjourn until 10:45.</p> <p>2 (Recess held, 9:52 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.)</p> <p>3 D. Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School</p> <p>4 THE CHAIR: All right. Great. It is</p> <p>5 10:45, and I'm going to call this meeting back to</p> <p>6 order.</p> <p>7 We are on Item D, which is the charter</p> <p>8 renewal for Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School.</p> <p>9 And I would first like to have those of</p> <p>10 you on the panel introduce yourselves, and then</p> <p>11 we'll pass it over to the PED.</p> <p>12 MS. JADE RIVERA: Good morning, everyone.</p> <p>13 So nice to be joined with you all this morning.</p> <p>14 Commissioner Burt and Commissioners, my name is Jade</p> <p>15 Rivera. I'm the founder and executive director of</p> <p>16 Albuquerque Collegiate.</p> <p>17 MR. DAN HILL: Madam Chair, members of the</p> <p>18 Commission -- excuse me -- I'm Dan Hill. I'm the</p> <p>19 attorney for the school.</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And with that,</p> <p>21 we'll go to Item A, which is Public Education</p> <p>22 Department Evaluation. And Director Chavez.</p> <p>23 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: Thank you. I'm</p> <p>24 actually going to pass it over to Deputy Director</p> <p>25 Dr. Russell for this one. Thank you.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">70</p> <p>1 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Thank you, Director 2 Chavez, Madam Chair, and Commissioners. 3 I would first like to express my gratitude 4 toward everyone who has worked so hard in this 5 process: the school and the community and staff, the 6 Public Education Commissioners, the Charter Schools 7 Division team, and including contractors who were 8 part of the site visits, and everyone who 9 contributed behind the scenes to this process. 10 In a sense, the renewal process begins 11 when a new charter contract is signed or a new 12 charter school opens, because schools have their 13 eyes on renewal throughout the charter term. 14 The actual formal renewal process began in 15 August when the Charter Schools Division provided 16 the schools with our data report, Part A of the 17 renewal application. 18 The school submitted their application in 19 September. 20 We conducted site visits to the schools, 21 including to Albuquerque Collegiate, in October, and 22 provided schools with a preliminary analysis on 23 November 1st, which is in the PEC materials. 24 Schools submitted responses on 25 November 15th.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">72</p> <p>1 specific neighborhood schools, because the school -- 2 the school had reported that even though their math 3 proficiency score was below Albuquerque District and 4 New Mexico State average, it was significantly 5 higher than neighborhood schools. 6 So in their response, the school did 7 provide that data, and CSD reviewed this. And 8 schools in the immediate neighborhood of Albuquerque 9 Collegiate did have math proficiencies in the single 10 digits. And so even though the school is not 11 meeting the statewide metric, they are exceeding the 12 math proficiency for their neighboring schools. 13 Another element in the school response to 14 our preliminary analysis was regarding whether the 15 school tracks students beyond the school. 16 The school's mission is to -- to prepare 17 students for college and career, which, as one of 18 the Commissioners commented this morning, said it's 19 an interesting mission for a K-5 school, because 20 there are seven years after they leave fifth grade 21 before they're actually going to college. 22 So CSD had noted that there wasn't an 23 actual plan in place to track students, you know, 24 their progress, after they leave Albuquerque 25 Collegiate.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">71</p> <p>1 And the Charter Schools Division made its 2 final recommendation for renewal on December 1st, 3 incorporating, where appropriate, changes in ratings 4 to -- in the preliminary analysis. 5 In Albuquerque Collegiate's case, we did 6 not make any changes in the preliminary ratings. 7 All of the school's ratings were either Meets the 8 Standard or Demonstrates Substantial Progress. 9 There were no areas in which the school was Failing 10 to Demonstrate Progress. 11 And the recommendation that the Charter 12 Schools Division is making is to renew Albuquerque 13 Collegiate Charter School for a term of five years 14 with no conditions. 15 There are a few areas in which the Charter 16 Schools Division would like to amend portions of our 17 preliminary recommendation. 18 We made an error in the Early Literacy 19 score in the original preliminary. The school -- 20 the -- excuse me. The school's rating on -- for 21 Early Literacy is 69 percent. The preliminary 22 report said 47 percent, and that was the Charter 23 Schools Division's error. 24 Also the preliminary report indicated that 25 the school did not provide comparative data about</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">73</p> <p>1 But we do recognize that, really, when a 2 school has a mission to prepare students for college 3 and career, if it's a K-5 school, what that means is 4 that when students are in fifth grade, they are on 5 grade level, they are on track in terms of reading, 6 math, and science proficiencies. 7 And let's see. 8 The final point that the school -- that 9 the CSD made in its preliminary recommendation to 10 which the school responded in its response was 11 regarding its lottery policy. 12 The Charter Schools Division has on our 13 website a guidance document advising best practices 14 in terms of lottery application, that, basically, 15 you ask for name, contact information, grade level, 16 and nothing beyond that. 17 Albuquerque Collegiate does ask, you know, 18 how parents heard about us, what school did you 19 attend prior. And this is not in alignment with the 20 guidance document, although it is not -- there's 21 nothing in administrative code or statute regarding 22 lotteries. It is Charter Schools' best practice. 23 And we did put forth that lottery FAQ in 24 response to a lawsuit calling out multiple charter 25 schools for problematic practices in their lottery</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">74</p> <p>1 policies. And so the charter schools made reviewing 2 school lottery policies a priority this year. 3 So reviewing schools is a complex process. 4 And circumstances during the past four years have 5 made the renewal process even more challenging. 6 Policies and practices have evolved at the PED. 7 Some of what is in the Performance Framework is no 8 longer applicable, which is why we are revising the 9 Performance Framework. 10 The Public Education Commission has a work 11 group currently to look at revising the Performance 12 Framework. 13 The global pandemic created new challenges 14 for schools, and there's always a balancing act 15 between holding charter schools accountable to the 16 same, if not more, rigorous standards as traditional 17 schools and honoring their autonomy as unique 18 entities. 19 The Charter Schools Division diligently 20 reviewed what was in each charter school's contract 21 in making our renewal recommendations and found that 22 Albuquerque Collegiate is implementing the mission 23 and educational program in their contract with 24 fidelity, which is why we are recommending 25 renewal -- renewal for five years.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">76</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: Yes. 2 MS. JADE RIVERA: All right. 3 Well, again Madam Chair and Commissioners, 4 very appreciative to be with you all this morning 5 and thank you for your time and consideration as we 6 present on behalf of the school. 7 Again, Jade Rivera. I'm the founder and 8 executive director of Albuquerque Collegiate Charter 9 School. 10 Today you'll hear from us a little bit, 11 kind of review about the school, some key points. 12 A quick video highlighting some of our 13 families and scholars in the classrooms, elements 14 from our renewal application, and then hearing from 15 a staff and student representative who are back on 16 campus. 17 So some reminders about Albuquerque 18 Collegiate. 19 Our core elements. We have two fully 20 licensed teachers in all of our kindergarten through 21 second-grade classrooms, really able to then provide 22 small group instruction to our students. 23 Our third- through fifth-grade teachers 24 are content specialized. We provide a longer school 25 day and a longer school year, individualized</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">75</p> <p>1 So, ultimately, the renewal process is a 2 time for making serious decisions about whether to 3 renew a school's contract, but it is also a time for 4 reflection. Preliminary analyses are meant to offer 5 an opportunity for each school and the PEC to 6 reflect about what is happening in the learning 7 community, specifically, how the successes can be 8 sustained and how areas in need of improvement can 9 be improved. 10 Thank you. 11 THE CHAIR: Thank you. That'll take us to 12 Item B, which is the School's Comments, which should 13 not total more than 30 minutes. 14 Ms. Rivera? 15 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, all. We will 16 get our slide show up here. I just need to share 17 that on my screen. 18 MR. DAN HILL: Just as a housekeeping 19 matter, it looks like Commissioner Manis might not 20 be with us. It still looks like -- 21 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: (Inaudible.) 22 THE CHAIR: Yeah. For the record, it 23 looks like Commissioner Manis is not present at this 24 time. We do still have a quorum of six. 25 MR. DAN HILL: You do still have a quorum.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">77</p> <p>1 instruction for our students, particularly through 2 those smaller teacher-to-student ratio classrooms. 3 I think the point of pride that we most 4 have is that our teachers are very highly supported, 5 and you'll see that throughout the work that we do, 6 and that we really try to model our program based on 7 those that have been really successful, both here in 8 New Mexico and around the country, particularly 9 looking at schools that serve predominantly students 10 of color and low income families. 11 And here is a quick video, and, hopefully, 12 our sound works for us this morning. 13 (Video played.) 14 MS. JADE RIVERA: There we go. Thank you 15 all for that. 16 So I wanted to overview some of our 17 academic performance data and student outcomes over 18 the last few years. 19 Our founding year -- that was the 20 2018-2019 school year -- we have our Istation 21 proficiency rate. In that, we had our kindergarten 22 and first-grade scholars and our STEP literacy 23 assessment. That's an internal assessment that we 24 provide our scholars. 25 Our goal there is we grow about three step</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">78</p> <p>1 levels. That's a very rigorous metric. And so we 2 met and exceeded, really, all of our goals in that 3 first year, had a Spotlight designation, 4 designations for literacy proficiency, growth, and 5 family satisfaction. 6 The following year, we know, was 7 unfortunately interrupted by the COVID pandemic. So 8 in March of 2020, that's the kind of most recent or 9 the best data that we had for the end of that school 10 year. And at that point of the year, our students 11 had grown about almost two STEP levels worth of 12 growth and felt very much that we were on track for 13 that continued growth and meeting the metrics of 14 that year. 15 Unfortunately, in March, of course, we did 16 have to close our doors to families, and, you know, 17 really shifted to serving all of our families 18 virtually online for the next few months. 19 In the 2020-2021 school year, we were 20 really proud to be able to open our doors to our 21 families the first day that we were allowed to do so 22 in September. That was from feedback that we 23 received overwhelmingly from our families that we 24 wanted an in-person option. 25 We prioritized our English Learners for</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">80</p> <p>1 scholars. This isn't something that we wanted, or, 2 you know, what we had felt that we had been working 3 towards. And so it took a lot of kind of inward 4 reflection about our practices and how we were 5 approaching that work. And I'll talk a bit about 6 that in a slide coming up. 7 For the current school year, we have our 8 most recent Istation data, which, again, is showing 9 strong growth. Our goal for this is to be closer to 10 about 80 percent, 85 percent proficiency by the end 11 of this school year, and our team is confident that 12 we will achieve that. 13 Our most recent midyear iMSSA reading data 14 is shown here. I will kind of caveat that we don't 15 feel that the iMSSA assessment is as rigorous as the 16 end-of-year assessment. I don't anticipate that 17 98 percent of our students are going to show 18 proficiency by the end of the year. 19 So we've had to also look at that and 20 identify ways so that we can get a better pulse of 21 where our students are truly during the school year. 22 So we've made some adjustments on that. 23 Below you will see state-level data for 24 reading, language, and math, noting that Albuquerque 25 Collegiate is higher than all three at this point</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">79</p> <p>1 instruction so that they were able to receive -- or 2 English Learners and special education scholars were 3 able to receive four days of in-person instruction 4 compared to the two days. 5 We had about 70 percent of our families 6 participating in the hybrid instruction while that 7 was available. 8 Unfortunately, we were unable to use our 9 Istation data during that time. We did transition 10 to STEP data, recognizing we had to shift our goals 11 here. 12 Our goal that year was to grow two and a 13 half levels of growth, and came just short of that 14 goal. 15 For the following year, transitioning to 16 kind of the new normal, we saw continued strength in 17 our Istation data, STEP data, just where we would 18 want to be. This was the first year that we 19 assessed through the State Summative Assessment, 20 having third- and fourth-graders that year with ELA 21 proficiency. 22 And, unfortunately, our math proficiency 23 was quite a bit lower than what we wanted it to be. 24 We really did have to grapple with that as a team 25 and identify ways we could better support our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">81</p> <p>1 for the midyear assessment. 2 Apologies. 3 So this is just a visual representation of 4 that '21-'22 school year data. And we have a lot of 5 strength in our Early Literacy. I think that's an 6 area where we've really been able to thrive and 7 succeed. 8 We see that ELS for third- and 9 fourth-grade scholars, a little bit higher than the 10 state and district, and then kind of our neighboring 11 schools. And for our math, candidly -- right? -- we 12 want to be very upfront about this and owning this 13 data, and we were with our governing board as soon 14 as that came out, and with our team, so that we were 15 really able to identify ways to better support our 16 scholars. 17 And then we have kind of our neighboring 18 schools. 19 What I will caveat this with is I want 20 this to provide some additional context, but also 21 recognize that we would never want to come into a 22 situation disparaging any schools or any work that 23 schools and school leaders are doing in our 24 community. 25 This is tremendously difficult work, and</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">82</p> <p>1 we recognize many of our students in the community 2 that we have are fortunate to work in and be a part 3 of face additional challenges. And that can very 4 much interfere with our ability to grow 5 academically. 6 And so I want to just clarify that, you 7 know, we would never want to speak ill of any other 8 schools, and just providing some additional context 9 here. 10 In terms of what that math support has 11 looked like and how we've made some adjustments to 12 that, we're providing additional support in our 13 third- through fifth-grade mathematics classes by 14 having additional staff support in there. 15 We see a lot of strength in our literacy, 16 particularly our early literacy instruction, so we 17 want to really kind of model our math instruction to 18 look more like that with the smaller groups so 19 students are getting truly, truly small-group, 20 targeted instruction for their individual level. 21 We've shifted to utilizing a math interim 22 assessment that our team went really back and forth 23 with quite a bit to ensure that we're aligning 24 instruction to the rigor of the assessment. And it 25 is our understanding that math really is a kind of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">84</p> <p>1 mathematics instruction. 2 We know that from NAEP data across the 3 country, low-income students and students of color 4 were most profoundly affected by the pandemic and 5 most profoundly affected in mathematics by the 6 pandemic. That's the population of families that we 7 get to serve. So we have really had to identify 8 ways to better support our work and our students. 9 Some of the elements in our charter 10 contract that intentionally focus on literacy and 11 mathematics we've certainly spoken to. It's 12 definitely the majority of our school day. We have 13 those targeted supports and really partner with our 14 families throughout our monthly conferences and 15 monthly conversations -- apologies -- through 16 conferences and monthly conversations with families 17 about how their students are doing and ways that 18 they can support their scholars at home. 19 In addition to that, we have our teacher 20 coaching and support program. This is something 21 that we feel a great sense of pride in and really 22 contributes to a strong sense of culture and success 23 in our building. 24 We've adapted the State evaluation to 25 really embed best practices, better aligned to the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">83</p> <p>1 more quality metric for identifying what the NM-MSSA 2 end-of-year assessment is for, so giving us better 3 touchpoints throughout the school year to identify 4 clear data points where we can better support our 5 teachers and better support our scholars in the 6 classroom. 7 Our students have supplemental math 8 practice in those third- through fifth-grade 9 classrooms as well. 10 We've also adjusted the curriculum in our 11 kindergarten through second-grade classrooms so that 12 it, again, mirrors the literacy instruction in those 13 classes and provides kind of better quality 14 instruction for exactly what the rigor of, you know, 15 these assessments and standards are looking for. 16 Alongside all of that, we've really pushed 17 ourselves to embody more of a growth mindset as we 18 approach this work. And that's post pandemic 19 lockdown, that I think we've had to recognize this 20 isn't just about true proficiency rates, and it's 21 really about, well, how are we supporting our 22 students that, you know, they might not hit a 23 proficiency metric this year, and that's okay. But 24 are they growing at least a year's worth of growth, 25 at least a year and a half worth of growth in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">85</p> <p>1 coaching that our teachers receive on a weekly and 2 daily basis. Right? 3 Our teachers receive three weeks of summer 4 professional development, weekly differentiated PD. 5 Data days, individualized coaching, team coaching, 6 grade-level data meetings. So this is something 7 that we take very, very seriously. 8 Many of our teachers are newer or new to 9 the profession, and I can tell you confidently they 10 look significantly better, you know, one semester in 11 than I did three years in of teaching. And I think 12 it is a huge testament to who we hire and who we get 13 to work with and the quality of coaching and support 14 that they receive every day. 15 With that, we've also been recognized 16 because of this work as an Innovator School from 17 Teach Plus New Mexico. 18 A few elements on finances and governance. 19 Our board members have completed 20 consistently all of their training, working to 21 really refine our policies and procedures when we 22 first started out four and a half years ago to 23 solidify the financial standing. 24 When we started, we were a very small 25 school. And every year as we've grown we've</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">86</p> <p>1 consistently decreased the number of those audit 2 findings. And when the most recent audit does 3 became available in February or March, we're very 4 excited to be able to share the results with the 5 Commission on those.</p> <p>6 In terms of our community engagement and 7 support, this is something that's very important to 8 our team. You'll hear from the folks at Pacha 9 Counseling Services. Post-pandemic, we know our 10 students really did face a lot of challenge -- 11 right? -- and our families did. And this was a 12 difficult and trying time for everyone.</p> <p>13 And so we identified that, you know, our 14 families and students needed access to therapy and 15 counseling services. And they're able to receive 16 this completely free of charge through Pacha 17 Counseling Services and are able to do this on site 18 at school at the Pacha offices, which are very close 19 by, and receive both individual student counseling, 20 but also family counseling, which has been really 21 restorative for many of our families.</p> <p>22 And I think we see just the tremendous 23 impact every single day. And I'm -- I could not be 24 more thankful for that partnership.</p> <p>25 In addition to that, we have our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">88</p> <p>1 We are in a humble shopping center in the 2 South Valley. And in order to be able to serve, you 3 know, our enrollment cap of students that we have, 4 we really do need more space. And so that is a 5 priority item for us, to be able to identify a 6 facility very close to where we are. And we've been 7 working for over a year on that at this point to 8 identify that, to ensure that it meets all of the 9 really stringent requirements that we've put in 10 place so that at some point moving forward we have 11 more space to serve more students for our charter 12 cap.</p> <p>13 In terms of middle school, this is our 14 first year we have fifth graders, which is 15 wonderfully exciting. And, you know, it's 16 emotionally kind of challenging. You all are going 17 to hear from one of our fifth graders that will be 18 leaving us at the end of this school year. And 19 for -- you know, we have -- we want to make sure 20 that we are setting up every single one of our 21 students for success.</p> <p>22 And what I would say is I think we very 23 much do have a plan and have been implementing that 24 plan for what it looks like when our scholars do 25 leave us after fifth grade. Already we've conducted</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">87</p> <p>1 partnerships with Westside Community Center, the 2 Atrisco Companies through Rio Grande Educational 3 Collaborative for our after-school programming, 4 that's free of charge to all of our families.</p> <p>5 We have our uniform clothing bank and food 6 boxes that we prep for families ahead of those 7 winter and fall breaks.</p> <p>8 Our regular family communications are 9 expected for every single family to get at least an 10 individualized monthly touch point. Our families 11 have been really outstanding and engaging in our 12 work in the community.</p> <p>13 We have a picture here of the folks from 14 our local fire department coming by to do a 15 presentation for our scholars, and have really been 16 excited about that community engagement work that 17 we've been able to do over the last few years.</p> <p>18 Some reflections on looking ahead.</p> <p>19 Our facility is a whopping 14,000 square 20 feet and at max capacity for what we are able to 21 provide in the building.</p> <p>22 We have folks sharing the office. And, 23 you know, many offices are in, you know, glorified 24 hallways. But that's -- you know, that's our work; 25 right?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">89</p> <p>1 individualized meetings with every single parent and 2 family of a fifth-grade scholar to identify ways 3 that -- what it is that they want in a middle school 4 and ways that we can support, because we know that 5 can be a challenging process.</p> <p>6 And there are many, many school options, 7 which we think is wonderful, for our families, and 8 so we're supporting them with that. They will 9 receive an additional individualized meeting come 10 January with those recommendations based on the 11 stipulations and things that they've said they want 12 for their scholar. And then we will help them with 13 any application process, that kind of thing, school 14 tours, as we head into the spring.</p> <p>15 With that, our families have 16 overwhelmingly indicated, you know, concern about 17 middle school. Middle school is scary. It -- and, 18 you know, that we have certainly heard quite a bit 19 from our families, you know, "Well, Ms. Rivera, when 20 are we going to do middle school? When are we doing 21 that?"</p> <p>22 So it is something that we're taking into 23 consideration and want to be very, very thoughtful 24 and intentional about.</p> <p>25 With that, we have a couple of</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">90</p> <p>1 representatives with us. Our third- through 2 fifth-grade English Language Arts teacher, 3 Mr. Sapien, and a fifth-grade scholar, Anthony. 4 Mr. Sapien, I will defer to you. 5 MR. SONNY SAPIEN: Good morning, 6 Madam Chair and Commissioners. My name is Sonny 7 Sapien, and I'm speaking as a teacher representative 8 from our team. 9 I want to take a moment to share insight 10 from the perspective of a seasoned teacher at ACCS. 11 I've been teaching for ten years now, with the past 12 three taking place here at our school. 13 Because of this, I have developed a huge 14 appreciation for what the school stands for and how 15 it holds true to the viewpoint of ZIP Code not 16 defining destiny. 17 For me, ACCS has helped nurture my 18 development in adding the element of joy throughout 19 my instruction and behavior management. This has 20 provided me opportunities to serve as a go-to 21 teacher in the building for not only what others 22 might need assistance in; I've also been able to 23 partner with both CNM and UNM Departments of 24 Education to serve as a cooperating mentor teacher 25 as well as immersing others in our unique model of a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">92</p> <p>1 the necessary systems and routines that make 2 partnerships with our scholars and families 3 authentic and everlasting. 4 Together we are one big happy family. We 5 know most, if not all, scholars by name, no matter 6 the grade. This is something that is not the norm 7 in other schools. 8 And because this is our aesthetic, 9 visitors have come to realize that ACCS teachers 10 infuse joy and passion in their teaching, while 11 scholars are showcasing their joy for their learning 12 no matter the rigor or the obstacles in their way. 13 In closing, I hope the school is renewed 14 for a full renewal. Thank you for your time. 15 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, Mr. Sapien. 16 And now we have the great fortune of hearing from 17 Anthony Alarcon, a fifth-grade scholar at 18 Albuquerque Collegiate. 19 MR. ANTHONY ALARCON: Hello, Madam Chair 20 and Commissioners. My name is Anthony Alarcon, and 21 I am a fifth grader at Albuquerque Collegiate. 22 This morning I wanted just to share ways 23 that ACCS has impacted my life and learning. 24 First, ACCS has helped me improve my 25 reading and comprehension, because I am finally</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">91</p> <p>1 school. 2 In addition, ACCS has provided 3 opportunities to hear and embrace teacher voice. 4 This has been extremely valuable for our teaching 5 model. In doing so, whether you're a veteran 6 teacher or a new teacher, you're provided support 7 that meets you halfway where you're at. 8 You're able to see what you're doing well 9 at, and you celebrate those successes every time you 10 meet. Eventually, you're able to call your own 11 shots by naming what it is in the professionalism 12 that you would like to do better in. In doing so, 13 this allows for teachers, whether they're veteran or 14 new, to enhance their skills in a much expedited 15 manner than what you would see compared to other 16 traditional public schools. 17 Furthermore, in hoping for the best 18 possible outcome regarding your full renewal, I am 19 excited to help oversee the potential in phasing in 20 grades six through eight. Jade's willingness to be 21 open to this idea during the recruitment and 22 interview process of my employment at ACCS is what 23 really attracted me to join the team. 24 That was then, but this is now. I can 25 honestly say that because ACCS is so small, we have</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">93</p> <p>1 learning my letter sounds, which has helped my 2 reading grade. 3 Second, ACCS has helped me learn what it 4 looks and sounds like to show kindness and have 5 respect for others and be brave, which are all of 6 the things that I am doing right now talking with 7 you all. 8 Lastly, ACCS has helped me feel like I 9 belong and that my learning matters. This has made 10 me grateful to be a scholar at ACCS, because I am -- 11 I am now confident in myself and my abilities. 12 I hope the school gets renewed for a full 13 renewal. Thank you for your time. 14 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, Anthony and 15 Mr. Sapien, for those wonderful words, and 16 Mr. Sapien for the subtle pushes to me and the 17 Commission. Not so subtle there, Mr. Sapien. Thank 18 you. 19 With that we are happy to stand for 20 questions and believe we do have some folks signed 21 up for Public Comment. 22 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you. 23 So, Missy, I'll let you take your time, 24 and we'll do Public Comment next. 25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: All right. First,</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">94</p> <p>1 we're going to have Sara Fitzgerald. I'm going to 2 promote her to the panel. 3 Overall, we have 16 minutes, so I'll -- we 4 don't have 16 people. 5 FROM THE PUBLIC: Good morning again, 6 Madam Chair and Commissioners. I'm Sara Fitzgerald. 7 It's F-i-t-z-g-e-r-a-l-d. I'm speaking on behalf of 8 the Board of Directors of the Greater Albuquerque 9 Chamber of Commerce. We want to voice our support 10 for Albuquerque Collegiate's renewal today. 11 Albuquerque Collegiate has earned a place 12 in the top 10 percent of New Mexico schools in 13 literacy. It's an incredibly important foundational 14 skill for kids that takes them through the rest of 15 their academic career and through life. 16 The school accomplishes this through some 17 really innovative investments, like a co-teaching 18 model that ensures each classroom's two teachers 19 help reach each and every one of their young 20 students, plus lots of structure that helps students 21 feel and thrive. 22 We also want to give kudos to founder and 23 director Jade Rivera for not only stepping up to do 24 this work in our state, but for bringing this model 25 of excellence to the South Valley in Albuquerque,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">96</p> <p>1 clinical director asked me if I was interested in 2 going over to a school. I started out as a school 3 social worker early in my career. And I was all for 4 it. 5 And they have accepted us with open arms. 6 They've given us a space for us to see these kids, a 7 nice, safe space. The teachers are overwhelmingly 8 supportive of us. Ms. Rivera is overwhelming 9 supportive as well. 10 We are multicultural, and we see families, 11 kids. So there's oftentimes that I will get texts 12 or phone calls after hours. My parents know that 13 that is something that is available to them. 14 And, just, as a matter of fact, last 15 Thursday, Ms. Rivera and I were on the phone at 16 about 8:00, 8:30 with a safety concern that we had 17 about one of the kids. 18 So there's nothing that we won't do to try 19 and help these young kids in all that the school 20 does. We're very appreciative of it, and we're glad 21 that we can collaboratively work with them. 22 I would recommend that they be allowed to 23 get their five-year renewal as well so that we can 24 continue providing some service to this community. 25 Thank you so much.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">95</p> <p>1 where rates of poverty are highest, and where 2 students, especially students of color, are most in 3 need of a life-changing educational experience. 4 We urge the Commission to approve 5 Albuquerque Collegiate for another five years of 6 excellence in education. Thank you. 7 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. Next we're 8 going to go to Mr. John Sanchez. 9 FROM THE FLOOR: Good morning, everyone. 10 My name is John Sanchez. I'm a Retired Lieutenant 11 Colonel, United States Army. I've been a Licensed 12 Clinical Social Worker for almost 35 years now, and 13 the last couple of years, I've been working with 14 Pacha Counseling Services, which Ms. Rivera spoke a 15 little about earlier. She took a little bit away of 16 our thunder that we wanted to talk about, but that's 17 okay. 18 We wanted to talk about some of the things 19 that have been impactful for us as an organization 20 and how we feel like maybe we've impacted the school 21 as well. 22 So the young man that you guys saw speak a 23 little bit earlier is one of the kids that I see at 24 the school. Great young man. 25 We have -- for -- about two years ago, our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">97</p> <p>1 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Rob 2 Leland. 3 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. I'm Rob Leland 4 with Pacha Counseling Services. It's L-e-l-a-n-d. 5 I'm the executive director of our 6 organization and wanted to let you know that we are 7 honored to get to work with Albuquerque Collegiate 8 to serve the students in our community. 9 We ask the Commission to renew the charter 10 for Albuquerque Collegiate such that the school may 11 continue to do the good work with academic 12 performance and expand their services in the 13 South Valley, as well as provide a safe place for 14 children to have access to behavioral health 15 services as provided by our organization. Thank 16 you. 17 MS. MELISSA BROWN: And then we're back on 18 Zoom with Alejandra Flores. 19 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hello. My name is 20 Alejandra Flores. I am a parent of a second grader 21 in Albuquerque Collegiate. 22 I think for me, it is really important to 23 see our kids strive, right? Especially mine. As an 24 immigrant, and my kids being my first generation in 25 the United States, school has been something that</p>

98

1 has been trained in my brain on how important it is.  
 2 But I didn't know what a high quality  
 3 school was until my daughter came to Albuquerque  
 4 Collegiate. I can tell you the first time that we  
 5 went, I was, like, there's no way my daughter is  
 6 coming here; right? It doesn't look that great.  
 7 I'm worried.  
 8 But I think it's the best choice that I've  
 9 made. I think I have many scenarios I can tell on  
 10 why it's been amazing. But the biggest one is in  
 11 the middle of the pandemic -- because my daughter  
 12 started kindergarten in the middle of the  
 13 pandemic -- was having -- going back to school for  
 14 about two, three weeks, and her coming back knowing  
 15 how to spell her first and last name.  
 16 So if I look at five years down the road  
 17 from now, if -- if the school doesn't get renewed,  
 18 it's like letting my daughter fall in the cracks and  
 19 all these other kids as well that are getting this  
 20 high quality education that for most of us maybe  
 21 wasn't an opportunity for us to have and that they  
 22 have this opportunity to be better.  
 23 So I please ask to really consider how  
 24 much of an impact this is making, because it makes  
 25 an impact overall; right? I have a cousin that goes

99

1 to the same school as well. And I can tell you  
 2 these little girls are getting an education that is  
 3 going to help them throughout their life.  
 4 So I appreciate you. I really hope that  
 5 you guys do renew the school's contract, and thank  
 6 you so much for your time.  
 7 MS. MELISSA BROWN: That's all we have,  
 8 Chair.  
 9 THE CHAIR: Thank you.  
 10 All right. That will take us to D, which  
 11 is Commissioner Questions.  
 12 Commissioner Gipson.  
 13 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thanks. And thanks  
 14 so much for all of this, and really appreciate the  
 15 counseling group being here, because that -- you  
 16 know, that support for families, we know is always  
 17 important. After these past two years and the  
 18 impact that, you know, families have had, it's  
 19 just -- you know, it's critical. And I really do  
 20 appreciate that.  
 21 And I guess I'm looking at the -- you only  
 22 have about \$12,000 in grants that are coming -- the  
 23 State grants, I think it said.  
 24 Do you get K-5 Plus? Extended Learning?  
 25 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. So our business

100

1 manager is here, and she can certainly speak to this  
 2 more eloquently than I can.  
 3 But we do participate in the ELTP program  
 4 and a few other additional below-the-line programs  
 5 available from the State.  
 6 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Well, I know you're  
 7 small. It doesn't look like it's a lot of money to  
 8 support this. But I know also because you're small,  
 9 but just -- I just was curious, because it's all  
 10 lumped in in the forms that we get into a variety of  
 11 different -- and I know you don't get Pre-K, because  
 12 you don't have Pre-K. So...sure.  
 13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Off mic.)  
 14 FROM THE FLOOR: So Albuquerque Collegiate  
 15 gets --  
 16 THE CHAIR: Sorry. If you could introduce  
 17 yourself first.  
 18 MS. KATIE RARICK: Sorry. I'm Katie  
 19 Rarick. I'm the business manager for Albuquerque  
 20 Collegiate. R-a-r-i-c-k.  
 21 So they get all the regular federal  
 22 funding that the other schools do based on size.  
 23 They also get the CSP Grant, which we've been  
 24 spending down.  
 25 So I don't know the exact number off the

101

1 top of my head. But I want to say that they have --  
 2 last year, we probably got about \$250,000 to  
 3 \$200,000 in federal grants, and then the rest is  
 4 regular State funding, which ELTP is lumped into.  
 5 Yeah.  
 6 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: So the CSP grant has  
 7 how many -- how many more years?  
 8 MS. KATIE RARICK: We're in its last year  
 9 right now.  
 10 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: It's the last year;  
 11 right?  
 12 MS. KATIE RARICK: Yes, yes. And so as the  
 13 school -- so all of our financial -- we have three-  
 14 to five-year financial projections. And so the  
 15 financial projections has the enrollment taking  
 16 place of CSP going forward, because we've been able  
 17 to buy a lot of our desks, computers, stuff like  
 18 that that we needed for start-up, that then kids  
 19 will continue to use going forward as we grow.  
 20 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Right. I guess --  
 21 you know, this is all about where can we look to  
 22 support these programs and get the funding for them  
 23 so that it's sustainable, plus being able to get you  
 24 into a building that is -- you know, that will be  
 25 able to offer even more programming and be able to

<p style="text-align: right;">102</p> <p>1 stay in the area that -- and I know that's, you 2 know, critical.</p> <p>3 But we all know no matter where we are, 4 facilities are hard to find and to finance.</p> <p>5 I know you've got an early start-up 6 foundation, so that -- you know, it's tougher for 7 foundations to raise money, you know. There's only 8 so many dollars to go around.</p> <p>9 So it's really a challenge. And, you 10 know, I don't know what the answer is. But we know 11 the solution is to be able to support programs like 12 the counseling programs for schools and how -- you 13 know, how do we continue to do that.</p> <p>14 So -- and as much as I appreciate that, I 15 was a little concerned when I read that the equity 16 council kind of disintegrated, for want of -- you 17 know, the report that came from the director, I 18 think, said that it had been disbanded, I think, for 19 a -- I think that was the term that was used? Yes? 20 Or was I -- sometimes I do click on the wrong --</p> <p>21 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: No. I can go 22 back to the report and read exactly what it said. I 23 know there's multiple documents to be navigating, 24 and they're all on the PEC's webpage. Give me a 25 minute and I'll find that.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">104</p> <p>1 staff members identify as people of color. 2 Albuquerque Collegiate's percentage is 85 percent. 3 We're very much -- that's not to say that it's 4 better or worse, then, because of that.</p> <p>5 But we are very much of that community and 6 for our community. And it's something that speaks 7 very much to who we are as leaders within our school 8 and our community in the South Valley, in Barelás, 9 in kind of the Greater South Valley area.</p> <p>10 So with that, I -- you know, I will say 11 that there has been some reluctance, in that some 12 individuals even voiced concerns that it felt 13 performative or that it felt tokenizing.</p> <p>14 And so we have had to grapple with that 15 and identify ways that we can really ensure that we 16 are focused on equity work and being truly 17 culturally and linguistically responsive in what we 18 do every day and what we do in our classrooms, and 19 it's not about heros and holidays, but it is about 20 really embedding that into the instruction that our 21 scholars receive, into the supports that our 22 scholars, families, and community members, our 23 teachers, receive every day.</p> <p>24 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yeah. I appreciate 25 that. It says, "Lost interest" in the -- in the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">103</p> <p>1 MS. JADE RIVERA: I'll clarify additional 2 information there as well, Commissioner Gipson.</p> <p>3 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Okay.</p> <p>4 MS. JADE RIVERA: So kind of clarifying 5 and related and appreciate your comments about the 6 challenges of facility -- right? -- that it's 7 definitely something, as I mentioned, we've been 8 working on for the last year and are still very much 9 in the works on. And so want to make sure that 10 we're working with local and national partners to be 11 able to approach that very thoughtfully and 12 carefully and so that we're not doing it to the 13 detriment of program, policy, or the financial 14 standing of the organization.</p> <p>15 With that, regarding the question about 16 equity councils. So when that came, that came from 17 the State. We pulled together an equity council. 18 And I will be very candid with you in that our 19 families were -- had some reluctance, our community 20 members had some reluctance, because they felt we 21 were very much doing equity-focused, DEI-focused 22 work throughout what we do as a team. And it's very 23 much embedded in who we are as an organization.</p> <p>24 For context, most recent data for the 25 State of New Mexico says about 40 percent of school</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">105</p> <p>1 report.</p> <p>2 And I certainly hear what you're saying. 3 And I'm just wondering if there -- you know, in my 4 little perfect world -- if there was a way that the 5 responses to the equity council components, if a 6 school is complying with it, can it not respond to 7 that, and say, "This is what we've done..." -- not 8 necessarily with an external five-member group 9 that's doing it -- but, "We're complying with all 10 the pieces"?</p> <p>11 And I know that's difficult, because we 12 live in these bureaucratic worlds where we're 13 requiring this.</p> <p>14 And I support the concept of the requiring 15 it, because you want to make sure that schools are 16 meeting the needs of their communities.</p> <p>17 But if the school has embraced it and is 18 doing it, is there some way we can do it, respond to 19 it by showing what you're doing, you know, and not 20 have to have -- and we all know there's only so many 21 people in a community to go around. And when you 22 only have 100 -- round up -- 150 students or 23 whatever, it's tough to find, you know, in this day 24 and age, volunteers, you know.</p> <p>25 We struggled with quorum earlier this</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">106</p> <p>1 morning. So it's -- you know, it's hard.  2 So I appreciate that. And I appreciate  3 the conversation about, you know, potential middle  4 school. That's -- it's tough to watch those little  5 guys go off to who knows where. You know, I get  6 that. And I'm not a fan of middle schools. But  7 it's -- yeah. When you see a little guy like that  8 and figure where they're going to go, they can be  9 eaten alive, you know.  10 So I do -- but I know it's -- it's a  11 struggle, too. But I do appreciate the fact that  12 you're caring for -- or they're going -- there  13 aren't that many charter options there, if I recall  14 correctly.  15 MS. JADE RIVERA: Commissioner Gipson,  16 there -- so there -- appreciate your question.  17 There are more charter options. We do  18 have a number of charter high school options kind of  19 in the Greater South Valley area. Many of them are,  20 you know, because of our community very focused on  21 dropout recovery, school reengagement.  22 And so, you know, we really are  23 identifying with our current families, "What is it  24 exactly that you want to see," and very  25 overwhelmingly hearing from those families, because</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">108</p> <p>1 class this year, which was really exciting. And,  2 honestly, it was very, very hard to tell moms and  3 dads and grandmas and tías that, you know, we just  4 didn't -- we don't have the space.  5 And now we are also kind of building that  6 capacity with our families so that about at least  7 half to two-thirds of our current kindergarten class  8 are younger siblings of current siblings. So they  9 were really guaranteed spots.  10 So when it came down to how many true  11 spots we have had available for kindergarten, it  12 ended up being about ten seats.  13 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yeah. It's a mixed  14 bag.  15 Sorry. I can't imagine those  16 conversations. So thank you for having them with  17 those parents.  18 So thank you. I appreciate it.  19 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo, then  20 Commissioner Robbins.  21 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Good morning.  22 Thanks for coming. And it's exciting, because this  23 is your first renewal.  24 So, first, I want to thank you for your  25 answer on the equity work.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">107</p> <p>1 of their experience at Albuquerque Collegiate, they  2 want something small. They want, ideally, something  3 close by that will match kind of the rigor,  4 structure, joy, love, and support that they felt in  5 our school.  6 And so we're really walking side by side  7 with them to identify what those options are, as I  8 shared, have plans to do school tours with them,  9 walk them through the lottery processes for any of  10 those schools that they're looking into.  11 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thanks. And just  12 one last thing. And I'm thinking the answer may be  13 the same as an earlier school.  14 The difference in the kindergarten  15 enrollment, is that the same answer as I got this  16 morning?  17 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. So -- yes. Our --  18 because we had prioritized in-person instruction for  19 that 20- -- 2020-'21 school year, we got a  20 tremendous amount of interest from families in the  21 community to be able to -- so we opened up two  22 kindergarten classes that school year.  23 And because of limitation of our building  24 size, we just really aren't able to do that. We had  25 an extensively long waitlist for our kindergarten</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">109</p> <p>1 I'm not a huge fan of this idea that we  2 have to have equity councils if schools are doing  3 the work of what we would want that council to do.  4 You know, the idea of having quotas, "You  5 need this many people here and..." -- it is. It's  6 going to be really hard, because of everything else  7 that you ask of parents in your school community, to  8 find somebody to be on this council. So I  9 appreciate your answer. You live it is essentially  10 what I heard you say. And to me, that's the most  11 important piece.  12 I like the fact that you are just really  13 working with your kids in grade five about what's  14 next, because I -- just -- anytime you're sending a  15 kid off to school and -- you know, because you have  16 the big APS -- I don't even know what the schools in  17 your area are -- APS, I imagine it's probably got at  18 least 600 or 700 kids, maybe, where a kid can feel  19 lost.  20 And so, I mean, it's important for them to  21 find that transitional piece.  22 Very -- I would echo what Commissioner  23 Gipson said. Very happy that Pancha is here and  24 very grateful for the work you're doing. It's just  25 that making sure the kids have all the wraparound</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">110</p> <p>1 services that they need and that tying into what you 2 were saying, Ms. Rivera, around the work you do with 3 parents and families about how to be your 4 children's -- your scholars' best educator. Because 5 so often, no matter what you're doing during the 6 day, you've got to have that parental instructional 7 support at home.</p> <p>8 And I'm hearing that that's happening. 9 So I'm impressed with your reading score. 10 And Commissioner Robbins and I, we talk about this 11 all the time. The foundation of absolutely 12 everything.</p> <p>13 I see there was a slip between year one 14 and four, but I imagine a lot of it had to do with 15 the gap of having to do instruction remotely, 16 because then you just -- it instantly went right 17 back up.</p> <p>18 And, you know, 69 is great. Let's face 19 it. There are schools that come before us, you 20 know, and we're applauding them for being in, like, 21 the upper 40s and early 50s, which I -- because the 22 bar, as I've said in many meetings, for New Mexico 23 is just so low.</p> <p>24 So we can't accept the institutional 25 mediocrity that's gone on for decades. You're at 69</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">112</p> <p>1 back to the elements that we had talked about during 2 the presentation.</p> <p>3 And, if I can, I would also respectfully 4 disagree that around the requirement to remove 5 Algebra 2 as a high school graduation requirement. 6 I think it's very necessary. And speaking as a kind 7 of collegiate-focused school, but I would say for 8 any students, you need Algebra 2 to be able to do 9 trig. You need Algebra 2 to be able to do Calc AB 10 and Calc BC. You need Algebra 2 to be able to do 11 Stat 145 when you get to college.</p> <p>12 And so if we're taking that out, what is 13 that message saying to our students across the State 14 of New Mexico? That's just a brief soapbox moment.</p> <p>15 But I would also say so we're really 16 working to provide those intervention supports for 17 our scholars. We have the strength in our literacy 18 program and identified ways -- what exactly is it 19 that has allowed us to have that strength so that we 20 can mirror those things in our K-2 instruction for 21 mathematics?</p> <p>22 Because the foundations there were clearly 23 not strong enough for what our students needed and 24 deserved in those upper elementary grades. 25 So we're kind of reframing what that looks</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">111</p> <p>1 right now, and I look forward to the next time we 2 see the annual reports, if it's going to be 73 and 3 77 and 80. So thank you for making that a priority.</p> <p>4 What are you going to do about math? 5 Okay? I mean, just -- I don't expect kids to take 6 Algebra 2 -- where is Glenna?</p> <p>7 THE CHAIR: She just stepped out. 8 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: I didn't notice. 9 Okay.</p> <p>10 I'm glad the Legislature is considering 11 getting rid of Algebra 2 as a requirement. But 12 there are still basic things that kids need to do -- 13 because you're the collegiate part -- to have 14 financial literacy -- just to be ready to how math 15 is relevant.</p> <p>16 And I did great in math, and it was fun, 17 because I had a teacher, little Ms. Loftus. I'll 18 never forget her, this little Irish woman that stood 19 4 foot 6 with bright red hair that just -- she was 20 like a drill sergeant, but she also made math really 21 fun.</p> <p>22 But, anyway, what are you going to do 23 about math?</p> <p>24 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, Commissioner 25 Carrillo, for your question. I'll kind of refer</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">113</p> <p>1 like. They've really done -- transitioned from both 2 a curriculum and instructional standpoint in our K-2 3 classrooms to provide more targeted and 4 individualized supports.</p> <p>5 I tell folks when -- I think we expect 6 kindergarteners to come in. And they haven't done 7 school yet. Maybe they've done some Pre-K, but we 8 expect them to come in and perform at the same 9 level. Really, that's not the case, right?</p> <p>10 We have some students that have already 11 been -- maybe they have some foundations of reading, 12 and some students who have never held a pencil 13 before; right?</p> <p>14 So we see that gap and those differences. 15 So there's differences -- right? -- 16 already in kindergarten. So we see those 17 opportunity gaps widen and exacerbated as students 18 continue on through their educational system.</p> <p>19 So we've really identified that need, 20 especially in our 3-5 grade levels, where we may 21 have some students who haven't started with us in 22 kindergarten, are joining us.</p> <p>23 Our friend Mr. Alarcon there joined us in 24 his second-grade year. So he had already had two 25 years of instruction somewhere else. And so we have</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">114</p> <p>1 kind of had to get him kind up to speed with the 2 work that we were doing. 3       Again, noting the -- the challenge -- and 4 I know a number of you all attended the Public 5 Charter Schools of New Mexico conference last week. 6 And we heard from the folks at NWEA about the impact 7 of math instruction and what that looked like for 8 students. 9       We saw the results impacted across the 10 country through our NAEP data. And Black and 11 Hispanic students were most profoundly impacted by 12 that, losing just phenomenal amounts of gains that 13 had been made over decades, and just plummeted, 14 really kind of overnight, through the pandemic. 15       And so we're identifying ways that we 16 really target those individualized supports for our 17 students and acknowledging that, you know, students 18 in our community, while we are not happy with our 19 results and working really rapidly to improve those, 20 and we're seeing the improvement, as you saw in our 21 midyear iMMSA results, you know, the reality is most 22 students in our community are at single and very 23 single low-digit proficiency rates. 24       And so we've got a lot of work to do. We 25 have -- you know, we have a game plan around doing</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">116</p> <p>1 renewal, it'll be interesting to see, and I have 2 very high hopes for where you're going to be. So 3 thank you very much your work, and Pacha, and all of 4 you that spoke, and your teachers. 5       THE CHAIR: Commissioner Robbins. 6       COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Thank you. And, 7 Ms. Rivera, I would applaud you on your stance on 8 Algebra II. If you want to go into sociology, you 9 have to take probability and statistics. If you 10 want to go into any of the social sciences, 11 probability and statistics in college is required. 12 And without Algebra II, you're going to have to 13 basically take it in college, which sets you back 14 further. It's another college class that you'll 15 have to take that you could have taken in high 16 school if they eliminate it as a requirement. 17       And my fear is eliminating things as a 18 requirement means fewer teachers who are proficient 19 in those subjects will be available in years to 20 come. That's one thing that we need to look at, 21 when if we don't stress math is important and -- and 22 encouraging math teachers and elementary teachers to 23 learn how to like math and get kids to like math, 24 they're going to suffer. 25       Earlier, we were talking with Altura</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">115</p> <p>1 that. 2       COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Thank you. I 3 appreciate you speaking about the opportunity gap, 4 because that goes into the equity piece; right? 5       And the drop is like -- it's like 6 anything. If you don't use the muscles, we don't 7 constantly use our math muscle, then it's going to 8 weaken. No. Thank you for your answer. 9       So I would respectfully agree with you 10 about the Algebra 2. And I was speaking more in 11 terms of I want it to be available for everybody. 12 Because kids that are going on to anything, 13 engineering, architecture, but whatever it is that 14 needs that, I absolutely want it to be available and 15 taught at a very high level. 16       I just don't want it to be something that 17 keeps kids back that aren't going into any track 18 that requires that advanced math instruction. 19       I completely hear what you're saying and 20 I -- I'm glad that you just kind of called me out on 21 that. So I appreciate that. 22       Thank you very much. And I -- you know, I 23 just -- I really like what I see at this school. I 24 see nothing but potential. So when we look at our 25 annual reports, you know, long before the next</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">117</p> <p>1 Preparatory and how, you know, they have a 2 70 percent proficiency in math, 70-plus proficiency. 3 I understand, the student populations are probably 4 different. 5       But how you teach it, the way in which it 6 is done is so important, the curriculum that's used. 7 I don't believe students in the South Valley are any 8 less capable in math, as they've demonstrated 9 they're not any less capable in reading. You have 10 that. 11       So I appreciate what you said about 12 working on changing curriculum and looking at 13 different methods of doing math to get those 14 proficiencies up. To me, math helps train the brain 15 how to work. Math is like another language for a 16 lot of students that haven't been exposed to it and 17 things like that. 18       Math is a language. It's like a second 19 language, because the -- you're looking at formulas. 20 You're not looking at just a sentence of words. And 21 so it has to be taught, and you really need people 22 who enjoy it to teach it. 23       My mom was an elementary school teacher, 24 and she loved teaching the kids reading. She was 25 okay at math, but she really loved the reading</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">118</p> <p>1 piece. And so, you know, I think her students 2 probably did better in reading than they did in math 3 also. 4 But I do appreciate that. 5 What are you doing -- because one of the 6 things that I see, given your location and the 7 population that you work with, you know, we talk 8 about parental engagement. And, you know, having 9 open houses, inviting them to come and visit the 10 school and things like that is nice. 11 But to me, parental engagement is 12 encouraging them to participate in the classroom, to 13 working with them, but also supporting the parents, 14 because you're dealing with -- with students that, 15 from an economic standpoint, struggle. 16 And what I see in some of the schools that 17 are targeting these underserved populations -- and I 18 applaud you in doing that -- that the parents 19 themselves are not in a position to provide as much 20 support to their students as students in other 21 schools. 22 And I think, you know, that is one of the 23 things that I saw with, you know, my fellow 24 students, that their parents -- if it was a single 25 parent, parents are working multiple jobs, there's</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">120</p> <p>1 the utmost ability to achieve at the highest levels. 2 And, unfortunately, our instruction and the support 3 that we were providing didn't result in that. 4 In addition to the question about parent 5 capacity, willingness, I will say I think, if 6 anything -- and I think our families in the video 7 and Mrs. Flores that spoke -- understand candidly, 8 almost more acutely than maybe families in other 9 areas of town, how important education is. 10 And so I think our families very much do 11 know the tremendous value of what education can be; 12 right? This is the silver bullet. This is the 13 thing that can change generational cycles of 14 poverty; right? And many of the individuals in our 15 school, myself included, are a testament to that. 16 And so I would say our families know and 17 value education, the importance of education. 18 With that, we have 100 percent of our 19 families -- truly 100 percent, because we hound 20 them -- participate in our family conferences that 21 are conducted throughout the school year. And as 22 part of those family conferences, we're going over 23 the data for each individual student that families 24 are receiving specific things because of where 25 they're -- based on where their student is leveled,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">119</p> <p>1 less time that they are either willing or able to 2 spend with their students. 3 And I thought, well, if the school can 4 engage and work with the parents to help them out, 5 are there programs that you have -- and I 6 understand, a small school, it's very difficult -- 7 are there things that you're doing to work with the 8 parents to get them to understand the importance of 9 their child's education? 10 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you for your 11 question, Commissioner Robbins. 12 A few things that I would note -- and 13 appreciate your commentary around mathematics and 14 wanting to really ensure we're building that joy and 15 love for math. I personally love math, and so I 16 think when we had those results, it definitely -- 17 and was a former middle school math teacher -- I 18 think those results felt like a gut punch to us. 19 What I will say about that -- and I 20 certainly will agree with you -- this is not about a 21 student capability issue. This was a direct 22 reflection of us, as adults in the building, not 23 being effective in our instruction. 24 So I'll clarify that, that I very much 25 agree with you and believe that our students have</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">121</p> <p>1 specific things that they can do at home to support 2 their scholar, and things that, you know, their 3 older children can be doing to support their 4 scholar, that their student can be reading to a 5 younger sibling that -- you know, we have many -- 6 we're fortunate to have many grandparents raising 7 grandchildren. 8 So some of that is talking about here's 9 how we log into the different programs -- right? -- 10 that are available at home. We've gone into homes 11 and set up Wi-Fi and been on the phone with Comcast 12 in some of our families' homes, because they didn't 13 have Wi-Fi, or they've never used e-mail or Zoom or 14 a computer. Some of that support looks a little bit 15 additional or different maybe for our school than it 16 may in another more affluent area of town. 17 And I will reiterate that our families 18 very much do know that value of education. 19 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Thank you. With 20 regard to facilities, you know, I -- the PSCOC that 21 I have sat on for the last -- well, three and a half 22 years -- they've been increasing the lease 23 assistance. Do you have a gap between what your 24 lease is and the lease assistance you receive? Do 25 you know how much that gap is?</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">122</p> <p>1 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, Commissioner.  2 Our business manager is whispering a 75 percent  3 amount gap. And a tremendous kind of nod to Matt  4 Pahl and the team at PCSNM for that shift in the  5 Legislature. It increased more in the last year  6 than it had over a four-year period in the last  7 year. So we're very excited about that.  8 We're on -- moving in the right track, and  9 we are paying a lot of money to be in a, candidly,  10 pretty rundown spot. So we want to make sure that,  11 you know, the facility really reflects the quality  12 of the program and what our families and students  13 deserve in our community. But, unfortunately, there  14 still is a pretty significant gap between that lease  15 assistance amount.  16 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Right. And I  17 understand. You know, they're increasing it to  18 somewhere close to \$800 per student. But that's  19 less than a quarter of what the average for capital  20 is in New Mexico. And it's about -- people are  21 going to be shocked at this -- it's almost a tenth  22 as much as what Albuquerque spends per student per  23 year.  24 Albuquerque is spending somewhere in the  25 neighborhood of \$6,000 per year per student on</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">124</p> <p>1 or anything -- it's individuals like her that can  2 help charters, because, you know, reaching -- I  3 don't know if you can reach out or have people that  4 could reach out. But there are groups out there  5 that are willing to help charters with capital money  6 and things like that.  7 But it is so important that the State step  8 up, because the State talks about, you know,  9 throwing more money into SEG and everything. And  10 that's great -- you know, the Equalization  11 Guarantee. But then they shortchange small  12 districts, and they shortchange charters on the  13 capital side, and then they have to pull out some of  14 that Equalization Guarantee that's supposed to go  15 into direct education, and it's having to go to pay  16 for their buildings.  17 And that to me is a travesty that this  18 state really needs to address.  19 I applaud you. Thank you for the work  20 that you're doing and continue to support your  21 parents. Thank you.  22 MS. JADE RIVERA: If I can respond, thank  23 you, Commissioner Robbins, and would be thrilled to  24 lobby some of the legislators up in Santa Fe with  25 you about the need for -- for this. We are talking</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">123</p> <p>1 capital and debt service and actual capital --  2 direct capital spending each year.  3 So the gap -- the paper today is talking  4 about a \$3 billion surplus that the State is going  5 to see. And, you know, one of the things that I  6 look at, if this is one of the areas where charter  7 schools could be benefited so much more if the State  8 would actually take the position -- the Legislature  9 has to do this -- to assist the charter schools to  10 get them in to permanent facilities, not just give  11 them the opportunity to borrow money that they have  12 to pay back or, you know, give them this, or give  13 them that, or give them tacit things, but actually  14 work with them.  15 And, again, saying, "Well, you have to be  16 part of the APS program since you're in the APS  17 district," they can add you to the program, but it's  18 ten years before you're going to get any money from  19 them. That's not helping the charter schools and  20 schools like Albuquerque Collegiate.  21 So I applaud you -- earlier, they talked  22 about Jeff Bezos. It was actually his former wife,  23 MacKenzie Scott, who gave \$3 million to Mission  24 Achievement and Success. It's individuals like  25 her -- and I don't know anything about her politics</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">125</p> <p>1 about equity work. I think this is -- should be at  2 the forefront of what we're talking about in terms  3 of facilities and needs for our scholars, really,  4 across the state, and, you know, certainly, for  5 those in the South Valley.  6 So appreciate -- appreciate your comments  7 on that. What I will say is also I would hope that  8 this money would come from New Mexicans for New  9 Mexicans; right? One of the criticisms of charters  10 more nationally is this idea about kind of private  11 and -- private funding. And so I think we really do  12 try to prioritize those public dollars to show what  13 is possible.  14 So appreciate your -- your thoughts and  15 very much share the sentiments regarding facility  16 needs.  17 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Armijo.  18 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank you. So, of  19 course, Commissioner Gipson and Commissioner Robbins  20 have already taken some of my questions and  21 comments.  22 But Albuquerque Collegiate is in my  23 district, so I kind of know -- well, I've lived  24 there my entire life.  25 So just to piggyback on Commissioner</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">126</p> <p>1 Robbins' question about engaging the parents -- and  2 I know how difficult it is when your population of  3 parents probably have two, three jobs, or, like you  4 said, grandparents are helping to raise and older  5 siblings and that sort of thing.  6 I was just curious as to if there -- you  7 touched on a whole slew of items that you're doing  8 to make sure that parents know what's going on. I  9 just wanted to maybe see if you can give me a little  10 bit more about maybe what you're doing in the  11 community, if there's any community collaboration  12 going on.  13 I know that you mentioned Westside  14 Community Center. I know that some of the other  15 community centers in the area, like Alamosa, a  16 little bit further. But maybe some of the other  17 district and charter schools like South Valley  18 Academy, those kinds of places where some of the  19 older students could maybe be sort of mentors to  20 younger students -- I don't know about the  21 parents -- but I know that helps in different ways.  22 So just if there's any collaboration going on in  23 that area.  24 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes. Thank you,  25 Commissioner Armijo. I think this is an area where</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">128</p> <p>1 and if we're trying to, we're probably not doing a  2 great job of it.  3 But the folks at Pacha do counseling  4 services incredibly well. The folks at Homewise are  5 doing homebuying education really, really well. So  6 how can we partner with more of those organizations  7 in our community?  8 And the goal would be that, you know,  9 come, you know, a new campus location, that there  10 would be a centralized hub and kind of, for us,  11 reenvisioning community school options for what that  12 looks like; instead of the school being the holder  13 of all of that information, that we have spaces for  14 our community partners to work and provide  15 information and support our families directly on our  16 campus. So that's very, very much part of our  17 broader plan.  18 But it's a lot of lift to -- to make all  19 of that happen, along with, you know, trying to have  20 walls and a roof.  21 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Got you. That leads  22 into my next sort of question. And I don't -- and  23 if you touched on this, let me know.  24 But have you -- what areas in the  25 South Valley have you looked at? And, also, are</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">127</p> <p>1 we've really tried to continue growing and  2 supporting. So this year is the first year that we  3 have a Dean of School Culture. And a lot of her  4 focus is engagement with our families and the  5 broader community.  6 And so through kind of those family  7 conversations, she's starting to do meetings with  8 the different schools. And so I think we're trying  9 to do more of that engagement and, just candidly,  10 have continued work to do there in how we engage,  11 particularly with some of the other schools in the  12 community for the work that kind of I do myself.  13 We have been really engaged with the folks  14 at Homewise in providing additional supports and  15 information to our families about homebuying --  16 right? -- and what that looks like, that many of our  17 families are not homeowners, but can be. There are  18 a multitude of programs available.  19 And so, really, one of our big goals over  20 the next five years, should we be approved for that  21 renewal, is going to be very focused on these  22 partners that we have similar to that with Pacha.  23 The team for Altura and I speak a lot  24 about, you know, this is a bandwidth issue. We  25 cannot be all things for all people at all times,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">129</p> <p>1 you -- if you're going to expand to middle school,  2 are you also thinking of adding a pre-K?  3 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you for your  4 question. We have worked with the folks at Homewise  5 to be really clear around location, what we want for  6 that, to ensure that we would still be close by.  7 We just recently looked at a few different  8 plots of land. All of those that are in possible  9 contention for that selection are less than  10 10 minutes away from our current location. And so  11 that is very important to us, and, actually, would  12 be a lot closer to many of our families from where  13 they are traveling currently. So that's very  14 exciting for us and the potential of that.  15 Remind me of the second component of your  16 question.  17 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Are you planning to  18 do also a middle school or the pre-K?  19 MS. JADE RIVERA: So those are early  20 conversations about middle school. Obviously, that  21 would have to be something that we know we would  22 have to come to the Commission for approval on that,  23 but definitely some subtle and not so subtle nudges  24 from our families, teachers, community members  25 around that request.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">130</p> <p>1 We would also like to be able to provide 2 pre-K services. And that's something that we've 3 talked about as well with the folks at YDI, even, 4 and a potential partnership that -- you know, pre-K 5 is not something that I know well; right? It's not 6 something that I think anyone on our team feels like 7 they know really well. 8 So before we would do anything like that 9 we would, one, want to build that capacity or bring 10 that capacity on to our team, and, two, look at are 11 there community partners that we could work with 12 that are already doing this work really well, like 13 the folks at YDI, and be able to have that on a 14 community campus. 15 COMMISSIONER ARMILLO: Yeah. I think I 16 heard about the conversations with YDI, because 17 they're -- they provide such a great service. Like 18 you said, leave it to the experts. So, good. Thank 19 you so much. I appreciate that. 20 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Voigt. 21 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Thank you, 22 Madam Chair. I know you're ready to stop answering 23 questions. So this will be quick and fun, 24 hopefully. 25 First of all, I wanted to congratulate you</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">132</p> <p>1 community partners, because you're thinking big 2 picture already. And you're only in your second 3 year -- third year -- fourth year. Where do the 4 years go? I know. What year is it, anyway? Is it 5 2023 or 2024? 6 Anyway, so it's great, because you've got 7 your counseling folks on staff or contracted. You 8 have -- you're looking at Homewise. That's huge for 9 your -- for your adult learners. And then you're 10 looking at YDI. 11 So these are all really well-established 12 organizations that can contribute huge resources 13 and, I mean, exponential knowledge resources to your 14 school and your community. So that's really great 15 thinking ahead. 16 And I would be remiss if I didn't touch 17 upon Algebra II. You know, I think it's great 18 that -- I think it's great that you offer a choice. 19 I hope you do, because -- oh, that's right, so, 20 anyway -- for your kids in their thinking ahead; 21 right? 22 Algebra II -- this is just my personal 23 philosophy -- is a gatekeeper to graduation. And 24 that's how it's been utilized, you know. And I 25 think that if there are more options available that</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">131</p> <p>1 on your Manati Fellowship. For the Commissioners 2 that don't know, the Manati Fellowship is for school 3 leaders of color. We have two Maniti Fellows in 4 Albuquerque, Ms. Rivera and Ms. Jackie Baldwin, the 5 leader of Siembra Leadership High School. 6 Congratulations on that. I hope it's good 7 learning for you in your life. I'm hoping also, 8 through that fellowship -- because you talked about 9 the equity council and how some of those members 10 felt tokenized. I've been there, felt that. 11 Hopefully, that's not coming from how it's 12 been presented to them. Hopefully, there can be 13 some authentic conversation, because I know the 14 folks that are feel tokenized need that empowerment. 15 And if there's a way that you can wrap that -- what 16 you're learning at Manati with your community 17 schools piece and with your parental engagement, the 18 equity council might be a lot easier to swallow for 19 those members. 20 And, yeah, it's something that's mandated. 21 But I think it's necessary, and I think it's 22 something that can be creatively constructed, you 23 know, with really good intentions, and, you know, 24 preventive action behind it. 25 So I really appreciate hearing about your</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">133</p> <p>1 are relevant, like financial literacy, like 2 probability and statistics, those types of data 3 pieces are what are being more utilized now in the 4 21st century than going on a trig/calc path; okay? 5 So there just needs to be choices in that 6 before we funnel every kid into the same mold and 7 force them to take Algebra II before they can 8 graduate, as if it's, you know, a great privilege 9 before they can graduate from high school. 10 I have a lot more other ideas how kids can 11 and should be able to graduate from high school. 12 Like, Carnegie Credits is just seat time. 13 But, anyway, what I wanted to talk about 14 mostly was with your equity council. If you can get 15 them to the Roundhouse, that would be empowering for 16 them, you know, because you're talking about 17 lobbying for money and dollars. That's something 18 that would really help empower them and give them 19 meaning behind them being on an equity council, 20 other than just saying, "Oh, PED is mandating an 21 equity council, would you be on it," you know what I 22 mean, to put some value behind that, especially for 23 the community that you serve. 24 Thanks. 25 THE CHAIR: All right. I think I'm the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">134</p> <p>1 last one. And I don't mind asking questions, 2 because if you don't like talking about your school, 3 I'd be shocked. So if we can give you an hour of 4 being able to talk about your school, I'm happy for 5 that.</p> <p>6 I -- once again, this is -- this school's 7 an easy one for me, because you've been able to show 8 success. And the other thing that I -- that I 9 think, as Commissioner Carrillo said, is the 10 potential; right?</p> <p>11 And I think it's extremely refreshing to 12 hear a school leader come in and say, "Hey, our 13 results aren't where we want them. And it's us."</p> <p>14 Like, it's not -- like oftentimes I hear 15 it's the kids, or it's the families, or it's someone 16 else. And so it makes me feel like there's great 17 potential, because if you put it back in your court 18 of, "We need to do something different," then I 19 think that's where change actually happens is, "What 20 do we do?"</p> <p>21 And so it does seem like those -- like, 22 thinking about the wraparound supports you're 23 providing -- because I do think -- ultimately, 24 schools are there for the academic success of 25 students. We know students, your scholars, need</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">136</p> <p>1 Who's going to be the person to do these 2 partnerships?</p> <p>3 And the community schools model, you're 4 doing it. I think you can easily integrate into 5 what the requirements are so you can get funding to 6 have a person that's doing that work instead of it 7 being another administrative duty that you're doing. 8 Because I know your administrative duties seem to 9 focus on your teachers -- right? -- like, heavily 10 focused on the teachers and supporting the teachers.</p> <p>11 So I don't think we want you to detract 12 from that; right? So -- but your school does need 13 those supports around you. So that would be my 14 encouraging part of -- you're doing it. So I really 15 hope you could take advantage of the funding that's 16 available to support you in that work and help 17 expand your bandwidth, because that includes 18 additional -- an additional person. Like, it's 19 going to fund people for you, and you need the 20 people in your school.</p> <p>21 Yeah. I mean, I don't -- if you had come 22 in and been, like, "Yeah, our kids are tough on 23 math," I think I would have had more questions for 24 you. But just seeing that any time -- as I read 25 through what your school has -- where it started,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">135</p> <p>1 other things to get to that level as well.</p> <p>2 So going back and being, like, okay, what 3 are the wraparound supports they need so we can 4 focus on the math. Like, we need them here to focus 5 on the math. What things do they need to get 6 successful so they can also focus on the math?</p> <p>7 I feel like you're doing so many things 8 already. And I feel like you're not giving yourself 9 credit for doing that, or you're trying to not go 10 down a path of, like, well, we're already doing it, 11 so -- I'm just wondering and hoping. You're doing 12 community schools work. You're doing it. And 13 you're doing equity council work. Like, you're 14 already doing it.</p> <p>15 So I'm hoping you can take advantage of 16 the fact that maybe they're slow pitches for you, 17 and you can hit them out of the park, because -- I 18 hope you apply for community school funding. I mean 19 I really hope you take advantage -- don't take it -- 20 like, get another person in there to help you with 21 those connections; right?</p> <p>22 'Cause there is a bandwidth thing. As a 23 small school, like, those pieces can feel 24 overwhelming of who's going to be the person to 25 reach out to YDI and figure out that partnership?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">137</p> <p>1 where it's come through, where it's gone, it's just 2 continuous growth, like; right?</p> <p>3 Like, I appreci- -- I can't -- I'm going 4 to keep saying I appreciate that it's real, you care 5 about it, and every time there's an issue, you work 6 to correct it. And that's, I think to me, the 7 hallmark of a great school.</p> <p>8 And, once again, I'm super looking forward 9 to the next five years. I really hope that your 10 facilities part can be adapted to match what your 11 students and your community deserves. Like -- and I 12 just wish that that wasn't so difficult. It's so 13 frustrating that that's what's hindering schools is 14 their space. It's so frustrating.</p> <p>15 So, Mr. Pahl, get back to work more -- 16 yeah. But, I mean, like, that's -- it's -- I hate 17 that that's what we have to hear hinders great 18 schools. That's frustrating. So I -- we feel -- I 19 think we all feel for you in that aspect.</p> <p>20 I did see on the -- there's a -- there's a 21 piece in the application -- not the -- the lottery 22 application that seemed to be, like, a point of 23 contention. And I don't know if it's -- 24 necessarily, I want to like, get, into it that far. 25 But it just -- I'm concerned about -- once again, it</p>

138	<p>1 seems like we have to be cautious of autonomy and 2 compliance and recommendations and what that looks 3 like and what a school is required to do more than 4 what they're doing and the practice behind it. 5 In the exact same similar vein, there's a 6 comment in the analysis and in the responses about 7 the mission and following kids further beyond 8 basically sixth grade, like tracking them into 9 college. 10 And I think -- I'm just worried that we're 11 getting too specific on telling a school what to do 12 in those things. 13 So I'm concerned by what I've read in 14 this. And I don't know where is the right place to 15 talk about it, because I don't think it's an 16 Albuquerque Collegiate issue, necessarily. But I 17 guess maybe -- we're just going to talk about it. 18 Okay. So, first, the lottery application. 19 It was mentioned to not have it have a log-in and 20 password and that there were a couple of other 21 questions that it was recommended be removed. 22 But in -- the response you gave was not 23 necessarily that you would do those things. So can 24 you talk about that? And CSD maybe be prepared as 25 well to talk about this part?</p>	140	<p>1 online portal, because we very much feel it is in 2 line with what law and statute stipulate. And there 3 is nothing that really says that that cannot be -- 4 cannot be utilized. If anything, we do think that 5 that is -- that does allow for greater access for 6 families, that they can submit an application at any 7 time, and it then goes through an online system. 8 And as we've gotten a little bit bigger 9 and now have growing waitlists -- we started the 10 school year with a waitlist for every grade -- that 11 we need to ensure that there is equitable access to 12 that. And an online system then takes out personal 13 bias as the system runs the lottery versus a human. 14 We know we are certainly more prone to error as 15 humans than -- than a technology-based system. So I 16 would kind of clarify that. 17 I think, you know, we -- we stated very 18 much our stance on this and any commentary that was 19 provided during the site visit. We stated that in 20 our analysis response. So I would defer to that for 21 any additional comments. 22 THE CHAIR: I don't know if CSD wants to 23 respond. And then, Commissioner Gipson, if you want 24 to keep on the same topic. 25 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yes.</p>
139	<p>1 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, Madam Chair. 2 Certainly happy to speak about that. And I think -- 3 and our General Counsel is here to provide any 4 additional context with that. 5 And I think we -- what we have to kind of 6 sit with and consider and would ask you all as well 7 as the Charter Schools Division to consider, is what 8 are true mandates as stipulated by statute and 9 Administrative Code and what are recommendations, 10 and that those are not the same thing. And so, by 11 law, we have to acknowledge that. 12 I come to this work formerly working in 13 education policy for Mr. Pahl back there. And so 14 certainly don't mean to bring up any of this in -- 15 you know, to be combative or contentious, but 16 knowing, really acutely knowing, what those distinct 17 differences are. 18 And where I think we see eye to eye on 19 some things and those recommendations, we've made 20 those changes; right? We have removed the "How did 21 you hear about us" question on the lottery 22 application for this upcoming school year. I don't 23 necessarily agree with that. I think it helps us 24 gather information. But we have removed that. 25 With that, I -- we are going to keep our</p>	141	<p>1 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: I'm happy to 2 respond, Chair Burt and Commissioners. Thank you. 3 I didn't realize that you had removed the 4 question. But that's listening to feedback. 5 Where the CSD is coming from -- and I 6 believe that we wrote this in a report -- is that at 7 one point, we received information about a lawsuit 8 about to happen. And I'm not sitting next to an 9 attorney like others are in the room. But we did 10 receive information about a lawsuit that was coming 11 at charter schools for having a lottery process that 12 seemed to bias some students. 13 And so we took a look at our guidance. 14 And it is guidance. I recognize it is guidance. 15 It's guidance based on best practice from national, 16 as well as our understanding with years and years of 17 experience working with charter schools. 18 And unfortunately, sometimes having to 19 hear people say, "Oh, yeah, those charter schools 20 are doing so well because they screen their 21 students." 22 That is, like, the worst thing I have to 23 hear, because I believe that our charter schools 24 work really hard to have excellent results. So even 25 if it's a perception that that might be occurring,</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">142</p> <p>1 not even a reality, those are hard words to hear.  2 And I don't think the charter schools movement wants  3 to have anybody believing that they aren't providing  4 equal access to their schools.  5 So the feedback for the school, I believe,  6 is also based on not just what is best practice; I  7 would argue that logging into a system and having to  8 have a password is an equity issue. I know that not  9 everybody has access to technology. We just talked  10 about it.  11 I really appreciate the system sort of  12 randomly choosing your students. I wonder if  13 there's a way that a school could enter data for  14 some families that maybe don't have the tech skills  15 or equipment and that sort of a thing. And maybe  16 you do that, which is wonderful.  17 But that's where we were coming from. We  18 wanted for schools to take a look at the lottery  19 guidance. And I -- you know, I hear PEC wanting to  20 separate out also what Public Education Commission  21 puts out and with what the State puts out.  22 But what we're looking for is really  23 trying to eliminate any questions about how students  24 get in. And maybe there does need to be something  25 in rule -- statute or rule. We can talk about that.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">144</p> <p>1 unable to access it, because they don't -- or could  2 they come into the school and someone do it for them  3 as they're there?  4 So just that -- because this is  5 perception. You know, when someone decides that  6 they're going to write an article in the newspaper,  7 they're going to look through, and they're going to  8 take a look at someone's lotteries, and they're  9 going to say, "Oh, look at that charter school. You  10 can only do it if you've got access to that  11 computer, or you know how to do this."  12 And a lot of families may not.  13 So you don't have the context, and you  14 don't have the opportunity to hear the school answer  15 to that.  16 I do appreciate the randomness of someone  17 else doing it. You know, that certainly makes it  18 easier. I'm not a huge fan of the universal lottery  19 for the -- I think it -- to me, it should stay with  20 the -- with the school, you know. You have so  21 little autonomy that let -- do it.  22 But, you know, we're trying our best to  23 make sure that, you know, lotteries are equitable.  24 And a lot of the questions that guidance was "Don't  25 ask this," it's because when there is that human</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">143</p> <p>1 Some people have already talked about there being a  2 universal lottery across the state. Other states do  3 that. And it's centralized, so that there's no  4 question at all about the lottery. You know,  5 New Mexico might want to consider it.  6 But in this particular case, we were  7 concerned about the additional questions. And there  8 was a question about needing to access technology to  9 enter the lottery process.  10 Thank you.  11 THE CHAIR: All right. Thanks. We'll do  12 Commissioner Gipson. Then I'll --  13 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: And thanks for that.  14 That was -- excuse me -- that was my concern, that  15 if -- and I know we've spoken about this at public  16 meetings -- that there has to be multiple  17 opportunities for access to a lottery application so  18 that if a family doesn't have the technology access,  19 that they can do a traditional paper copy and  20 someone else can input it so that there isn't -- and  21 I -- it's not a concern of, for your school in  22 particular, that you don't -- you ha- -- it's  23 obvious that you have families that are diverse,  24 that are accessing it.  25 But are there others similarly that are</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">145</p> <p>1 touch on it, and you're asking, like, "What school  2 did you come from," you know, in some areas, that  3 could be, "Oh, I don't know what kind of student  4 that potentially could be."  5 And someone could say, "Well, we're not  6 going to take that person."  7 It's certainly when you're doing it  8 electronically. But that perception, once again,  9 people from the outside don't know that that's  10 what's happening, so that they see it, and  11 they're -- you know, all charters -- we go into  12 legislative sessions, and you don't know what a  13 legislator is whispered in their ear, and then  14 it's -- you know, it becomes, "That's what's  15 happening everywhere."  16 And that's -- you know, we're trying to  17 protect everyone through this.  18 So is there an opportunity for parents --  19 families -- if they don't have the technology, to  20 submit an application?  21 MS. JADE RIVERA: Yes, Madam Chair and  22 Commissioner Gipson. I know, again, we have a  23 number of documents in front of us. What I would  24 refer everyone to would be the school's response to  25 the preliminary analysis, where we addressed this.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">146</p> <p>1 And I'll just read from that. It's on 2 Page 5. 3 So regarding the school's lottery system, 4 "We would reaffirm that the school remains compliant 5 with all legal requirements." 6 The -- the school enrollment system is 7 very much equitable in that we stated, during the 8 site visit, and then furthermore in this document, 9 clarified that families can always submit enrollment 10 applications and registration information in person 11 via phone or through the online system. 12 This actually ensures equitable access to 13 the system for all families at all times. 14 Again, we would request to refer -- there 15 was a comment made during the site visit of this, 16 you know, idea of the inability of a single mother 17 of four to complete an online application because it 18 requires a log-in and password. 19 This statement was felt to be very -- you 20 know, highly offensive to our team, and we sincerely 21 hope that this kind of a statement wasn't made or 22 shared with any of our families, or I hope they have 23 already logged out at this time. I did not want to 24 have to repeat that. 25 With that, I would refer all to the site</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">148</p> <p>1 things, because it's not -- I should not use that as 2 an excuse. So I apologize. I missed it. 3 The perception is not our perception. The 4 perception I'm talking about is someone out there 5 that decides they're going to write, you know, a 6 scathing article, and they're going to cherry-pick 7 information. And that's -- you know, we spend too 8 much of our time doing damage control as opposed to 9 forward progress work. And that's -- you know, 10 that's what gets so frustrating. 11 And it's frustrating for you, too. So I 12 appreciate that. 13 THE CHAIR: Thanks. I think that's, like, 14 a perfect -- yeah, we do a lot of damage control 15 instead of being proactive and thinking about what 16 actually works best for the families. So thanks for 17 that. 18 I have one other one. It's going to be 19 about the mission, the mission, how it's described 20 and tracked. The tracking of the mission, which I 21 know -- once again, I saw in the response, you said, 22 we didn't have mission goals, so there's not a 23 rating for mission goals. And I hear that. But I 24 still want to talk about it. So bear with me. 25 So I saw that -- you know, the Charter</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">147</p> <p>1 visit team code of conduct as was outlined in the 2 renewal site visit. That shares kind of 3 stipulations around what kind of conduct should be 4 held throughout that, including this idea of kind of 5 non-judgment about that. 6 I find it hurtful that a statement like 7 that would be made or assumptions would be made 8 about any family, regardless of their marital status 9 or number of children that they have. 10 With that, you know, if we are talking 11 about this issue of perception, I would gladly 12 invite anyone to come to our building and look at 13 the students and families that we are very fortunate 14 to be able to work alongside with, look at the 15 building that our school is in. 16 And so it is difficult for me to hear some 17 of that commentary, because I very wholeheartedly 18 disagree with it, and think that our team does truly 19 an exceptional job of acquiring those applications, 20 whether it be via phone or in person or online. And 21 when we do that, we note it so we have a tracked 22 information system of how our families are applying. 23 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thank you. And I 24 apologize if I missed it, because it's not an excuse 25 to say we've got multiple applications and we miss</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">149</p> <p>1 School Division saw -- asked -- how are you ensuring 2 your students are career and college ready; right? 3 How are you tracking them beyond your school? 4 And I think that in your response, you're, 5 like, we are -- like, we're helping them get into 6 sixth grade. I saw, when the final analysis came 7 out, I was like, no, like, beyond sixth grade, what 8 does that look like, beyond sixth grade into college 9 and career? 10 The only concern I had about that was in 11 the analysis was that we kind of -- not "we" -- CSD 12 had said that Albuquerque Collegiate should put 13 their mission goal to be that they should be 14 following kids later on, which I would hesitate to 15 tell a school what their mission goal should be next 16 year. That's the first thing I'm going to say is 17 I'm not -- I think the school should come up with 18 their mission goal. 19 I also think it's very, very difficult, 20 maybe improbable to impossible, to track a fifth 21 grader to their high school graduation later. I 22 think that would be extremely difficult to do. So I 23 don't know if that's something -- if that's part 24 of -- I'd be really interested to know if that's 25 part of a plan.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">150</p> <p>1           Because I saw -- we do have a plan to 2 track kids after Albuquerque Collegiate. So can you 3 talk about -- is that what I heard from you in your 4 presentation and in here that you're doing extensive 5 work with your fifth graders on getting them into 6 looking at charter schools or traditional schools -- 7 like, all their options for sixth grade. Do you 8 have something that follows them after sixth grade? 9           MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you, Madam Chair, 10 for that question. And certainly agree with the 11 sentiments regarding the kind of suggestion around 12 what Mission-Specific Goals should be. 13           We're excited to be able to engage in that 14 conversation with the Commission and identify those 15 for us as a school. 16           With that, I would say we have -- we very 17 much do have that plan for our students over kind of 18 what that looks like for them in the next year and 19 next few years. We have been in early conversations 20 with other school leaders in the community about 21 what this looks like, one of those being Chris Eide 22 at Turquoise Trail Charter School and hearing from 23 him about the work that they're doing to follow 24 students; right? 25           Turquoise Trail is one of the oldest</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">152</p> <p>1           specifically right now to indicate to you, your 2 teachers, your families, your students, that you are 3 seeing success in your mission, like, that you are 4 implementing your mission? What data are you 5 looking at? 6           MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you for that, 7 Madam Chair. I think the -- one of the areas that 8 we are most excited about is regarding teacher 9 coaching and support. And I think that is 10 something -- as we think about Mission-Specific 11 Goals -- and when those came about kind of around 12 the time of our initial application and charter 13 approval, that was something that was still kind 14 of -- those were early conversations of 15 Mission-Specific Goals. 16           But I very much remember it being about, 17 "Well, what makes your school unique?" Right? 18           And we very much feel that our teacher 19 coaching and support is a unique aspect of our 20 organization, something that we do really well and 21 that we're committed to doing as we grow. I don't 22 want to see that. And I'm worried -- I'm not 23 worried, I guess. 24           But I would be concerned, as the school 25 grows and serves more students and has the</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">151</p> <p>1           charter schools in the state of New Mexico and now 2 has kind of a longer standing history to see what it 3 is and how they're supporting their students beyond 4 their time at Turquoise Trail. 5           So that's been really informative for us. 6 So I think, while we have early plans for next year 7 and the next few years, certainly something that we 8 are interested in looking at over the kind of course 9 of our organization and the -- as our students 10 continue to grow at Albuquerque Collegiate and 11 beyond it. 12           With that, we -- as I said, we're excited 13 to be able to engage in our Mission-Specific Goals 14 and already have some ideas in place. While I don't 15 think that this may necessarily be a critical piece 16 to that, we see other areas of higher importance 17 that we would like to see the Commission really 18 measuring the effectiveness of the organization year 19 over year. 20           THE CHAIR: So right now, I know -- once 21 again, I know you haven't -- you did not opt into 22 mission goals when you first started. But I am 23 interested -- you -- I know your mission is 24 important to your school. 25           So what is it that you are looking at</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">153</p> <p>1           opportunity to coach and support more teachers, that 2 something like that, a program like that, may not 3 continue to be as robust. So I think that's 4 something we're really excited about, because we see 5 the direct impact and influence that it provides to 6 the success of our scholars and the success of our 7 teachers; right? 8           I think they -- again, these are 9 teachers -- Mr. Sapien being one of our more veteran 10 teachers, we have many new to the profession, 11 alternatively teachers, teachers going in as student 12 teacher observers that want to stay at and stay at 13 working in our organization. So I think they know 14 and hopefully very much feel that they are the most 15 valuable asset in that building every single day. 16           And so I want to ensure -- our team wants 17 to ensure that we continue to prioritize that as an 18 organization. 19           THE CHAIR: Okay. So I appreciate that. 20 I do -- I like it. I want to go one step further, 21 because that's kind of the how you're doing it. 22 What is the outcome? What outcomes are you 23 measuring to show that that's -- once again, to 24 ensure that your mission is successful. What's the 25 outcome that you're measuring?</p>

154	<p>1 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you for that 2 question, Madam Chair. I think, certainly, the 3 results that our students produce.</p> <p>4 What I would also say there is the kind of 5 inputs, outputs, and outcomes; right? And so I 6 think something that we're more eager to dive into 7 about exactly how we would like to see that measured 8 and are eager to get that feedback from you all as 9 well.</p> <p>10 I can tell you -- I'm not sure if any of 11 the Commissioners -- I think some of the incoming 12 were able to attend our session on Thursday morning 13 at the PCSNM conference about our teacher coaching 14 and support, and brought up, you know, just minute 15 by minute, like, truly, how many minutes teachers 16 have -- each individual teacher has received 17 coaching and support or debrief meetings, 18 observations this school year. That is well into 19 the thousands at this point for their individual 20 coaching and support.</p> <p>21 So we're really excited to be able to 22 continue to maintain that. While I think it will be 23 a challenge, it is something we've heavily 24 prioritized. So I would like to see, truly, like, 25 the minutes and their growth over time, how that's</p>	156	<p>1 integrate into what you're doing? Just curious.</p> <p>2 MS. JADE RIVERA: Thank you for that 3 question, Commissioner Carrillo. Our scholars 4 receive enrichment instruction every day. That 5 varies between physical education and art 6 instruction. With the limitations of the size of 7 the building right now, unfortunately, we do not 8 have a dedicated art or music room. Those are very 9 much part of future facility plans.</p> <p>10 But our students do receive art and PE 11 instruction every day.</p> <p>12 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Terrific, because 13 we know the way music relates to math. And I know, 14 of course, you know that. So thank you very much.</p> <p>15 And I also want to tell you I really 16 appreciate your forthrightness in owning the math 17 question around -- you just said it's the adults and 18 the curriculum and what we need to do. I just 19 really appreciate your owning that.</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Armijo.</p> <p>21 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank you. So I 22 move that the Public Education Commission approve 23 the renewal application for Albuquerque Collegiate 24 Charter School for a five-year term from 2023 to 25 2028, without condition.</p>
155	<p>1 factoring in with their evaluation scores over -- 2 seeing all of those elements included in our 3 Mission-Specific Goal.</p> <p>4 THE CHAIR: All right. And I think -- I 5 actually am, like, more and more a fan of 6 Mission-Specific Goals the longer I'm on the 7 Commission, because I do think it does require an 8 element of thoughtfulness that's -- a mission is 9 what is driving the school; right? So really 10 considering what the mission is, what it's doing and 11 how you measure it is -- like, I'm looking forward 12 to the spring and what that looks like for you, 13 because I think there's many opportunities for what 14 it could be and the innovation and how the teacher 15 work that you do is connected to all of it.</p> <p>16 I think that will be -- that seems to be a 17 very unique piece to a mission goal and would be 18 interested to see how it could be incorporated into 19 it.</p> <p>20 All right.</p> <p>21 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Okay.</p> <p>22 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo.</p> <p>23 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Art and music. 24 I'm just curious. We didn't talk about that at all. 25 We haven't spoken about that at all. How does that</p>	157	<p>1 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Second.</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Second.</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: There's a motion and a second. 4 Any other discussion from Commissioners? 5 (No response.)</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: All right. Seeing none, 7 Secretary Armijo, if you could call roll.</p> <p>8 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner 9 Carrillo.</p> <p>10 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Yes.</p> <p>11 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Gipson.</p> <p>12 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yes.</p> <p>13 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner 14 Robbins.</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes.</p> <p>16 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner -- Vice 17 Chair Voigt.</p> <p>18 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes.</p> <p>19 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Secretary Armijo 20 votes yes.</p> <p>21 Chair Burt.</p> <p>22 THE CHAIR: Yes.</p> <p>23 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: That passes, six to 24 zero.</p> <p>25 THE CHAIR: Congratulations, and we will</p>



158	<p>1 adjourn until 2:00 p.m. 2 (Recess held, 12:40 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.) 3 E. Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School 4 THE CHAIR: All right. Good afternoon. 5 It is 2:00, and I'll go ahead and call the meeting 6 back to order. 7 We are on Item E, which is the charter 8 school renewal for Cottonwood Classical Preparatory 9 School. 10 If I could ask those of you on the panel 11 here to just introduce yourself, and then we will go 12 to the Public Education Department evaluation. 13 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Hello, Madam Chair, 14 members of the Commission my name is John Binnert. 15 I'm a Moriarty native and current executive director 16 of Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School. 17 MS. CARISA PETRIE: Hello. My name is 18 Carisa Petrie. And I am the assistant director at 19 Cottonwood Classical. 20 MS. RATHI CASEY: Hello. My name is Rathi 21 Casey. I'm the governing council president. And 22 with me here is Susan LaBarge, who's also a 23 governing council member. 24 THE CHAIR: Thank you. So that will take 25 us to Item A, Public Education Department</p>	160	<p>1 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Melissa Armijo. I 2 am District 1, which is South Valley all the way 3 from Isleta Pueblo to Paseo Del Norte and west of 4 the Rio Grande River. 5 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Glenna Voigt. 6 District 3, which is Greater Albuquerque, which 7 encompasses Louisiana to the river, Gibson to Paseo 8 Del Norte. And this is my last month. 9 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Robbins, do you 10 want to go ahead and go? And then Commissioner 11 Manis. 12 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: David Robbins, East 13 Albuquerque, basically east of Louisiana. Thank 14 you. 15 COMMISSIONER MANIS: KT Manis, District 9, 16 which now covers Eddy County, Otero County, Lea 17 County, and a small corner of Chaves County. 18 THE CHAIR: And I'm Bekka Burt, 19 District 4. 20 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: Thank you, 21 Commissioners. 22 I also want to introduce my staff. You 23 all know me. I've visited the school. Corina 24 Chavez, the director of the Charter Schools 25 Division. And so we'll go this way.</p>
159	<p>1 Evaluation. 2 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: (Inaudible.) 3 THE CHAIR: All right. Come on up. 4 MR. MIKE VIGIL II: My apologies. 5 Madam Chair, members of the Commission, good to see 6 you again. I'm Mike Vigil, and I'm the business 7 manager for Cottonwood Classical. 8 THE CHAIR: All right. Public Education 9 Department Evaluation. Director Chavez. 10 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: Thank you, 11 Chair Burt. Welcome, everyone. Good to see you. 12 Plenty of good people in the audience. 13 And I know that you all are new to the current 14 Public Education Commission, so I actually am going 15 to ask the Commissioners to introduce themselves 16 first, and then we'll introduce my staff, and then 17 I'll go into the recommendation. 18 Starting on this end, please. 19 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Pattie Gipson. I'm 20 from the southern part of the state, District 7, 21 mostly Doña Ana County. 22 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Steve Carrillo, 23 District 10, northern part, everything to the 24 Colorado border, so Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, Colfax, 25 Taos, except the Four Corners area.</p>	161	<p>1 DR. BRIGETTE RUSSELL: Brigitte Russell, 2 Deputy Director. 3 MS. MARTICA DAVIS: Martica Davis, 4 Authorizing Practices Administrator. 5 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Missy Brown, Technical 6 Assistance and Training Administrator. 7 MS. LUCY VALENZUELA: Lucy Valenzuela, 8 Technical Assistance and Training. 9 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: And some of the 10 members of the team aren't here, or may be on video. 11 But I'm going to go ahead and -- 12 THE CHAIR: We have more over here. 13 MS. JULIA BARNES: Julia Barnes. I'm the 14 attorney for the PEC. 15 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: Thank you. 16 Let me go ahead and get started. I first 17 just want to express my gratitude to everyone who 18 was involved and worked so hard on this process: 19 the schools and their community, the volunteers who 20 are on the board, the Public Education Commission 21 and staff in the Charter Schools Division who were 22 part of the site visit, and those who contributed 23 behind the scenes. 24 This process is long and included many 25 documents. If you want to find them, they're on the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">162</p> <p>1 Public Education Commission's webpage.  2 There's a link to all the renewal  3 documents. Started out with Part A on August 19th,  4 which didn't have academic data, so we updated it on  5 September 2nd.  6 We also sent a preliminary annual report  7 September 12th.  8 Part B was sent to us from the school on  9 September 15th.  10 We conducted a site visit to the school.  11 November 1st, we published a preliminary  12 analysis for the school, and we gave schools an  13 opportunity to respond. Thank you for sending the  14 response on November 15th.  15 And then December 1st was when we sent the  16 final recommendation.  17 Renewing schools is a complex process and  18 circumstances particular to the past four years make  19 the renewal process even more challenging.  20 As you all know, the policies and  21 practices have evolved at the PED, and some of what  22 is in the Performance Framework is no longer  23 applicable.  24 But that's not the case with this school.  25 That was less of an issue. With this school, the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">164</p> <p>1 Also, and lastly, there's this balancing  2 act that we have between holding charter schools to  3 the same, if not more, rigorous standards as the  4 traditional public schools, and honoring their  5 autonomy as unique entities.  6 The Charter Schools Division was really  7 diligent in reviewing all that it had before it. We  8 collected data from Albuquerque Public Schools. We  9 visit the schools. We -- we read the contract and  10 we were essentially looking to see if the school  11 implemented what was promised in the contract it had  12 with APS, and, if those terms were evident in terms  13 of what was in the renewal application, what we saw  14 during the site visit, and in the site visit reports  15 for the past four years that we received from  16 Albuquerque Public Schools.  17 We acknowledge that there's always room to  18 improve any process. And we recognize that there  19 were some components of this renewal process that  20 could be refined.  21 First, the renewal documents that we sent  22 for the school were not as comprehensive as we would  23 have liked them to be. At the same time, we felt it  24 was really important to give the schools information  25 as quickly as possible.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">163</p> <p>1 challenge was taking a school which has been  2 authorized by Albuquerque Public Schools and taking  3 into consideration their Performance Framework and  4 indicators -- we all align with State statute -- but  5 really looking at what another authorizer has been  6 evaluating the school against and looking at the  7 school just in this -- for the site visit, to make a  8 recommendation.  9 I usually take this time to put a plug  10 towards our -- our plans to revise the Performance  11 Framework, and I have copies of the Draft Academic  12 Performance Framework and invite you all to be  13 involved in the process, taking a look at what we  14 have there and offering some feedback.  15 Also, during this charter schools term,  16 was the global pandemic. And not that I want to  17 blame it on everything, but it did cause some blips  18 in the information that we have available for us,  19 not to mention the challenges that the school may  20 have experienced from working online and really  21 working with kids during this really difficult time.  22 So my gratitude for everybody at the  23 school for sticking with it and supporting your  24 school -- your students and your families. I think  25 that's really important.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">165</p> <p>1 We're still waiting for the full set of  2 academic data to be released. I saw the e-mail  3 that -- that the head administrator sent to someone  4 at the PED. And, again, we're still waiting.  5 We also -- so we don't have growth data  6 for this school, which is unfortunate, and we are  7 hoping that next year we'll have growth data for  8 everybody.  9 We also asked for and carefully read the  10 responses to the preliminary report. We corrected  11 any ratings that warranted correction if evidence  12 was present to justify a change.  13 And some responses were not, but some  14 were.  15 Also, we acknowledge that the renewal  16 application said that we would give a preliminary  17 indication about renewal, nonrenewal, or renewal  18 with conditions with the preliminary. And we did  19 not send that out. I consulted with the Chair, and  20 we felt like let's use as much data as we can have  21 available before we make those recommendations.  22 So we -- we held off, but we hope that in  23 Part B Progress Report, we provided some insight as  24 to how the CSD understood the school's performance.  25 So, ultimately, the renewal process is a</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">166</p> <p>1 time for making serious decisions about the school, 2 but it's also a time for reflection. And we heard 3 that when we were at the school. We felt like staff 4 and families and -- and students, even, were 5 forthright and open and reflecting to us about how 6 the learning community was functioning and how the 7 successes can be sustained, and how the areas in 8 need of improvement could be improved. 9 So with that spirit in mind, the CSD has 10 recommended renewal without conditions for 11 Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School. 12 And as part of our final analysis and 13 recommendations, we did acknowledge that, in 14 response to 2.a., the Educational Program, there was 15 an issue of semantics regarding the type of special 16 education provided at that school. 17 Cottonwood Classical Preparatory uses a 18 combination of inclusion and small group models for 19 special education support. And while the term 20 "pullout" was used during one of our focus groups, 21 the CSD would acknowledge that during our site 22 visit, we did -- we did see other ways of supporting 23 students. And we -- we also looked at the school's 24 record and saw that over time, there's been 25 increasing support for special ed students, and we</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">168</p> <p>1 Cottonwood Classical joining our cohort -- or 2 portfolio -- of schools. We know that the school is 3 a really beautiful place. I was fortunate enough to 4 go on the site visit. And I have to admit I got 5 goosebumps when I visited the music room. So thank 6 you. 7 THE CHAIR: All right. That'll take us to 8 Item B, which is the School Comments. And the floor 9 is yours. You'll have no more than 30 minutes, 10 please. 11 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Thank you very much, 12 Corina, and thank you to the Commission. So to 13 present our school, we decided to focus on just two 14 elements today. The first is a handout, old-school 15 one-pager with two sides, because we wanted to 16 really highlight what we -- what we do and the 17 outcomes of what we do. 18 So on one side, you have a sort of summary 19 of overall performance, with that top chart showing 20 our middle school students in English Language Arts 21 compared with the State averages. 22 Now, because the data hasn't been 23 disaggregated to the extent that we would like to 24 see, I had to use a statewide comparison that's 25 K-12, or, really, 3 through 8 and 11.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">167</p> <p>1 encourage the school to continue along that path, 2 meeting the needs of the -- all the students that 3 attend. 4 Second, in response to 2.e., Equity and 5 Identity, we acknowledge that the school actually 6 did submit the CLR Readiness Assessment. And as a 7 result of verifying that information -- I think we 8 had some bad information, which is exactly why we 9 asked you to respond to our preliminary. But we 10 were able to verify that you had, in fact -- the 11 school had, in fact, submitted that. 12 So in the final analysis, we made that 13 indicator change to Meets Standards. 14 And it wasn't just about submitting the 15 required documents. There were many things that the 16 school did also that reflected a true commitment to 17 equity and identity, including using the score card 18 to look at instructional materials, and having 19 training with Dr. Hollie, who is an expert in the 20 area, working with staff. 21 And, for this school, the equity council 22 not only involves the adults, but the students at 23 the school. 24 And so we wanted to acknowledge that 25 and -- and we are happy to have the PEC contemplate</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">169</p> <p>1 But you can see our middle school students 2 for math, proficient and advanced compared with the 3 state average. And then eighth and eleventh grade 4 science compared with the state average. 5 And then that second chart is just the 6 SAT. And it's a little hard to read. I apologize. 7 The first chart says that 60 percent of our students 8 met both the math and ERW benchmarks, compared with 9 the state average of 14 percent. 10 80 percent of our students met the 11 benchmarks for ERW. 12 And 62 percent met or exceeded the 13 benchmark for math, with only 19 percent of 14 students -- relatively speaking only, but to us 15 that's still a big number -- not meeting either 16 benchmark. 17 And on the backside, I -- what I did is I 18 printed off just the first couple of columns of a 19 much larger spreadsheet that's included in the 20 renewal folder that shows our academic target. 21 So this is our baseline data. It's not 22 really fair to compare apples and oranges. This was 23 a new assessment to NM-MSSA, how our students 24 performed on the SAT and also the NM-MSSA 25 assessment.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">170</p> <p>1 And you'll notice we added one of our own 2 subgroups, which is students on intervention in the 3 middle school grades, so that we can track for 4 ourselves how our intervention programs are working. 5 And we have a spreadsheet that aims to 6 look at every subgroup over a five-year period and 7 track how we're doing with regard to our own goals 8 for growth and progress. 9 And the other thing that we wanted to do, 10 because I think it's really important to hear as 11 much as possible directly from the source, the 12 people that are the lifeblood of an organization 13 every day, we put together a video. 14 I want to thank Ashley Weaver, our 15 communications officer, for getting this done. It's 16 about 12 minutes long, and we hope that you enjoy 17 it. Thank you. 18 (Video played.) 19 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Okay. That's it for 20 our school presentation. Thank you. 21 THE CHAIR: All right. Thank you. So 22 that will take us to Item C, which is any Public 23 Comment. And I'll give Missy a moment to -- 24 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Figure out how the 25 microphone works?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">172</p> <p>1 today says a lot about the PEC's strong new 2 direction that puts kids first. We urge the PEC to 3 renew Cottonwood Classical's charter and to welcome 4 them into our state's portfolio of strong charter 5 schools. 6 Thank you. 7 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next on the list is 8 Eva -- or Ava (ph) -- I'm going to promote you to 9 the panel, and I would like you to spell your first 10 and last name, please, for the court reporter. 11 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hi. My name is Eva 12 Haag. E-v-a H-a-a-g. 13 And I just wanted to come before this 14 committee and say one of my favorite things about 15 Cottonwood is the small classes. You know, usually 16 at public schools, you see that classes range from 17 25 kids to 30 kids packed in a small room. And at 18 Cottonwood, we have classrooms that, you know, at 19 most, reach, like, 20 kids. 20 I really don't have that many kids in my 21 classroom, which makes it really easy to connect 22 with my teachers and connect with my peers, which I 23 think is great. And it's very supportive to the 24 learning that we do at Cottonwood, since it is very 25 rigorous and it's IB-focused.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">171</p> <p>1 First, we have the person I just promoted. 2 Sara Fitzgerald. 3 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hi, again, Madam Chair, 4 Commissioners. Sara Fitzgerald, 5 F-i-t-z-g-e-r-a-l-d, speaking on behalf of the Board 6 of Directors of the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of 7 Commerce. 8 We are in strong support of Cottonwood 9 Classical's renewal. Cottonwood Classical may be a 10 fresh face here at the PEC, but they're not new. 11 For nearly 15 years, they've established themselves 12 as one of the best high schools in the country, and 13 for good reason. 14 Their reading and science proficiencies 15 put them in the top 10 percent of our state schools. 16 And many of the students' participation in the 17 International Baccalaureate Programme mean they can 18 and do successfully compete with their peers 19 worldwide. 20 Meanwhile, the school's use of the Paideia 21 Program teaches their students critical thinking and 22 communication skills that help them become engaged 23 citizens and leaders right here at home in our 24 community. 25 The fact that they're here before you</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">173</p> <p>1 And kind of leading into that, the 2 teachers are very, very supportive of our education. 3 For instance, my math teacher, he grades our 4 assignments. And for every assignment, he puts, you 5 know, what we did right, what could use improvement, 6 as well as ways to reach out. You know, "Come after 7 class," "Come talk to me during class," "E-mail at 8 any time." 9 It's a very, very supportive environment, 10 which is especially important, again, for IB 11 learning, since it is much more rigorous than, you 12 know, your average high school. 13 And being an IB student, there is 14 definitely some stress that comes with the 15 curriculum. So dealing with that really works out 16 when you reach out to your teachers. And, of 17 course, with these small classes, with these little 18 ways that the teachers, you know, promote reaching 19 out, it makes this a lot easier to deal with stress 20 and to deal with, you know, how hard the education 21 is. 22 And, overall, Cottonwood is a great school 23 that's really helped me develop as a person to 24 communicate and to reach out when I need help. So 25 thank you very much.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">174</p> <p>1 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you. I'll 2 promote you back to Attendee. We'll stick with our 3 kids who are here on Zoom. 4 And I have been given instructions that 5 it's Matthew Alexander. I'm going to promote you. 6 And, again, please spell your name for the court 7 reporter. 8 FROM THE PUBIC: Hello. My name is Adarsh 9 Matthew Alexander, and I'm a junior at Cottonwood 10 Classical Preparatory School. I joined CCPS in 11 seventh grade when my family moved to Albuquerque 12 from India in 2018. And ever since, I've had a 13 wonderful academic life at this school. 14 In all honesty, I don't think my life 15 would be where it is today if my parents had decided 16 to take me to another school, or if my student 17 (verbatim) didn't get into the school via the 18 lottery program. 19 Although the pandemic was difficult for 20 everyone, I believe my experience in online 21 schooling had been much easier and less stressful 22 than many of my peers who go to other schools. 23 As difficult as the IB Programme may seem, 24 the International Baccalaureate Programme and how 25 difficult it often is, I'm happy that I am acquiring</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">176</p> <p>1 me through the challenging times that 2020 2 presented, and they were really flexible and 3 supportive of me in my personal learning journey. 4 In eighth grade, the year after, I was 5 able to get involved in more clubs, so I joined 6 Speech and Debate, Newspaper Club, and Safe Sounds 7 [ph]. And all three of these kind of put me into 8 leadership positions. And I really appreciated 9 that. 10 So I learned that, this year, that was the 11 kind of clubs I wanted to join. During this process 12 of hopping through all these different clubs, I 13 discovered what my interests are, what kind of 14 things I like, what things I don't like. 15 And that is one of the -- the (inaudible 16 due to audio distortion) at Cottonwood is developing 17 interests and passions. Like, I discovered I really 18 love playing guitar through Cottonwood. 19 And on that, I've learned that Cottonwood 20 really does develop the whole child for the whole 21 world, and even, like, the whole person for the 22 whole world. I feel like I've developed a lot 23 through this school. I've discovered my own, like, 24 identity and values. 25 And I feel, like, part of that is not only</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">175</p> <p>1 my high school education from the school, as it will 2 pay off for me as I go off to college in the next 3 two years. And I can already tell you that amongst 4 my peers who go to other schools, I can definitely 5 tell that my academics is quite a step higher than a 6 lot of students who are in the same grade band as 7 me. 8 I appreciate all of my teachers and the 9 staff that are responsible for all the opportunities 10 that the school has made available to me, which now 11 includes this meeting. 12 So I would like to thank all the staff at 13 CCPS for all the work they have done and will do in 14 the future. 15 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you. Next we 16 have Mylie Lanoy. 17 FROM THE PUBIC: Hello. I'm a ninth grade 18 student at Cottonwood Classical, and my name is 19 M-y-l-i-e L-a-n-o-y. 20 So I am -- like I said, I'm a ninth grade 21 student rep and I'm a team member on Make-A-Wish. I 22 also joined in seventh grade, but that was the 23 pandemic year. So this is 2020. 24 And one of my favorite parts of the school 25 is actually the staff. They were always there for</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">177</p> <p>1 the clubs and the supportive staff, but the really 2 rigorous education system. It's a lot of pressure, 3 but you learn to evolve under it. And I guess 4 Cottonwood really makes diamonds out of coal. 5 Thank you. 6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you. Next we 7 have Mr. Clifford Garrett. 8 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello, everyone. 9 Prepared a statement here. 10 My name is Cliff Garrett. This is my 11 twelfth year at Cottonwood Classical Preparatory 12 School as both a general education math teacher and 13 special education teacher. 14 I am proud to be an educator at our 15 school, and I wanted to be here today to advocate 16 for my school to be renewed as a New Mexico State 17 Charter School. 18 Our school has come a long way in my time 19 here with respect to growth and size and challenges 20 regarding student learning. Our school has become 21 more diverse with respect to our student population 22 as well as the learning needs from our students. 23 As our school has grown, our teaching 24 staff has also grown by taking professional 25 development courses to help address student learning</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">178</p> <p>1 loss, as well as student social and emotional needs.  2 Cottonwood administration has recognized  3 that our teachers need the necessary training to  4 help students who struggle as a result of learning  5 challenges that were brought on by the recent  6 pandemic.  7 Our staff has participated in Cultural and  8 Linguistic Responsiveness training facilitated by  9 Dr. Sharroky Hollie, as well as Advantages to  10 Teaching and Learning, or ATL, training classes.  11 It is these opportunities that have helped  12 us to get better through lesson plan preparation and  13 assessment development, to create more student group  14 activities and movement opportunities in the  15 classroom, to help all of our students to succeed in  16 our International Baccalaureate, or IB, Programme.  17 It is through these programs, along with  18 professional development classes facilitated by CES  19 and our special education department that our  20 teachers and staff have become more flexible by  21 offering students multiple modality opportunities in  22 which to show their knowledge and skills in their  23 classes.  24 These professional programs have helped  25 our teachers provide students with more</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">180</p> <p>1 continuing endeavor to find the best ways to serve  2 all of our students, I have every confidence that  3 Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School is actively  4 pursuing the most innovative and data-driven ways to  5 help us -- to help all of our students succeed and  6 to embrace lifelong learning, cultural diversity,  7 and accelerated learning to improve and enrich  8 students' educational experience.  9 Thank you very much.  10 THE CHAIR: All right. That moves us to  11 D, which is Commission -- or PEC questions.  12 Commissioner Voigt. Then Commissioner  13 Gipson.  14 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thank you,  15 Madam Chair.  16 And thank you, Cottonwood Classical, for  17 being here and for applying to the PEC. I remember  18 you used to be a State-authorized school, and then  19 you went to APS, and now you're back. So it's great  20 to see you here again.  21 I love that "Whole child for the whole  22 world" theme. I've always felt like the best  23 education is travel. And, hopefully, your kids have  24 an opportunity to experience some international  25 culture somehow, either through school-sponsored</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">179</p> <p>1 opportunities to celebrate their cultural  2 backgrounds in conjunction with what they are  3 learning in their classes at Cottonwood.  4 Our school has a knowledgeable and caring  5 special education and ancillary staff that have  6 helped our students to meet their educational  7 progress and goals outlined in their IEP and 504  8 plans consistently.  9 We have seen such positive results in our  10 students, as many who struggle and/or come from  11 diverse backgrounds complete our IB Programme.  12 I am reminded of students who struggled  13 with our rigorous curriculum and graduated with IB  14 diplomas. Our one student from recent years in  15 particular, who has a severe physical disability,  16 felt confident in their skills and took and received  17 credit for two IB exams and graduated with  18 distinction.  19 I had the incredible honor of being in the  20 graduation ceremony with this student, also  21 realizing, in that moment, that what we are doing to  22 educate kids at Cottonwood is working, and that we  23 are, in fact, succeeding in educating the whole  24 child for the whole world, which is our mission.  25 While we have more to learn in our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">181</p> <p>1 trips or inviting outside instructors, or having  2 those different types of experiences.  3 I don't know if you -- do you have that?  4 MR. JOHN BINNERT: I'm happy to speak to  5 that, Commissioner Voigt. And thank you for your  6 years of service to the Commission and to the State  7 of New Mexico. I really appreciate you.  8 I'll start with the most recent evolution  9 of what we're doing.  10 So we are, right now -- so you saw  11 Mr. Lukes in that video. So we've -- he's one of  12 two staff members that is actively planning a  13 student exchange with Panama. We're working with  14 the Metropolitan School in Panama City to have about  15 ten to twelve of their students in Albuquerque in  16 February. We're going to take them skiing at  17 Sipapu. We're going to take them to a Lobo game.  18 And then we're going to do just a lot of  19 cultural exchange work with them.  20 And then in March, we'll have between ten  21 and twelve students go to Panama City, largely over  22 Spring Break.  23 And this is the first one we've organized  24 on our own. We've been trying to work through all  25 of the hurdles of insurance and make the most of our</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">182</p> <p>1 foundation, which is a 501(c)(3) -- right? -- to 2 support this endeavor. 3 That's the most recent. 4 At the early years of the school, we 5 started with having our Spanish teachers be from 6 Spain. That was, I thought, really interesting, as 7 an early career teacher, to see that value in place. 8 Visa -- the visa process became much more 9 challenging over the last 15 years, so that's not 10 something we do as often. 11 The Panama trip is very exciting. That's 12 a recent example. And we are working to provide 13 scholarships as well for students who can't afford 14 it. 15 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: That's awesome. 16 Have you heard of the organization, the 17 nonprofit, called Global One to One? Yay. 18 Sarah Wilkinson, personal friend. 19 And they recently had students from 20 Mexico -- pre-pandemic -- from Mexico come to 21 Albuquerque. And they studied -- they went to the 22 Jemez Mountains, they camped, and they studied soil 23 and issues around water. 24 So there's always those types of 25 exchanges.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">184</p> <p>1 much more complicated than that, and just do part of 2 the program. 3 But we have every student -- this is very 4 important, and you can see it in the talk about 5 clubs. Even with younger students, all of our 6 students do the IB Core, which includes something 7 CAS, Creativity-Activity-Service. They are required 8 to go -- and we don't count hours; we count 9 experiences. They do creative experiences, 10 physically active experiences, and service 11 experiences. And that's something that we believe 12 is really important for each student that comes 13 through our program. 14 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: That's awesome. 15 Thank you. 16 Do the teachers require a special license 17 in order to teach IB, or just a certification? 18 MR. JOHN BINNERT: So our teachers are 19 required to attend training every time there's a 20 curriculum update with IB, which is roughly every 21 seven years. They have to be trained within the 22 first year of teaching a new subject or receive 23 renewal training in the school year in which a 24 new -- a new curriculum or assessment is in place. 25 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Okay. Thanks. And</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">183</p> <p>1 Sarah would be ecstatic to hear from you. 2 Global One to One. Sarah Wilkinson is the director. 3 So your academics are just out of the 4 park. That's wonderful to see the data on your 5 reading, your math, and your science scores. 6 I'm curious as to the International 7 Baccalaureate curriculum. Does every student 8 automatically receive that? Or is it -- do they 9 kind of opt in for that? 10 MR. JOHN BINNERT: So we've been 11 recognized by IB as being an IB For All school. In 12 fact, the IB coordinator -- I just met with someone 13 at IB Americas last week about how to help other 14 schools do it. 15 There's no -- there's no extra hurdle. 16 Once a student is our student, they are an IB 17 student, and they do not have to opt into the 18 program. 19 What they can choose to do when they reach 20 eleventh grade is they can select to be a full 21 diploma student and do the entire program, and that 22 is what would allow them to study anywhere in the 23 world if they would like to go to college overseas; 24 or they can opt to do a set of exams, IB exams, 25 which I'm going to say is comparable to AP, but it's</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">185</p> <p>1 it's really great that students have that 2 opportunity for experiential type of learning. 3 Does that include -- I would think, within 4 the IB curriculum, that there would be kind of 5 civic-minded projects. Could you speak to that? Or 6 do you have some in mind? 7 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Yes. So in tenth 8 grade -- I'm going to start in tenth grade, which is 9 before the IB Diploma program. We have what is the 10 best civics curriculum in the state, and I wish 11 every school would do it. It's called We the 12 People. 13 It's something I participated in in high 14 school, and I believe very strongly in its ability 15 to help students learn not just about the 16 Constitution and the founding of the country, but 17 civic engagement. 18 In most pre-pandemic years, our tenth 19 graders would actually be a part of the legislative 20 progress in session. We're trying to get back to 21 that this year, as sort of a stepping stone into 22 eleventh and twelfth grade, where there is extensive 23 civic engagement by our eleventh and twelfth 24 graders. 25 I'll give you two examples, just</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">186</p> <p>1 because -- I could go on and on.</p> <p>2 We have students volunteering and helping</p> <p>3 to coordinate tutoring services at ERVA [ph], which</p> <p>4 is specialized tutoring for refugee families and</p> <p>5 those who are awaiting their day in court --</p> <p>6 their -- what is the word I'm looking for? Help me</p> <p>7 out here. Asylum. So families who are awaiting</p> <p>8 asylum decisions.</p> <p>9 And then we also have one other example.</p> <p>10 We have students who help out with the -- oh, man --</p> <p>11 it's in Corrales. And it's a center where they</p> <p>12 support families through -- families and</p> <p>13 economically disadvantaged people. ARVA? ARPA?</p> <p>14 no, not ERVA.</p> <p>15 So our students have gone and helped them</p> <p>16 build up their facilities. And we have our CAS</p> <p>17 coordinator, Mr. Lukes, who you saw in the video,</p> <p>18 who helps to arrange transportation for them and</p> <p>19 gets them involved.</p> <p>20 And we are the proud home of the 2021</p> <p>21 Albuquerque City Youth Volunteer of the Year was one</p> <p>22 of our students who just did a lot of this work</p> <p>23 because it was really fulfilling for her.</p> <p>24 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Well, that was kind</p> <p>25 of a setup question, because I knew you had We the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">188</p> <p>1 something. There should have been something about</p> <p>2 that within our state that every educator could have</p> <p>3 read about. I don't know.</p> <p>4 Was there any kind of media coverage about</p> <p>5 that?</p> <p>6 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Sometimes it's hard for</p> <p>7 good news to make the news. But we do have a</p> <p>8 communications -- a wonderful communications officer</p> <p>9 here in the background who will send out press</p> <p>10 releases every time something like that happens and</p> <p>11 shares out on social media, which is where we tend</p> <p>12 to get the most attention on the positive stories.</p> <p>13 But thank you for that acknowledgement.</p> <p>14 It's the work of our students and our teachers.</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: It's huge.</p> <p>16 I think something that has really helped</p> <p>17 feed that success is the fact that you focus also on</p> <p>18 your Social Emotional Learning, especially</p> <p>19 post-pandemic, for your students.</p> <p>20 Is there anything that you've done to help</p> <p>21 support your staff?</p> <p>22 MR. JOHN BINNERT: In short, yes. I think</p> <p>23 the most fair thing that I can do right now is to</p> <p>24 defer to my colleague and assistant director Carisa</p> <p>25 Petrie, who over the last two years, we've</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">187</p> <p>1 People, and I wanted that to be shared. And thank</p> <p>2 you for that. I knew you had a strong civics</p> <p>3 program. I did not realize that the students were</p> <p>4 physically getting that far off campus to do that</p> <p>5 type of work and have those experiences. So that's</p> <p>6 really great.</p> <p>7 Do you have any school vehicles?</p> <p>8 MR. JOHN BINNERT: I'm working on it.</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Good for you. Yeah,</p> <p>10 you should. There's a great dealer in Belen.</p> <p>11 Chevrolet.</p> <p>12 So the Paideia curriculum, I think, is</p> <p>13 phenomenal, because it really does address quality</p> <p>14 over quantity of education. And so much of</p> <p>15 education is -- is time-driven and having to cover</p> <p>16 that piece -- or that standard.</p> <p>17 But when you look at the quality of</p> <p>18 education, it can be so much broader and so much</p> <p>19 deeper when you give it the attention that it's due.</p> <p>20 And I think the Paideia method really does that.</p> <p>21 I'm glad that you're using that.</p> <p>22 I don't know if everyone read in their</p> <p>23 literature that the -- that CCCS outperformed the</p> <p>24 world in literature, in their literature. That's</p> <p>25 huge. That should have been a press release or</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">189</p> <p>1 reorganized to make sure we have senior</p> <p>2 administration focused on support for students,</p> <p>3 families, and staff.</p> <p>4 So I'll let her speak to some of the</p> <p>5 things that we've been working on.</p> <p>6 MS. CARISA PETRIE: All right. So we've</p> <p>7 actually really bulked up our support of our staff.</p> <p>8 They did a heroic thing during the pandemic time.</p> <p>9 They worked from home. They did</p> <p>10 acrobatics for our students.</p> <p>11 But it wears teachers down. And one of the</p> <p>12 places that we really needed to add in support was</p> <p>13 for our new teachers, those teachers in years one to</p> <p>14 three.</p> <p>15 So we implemented a more rigorous</p> <p>16 mentoring program. So our teachers, before they</p> <p>17 move up to the Level II license, have a mentor that</p> <p>18 they work with. And the -- the purpose of that</p> <p>19 program is really -- and I say this, you know, in a</p> <p>20 very -- in a very practical way -- we want them to</p> <p>21 stay in the profession. They need to move up to</p> <p>22 Level II.</p> <p>23 And so we work with them to get that</p> <p>24 dossier completed. I know we're moving to a new</p> <p>25 system in the next -- in this next year. But we've</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">190</p> <p>1 had many, many teachers that have stayed in the 2 profession, despite going through this pandemic, 3 because of that extra support. 4 In a fun way, we've added a Sunshine 5 Committee. I know lots of schools have Sunshine 6 Committees. Our nurse heads that up. I'm a member 7 of that, our counselors, several teachers. Just, 8 you know, for example, on Monday, we had a hot 9 chocolate bar in the teacher lounge. And it was -- 10 it was fun. 11 We had bagels today. 12 You know, we do fun things. Like, we 13 dance before a staff meeting, and, you know, just 14 get out some energy. 15 We do a weekly Coyote kudos. And the 16 social worker and I work together to have an 17 announcement that praises specific teachers. 18 So we get through the whole staff. It 19 takes us all year long. We do three to five 20 teachers every week. And there's a public kudos to 21 them. 22 The announcements go out in e-mail form. 23 And then we print up the kudos, and we post it on 24 their door so everyone can see it. 25 This year, we're focusing on IB traits and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">192</p> <p>1 have to have, you know, a special education licensed 2 teacher with an EA, or two teachers team teaching in 3 a bigger, full inclusion class. 4 So how does that look? 5 MR. JOHN BINNERT: So I'll start and I'll 6 give it back over to Carisa. 7 We have, if my recollection serves 8 correctly, four special ed certified staff members, 9 two of whom are more predominantly focused on 10 special ed, and two of whom are doing more general 11 population efforts, but have that endorsement and 12 are called upon to engage in support. 13 And then we have, I think, three gifted 14 endorsed staff members. In total, we have 98 gifted 15 students and 39 students with disabilities that our 16 teachers are working to support. 17 And the model has been evolving. I know 18 Cliff spoke to this a little bit in sort of what 19 he's been seeing. And we try to be responsive to 20 the data and responsive to the anecdotes in front of 21 us and making sure we're supporting all students. 22 So what we've done has grown -- grown 23 quite a bit over the years. 24 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: And I know -- gifted 25 education. That's wonderful. And I know people</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">191</p> <p>1 how those teachers embody the IB traits. 2 There's -- you know, just little things we 3 really try to implement so that people want to come 4 back to work. 5 And I will say Cottonwood keeps staff. We 6 even keep our ancillary staff that comes to us 7 through CES. They come back year after year. So 8 where other schools had trouble retaining their 9 staff, we did not, because we did those little 10 things on, you know, a daily and weekly basis. We 11 provided that kind of support. 12 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Thank you very much. 13 I mean, yeah, that's very crucial having that type 14 of culture that's acknowledging, appreciating, 15 rec- -- you know, all of those things. That's 16 really great that you take the time to do that. 17 So with your special education, I know 18 special education numbers are increasing in awesome 19 schools because that's where smart parents want 20 their kids to go -- right? -- that need extra 21 support. 22 How are you and your special education 23 licensed staff? Do you -- how many teachers do you 24 have that are special education licensed? I know 25 you run full inclusion, so oftentimes, you might</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">193</p> <p>1 think -- a lot of folks think that gifted, oh, 2 they're just those really smart kids. 3 But oftentimes gifted kids have OHIs, and 4 I would say probably nine times out of ten, there 5 are those Other Health Impairments that come along 6 with exceptionalities. 7 MS. CARISA PETRIE: So I'm glad that you 8 bring that up, because we have -- we have included a 9 full-time social worker in that -- in that special 10 ed cohort of support. And we do end up having many 11 gifted kids that need that kind of additional 12 support. 13 We have -- we have a mental health 14 counselor -- and these are both full-time people 15 that work with our population. We have a 16 diagnostician that has worked with us for many 17 years. Very responsive. We don't gate-keep 18 diagnostics. 19 So we're very responsive. When parents 20 feel like there's an issue, we look at data, we work 21 with our diagnostician. We reevaluate kids, because 22 kids' needs change. They've been evaluated in third 23 grade. When they're in ninth grade, they may need 24 very different things. 25 And then we've found with our program that</p>

194	<p>1 because we have strong teachers, strong curriculum, 2 strong families, we do have kids that exit special 3 education, because they no longer need it. Their 4 data is good, their grades are good, and they can go 5 to a very low level of extra support.</p> <p>6 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: That's wonderful. 7 And that would be, you know, an optimum goal, you 8 know. So it's great that you have that ancillary 9 and support staff that you need and then some. But 10 also that you have an ed diag in-house. That's 11 huge.</p> <p>12 So the -- there's a school -- I know 13 several schools that have four and five social 14 workers on staff and admin, just because they need 15 that capacity with the populations that they're 16 serving, you know. So it's good that you're 17 proactive, you know, in that.</p> <p>18 Did you want to say something? Okay. 19 So the basketball team. Looks like 20 they're kicking it, you know. There's just 21 really -- what other sports do you have besides -- I 22 know you have boys and girls basketball. You have a 23 beautiful gymnasium.</p> <p>24 Do you play soccer? 25 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Almost. We're not</p>	196	<p>1 coed soccer. Part of our facility's master plan is 2 to install a multi-purpose field. And at that 3 point, we're looking at starting a soccer program.</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: You know, you need a 5 lot of students to have a soccer team. But you have 6 such a wide variety of offerings. That's really 7 great. That's super and that's great that you have 8 golf.</p> <p>9 One of the things that you spoke about 10 that I think is really truly innovative that not 11 many schools do is mixed-grade instruction. And 12 that's wonderful that you do that, because whether 13 you're teaching for mastery and students are 14 learning in a mastery setting, they're not always 15 going to be at a level of their same-age peer, you 16 know.</p> <p>17 There might be a fifth grader that can be 18 at a seventh-grade level. So if kids are learning 19 in that method, with mixed ages, mixed grades, 20 that's truly a mastery framework. And so I commend 21 you for thinking out of the box and letting your 22 students excel at their own pace.</p> <p>23 So that's all I have. Thank you very 24 much. It's always a pleasure to hear from you. 25 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Gipson.</p>
195	<p>1 quite there. We're a Triple A school. Athletics. 2 We're in a district with Sandia Prep, Bosque School, 3 East Mountain High School, St. Mike's. So those are 4 a sampling of schools we play. Very tough soccer 5 district.</p> <p>6 We have opted, thus far -- since we don't 7 have a field at this point -- to have our students 8 play at their neighborhood schools.</p> <p>9 So we have had, in recent -- so this year, 10 we have a senior who was varsity of the Cibola 11 soccer team. Last year we had two students on the 12 state champion Cibola soccer girls' team.</p> <p>13 We have girls that play baseball and 14 football at other schools.</p> <p>15 But at our school, we have boys and girls 16 basketball. Our full-size high school gym is almost 17 completed. If you drive down Jefferson, you'll see 18 it. Very shiny right now.</p> <p>19 We have track and field, swimming and 20 cross country, where we've been state champions 21 multiple times, and students perform very well in 22 those sports.</p> <p>23 And we have golf, which Mr. Garrett is one 24 of our golf coaches. 25 At the middle school level, we've done</p>	197	<p>1 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thanks. So welcome 2 back. I appreciate all this. And thanks, 3 Commissioner Voigt, because much of what I wanted to 4 ask was answered in terms of counselors and social 5 workers. And I really appreciate that dialogue 6 about caring for families, staff.</p> <p>7 You know, everyone's been affected 8 differently. But it becomes a universal problem in 9 the classroom. So really do appreciate that.</p> <p>10 I remember when I was first on the 11 Commission, we actually -- we had a school that 12 changed out of IB, because it just got to be too 13 expensive for them to be able to truly commit to it 14 and be able to be financially viable.</p> <p>15 So could you talk for me a little bit 16 about the potential stress on a budget with that? 17 MR. JOHN BINNERT: I'd be delighted to. 18 This is my top layer of advocacy with 19 legislators this year.</p> <p>20 So the annual fee, the sort of fee to 21 participate, is \$11,650. That's just to have a 22 program at the diploma level.</p> <p>23 And then every exam is \$119. 24 And the way that we've made that work is 25 by putting the cost of exams on our families.</p>

198	<p>1 So this year -- and our foundation has</p> <p>2 offered some scholarships to support families who</p> <p>3 need it and make the application.</p> <p>4 But this year, as a way to just sort of</p> <p>5 take a risk and show that we mean business and we</p> <p>6 believe in this program, we're paying for one exam</p> <p>7 for every senior, which is over \$7,000 on top of our</p> <p>8 annual fee. And we are -- we have been working with</p> <p>9 the other three publicly funded schools that have</p> <p>10 the Diploma Programme, Sandia High School, which is</p> <p>11 part of APS; Navajo Prep in the Farmington area; and</p> <p>12 Mandela Magnet School in Santa Fe.</p> <p>13 We've been working with them to collect</p> <p>14 the data on how these things are paid for. We've</p> <p>15 created an info-graphic that we're now sharing with</p> <p>16 legislators to work to get funding. About \$100,000</p> <p>17 right now would cover the costs statewide.</p> <p>18 And compared to the \$2 million-plus that</p> <p>19 we as a state spend on AP exams, it seems like a</p> <p>20 bargain.</p> <p>21 So that's what we're working on now</p> <p>22 because we don't want families to even -- to have to</p> <p>23 go through any hoops and hurdles when it comes to</p> <p>24 the financial burden.</p> <p>25 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: So that funding is</p>	200	<p>1 because you know it's a challenging program to</p> <p>2 start. So you're a struggling school, and now</p> <p>3 you're going to embrace this.</p> <p>4 But I think they're in the -- but they</p> <p>5 don't have a high school program. They're an</p> <p>6 elementary and a middle school. So maybe that's --</p> <p>7 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Yeah. The Primary</p> <p>8 Years and Middle Years Programmes have annual fees</p> <p>9 that are a little bit lower, and they don't require</p> <p>10 exam fees.</p> <p>11 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yeah. Okay. I was</p> <p>12 una- -- so I apologize for this question, because I</p> <p>13 was unable to open up the Part E in their appli- --</p> <p>14 I've never been able to open it. Do you own the</p> <p>15 building?</p> <p>16 MR. JOHN BINNERT: We have a lease</p> <p>17 participation agreement with our foundation, yes.</p> <p>18 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Okay. I couldn't</p> <p>19 access that information. I certainly love that</p> <p>20 you're participating in We the People. It's a</p> <p>21 program that I embraced and participated in. And</p> <p>22 it's not easy, you know. And it's a tough mindset.</p> <p>23 I've tried to get other schools to -- so</p> <p>24 maybe that's something we can go on to get more</p> <p>25 schools to truly embrace it, because it -- it really</p>
199	<p>1 for the participation of the program? Or is that</p> <p>2 the funding you're asking for for the tests?</p> <p>3 MR. JOHN BINNERT: We would take just the</p> <p>4 funding for exams. If there's enough funding to</p> <p>5 also pay the annual fee, that would be wonderful,</p> <p>6 because that would be a budgetary offset that would</p> <p>7 benefit us and benefit the students. But just the</p> <p>8 exam fees would be enough, because then we're not</p> <p>9 asking our families to pay anything at this point.</p> <p>10 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Because we have</p> <p>11 actually have -- did they get certified? Taos? We</p> <p>12 have an IB school.</p> <p>13 They actually -- everyone looks at --</p> <p>14 often -- I can't say everyone. I hate to generalize</p> <p>15 everyone. But many look at IB as something that's</p> <p>16 so exclusionary and so difficult that, oh, you know,</p> <p>17 it's only for that small percentage.</p> <p>18 And we had a school in Taos that we were</p> <p>19 close to closing that actually used it as a redesign</p> <p>20 to better the experience for students and -- and</p> <p>21 a -- you know, a population of students that</p> <p>22 certainly falls into that underserved.</p> <p>23 So they kind of went against the stream on</p> <p>24 everything in terms of what you envision IB for.</p> <p>25 And I think we questioned it first, the --</p>	201	<p>1 empowers each and every student in that classroom.</p> <p>2 So kind of on that note, I know you</p> <p>3 mentioned in the application, there's one or two</p> <p>4 times during the year that the students go before,</p> <p>5 you know, a panel or a group of staff, whatever.</p> <p>6 Do you have many opportunities for</p> <p>7 presentations of learning something? Because I</p> <p>8 know -- my understanding is that's very much a part</p> <p>9 of IB. So could you talk just a little bit about</p> <p>10 that?</p> <p>11 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Yes. And I promise</p> <p>12 just a little bit.</p> <p>13 So we have -- I would say that -- and I</p> <p>14 will invite all of you to visit once we solidify the</p> <p>15 date. But we have something called the IB</p> <p>16 Colloquium, which is presentation of learning</p> <p>17 students present on their extended essay research --</p> <p>18 which I'll come back to -- or they can select to</p> <p>19 present on an internal assessment body of research</p> <p>20 they've done in a specific subject area.</p> <p>21 That's the sort of ultimate presentation</p> <p>22 of learning. And we require juniors to attend. And</p> <p>23 this year, we're looking at actually having younger</p> <p>24 students attend in some compulsory fashion that's</p> <p>25 reasonable.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">202</p> <p>1           And so the extended essay is a 4,000-word 2 independent research paper. And it's -- some people 3 say college level. I would say it's more akin to 4 what you would see in senior year in undergraduate 5 or even graduate work. 6           The librarian showed me data from 2022 7 today. 60,000 search queries on EBSCOHost alone in 8 2022, and over 8,000 resources accessed. Our 9 students are learning discernment and research skill 10 and the ability to ascertain what is valid and 11 reliable information, and then forming that into a 12 package that can be presented to others. 13           We do lots of presentations of learning in 14 our hallways with younger students. And We the 15 People, Speech and Debate -- these are two examples 16 of presentations of learning that are more targeted, 17 specific, engaged aspects of what they're doing. 18           Our next step, I think, is to work more 19 with eighth grade. It's a good reflection year, as 20 they -- even though they're taking multiple high 21 school credits in eighth grade at Cottonwood, it's a 22 great year for them to sort of pivot into high 23 school, reflect on what they've learned, what kind 24 of learner they are, and figure out ways to capture 25 and share that information.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">204</p> <p>1           They're myriad; right? 2           But we have found, in general, that our 3 retention rate from eight to nine is actually 4 stronger than ten to eleven, where students are 5 hitting the Diploma Programme and realizing that if 6 they go to a neighborhood high school, they'll 7 graduate a year early if they want to. 8           Part of being an IB Diploma school is that 9 we have to get a lot of the New Mexico graduation 10 requirements out of the way before eleventh grade. 11 So our students look up and realize, "Wow, I am -- 12 I've already met the bar for New Mexico. I can go 13 graduate early." 14           And if they -- unless they're very 15 dedicated and committed to the IB Diploma Programme, 16 it can be -- it can be hard to keep a student who's 17 motivated to go elsewhere to stay. 18           COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yeah. So you don't 19 have a lot of dual credit then. 20           MR. JOHN BINNERT: No. No, we do not. 21 Only -- only on a case-by-case, approved basis. And 22 we do not allow our students to do dual credit for 23 something that we offer at the IB level. 24           And we encourage them, if they are going 25 to do it, to treat it as an elective and understand</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">203</p> <p>1           COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thanks. So that -- 2 speaking of that pivot into high school -- and I 3 know it's a challenge with virtually every charter 4 that we have, that eighth to ninth grade just gets 5 to be hard. 6           And I don't -- you know, I guess I ask -- 7 kind of ask because we're grasping for how do we 8 help fix this? And I don't know if there is a good 9 answer, 'cause you have a lot of offerings for high 10 school that a lot of other charters don't in terms 11 of a variety of other activities that kind of pull 12 students off and out of a charter into a bigger high 13 school. 14           So I always just solicit what else, you 15 know, can folks do? 16           MR. JOHN BINNERT: Boy. So as I said 17 earlier, we like to -- we like to look at the data. 18 So we've been tracking -- we ask families when they 19 withdraw -- although we can't require it, we ask for 20 a reason and try to do exit interviews, especially 21 with older students, to best understand, "Are you 22 leaving for financial reasons? Are you leaving for 23 involuntary reasons? Are you leaving because you 24 see a better outcome for yourself at a different 25 school?"</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">205</p> <p>1           that it will feel a lot different than what they're 2 experiencing at our school. 3           COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thanks. You 4 mentioned it in the application. And we look at it. 5 And there is no good answer for how do we get 6 potentially a more diverse population. 7           And I don't have a -- you know, we're -- I 8 mentioned to another school earlier. You know, I 9 went to a national conference, and they're talking 10 about schools have to be more diverse. 11           And, you know, some states are looking at 12 putting in quota requirements, you know. 13           And it's, like, no. 14           And I don't -- it's one of those topics, 15 again, that I just solicit, you know, input to see 16 what -- you know, what, if anything, can be done, 17 'cause it's not a mandate. 18           But you do look at some schools and say 19 how come, you know, people aren't going to the 20 school or -- you know. 21           So it's that vexing question. 22           MR. JOHN BINNERT: Yes, vexing, indeed. 23 And if you look at the subgroup side of the handout, 24 you can see that from an ethnic diversity 25 standpoint, we're pretty well aligned with the city,</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">206</p> <p>1 broadly, of Albuquerque. Where we tend to struggle 2 is with students with disabilities where we're at 3 about 5 percent. The state is between 12 and 20, 4 depending on who you ask. And I'd love to get more 5 accurate data there.</p> <p>6 And with economically disadvantaged 7 students, I would say that this is the one that 8 really pulls on us, because when you think about 9 barriers and charter schools, one of the ultimate 10 barriers that we're supposed to be knocking down is 11 cost; right? And at the same time, there is this 12 parallel struggle as a charter to get adequate 13 funding.</p> <p>14 Part of that is just the way the funding 15 formula works in the state. And part of that is the 16 way facilities funding works.</p> <p>17 But I would say that, generally speaking, 18 I know there's an initiative out there right now for 19 free lunch for everyone in New Mexico. That would 20 go a long way, because that would erase -- we saw 21 that last school year, the '21-'22 school year. We 22 had free lunch for everybody, no questions asked.</p> <p>23 Talk about destigmatization for kids who 24 are engaging in free lunch access and supporting a 25 school with limited facilities.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">208</p> <p>1 monies in particular. But any federal flow-through 2 does flow through the district. They're identified 3 as the LEA, and we have to apply through the local 4 school district and then request reimbursement, as 5 money is expended, for the application.</p> <p>6 But I'm not 100 percent sure what grant 7 money you're speaking to, because there are some 8 other grants that are State initiatives that the 9 school gets directly.</p> <p>10 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: I'm trying to find 11 them. Is that E on there? No. E is the -- we're 12 navigating so many different things, I'm trying to 13 find it quick.</p> <p>14 MR. JOHN BINNERT: While Commissioner 15 Gipson is looking, I'll say grants is -- we apply 16 for every one that we're eligible for. And I see -- 17 I want to thank Brigitte there for help with grants.</p> <p>18 And it has been difficult at times being 19 district-authorized. It removes us from the stream 20 of eligibility for some grants, which can be 21 frustrating.</p> <p>22 But, for example, I believe we are the 23 only school in APS -- or maybe one of two, including 24 all schools and charters -- to receive the Near Peer 25 Tutoring Grant, which allows our high school</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">207</p> <p>1 So I think something like free lunch for 2 everybody is huge. I think more funding for at-risk 3 and after-school programming. I know we've put a 4 lot of money into that at the state level. More is 5 welcome. That's how we've done a lot of the things 6 that we've done over the last few years.</p> <p>7 And from there, it's branding and 8 understanding. So making sure that families 9 understand that charter schools are free and open, 10 and there's a fair lottery process, and 11 understanding that it is for everybody; right?</p> <p>12 And I think part of that, too, is a 13 charter school when you have autonomy is when things 14 work, you share them out. We say, "Hey, we've been 15 doing this, we know it works, come and learn about 16 it from us."</p> <p>17 So that's another layer of things that 18 we're working on.</p> <p>19 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: I saw that you don't 20 get any grant monies? That line is blank. Is that 21 because it flows into the district and not directly 22 to the school at this point in time? Is that why 23 that piece of the financial statement is blank?</p> <p>24 MR. MIKE VIGIL II: And I could speak to 25 that. I'm not sure what is meant exactly by grant</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">209</p> <p>1 students to tutor middle school students. That's 2 one small example of grants we've gone for.</p> <p>3 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yeah. See, on this, 4 it's the 2700 to 5999, All Other Function codes, PED 5 Grant Initiatives, Pre-K, State Grants, Next Gen, 6 CTE. And it's zeroed out.</p> <p>7 MR. MICHAEL VIGIL II: And the only grant 8 I can think of --</p> <p>9 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Extended Learning, 10 K-5.</p> <p>11 MR. MIKE VIGIL II: Extended Learning and 12 K-5 do not -- they're actually flowing through SEG. 13 So that's not a grant in particular.</p> <p>14 But the only 27000 funds that we have did 15 have access to were the former Instructional 16 Materials, the General Appropriations Act of -- I 17 think it was 2018, when the whole Yazzie-Martinez 18 kind of came forth.</p> <p>19 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Right.</p> <p>20 MR. MICHAEL VIGIL II: Beyond that -- we 21 do get access to -- like I say -- CTE. But, 22 unfortunately, it's not applicable to the school's 23 current programmatic needs. So, essentially, the -- 24 that money is allocated, but then we end up 25 reverting it.</p>

210	<p>1 So, at this point, there's not really a</p> <p>2 whole lot of below-the-line statewide funding that</p> <p>3 the school has access to.</p> <p>4 But, like Mr. Binnert has been saying,</p> <p>5 every single year, we do seek out every piece of</p> <p>6 funding, because everything is expensive, and it</p> <p>7 gets more expensive.</p> <p>8 And I will say on just one thing, while</p> <p>9 I'm on my step-stool to stand on here, is that I</p> <p>10 meet monthly with Mr. Binnert and the office manager</p> <p>11 to go over budget, not only budget and our current</p> <p>12 standing, but projecting out two, three, four, five</p> <p>13 years, because there is a lot of phases involved,</p> <p>14 and this school is probably the most attentive when</p> <p>15 it comes to audit and finance that I am personally</p> <p>16 involved in.</p> <p>17 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Thanks. I</p> <p>18 appreciate that.</p> <p>19 Just as a housekeeping -- do you think</p> <p>20 there's a typo error on their -- I think it's their</p> <p>21 seventh grade enrollment. It says you have 1210,</p> <p>22 something like that. So I think that there's --</p> <p>23 it's, like, wow, that was a good year. And then</p> <p>24 they all left. So thank you for all your answers.</p> <p>25 I appreciate it.</p>	212	<p>1 Commissioner Gipson covered some of what I</p> <p>2 was concerned about relative to costs, like, of</p> <p>3 exams and things like that. And I know that even</p> <p>4 though I'm not on the Board of Education anymore up</p> <p>5 in Santa Fe, there are people who still call me now</p> <p>6 and then and say, "Why do we have to do all this?"</p> <p>7 Why do we have all this extra expense, in addition</p> <p>8 to what my kid is going through, just being a part</p> <p>9 of this program?"</p> <p>10 So I'm glad that you're finding ways to</p> <p>11 offset that.</p> <p>12 Happy to hear about We the People at your</p> <p>13 school.</p> <p>14 What percentage of your students, eleven,</p> <p>15 twelfth-graders end up being Diploma students?</p> <p>16 MR. JOHN BINNERT: So it varies by year.</p> <p>17 Usually, between a third and a half of our students</p> <p>18 are full Diploma. And so this year, for example,</p> <p>19 the average number of exams that a senior is signed</p> <p>20 up for is about four, just under four.</p> <p>21 And I think we have 29 out of our 67</p> <p>22 seniors who are signed up to be full diploma.</p> <p>23 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Wow. I have a</p> <p>24 dear friend. She's lamenting over all these state</p> <p>25 requirements she has to do in addition to. She</p>
211	<p>1 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo.</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Thanks. Thanks</p> <p>3 for coming to be a part of the State Charter family.</p> <p>4 I find it appalling. We had a school in</p> <p>5 Taos that did the same thing. They left the Taos</p> <p>6 Public Schools. For a school their size, the amount</p> <p>7 of money that the district was taking from them was</p> <p>8 just -- it just didn't make any sense at all.</p> <p>9 But so -- and I know that you also</p> <p>10 received -- when Desert closed in Santa Fe, we</p> <p>11 had -- a bunch of kids came down here, because they</p> <p>12 wanted to continue with IB. And even though we</p> <p>13 started Mandela, we have didn't have any of those</p> <p>14 grade levels yet.</p> <p>15 Do you still have -- are there still kids</p> <p>16 left from Desert when they came down?</p> <p>17 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Yes. And, in fact, we</p> <p>18 still have a student who lives in Santa Fe and plays</p> <p>19 for Santa Fe High soccer, but attends our school.</p> <p>20 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Santa Fe High</p> <p>21 soccer is so great. That's why I'm wearing this.</p> <p>22 It's game day. So I'm going to go to Rio Rancho</p> <p>23 later for the varsity basketball games. No. And</p> <p>24 I -- I was very happy to learn the extent to which</p> <p>25 athletics plays into everything at your school.</p>	213	<p>1 says, "Steve, it's just so unfair."</p> <p>2 And, yeah, it is really unfair.</p> <p>3 On the Diploma side, do you find that -- I</p> <p>4 don't know if this happened down here. I know it</p> <p>5 happened with us whether we opened Mandela. We</p> <p>6 found that we had way too many kids that were coming</p> <p>7 to Mandela because they wanted the small school</p> <p>8 option, not necessarily the rigorous school option.</p> <p>9 So we had a lot of changeover for a while</p> <p>10 when we, as a district, decided to really let people</p> <p>11 know, "This is what you're signing up for."</p> <p>12 Do you have that challenge in the earlier</p> <p>13 years in --</p> <p>14 MR. JOHN BINNERT: I would say so. I</p> <p>15 think, you know, we -- in a typical year, we've had</p> <p>16 about 130 spots for sixth grade. And after</p> <p>17 siblings, and now staff, preference are accounted</p> <p>18 for, we might have about 80 spots and between 300</p> <p>19 and 400 applications, generally speaking.</p> <p>20 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: 300 to 400</p> <p>21 applications?</p> <p>22 MR. JOHN BINNERT: For sixth grade. And</p> <p>23 so when you try to work through what that means and</p> <p>24 why families are signing up in large number to be at</p> <p>25 the school, there are some that are doing research,</p>

214

1 looking on the Internet, Best School in the State,  
 2 Best School in Albuquerque, whatever it is. It  
 3 comes up on U.S. News or Niche or things like that.  
 4 They understand what they're getting into.  
 5 Then there are families who think, "This  
 6 is smaller, this is safer, this is going to be a  
 7 good focus here. Maybe or maybe not, will we stay  
 8 at that school for high school. For middle school,  
 9 good preparation, small, safe."  
 10 We would certainly prefer, because it's  
 11 our mission, our focus, that families commit six  
 12 through twelve to get the totality of our program,  
 13 so that when they learn how to annotate in sixth and  
 14 seventh grade, that they're using that in the ways  
 15 that it's designed for at our school as part of that  
 16 program.  
 17 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: True that. The --  
 18 oh, transportation.  
 19 Is that -- how do you handle -- because  
 20 transportation could often be one of the biggest  
 21 roadblocks for kids, you know? Like, in Santa Fe  
 22 public schools trying to interzone, it's something  
 23 that can keep people from really going to the school  
 24 of their choice. How is transportation -- do you  
 25 have hubs? How does that work?

215

1 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Right now we have seven  
 2 buses every day for to-and-from transportation. We  
 3 have an agreement with Albuquerque Public Schools,  
 4 Transportation Office, where our transportation  
 5 funding goes to them, and the contract stipulates  
 6 that they provide the buses that we need.  
 7 So we have buses that go to Rio Rancho,  
 8 buses that go down to the Rail Runner Station near  
 9 the Sunport, comes at Atrisco and Central. So they  
 10 really spread throughout the city.  
 11 We also, starting last year, have  
 12 after-school care until 5:30 four days a week,  
 13 because that's -- not every family can get to that  
 14 bus stop, and they don't necessarily want their 11-  
 15 or 12-year-old walking home from that bus location.  
 16 So it's far better -- I remember the first  
 17 year, the school, we had no buses, and parents were  
 18 blocking Montaño to drop their children off. And it  
 19 was really a dangerous situation, too. So buses are  
 20 safer. We prefer to have as many as possible.  
 21 And that's something that -- you know,  
 22 that Mike and I had talked about with the transition  
 23 from being an APS charter to a State charter. And  
 24 the way transportation funding falls here, it's a  
 25 little complicated to sort through. And that's

216

1 something that we still have in front of us to work  
 2 out. But that --  
 3 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: You'll be able to  
 4 continue that transportation just kind of maybe  
 5 moving money around differently.  
 6 MR. MICHAEL VIGIL II: Yes. And I can  
 7 speak to that a little bit, beyond that. So  
 8 transportation funding is based on prior year  
 9 ridership numbers. So that's been difficult.  
 10 So we have -- as the Vigil Group  
 11 contractors, we represented a school that completely  
 12 lost that funding. Fortunately, my mom actually  
 13 works in APS Transportation. And she's guaranteed  
 14 me -- and I'm taking her word for it -- that she's  
 15 actually been able to track actual ridership for the  
 16 past three or four years, specifically.  
 17 So it's kind of a misnomer that funding is  
 18 just (incomprehensible). The fact is that you need  
 19 to prove to the PED that you actually contract those  
 20 numbers.  
 21 So the hope is that we'll be able to  
 22 continue on with transportation, just with a  
 23 different funding mechanism, where we'll get the  
 24 money direct and probably just funnel it right back  
 25 out to APS like we're doing right now.

217

1 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Terrific. Well,  
 2 thanks for that, using transportation that way.  
 3 Sounds like -- I want to come down sometime. I've  
 4 heard about the campus and how beautiful it is. I  
 5 don't come down La Bajada that often. It's a great  
 6 reason to maybe come visit your school. When you  
 7 have something special, you said you're going to  
 8 send something out to all of us, because that would  
 9 be --  
 10 MR. JOHN BINNERT: We tentatively have a  
 11 ribbon-cutting for our 24,000-square-foot addition  
 12 on February 27th. And our IB Colloquium is usually  
 13 in mid-April. So I will be sending out invites to  
 14 both of those.  
 15 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Terrific. Thank  
 16 you very much.  
 17 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Robbins.  
 18 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Thank you. Most of  
 19 my questions are answered and asked by others.  
 20 One of the things I did want to just maybe  
 21 mention -- and it was mentioned earlier -- the IB  
 22 Programme is a rigorous program. And with regard to  
 23 diversity, it's -- you know, it's going to drive  
 24 some students away, regardless of their ethnic  
 25 makeup or socioeconomic background.

218	<p>1 But a rigorous program is what the IB 2 Programme is. And I applaud Cottonwood Classical 3 for maintaining that and really sticking with that. 4 I really hope that the Legislature will be 5 willing to work with you with regard to covering the 6 testing fees that IB has. I don't know if there's 7 any negotiation you can have with IB to reduce the 8 cost. If you increase the number of tests, if 9 there's some sort of a discount, that might be an 10 incentive for the Legislature to step up to the 11 plate. 12 But, you know, I'm familiar with 13 Cottonwood. I was on the APS Board for four years, 14 have watched it. And I was very glad, you know, 15 when Sandia started the IB Programme when I was on 16 the board there. I wish more schools would offer 17 that as an option. 18 You mentioned it's not difficult to get or 19 retain your teachers. And that may be an issue for 20 other schools that want to take on the IB Programme 21 is getting teachers to really buy into that program, 22 because it is rigorous, the additional training that 23 they have to go through periodically, especially as 24 the curriculum goes. 25 What do you see -- I mean, your cap is</p>	220	<p>1 looking to increase our enrollment cap from 800 to 2 1,000. That's something that we're planning to do. 3 And it's not even so much that we want to be at 4 1,000 students; it's just we need wiggle room with 5 siblings and staff preference, because there's times 6 in that lottery management where we're over 800 and 7 trying to figure out the best way to work through 8 that before school starts. 9 It's worked out okay. 10 We've had waitlists at the middle school 11 every year since the school opened. So we are 12 looking to increase our cap and bring more students 13 in. 14 Beyond -- beyond that, we don't have room 15 at our facilities. So it's -- you know, the 16 long-term replication, expansion partnership 17 planning, that's in our Strategic Plan to continue 18 to work on between now and 2026. And we do take 19 that conversation seriously. But we don't at this 20 time have plans beyond the increase in our 21 enrollment cap. 22 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Thank you. 23 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Armijo. 24 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank you. I'm 25 going to actually piggyback off of what Commissioner</p>
219	<p>1 800, and you're about 750 or thereabouts right now. 2 Do you ever envision increasing your cap to 3 provide -- because, you know, it is a relatively 4 moderate school, moderate-sized school for, you 5 know, sixth through twelfth grade. 6 Is there any indication or desire to 7 either expand the school or to work with others to 8 start another IB Programme elsewhere in the 9 district? 10 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Thank you, Commissioner 11 Robbins, first of all, for the comments and the 12 notes about the program. 13 It is a lot to support, and we're 14 committed to it. And I know that we mentioned 15 earlier that Mr. Garrett here, this year for the 16 first time, is actually teaching a math course 17 within IB to allow to work at a different pace and 18 still cover the content that's necessary for those 19 students to do well. 20 So we're -- we're iterating all the time 21 on getting kids through this program, because we do 22 believe every kid can do it. It takes commitment. 23 It's hard work. It takes some family support. But 24 everyone can do it. 25 As far as the enrollment cap, yes, we are</p>	221	<p>1 Robbins was asking about. 2 I'm just going to be perfectly honest. I 3 probably didn't even know what International 4 Baccalaureate meant before, like, maybe, 10, 15 5 years ago. So a lot of the people in my 6 community -- I've been thinking South Valley, 7 International District, those kinds of areas -- what 8 is your outreach to them? I noticed you said that 9 you had 300 to 400 people apply, so you're doing 10 something right. 11 But to these folks who wouldn't 12 necessarily understand what that curriculum is, what 13 that means, what are you doing to promote that and 14 help them understand? 15 MR. JOHN BINNERT: So here I want to thank 16 our governing council and our communications 17 officer. Because something that we all agreed was 18 important last year -- I have a large map on the 19 wall of my office of where all of my families live. 20 We've got Santa Fe, Socorro, Belen, 21 Los Lunas, the Moriarty district, Rio Rancho, 22 everywhere; right? But there's this notable -- I'm 23 not going to say gap, because we do have families 24 that live south of Lomas in Albuquerque. But it's 25 underrepresented. But even with a bus that goes to</p>



222	<p>1 a couple of locations in that area, it's a concern.</p> <p>2 So this last year, we increased our</p> <p>3 advertising budget, and we have picked three</p> <p>4 billboards south of Lomas to try to capture more</p> <p>5 attention, to reach a different community. We</p> <p>6 started doing more as well with social media</p> <p>7 marketing in trying to broaden our reach to help</p> <p>8 families across the city get to know who we are a</p> <p>9 little bit better without having to do internet</p> <p>10 research.</p> <p>11 Those are two things. Thus far, it</p> <p>12 doesn't seem like it's worked enough. So the other</p> <p>13 thing that I've been working on is partnering with</p> <p>14 other charter leaders who have phenomenal -- in my</p> <p>15 view, phenomenal elementary schools around the idea</p> <p>16 of some outreach and transition support.</p> <p>17 So, like, Jade, who I believe was here</p> <p>18 earlier with Albuquerque Collegiate, you know,</p> <p>19 that -- she's got fifth-graders now, and I'm aware</p> <p>20 of that. And so that's a conversation that I've had</p> <p>21 with her about, you know, how can we -- how can we</p> <p>22 potentially help their families with this idea of</p> <p>23 what it is to transition to middle school, and at</p> <p>24 the same time be, like, "Hey, this is -- this is who</p> <p>25 we are, this is what IB is." Families can still</p>	224	<p>1 it.</p> <p>2 We realized pretty early on that we were</p> <p>3 not going to have a lot of guidance. There was a</p> <p>4 pause, an understandable pause, put on guidance and</p> <p>5 portfolio. So we decided to do a lot of our own</p> <p>6 work and ask ourself questions before and after that</p> <p>7 first assessment.</p> <p>8 I've asked Carisa to be the senior</p> <p>9 administrator that really helps to coordinate some</p> <p>10 of the agenda efforts and liaise between the equity</p> <p>11 council and some other organizations, so I'll let</p> <p>12 her speak more to that and take more questions.</p> <p>13 MS. CARISA PETRIE: So our students</p> <p>14 started by creating a Black Student Union. And then</p> <p>15 other groups felt like they wanted representation.</p> <p>16 So we have a Hispanic Student Union now. But we</p> <p>17 have really wanted something more comprehensive.</p> <p>18 And so our current teacher head of the</p> <p>19 equity council worked with Zaria, who had come to</p> <p>20 our equity council meetings and still does. And</p> <p>21 Zaria is an excellent leader, a student leader.</p> <p>22 And so she started the student-led equity</p> <p>23 council. And as you all can imagine, the things</p> <p>24 that they tend to bring are different than what the</p> <p>25 adults bring to the equity council. You know, we go</p>
223	<p>1 make that choice for themselves.</p> <p>2 I think that's what it takes, because just</p> <p>3 doing the advertising and going to the school choice</p> <p>4 fairs, we're not getting that many new families so</p> <p>5 far.</p> <p>6 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: I would even suggest</p> <p>7 collaborating with district schools in those areas</p> <p>8 as well. Oops. I have another question.</p> <p>9 So I was looking at the student equity</p> <p>10 council. I think that's awesome. So I can imagine</p> <p>11 that that's going really well.</p> <p>12 Can you give me a little bit more</p> <p>13 information about how that works?</p> <p>14 MR. JOHN BINNERT: So I'll start and kick</p> <p>15 it over to Carisa.</p> <p>16 So Zaria Peralta was the PCSNM Charter</p> <p>17 School Student of the Year last year, in large part</p> <p>18 for her work with getting that student equity</p> <p>19 council going. And she's been just an incredible</p> <p>20 voice and pillar of the student community around</p> <p>21 matters of equity and has helped the adults in the</p> <p>22 room kind of rethink some assumptions we've all kind</p> <p>23 of grown accustomed to.</p> <p>24 We've had a functioning equity council</p> <p>25 since we were asked to. We just never stopped doing</p>	225	<p>1 look at data a lot, and we listen to parents and</p> <p>2 teachers, and so we have that perspective. Of</p> <p>3 course, we listen to students.</p> <p>4 But when they had their own equity</p> <p>5 council, they could really hone in on why their</p> <p>6 issues were equity issues.</p> <p>7 So, for example, when we -- when we were</p> <p>8 going through our Black Education Act documentation,</p> <p>9 one of the parts of the Black Education Act is to</p> <p>10 look at the dress code. And so our students were</p> <p>11 really able, from their own perspective, to look at</p> <p>12 the dress code and why certain issues were equity</p> <p>13 issues.</p> <p>14 And so one of the things that came up --</p> <p>15 and you all know this, because you shop, and some of</p> <p>16 you have kids that you shop for -- all the pants</p> <p>17 have holes. And we did not allow pants that had</p> <p>18 holes. And so we had to adjust that a little bit.</p> <p>19 We don't want giant gaping holes in the pants.</p> <p>20 As a school, we don't feel like that's the</p> <p>21 prep school model. But it's reasonable to say,</p> <p>22 okay, if they have a few, that's within reason.</p> <p>23 The kids felt like that was a reason, that</p> <p>24 that was an equity issue before. You know, that's</p> <p>25 something that kids would bring up. It's not really</p>

226

1 something that adults think about as much.  
2 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Or culturally;  
3 right? Some of the things that students wear. So  
4 -- and did Dr. Hollie actually interact with the  
5 students as well?

6 MS. CARISA PETRIE: So when we had  
7 Dr. Hollie -- so we've done a few things with  
8 Dr. Hollie. Our staff has had a lot of training  
9 with Dr. Hollie's group. And then he did training  
10 directly with our staff last January.

11 And then this year, our staff is doing  
12 Professional Learning Communities around his book.

13 So our students in the equity council have  
14 had training through -- we have a DEI -- we have a  
15 DEI consultant working with our school and  
16 evaluating our equity practices. And so our  
17 students on the equity council did come for that  
18 training with Tamara Thorpe. And she's our  
19 consultant. So we've really tried to include them.

20 Sometimes they're a little bit resistant.  
21 A lot of the trainings are aimed at professional  
22 educators. But when they come, they've really given  
23 us good feedback.

24 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Very cool.  
25 And my last question, because -- around

228

1 So, for example, a common one for Level 1  
2 infractions, we have this online portal called  
3 "Base" that is a social-emotional learning platform  
4 that we used pretty heavily in the year that we were  
5 three quarters of the year online. And there's  
6 modules that students can take in this Base course.

7 So we'll say, "Okay. We're going to have  
8 you fill out lunch detention. Fill out a reflection  
9 form. Do this Base course, and then sit with an  
10 administrator or a counselor and talk about your  
11 reflection, what you did, the level of ownership  
12 that you need to have here, how that might have  
13 affected other people."

14 And then trying to get -- if it was two or  
15 more students involved, finding the right time to  
16 get them back together. That's -- yes.

17 THE CHAIR: I know Commissioner Voigt --  
18 I'm going to come back around for her. If any other  
19 Commissioner -- I know Commissioner Voigt wants to  
20 make a motion.

21 If any other Commissioner wants to speak  
22 before her, we might do that, too.

23 But I just wanted to go straight to --  
24 like, I mean, once again, I feel very fortunate  
25 today. It's a slow pitch for us, which I'm very

227

1 restorative justice -- do you have -- can you just  
2 speak to any practices that you all do with  
3 restorative justice?

4 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Certainly. So in the  
5 last few years, we've actually updated our  
6 discipline policy every year. So the Black  
7 Education Act was a catalyst one year, because we  
8 were looking at non-discrimination due to hairstyle,  
9 for example, and thinking about ways to couch that  
10 appropriately in a dress code, but then also in a  
11 discipline policy to ensure the new administrator,  
12 regardless of who's the administrator right now,  
13 wouldn't discipline due to hair color.

14 And so one of the things we've done,  
15 though, every single year, as we've updated the  
16 discipline policy, is we've looked at additional  
17 restorative components to put in there.

18 We have a three-tiered system around  
19 different kinds of behaviors and express, sort of,  
20 "Okay, if it's a Level 1 behavior, this is the kind  
21 of thing that might happen. Level 2, this would  
22 happen. Level 3, a little more serious, these are  
23 things that we look at."

24 And in every tier, there's different kinds  
25 of restorative practice.

229

1 grateful for, because it's a great school. You have  
2 the data to support the work you're doing; right?

3 Like, I know there's a lot of hard work at  
4 the school. And it's effective, which is great.

5 There -- I was really interested in  
6 reading through all the information about the IB  
7 Programme, what that looks like and all the data  
8 behind that. And I'm so grateful that that was all  
9 provided for us before, so I could, like, learn  
10 about it a little bit more. Because I didn't know  
11 exactly -- I knew it wasn't required of all the  
12 students. But I didn't know -- and I did see that  
13 it's about a third of your students each year are  
14 choosing that track.

15 I mean, that's -- which is incredible. Is  
16 that -- do you have a goal in mind for how many kids  
17 you want to choose the track? That was the only  
18 thing I, like, couldn't find about it.

19 MR. JOHN BINNERT: We talk about this all  
20 the time in the governing council. And Rathi -- she  
21 knows a lot about IB, and she has really different  
22 experiences around it. She and I have had this talk  
23 multiple times.

24 I would say that a good minimum goal is  
25 50 percent. But it's a little complicated, because

230	<p>1 this other thing that you offer is a big part of</p> <p>2 incentivizing students to make a choice at the right</p> <p>3 time. And so, for example, IB now has something</p> <p>4 called the Career-Related Programme, or CP. And we</p> <p>5 actually do have CTE pilot funding this year, where</p> <p>6 we are trying to leverage that into -- we have</p> <p>7 seniors that are actually helping teach classes</p> <p>8 right now, not making copies, but actually helping</p> <p>9 to teach middle school classes, which is wonderful.</p> <p>10 And we have lots of students interested in hardware</p> <p>11 and IT and all that.</p> <p>12 So if we could build up this other pathway</p> <p>13 in a way that other students could grapple with what</p> <p>14 it might mean for them to go with the full Diploma</p> <p>15 or this other pathway, I would like to see a rough</p> <p>16 balance between the two.</p> <p>17 But I'm okay with that shifting, because</p> <p>18 some years we might see that that particular cohort,</p> <p>19 30 percent of them are going to be full Diploma.</p> <p>20 But in that next cohort, it might be 60.</p> <p>21 And so, for example, the junior class</p> <p>22 right now, we have a record number of juniors who</p> <p>23 have signed to take an exam this year. They're</p> <p>24 allowed to take one or two exams this year. I want</p> <p>25 to say 70 percent of them at this point are thinking</p>	232	<p>1 THE CHAIR: Do you think the cost of the</p> <p>2 exam was the biggest barrier for not getting</p> <p>3 100 percent of your kids? Or -- I mean, I -- so</p> <p>4 I'll say this.</p> <p>5 I was an AP student. I took as many AP</p> <p>6 classes as possible when I was at Rio Rancho High</p> <p>7 School. I took AP Stats as an elective. Terrible</p> <p>8 decision. Did not take that test. I took every</p> <p>9 other one. But I was, like, I'm not going -- even</p> <p>10 though, I mean, I was a low-income student, so my</p> <p>11 test was \$5.00. It wasn't the cost. It was, like,</p> <p>12 I'm too embarrassed to take the test, I'm not doing</p> <p>13 it.</p> <p>14 I'm trying to come at it with that in the</p> <p>15 back of my mind, too. Like, are your students maybe</p> <p>16 choosing not to do it because they're, like, I don't</p> <p>17 know, I don't feel ready for it? Or is it the cost?</p> <p>18 Or maybe both.</p> <p>19 MR. JOHN BINNERT: First, as someone who</p> <p>20 taught AP Statistics for four years, that makes me a</p> <p>21 little sad.</p> <p>22 THE CHAIR: I liked the -- math was not</p> <p>23 my -- I was not bad at math, but I never cared</p> <p>24 enough about math to really want to try hard.</p> <p>25 MR. JOHN BINNERT: I understand.</p>
231	<p>1 they're going to be full Diploma.</p> <p>2 They can change their mind. They have</p> <p>3 time. Who knows? That's why I feel roughly</p> <p>4 50 percent is a good benchmark over a five-year</p> <p>5 period to shoot for.</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: Okay. So I did see, like,</p> <p>7 this last -- in 2022, like, over 98 percent of your</p> <p>8 kids took an exam, which is, once again, like, not</p> <p>9 required; right? Like -- like -- or what is the</p> <p>10 requirement for them to take an exam? Maybe I</p> <p>11 should ask that.</p> <p>12 MR. JOHN BINNERT: We've been grappling</p> <p>13 with that. And the governing council put a policy</p> <p>14 in place that embeds the expectation. But because</p> <p>15 we haven't been able to fund it until this year --</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: Got it.</p> <p>17 MR. JOHN BINNERT: -- where we can really</p> <p>18 say, "Hey" --</p> <p>19 THE CHAIR: Take it.</p> <p>20 MR. JOHN BINNERT: -- "we're paying for</p> <p>21 it. You're going to take an exam."</p> <p>22 Now, there can be extenuating</p> <p>23 circumstances, of course. So if we have a student</p> <p>24 that's homebound for some reason, that's not going</p> <p>25 to be viable.</p>	233	<p>1 THE CHAIR: Don't get mad at me,</p> <p>2 Mr. Binnert.</p> <p>3 MR. JOHN BINNERT: That's okay. So our</p> <p>4 students, they all take the courses. Our teachers</p> <p>5 are teaching at that level for every student. So</p> <p>6 it's not the access; right? They have the access to</p> <p>7 the information.</p> <p>8 So then there's the funding. And that has</p> <p>9 been a true barrier. But we've said to them in the</p> <p>10 past, "Okay, you can just fill out this scholarship</p> <p>11 application with our foundation. You can get some</p> <p>12 at least partial funding"; right?</p> <p>13 In my view, the biggest barrier has been</p> <p>14 misinformation about what the ROI is to them.</p> <p>15 So -- and, in particular, now that we have</p> <p>16 the Opportunity Scholarship, more and more of our</p> <p>17 students are choosing to remain in-state. They're</p> <p>18 going to go to UNM, New Mexico State, or New Mexico</p> <p>19 Tech. This last year, I think over 50 percent of</p> <p>20 our students were making that choice.</p> <p>21 And there was this thought that, "Well,</p> <p>22 I'm already overprepared for that. What am I going</p> <p>23 to get out of taking these exams?"</p> <p>24 So we've worked really hard to help them</p> <p>25 see exactly what they will get. Because at NMSU,</p>

234	<p>1 they could walk in pretty much as a sophomore. At 2 UNM, just about the same. And New Mexico Tech, 3 we're still working on them. They'll give some 4 credits, but they like everyone to take their 5 calculus, too, no matter what; right? 6 so we've worked on that. I think it's 7 better. We've seen an increase in the number of 8 exams that the average student is signing up for. 9 And I'm hopeful that we can get more funding, at 10 least parity with the AP exams, so that we can say 11 "That's gone. You're going to take these courses. 12 You don't need to take all of them, but the ones 13 that you take, we're going to ask you to do all of 14 the assessments." 15 THE CHAIR: All right. Those were the 16 main questions I had. I was just so interested in 17 reading more about it, because it is a unique 18 program. And to the same thing, like, not even 19 just -- it's unique for a school, but unique for our 20 culture, unique -- it's so unique. So it was really 21 interesting reading. So those were my questions I 22 had about that. 23 The other thing bold in your goals for 24 your school was that increase in your cap to 1,000. 25 So I did ask, I was like "How does that work?"</p>	236	<p>1 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Okay. Thank you. 2 What Commissioner Armijo was asking about 3 the recruitment for the South Valley, and then I 4 know you're also looking at increasing your 5 enrollment. It just occurred to me that you might 6 market for soccer players. 7 (Participants speaking off-mic.) 8 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: I'm just kidding, but 9 not really. You just said you're kind of short 10 players, so -- and I realize you all were the second 11 State-authorized school in 2008. I think your 12 school number is 501-002; am I correct? 13 So because of that, it is a privilege for 14 me to move that the Public Education Commission 15 approve the renewal application for Cottonwood 16 Classical Preparatory School for a five-year term, 17 2023 to 2028, without conditions, but with an 18 enrollment cap of 1,000, as long as the students are 19 in a facility where there is sufficient E-Occupancy 20 to house the students enrolled. 21 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Second. 22 THE CHAIR: Thank you. There's a motion 23 and a second. 24 Any other comments by Commissioners? 25 (No response.)</p>
235	<p>1 Because we don't have a contract amendment. We 2 don't have a contract with you. So what does that 3 look like? 4 So just for the Commission to be able for 5 see and look, I did ask to have it added to the 6 motion, to increase the cap to 1,000 today as well. 7 So that actually is -- oh, yeah. 8 But in that, we know one of the barriers 9 to an enrollment cap increase is the E-Occupancy of 10 your building. So what is that? 11 MR. JOHN BINNERT: So when the addition is 12 completed, it'll be 969. And then we have five 13 portables that easily add -- get us over 1,000. 14 THE CHAIR: Okay. And the way it's worded 15 is, basically, your cap is up to 1000 pending 16 whatever your occupancy is available. So it kind of 17 gives you the flexibility to add up to that. That 18 would be the cap. 19 So that's something I'll support in the 20 motion. And if any other Commissioners want to 21 comment on that, they're more than welcome to. But 22 that would be -- Commissioner Voigt agreed to add 23 that in and put that in the motion as well. So that 24 will be in today as well. 25 Commissioner Voigt, back to you.</p>	237	<p>1 THE CHAIR: All right. Seeing none, 2 Secretary Armijo, if you could call roll. 3 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Gipson. 4 COMMISSIONER GIPSON: Yes. 5 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Manis. 6 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes. 7 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner 8 Robbins. 9 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Yes. 10 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Vice Chair Voigt. 11 COMMISSIONER VOIGT: Yes. 12 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Commissioner Armijo 13 votes yes. 14 Chair Burt. 15 THE CHAIR: Yes. 16 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: And Commissioner 17 Carrillo. 18 COMMISSIONER CARRILLO: Yes. 19 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: That passes, seven 20 to zero. Congratulations. 21 MR. JOHN BINNERT: Thank you. 22 (Applause.) 23 THE CHAIR: All right. And with -- before 24 we all stand up -- okay. Okay. 25 Commissioner Robbins.</p>

1 COMMISSIONER ROBBINS: Well, I just had  
2 one question about the starting time for tomorrow  
3 because my agenda didn't show starting time. And  
4 you may be addressing that, so thank you.

5 THE CHAIR: Sure. Yeah. Tomorrow, it  
6 will be 9:00 a.m.

7 But it actually wasn't that. But tomorrow  
8 is 9:00 a.m. in Santa Fe. I'm actually going to  
9 pass it over to Director Chavez, because we have a  
10 quick little surprise.

11 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: I would just like  
12 to announce that today is somebody's birthday, and  
13 can we all join in in singing Martica Happy  
14 Birthday, the birthday girl.

15 One, two, three.

16 THE CHAIR: Happy Birthday, Martica.  
17 Thanks for spending your birthday with us, renewing  
18 three amazing schools. We're so great grateful for  
19 your work that you do for CSD and for all the  
20 schools in the state. Happy Birthday.

21 All right. We are adjourned -- no,  
22 recessed -- until tomorrow, 9:00 a.m.

23 (Proceedings in recess at 3:49 p.m.)  
24  
25

1 RECEIPT

2 JOB NUMBER: 6335N CC Date: 12/13/22  
3 PROCEEDINGS: OPEN PUBLIC HEARING - Charter Renewal  
4 Proceedings

5 CASE CAPTION: In re: Altura Preparatory School,  
6 Albuquerque Collegiate Charter School, Cottonwood  
7 Classical Preparatory School

8 \*\*\*\*\*

9 ATTORNEY: MS. BEVERLY FRIEDMAN - PED

10 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other \_\_\_\_\_

11 DATE DELIVERED: \_\_\_\_\_ DEL'D BY: \_\_\_\_\_

12 REC'D BY: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

13 \*\*\*\*\*

14 ATTORNEY:

15 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other \_\_\_\_\_

16 DATE DELIVERED: \_\_\_\_\_ DEL'D BY: \_\_\_\_\_

17 REC'D BY: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

18 \*\*\*\*\*

19 ATTORNEY:

20 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other \_\_\_\_\_

21 DATE DELIVERED: \_\_\_\_\_ DEL'D BY: \_\_\_\_\_

22 REC'D BY: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_  
23  
24  
25

1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
3  
4  
5  
6

7 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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

14 In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my  
15 hand on December 27, 2022.  
16  
17  
18

19 \_\_\_\_\_  
Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR  
New Mexico Certified Reporter #219  
BEAN & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
20 201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102  
21 License Expires: 12/31/2023  
22  
23  
24

25 Job No.: 6335N (CC)  
Proofed By: PD

1                   BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

2                                   STATE OF NEW MEXICO

3  
4  
5  
6  
7                                   REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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

14                   In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my  
15 hand on December 27, 2022.

16  
17                                   *Cynthia Chapman*

18                                   -----  
19 Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR  
20 New Mexico Certified Reporter #219  
21 BEAN & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
22 201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630  
23 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102  
24 License Expires: 12/31/2023

25                   Job No.: 6335N (CC)  
                  Proofed By: PD

SANTA FE OFFICE  
119 East Marcy, Suite 110  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 989-4949  
FAX (505) 843-9492

**BEAN**  
**ASSOCIATES, Inc.**  
PROFESSIONAL COURT  
REPORTING SERVICE

MAIN OFFICE  
201 Third NW, Suite 1630  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
(505) 843-9494  
FAX (505) 843-9492  
1-800-669-9492  
e-mail: info@litsupport.com