

BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
COMMUNITY INPUT HEARING  
EQIP ACADEMY OF NEW MEXICO

July 9, 2024

1:00 p.m.

New Mexico Activities Association

6600 Palomas Avenue, Northeast

Albuquerque, New Mexico

-and-

Zoom Webinar Video-Teleconference

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S  
2 COMMISSIONERS:  
3 PATRICIA GIPSON, Chair  
4 STEVEN J. CARRILLO, Vice Chair  
5 TIMOTHY E. BECK, Secretary  
6 MELISSA ARMIJO, Member  
7 REBEKKA BURT, Member  
8 STEWART INGHAM, Member  
9 K.T. MANIS, Member  
10 STAFF:  
11 CORINA CHAVEZ Director  
12 Charter School/Options for  
13 Parents and Families Division  
14 LUCY VALENZUELA Technical Assistance and  
15 Training Specialist  
16 Charter School/Options for Parents  
17 and Families Division  
18  
19 MELISSA BROWN Technical Assistance and Support  
20 (MISSY) and Training Administrator  
21 Charter School/Options for  
22 Parents and Families Division  
23  
24  
25

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1 THE CHAIR: All right. Good afternoon,  
2 everyone. And thanks for your patience while we get  
3 this all set up.  
4 So I am going to call to order the PEC  
5 community input hearing. This is Thursday,  
6 July 9th, 2024, and it is 1:12 p.m. Oh, I'm sorry.  
7 It's Thursday -- it's Tuesday. No, Thursday is  
8 July 11th. I'm getting ahead of myself, because I'm  
9 looking at this agenda. Because I'm looking at the  
10 back of the agenda.  
11 So thank you very much for bearing with us  
12 once again.  
13 So I'm going to call this meeting to  
14 order, and I'm going to ask Commissioner Beck to  
15 please call roll.  
16 (Commissioner Beck inaudible.)  
17 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Burt.  
18 COMMISSIONER BURT: Here.  
19 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham.  
20 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Here.  
21 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis.  
22 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Here.  
23 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson.  
24 THE CHAIR: Here.  
25 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo.

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1 I N D E X T O P R O C E E D I N G S  
2 P A G E  
3 1 Call to Order 4  
4 Roll Call  
5 Pledge of Allegiance  
6 Salute to the New Mexico Flag  
7  
8 2 Approval of the Agenda 5  
9  
10 3 Community Input Hearing for 6  
11 Equip Academy of New Mexico  
12 Application and Peer Review Report  
13  
14 4 Recess 141  
15  
16 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE 142  
17  
18 ATTACHMENTS:  
19 1 List of Attendees  
20 2 Script for Interpreter  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

5

1 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Here.  
2 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, here.  
3 That means that we currently have six.  
4 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. And I'm  
5 just going to remind folks with the mics. Once you  
6 finish speaking, if you could turn the mic off,  
7 because there's some challenges with the -- with the  
8 sound if there's multiple mics that are open; okay?  
9 So I'm now going to ask everyone to stand  
10 for the Pledge of Allegiance and the Salute to the  
11 New Mexico Flag.  
12 (Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the  
13 New Mexico Flag conducted.)  
14 THE CHAIR: We are on to Item No. 2, which  
15 is the Approval of the Agenda.  
16 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Motion to approve.  
17 COMMISSIONER BURT: Second.  
18 THE CHAIR: There's a motion by  
19 Commissioner Carrillo and a second by Commissioner  
20 Burt.  
21 All in favor?  
22 (Commissioners so indicate.)  
23 THE CHAIR: Hearing -- opposed?  
24 (No response.)  
25 THE CHAIR: Hearing no opposition, the

6

1 motion passes.

2 Before we begin, there is an interpreter

3 here. So we've asked her to do a brief introduction

4 and let folks know that she is available if

5 individuals are more comfortable communicating

6 through the interpreter.

7 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: And for those

8 standing, there's a lot of seats right up here if

9 you want a place to sit down, and in the front on

10 the other side.

11 THE CHAIR: So as we -- for everyone, as

12 we begin, because we do have a court reporter doing

13 the minutes of this, she's on Zoom. So we are

14 asking people to please make sure that you introduce

15 yourself. Those at the table, once you've done it

16 the first time. But if you also spell your last

17 name for the record, we appreciate it.

18 So thank you.

19 (Interpreter presents introductory

20 comments in Spanish.) (See Attachment 2)

21 THE CHAIR: So we are on to Item No. 3,

22 which is the Community Input Hearing -- and I want

23 to make sure I've got the name completely correct --

24 for Equip Academy of New Mexico.

25 We have 26 people that have signed up for

7

1 public comment when we get to that. So we're going

2 to ask people to do your best to try to stay to two

3 minutes or under for this so that we can get

4 everyone in. We want to make sure that everyone is

5 heard.

6 But we do have -- we want to be

7 considerate of everyone's time as well. So if -- we

8 do just ask that -- we do have a timer. You'll get

9 a reminder when you're getting close to that time.

10 So letter B is the presentation by the

11 applicant, which you have 20 minutes to use as you

12 so choose. So welcome --

13 (Chair consults with Vice Chair Carrillo.)

14 So welcome, once again. And reminder, if

15 you could, each individual that's going to speak up

16 from the team, introduce yourself and then spell

17 your last name for the record.

18 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Commissioner,

19 Madam Chair, thank you.

20 My name is Mercy Herrera, H-e-r-r-e-r-a.

21 And I'm lead founder of the proposed -- I'm lead

22 founder and proposed head of school of Equip Academy

23 of New Mexico.

24 And I've spent the past decade teaching

25 and leading in some of the highest performing

8

1 charter schools in the country. And I'm committed

2 to bringing a high-performing charter option to the

3 west side of Albuquerque, with a fuller founding

4 team. Thank you.

5 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: Madam Chair,

6 Commissioners, my name is Renee Delgado-Riley.

7 D-e-l-g-a-d-o hyphen R-i-l-e-y.

8 I've worked in higher education for

9 16 years, leading equity-centered assessments,

10 strategic planning, and helping people use data for

11 decision-making.

12 I'm excited to serve as the proposed board

13 chair, because, as a Native New Mexican, somebody

14 who grew up on the Albuquerque west side, and a

15 parent of a child with complex learning abilities

16 and mental health issues, I saw firsthand the

17 challenges in public education.

18 I can't wait to share my expertise in this

19 role, as well as to the academic and governance

20 committees.

21 MS. SARA FITZGERALD: Madam Chair,

22 Commissioners, my name is Sara Fitzgerald.

23 F-i-t-z-g-e-r-a-l-d.

24 I'm a public policy and communications

25 professional. I'm also our proposed vice chair.

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1 I bring years of experience in state

2 education policy and community engagement, which I

3 will contribute to our audit and governance

4 committees.

5 MS. ALEJANDRA GRIJALVA: Madam Chair,

6 Commissioners, my name is Alejandra Grijalva,

7 G-r-i-j-a-l-v-a.

8 I'm a first-generation graduate, an

9 English Language Learner, a Native New Mexican, and

10 the parent of a two-year-old. And, as such, I'm

11 excited to contribute my knowledge and nearly ten

12 years of experience in the nonprofit sectors,

13 serving underserved communities in the state, and

14 also education policy and budgeting experience from

15 the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee, as I

16 serve as the proposed board secretary, academic

17 committee lead, and a finance committee member.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. JANET LEUNG: Madam Chair,

20 Commissioners, my name is Janet Leung. L-e-u-n-g.

21 I'm the director of business development for UNM

22 Hospitals.

23 Growing up in Mississippi, I struggled to

24 read. And if it weren't for a couple of public

25 school teachers who made sure I could read and

<p style="text-align: right;">10</p> <p>1 understand The Three Billy Goats Gruff, I don't 2 think I would be as successful as I am today. 3 I would love for more New Mexican students 4 to have the same great early education experience 5 that I had. I bring over 13 years of finance and 6 accounting experience as the proposed treasurer, 7 finance committee lead, and academics committee 8 member for Equip Academy. 9 MS. MARY JONES: Madam Chair and committee 10 members, my name is Mary Jones. J-o-n-e-s. I'm a 11 partner at a law firm here in town and a lawyer of 12 about ten years. I'm also the parent of a 13 three-year-old, who is learning to read right now. 14 And as we all know -- I grew up in 15 New Mexico -- reading is important. There's no 16 other way to do what we do or succeed in life if you 17 can't effectively communicate with the people you're 18 working with. 19 As the proposed audit committee lead, I 20 will bring a decade of legal experience and 21 expertise to every aspect of this organization, 22 making sure we are in compliance with all 23 regulations and all policies and procedures. 24 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 25 MR. DANIEL IVEY-SOTO: Madam Chair,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">12</p> <p>1 Equip Academy of New Mexico. 2 I would love to start by grounding us in 3 the "why." Why academ- -- why Equip? Why the west 4 side? And why now? I'm sorry. 5 I just want to thank everyone for being 6 here that's been really, really supportive, from us. 7 So it's really a painful reality on what's 8 happening with the proficiencies for students on the 9 west side and across the west side in comparison to 10 proficiency levels across Albuquerque, New Mexico. 11 We know as a team that this is 12 unacceptable. And because statistics show that a 13 lack of foundational skills limits the probabilities 14 of life and limits the possibilities of success, 15 like you all, we have a firm belief, and we know our 16 children are far capable of achieving more. 17 And at Equip Academy, we know firsthand 18 the power of education through our program. It 19 really equips students with the knowledge and skills 20 to take on any life goal that they set their mind 21 to. 22 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: Every child has 23 the opportunity to live out their greatness. Our 24 commitment is to equip them to do so. 25 Our educational approach is joyful,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">11</p> <p>1 Commissioners, my name is Daniel Ivey-Soto, I-v as 2 in "Victor" -e-y dash capital S-o-t-o. 3 I'm been volunteering as general counsel 4 to the proposed school and the proposed board. I am 5 a person who learned English as a Second Language 6 and someone who actually never finished high school. 7 And, as a result, I understand very much the 8 importance of a school that focuses on the reading 9 skills in the early years and the difference that 10 that can make the rest of someone's life. 11 And I'm very excited to be involved with 12 this school. Thank you. 13 MS. REBEKAH RUNYAN: Madam Chair and 14 Commissioners, my name is Rebekah Runyan. It's 15 R-u-n-y-a-n. 16 I'm the co-founder and co-CEO of 17 K12 Accounting. We serve over 30 charter schools 18 and school districts in the state of New Mexico. 19 And I have 15 years' experience both auditing public 20 schools in New Mexico and working as a business 21 official in New Mexico. 22 THE CHAIR: So whenever you're ready, your 23 time will start as soon as you begin. 24 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Thank you, 25 Madam Chair. Missy, we're ready.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">13</p> <p>1 engaging, celebrates student curiosity, community, 2 and really imagines what a literacy-rich, 3 K-through-5 school can and should be. 4 Our mission is by providing a top-tier, 5 inquiry-based, college preparatory education. 6 Equip Academy New Mexico ensures our 7 K-through-5 students master the knowledge and skills 8 to dream audaciously, engage deeply, and pursue a 9 life of purpose. 10 As you can see, every one of us joined 11 this team because we stand behind our mission to 12 transform academic achievement. 13 Our mission strategically anchors our 14 educational model and is actualized in five key 15 ways. 16 Next slide, please. 17 MS. MERCY HERRERA: So our school design 18 is -- can really be described in five ways: 19 The first way is our inquiry-based 20 approach. And this really deploys strategies that 21 center student learning. They're the ones doing the 22 thinking, the sense-making, the debating, and, 23 through discourse, ultimately putting the ownership 24 of learning on them. 25 The second element to our school design is</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">14</p> <p>1 our comprehensive literacy and language acquisition 2 program, which is intentionally designed to meet the 3 needs of all students, ensuring that they build 4 strong, successful, and foundational reading skills. 5 Our -- our third design is that -- is 6 educator excellence. 7 So we believe firmly that for every 8 student to learn, each teacher should be trained, 9 coached, and supported, with a heavy focus on 10 curriculum internalization, data analysis, and 11 intentional action planning to support every 12 student. 13 Our fourth element is our college 14 preparatory culture. We believe every child has 15 what it takes to earn a place of their choosing in 16 college, regardless of where they come from, 17 regardless what they look like, and regardless what 18 their families have done. 19 We provide early college exposure and 20 track college readiness indicators for students. 21 Lastly, is our rigorous curriculum. 22 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: Our 23 evidence-based curriculum is nationally -- evidence 24 that it shows successful rates in similar demography 25 that we're going to be supporting. And we believe</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>1 ensuring that students are receiving necessary 2 supports and timely interventions to support their 3 learning. 4 Additionally, our tailored classroom 5 supports include having a lead teacher and an 6 instructional assistant with the appropriate 7 credentials in the classroom in grades K through 2, 8 and special education-focused, shared instructional 9 assistants, in grades 3 through 5. 10 This is all done under our inclusion 11 philosophy, ensuring that our teachers, student 12 assistants, and students are working together to 13 provide appropriate and necessary supports to 14 students with disabilities. 15 Next slide, please. 16 We know what our demographic needs. 17 31 percent of our target population is made up of 18 households that speak a language other than English. 19 So ensuring that our school is prepared with a 20 supportive and comprehensive EL -- or English 21 language -- learning program is a priority of our 22 school design. 23 And this starts with accurate 24 identification of our EL students through a language 25 usage survey and State-mandated assessments, such a</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">15</p> <p>1 in setting high expectations so every student can 2 see themselves in the curriculum, from cultural 3 background to a diverse array of experiences. So 4 we're instituting a really rigorous curriculum to 5 make sure that they're reading by December. 6 Kindergarteners will read to their 7 families by December, and we believe strongly in 8 that. 9 MS. ALEJANDRA GRIJALVA: So Equip 10 Academy's school design prioritizes providing a 11 highly supportive and inclusive learning environment 12 for all of our students, every single student that 13 walks through our doors. 14 Our intentional school design and 15 commitment to inclusion ensure that every student 16 receives the individualized support they need to the 17 thrive academically and socially. 18 Our special education model is designed to 19 serve our students with special needs within a 20 general education setting as much as possible, while 21 providing a multilayered system of support, or MLSS, 22 as appropriate. 23 A highlight of our model is our dedicated 24 Student Assistance Team, that will be responsible 25 for weekly progress monitoring, IEP development, and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">17</p> <p>1 the WIDA ACCESS Test. 2 The cornerstone of our program is our 3 multilayered system of support that will provide 4 regular progress monitoring that will inform 5 data-driven instruction, and ensure appropriate 6 support based on the student's actual needs and 7 early -- and identifying early interventions when 8 necessary. 9 Additionally, we are committed to cultural 10 responsiveness through our culturally responsive 11 curriculum and appropriate materials that reflect 12 our student demographic and the philosophy that 13 celebrates our students' diversity as their biggest 14 strength. 15 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: So to ensure 16 we're meeting the diversities of our students and 17 being held accountable to the communities we serve, 18 our tailored assessment design can help us 19 accurately identify early learning gaps that can 20 help drive instruction, monitor student progress, 21 and set overall goals for the school. 22 So we're going to do this in a couple of 23 ways, specifically through our Mission-Specific 24 Goals, highly focused on the academic excellence. 25 So we're expecting in reading that</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">18</p> <p>1 70 percent of our students will advance two or more 2 reading levels in one academic year, as measured by 3 Fountas &amp; Pinnell Reading Assessment, which is 4 grounded in the Science of Reading. 5 For mathematical problem-solving, we 6 expect 70 percent of our students will solve complex 7 grade-level number stories accurately. 8 As a place of educator excellence, we're 9 going to hold ourselves to high-quality instruction. 10 And to do that we're going to have 190 hours 11 annually of teacher professional development. 12 There's going to be ongoing coaching and 13 observations led by our proposed heads of school, 14 and as well as quarterly data studies to ensure that 15 teachers know how to use the data to not only drive 16 instruction, but, ultimately, impact student 17 learning. 18 Because of our inquiry-based approach, 19 there's ongoing formative assessments that are 20 embedded in the curriculum. So there's ongoing data 21 collection that is very iterative that centers 22 students in their learning. 23 This data will then drive the development 24 of individual student learning goals that can 25 address gaps, adjust them in realtime, which is, we</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">20</p> <p>1 committee. This is to ensure the most effective use 2 of public and private funds to support the school's 3 mission and to ensure compliance with PED. 4 We, as a mission, is to equip students 5 with the knowledge and skills to succeed. 6 Therefore, we have budgeted enough financial support 7 for a full-time special education teacher and other 8 needs that students may present upon enrollment. 9 If other needs arise, we have three grant 10 writers on the board who will also help apply for 11 grants in the future. 12 We will also have a dedicated fundraising 13 team to develop and implement a fundraising -- a 14 comprehensive fundraising strategy, which will 15 include annual campaigns, major donor cultivation, 16 and special events. 17 In terms of our long-term priorities, we 18 will support our teachers with robust professional 19 development each year. And we also plan on adding 20 more staff support in the future, which includes 21 instructional assistants, an assistant principal in 22 residence, and an education coordinator. 23 Our largest long-term priority, however, 24 is a permanent facility in year four on the west 25 side to support our 450 students at max enrollment.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">19</p> <p>1 know, both inclusive and equitable. 2 And, lastly, we'll rely on standards-based 3 assessments, which are a series of summative 4 assessments that give us a high-level understanding 5 of student proficiency that we can look at overall 6 trends over time, as well as disaggregated by our 7 special populations. 8 Next slide, please. 9 MS. JANET LEUNG: In terms of our 10 financial model, we as a proposed governing board, 11 have a responsibility to review fiscal oversight, 12 the management of public and private funds, and 13 long-term priorities. 14 For oversight, we have a responsibility to 15 ensure that the finances are compliant, especially 16 with PED, our budget must be conservative, balanced, 17 and aligned with public interests. 18 We all notice that the fiscal health of 19 the school is dependent upon enrollment. We, as the 20 proposed board, as the stewards of public health -- 21 stewards of public funds -- will review this metric 22 closely in the planning year. Enrollment is very 23 important. We will make recommendations, as needed. 24 In terms of our internal controls, we will 25 review finances regularly through the finance</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21</p> <p>1 Next slide. 2 MS. SARA FITZGERALD: Continuous 3 improvement and accountability are really central to 4 the Equip Academy model, and we've designed our 5 governance structure to make sure we're delivering 6 that to our school community, both to the students 7 and families that are part of that. 8 So to that end, our governing board will 9 be overseeing these areas: 10 Mission and vision alignment, to make sure 11 that we are making good on the promises that we make 12 in our charter; academic accountability; legal 13 compliance and fiscal health; the selection and 14 evaluation of our head of school; strategic planning 15 for the long-term success of our school; and public 16 transparency, because we are not just stewards of 17 public resources, but we're also community partners. 18 So to get started, if we're approved, we 19 will immediately transition from a founding board to 20 a governing board, and we'll do that by adopting our 21 bylaws, electing officers and establishing 22 committees, qualifying as a Board of Finance so that 23 we can carry out our fiscal responsibilities, 24 ensuring that we are in full compliance with the 25 Open Meetings Act, and take steps to hire a head of</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p>1 school; so approving that job description and 2 starting to flesh out a contract so that we can make 3 an offer.</p> <p>4 At that point we will also start 5 scheduling our training. We know that State law 6 requires that we complete ten hours of governing 7 body training by the end of that first academic 8 year. We want to make sure we get that done right 9 away.</p> <p>10 In terms of our regular board 11 responsibilities, we'll be evaluating our head of 12 school each year, using multiple measures. So 13 50 percent of that evaluation will be based on 14 student achievement; 25 percent will be based on 15 teacher observations and feedback; and that 16 remaining 25 percent will be based on the PED high, 17 objective, uniform State standards of evaluation, 18 and school community feedback as well.</p> <p>19 We'll also undergo an annual board 20 evaluation as a governing body. And so we'll start 21 with a detailed self-evaluation. We do have a 22 rubric in our application to really look at 23 ourselves in six important domains.</p> <p>24 And we'll actually do that twice each 25 year. So the second time, at the end of the year,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p> <p>1 of respondents revealed the perceived benefit of a 2 high-quality elementary school, like Equip, as 3 important.</p> <p>4 Through four focus groups and many 5 one-on-one meetings with over 245 people across the 6 Albuquerque community, they have demanded an overall 7 sentiment and excitement about our school model.</p> <p>8 Through our many local organizations and 9 businesses, ranging from Head Starts, daycares, 10 religious organizations, community organizations, 11 businesses, overwhelmingly are endorsing a school 12 like Equip Academy to open on the Albuquerque west 13 side.</p> <p>14 And, lastly, we received 134 letters of 15 support from families and community members 16 amplifying the importance of having a school like 17 Equip. This visual you see here represents over 18 16,000 words from community members' voices 19 expressed during our focus groups.</p> <p>20 A text-mining, statistical analysis was 21 used to create word associations which refer to the 22 strength and connections between community members' 23 words.</p> <p>24 As you can clearly see, community members' 25 voices are amplified and vocalizing Equip's</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>1 when we do that, we'll also undergo an evaluation by 2 our staff and by our school community as well 3 through surveys to get their important feedback as 4 well.</p> <p>5 And to sustain or board long-term, each 6 one of us will be responsible for leveraging our 7 network to find other community-minded, committed 8 members of our board who might be able to contribute 9 skills and their values to be an asset to us. And 10 we have a thorough vetting system to make sure that 11 they're a good fit.</p> <p>12 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: So strong 13 community support is an indicator of the potential 14 success of our school and reflects the local demand 15 and commitment to our school mission.</p> <p>16 Background research a few years ago in 17 New Mexico revealed that over 80 percent of families 18 want more choices in public education. And over 19 70 percent support opening more public charter 20 schools.</p> <p>21 Through extensive outreach, Equip 22 Academy -- as you can see here, we have lots of 23 people. But in addition to that, we've learned that 24 they really support us in a couple of different 25 ways, the first being our survey, where 97 percent</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p> <p>1 educational model, from inquiry-based to 2 mission-vision to school design.</p> <p>3 Next slide, please.</p> <p>4 This visual -- not expecting you to read 5 everything -- but it's a very complex web of 6 connections created with community organizations, 7 businesses, and community groups by the founding 8 Equip team in the last ten months.</p> <p>9 So the thicker the line, the more pink and 10 more orange visually represent the intentional 11 strength of that relationship that's going to be 12 directly involved in executing our academic model.</p> <p>13 Next slide, please.</p> <p>14 Community voices are critical for 15 understanding our community needs and aspirations, 16 especially for the people in our proposed community. 17 We are so grateful to our community for sharing 18 their voice, which has helped inform our school 19 design, and will continue to inform our school 20 design.</p> <p>21 And we really appreciate everyone that 22 showed up today. I'd like to take a moment, if 23 you're willing and able, to please stand so that the 24 founding team can recognize your courageousness to 25 share your voice and time with us.</p>

26	<p>1 (People stand.)</p> <p>2 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: And I don't want</p> <p>3 to read all these quotes. But I just think some of</p> <p>4 them are critical.</p> <p>5 "All New Mexico students deserve access to</p> <p>6 high-quality options now."</p> <p>7 "Education can be the tool to impact</p> <p>8 lives, but the first step is access." Next slide.</p> <p>9 MS. MERCY HERRERA: We just want to thank</p> <p>10 you with three things. The first is our commitment</p> <p>11 to provide a high-achieving academy that fosters</p> <p>12 curiosity to develop independent and critical</p> <p>13 thinkers. We center community through partnership</p> <p>14 and maintain transparency and accountability as an</p> <p>15 institute.</p> <p>16 We are grateful for you all today taking</p> <p>17 the time to engage with us in lending your area of</p> <p>18 expertise, and we look forward to discussing this</p> <p>19 possibility with you today.</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: Thank you.</p> <p>21 Is there anyone here from Albuquerque</p> <p>22 Public Schools?</p> <p>23 (No response.)</p> <p>24 THE CHAIR: Okay. Is there anyone here</p> <p>25 from a tribal entity?</p>	28	<p>1 Encore Enterprises. We are business owners in a</p> <p>2 variety of businesses within the real estate, health</p> <p>3 care, and consumer industries.</p> <p>4 We own and operate dental practices across</p> <p>5 the country. We own a total of 37 practices in the</p> <p>6 United States, five of which are in New Mexico and</p> <p>7 very close to your community. And in New Mexico, we</p> <p>8 employ about 101 people at all levels of skill and</p> <p>9 education.</p> <p>10 We have dentists, hygienists, treatment</p> <p>11 coordinators, front desk receptionists, office</p> <p>12 coordinators, and leaders.</p> <p>13 And while we see labor issues across the</p> <p>14 country continue to be a problem for us in terms of</p> <p>15 staffing post COVID, I will say that staffing and</p> <p>16 finding superstar talent in New Mexico continues to</p> <p>17 be a challenge.</p> <p>18 And that is why I'm here today to fully</p> <p>19 support the Equip Academy founding team's desire to</p> <p>20 open a charter in the community and to serve the</p> <p>21 community of our employees and their families as</p> <p>22 well, because the hope is that kids who are educated</p> <p>23 at Equip Academy can grow up to be, in our benefit,</p> <p>24 selfishly, dentists, or any other professionals that</p> <p>25 would encourage a business like Encore, a business</p>
27	<p>1 (No response.)</p> <p>2 THE CHAIR: Okay.</p> <p>3 We are now on to public comments.</p> <p>4 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Do you want people in</p> <p>5 the room or people on Zoom first?</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: Let's do the Zoom people</p> <p>7 first.</p> <p>8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. So first up on</p> <p>9 Zoom we have -- and I apologize for not pronouncing</p> <p>10 it correctly -- Nili Sangani.</p> <p>11 And remember to please spell your first</p> <p>12 and last name for the court reporter.</p> <p>13 I'm going to give you permission to talk</p> <p>14 in just a second here.</p> <p>15 There you go.</p> <p>16 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hi. Can everyone hear</p> <p>17 me?</p> <p>18 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We can.</p> <p>19 FROM THE PUBLIC: I'm really happy to be</p> <p>20 going first.</p> <p>21 My name is Nili Sangani. First name is</p> <p>22 N-i-l-i. Last name, S-a-n-g-a-n-i.</p> <p>23 So a little bit about myself.</p> <p>24 I am a board member and a senior</p> <p>25 vice president of operations at a business called</p>	29	<p>1 that I'm a part of, to continue to expand their</p> <p>2 footprint in Albuquerque and New Mexico.</p> <p>3 I also strongly believe that kids who grow</p> <p>4 up to be a part of the labor force in New Mexico and</p> <p>5 who have ties and deep connections to the state make</p> <p>6 better overall hires and contribute to the very rich</p> <p>7 culture of our community and our local businesses.</p> <p>8 So with that, I hope the committee</p> <p>9 approves Equip's application and proposal today.</p> <p>10 Thank you.</p> <p>11 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next up, we'll have</p> <p>12 Janice Arnold. I'm just finding you.</p> <p>13 I can't find Janice Arnold.</p> <p>14 I'll go to John Jones. You can unmute</p> <p>15 yourself, John, and I will start the timer when you</p> <p>16 finish spelling your name.</p> <p>17 FROM THE PUBLIC: I'm John Jones,</p> <p>18 J-o-n-e-s. Pleased to see the approach this board</p> <p>19 is taking with their goals and objectives to focus</p> <p>20 on reading and math competencies in a dual-language</p> <p>21 environment. I would like to hear a little bit</p> <p>22 about the market analysis they've done to establish</p> <p>23 the need for these.</p> <p>24 I think they're on -- they're spot on the</p> <p>25 mark. I would like to hear some of that data.</p>



30	<p>1 Thank you.</p> <p>2 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you. Next we</p> <p>3 have Andrea Hawkins.</p> <p>4 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hi, there. Can you hear</p> <p>5 me?</p> <p>6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Yes, we can.</p> <p>7 FROM THE PUBLIC: Okay. My name is Andrea</p> <p>8 Hankins, H-a-n-k-i-n-s. And I'm happy to share why</p> <p>9 I think Equip Academy of New Mexico is not only a</p> <p>10 welcome addition to Albuquerque's west side. And</p> <p>11 having grown up on Albuquerque's west side, I do</p> <p>12 believe that it's necessary to our children's</p> <p>13 future.</p> <p>14 As so many of you know, our academic</p> <p>15 performance for our children are really low. It's</p> <p>16 very below par. They're struggling with reading and</p> <p>17 math. And the proficiency rates in our area are so</p> <p>18 low, only about 26 percent in reading, and I believe</p> <p>19 even lower in math, from what I understand.</p> <p>20 Equip Academy's unique approach with the</p> <p>21 strong emphasis on literacy and inquiry-based</p> <p>22 instruction is -- I believe it's designed to address</p> <p>23 these issues head on. This will give our kids the</p> <p>24 foundation that they need too excel academically.</p> <p>25 I really like Equip Academy's model, and I</p>	32	<p>1 have to pay for this level of education. And I</p> <p>2 truly am excited about the future of our children,</p> <p>3 and I just encourage you to support this incredible</p> <p>4 initiative.</p> <p>5 Thank you.</p> <p>6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you. If Janice</p> <p>7 Arnold is using a different channel's name, you</p> <p>8 could raise your hand. Otherwise, we could go to</p> <p>9 the room.</p> <p>10 I'm thinking that it's D'Val -- oh, there</p> <p>11 we go. Sorry. We'll go to Monique. You can speak.</p> <p>12 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hi. My name is Monique</p> <p>13 Diaz. I am really grateful to be here today.</p> <p>14 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Can you please spell</p> <p>15 your name?</p> <p>16 FROM THE PUBLIC: Monique, M-o-n-i-q-u-e.</p> <p>17 Last name, D-i-a-z. I grew up going to school on</p> <p>18 the west side of Albuquerque. I am really excited</p> <p>19 to see a school like Equip be started for the</p> <p>20 children of that community on that side -- or just</p> <p>21 in Albuquerque, in general. From my experience,</p> <p>22 it's very much needed.</p> <p>23 You know, I was a very lucky kid growing</p> <p>24 up, knowing, you know, just with the backing of my</p> <p>25 mom who had been to college, and, looking at the</p>
31	<p>1 think what sets them apart is the commitment to</p> <p>2 teacher excellence. I like the idea that teachers</p> <p>3 will undergo a rigorous professional development and</p> <p>4 they'll get ongoing support through regular</p> <p>5 observations and life coaching. And I really just</p> <p>6 believe that this gives our children the best of the</p> <p>7 best.</p> <p>8 Early -- Equip's early introduction to the</p> <p>9 idea of college and career opportunities, I think,</p> <p>10 is transformative, starting at the kindergarten</p> <p>11 level. Speaking to kids like, you know, "when you</p> <p>12 go to college," not "if you go to college." And</p> <p>13 truly preparing them for that experience, I think,</p> <p>14 is huge. I think it's crucial to their futures.</p> <p>15 I myself am a product of private education</p> <p>16 here in Albuquerque. And as a parent of a</p> <p>17 15-year-old, I have invested in private education</p> <p>18 for my son for grades kindergarten through the</p> <p>19 eighth grade.</p> <p>20 And I truly do wish that Equip Academy of</p> <p>21 New Mexico was around during my son's younger years.</p> <p>22 I think this model gives our children the</p> <p>23 opportunity to thrive without placing such a</p> <p>24 financial burden on their parents.</p> <p>25 I do think that our community should not</p>	33	<p>1 rest of my family, just noticing, like, what a</p> <p>2 blessing that my mom had that opportunity and to</p> <p>3 help me groom -- groom me to a way to get myself</p> <p>4 there as well.</p> <p>5 Had I not had something like that, I would</p> <p>6 have struggled, just like I saw a bunch of my</p> <p>7 friends in school struggle.</p> <p>8 And so I'm very excited to hear about a</p> <p>9 school that is going to help children get there,</p> <p>10 despite whether their families have had an</p> <p>11 experience like that or not, because -- I don't</p> <p>12 know. My heart is in the children of New Mexico.</p> <p>13 I love where I'm from, and I feel like the</p> <p>14 children there deserve every little bit that this</p> <p>15 school has to offer. And I'm just really excited to</p> <p>16 see what comes in it.</p> <p>17 So I'll just share a quick experience.</p> <p>18 In middle school, I moved from El Paso,</p> <p>19 Texas, to Rio Rancho. And without any question, I</p> <p>20 was placed into a program for children who didn't</p> <p>21 speak English as a first language without even being</p> <p>22 asked.</p> <p>23 My parents were not asked. No one asked.</p> <p>24 It was just assumed. And I -- after a couple of</p> <p>25 months, I let my mom know that school seemed really</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">34</p> <p>1 easy, like, beyond easy.  2 She questioned that, because she didn't  3 like that for me. So she did digging and was able  4 to realize that I was in the wrong program.  5 And so I would really absolutely hate for  6 a student to have to go through something like that  7 long-term and not be challenged to grow and to  8 become everything that they could become because the  9 parents either didn't know or the child didn't know  10 to ask or any of that.  11 And so I really hope that that is  12 something that can be avoided. And I really feel  13 like with a school like Equip Academy, that can  14 absolutely be avoided.  15 So thank you for letting me share today.  16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. In the room,  17 D'Val Westphal.  18 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm D'Val Westphal.  19 That's D apostrophe V-a-l W-e-s-t-p-h-a-l.  20 I'm the executive vice president of policy  21 and programs for the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of  22 Commerce, and I'm also a westside resident and the  23 proud parent of a charter school graduate.  24 And so I'd like to share why approving  25 Equip Academy is a win from both of those</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">36</p> <p>1 And we were very, very lucky, and we were  2 able to. And it was 100 percent absolutely worth  3 it.  4 Our son graduated with 45 college credits.  5 He got his bachelor's and his master's in four  6 years. And now he's got a brand new job, on the  7 Base, as a program manager. And that is in great  8 part because he went to great charter schools,  9 schools where tutoring and support are the norm,  10 schools where every child is given the tools they  11 need to succeed, where failure is simply not an  12 option.  13 And what the school landscape looks like  14 is one of the first questions businesses ask when  15 they consider New Mexico. It's a question all of us  16 parents ask ourselves every day.  17 Please, please, please approve this  18 charter and make that an option for more families  19 here.  20 Thank you.  21 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Alyssa  22 Zamora.  23 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. My name is Alyssa  24 Zamora. Hold this. I'm a resident teacher at the  25 University of New Mexico.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">35</p> <p>1 perspectives.  2 From the charter standpoint, businesses  3 want great schools and great options for their  4 employees. We all know New Mexico school  5 performance measures are not where they should be.  6 And so it's essential to expand the offerings with  7 high-performing charters like Equip, which are both  8 more targeted and more nimble in delivering the  9 education that our student bodies need.  10 From the parent standpoint, we truly won  11 the lottery, not once but twice; first, when my son  12 got into a Montessori charter, again, when he got  13 into a college-prep charter.  14 That was just the first hurdle, though.  15 Getting him to school every day for twelve years was  16 a huge challenge. We had to drive from far  17 northwest Albuquerque to the center of town every  18 day for five years. And then for the next seven, we  19 had to drive all the way from northwest Albuquerque  20 to the Pit area.  21 It was a sacrifice many parents just can't  22 make. I had many colleagues at the time tell me  23 they simply just couldn't get their kid across town.  24 They couldn't -- they couldn't afford the gas money;  25 they couldn't make it work.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">37</p> <p>1 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Could you please spell  2 your name?  3 FROM THE FLOOR: Oh, sorry.  4 A-l-y-s-s-a Z-a-m-o-r-a.  5 I'm a resident teacher at the University  6 of New Mexico, and I will soon be receiving my  7 degree in elementary education.  8 I have had the opportunity to attend one  9 of Equip's focus groups. And I think that Equip  10 Academy is needed because of its focus on teacher  11 training through educator excellence.  12 I believe that educator excellence is one  13 of the most important key elements for student  14 success, because students cannot live up to their  15 full potential if they are not properly led by a  16 highly educated, skilled, and trained teacher.  17 The teacher creates a community within the  18 classroom, and that makes a huge impact on how  19 students learn and perform overall.  20 Thank you.  21 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Mark  22 Vigil. And please remember to spell your name.  23 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is Marc  24 Vigil. M-a-r-c. Last name, Vigil. V as in  25 "Victor" -i-g-i-l.</p>

38	<p>1 I'm here, CEO of ME Designs, a design                  2 company that creates various custom projects. Equip                  3 Academy is needed in New Mexico, Equip's                  4 inquiry-based model, which helps student thinking,                  5 curiosity, and creativity. Creativity is crucial                  6 in -- is crucial because it allows individuals to                  7 showcase their -- and express their talents and                  8 skills in various mediums. This is crucial for                  9 tomorrow's learning.                  10 Thank you.                  11 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Melissa                  12 Sanchez.                  13 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. My name                  14 is Melissa, M-e-l-i-s-s-a, Sanchez, S-a-n-c-h-e-z.                  15 I am a westside resident and the CEO of                  16 the Albuquerque Westside Business Association, where                  17 our mission is to support the educational and                  18 economic development of Albuquerque's west side.                  19 And I've had the opportunity to meet with                  20 some of the founding members of Equip Academy of                  21 New Mexico. I've attended the focus groups, which                  22 had great community engagement, and was just quite                  23 impressed with, you know, the start and just the                  24 willingness to work with community and different                  25 organizations.</p>	40	<p>1 so I can't read or spell that good. So I like how                  2 they will teach them how to read a few more books,                  3 higher grades than them, and just learning that                  4 overall.                  5 But thank you.                  6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Bruce Stidworthy.                  7 FROM THE FLOOR: I'll hold the mic, too.                  8 My name is Bruce Stidworthy. Last name,                  9 S-t-i-d-w-o-r-t-h-y.                  10 I am the president and the CEO of Bohannon                  11 Huston, a local civil engineering firm. And also                  12 relevant to today's discussion, I am the grandparent                  13 of two preschoolers here in Albuquerque.                  14 Parents in the Albuquerque community want                  15 more options to help their students thrive by                  16 finding the right fit for them. And I believe that                  17 Equip Academy will help fulfill that need in our                  18 community.                  19 As a community member who believes in a                  20 bright future for Albuquerque, I want Equip Academy                  21 to help our youngest students become strong leaders,                  22 critical thinkers, and young people of integrity.                  23 That's good for them, good for their families, good                  24 for our businesses, who want to hire smart and                  25 motivated people, and good for our community.</p>
39	<p>1 You know, education is the cornerstone to                  2 a community's economic prosperity. And on the west                  3 side, due to the increased population growth, we do                  4 face challenges and lack of infrastructure. So we                  5 do believe that the addition of Equip Academy will                  6 definitely benefit families and residents of the                  7 west side and Albuquerque as a whole, and I strongly                  8 urge that you approve Equip Academy of New Mexico.                  9 Thank you.                  10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Isaiah                  11 Holtry, I believe.                  12 FROM THE FLOOR: Yeah. It's okay. My                  13 name is Isaiah Holtry. I-s-a-i-a-h. And then last                  14 name, H-o-l-t-r-y.                  15 And -- but I just want to say about the                  16 Equip Academy is -- what I love about Equip Academy                  17 is how the kids -- how the kids can -- or how the                  18 kids will visit colleges at such a young age, having                  19 kids think about the early future or become more                  20 comfortable with the idea of college and what they                  21 want to become.                  22 I don't have any kids yet. But when I do,                  23 I would send them to Equip Academy.                  24 And I really like the part about the                  25 reading and stuff. Because I have, like, dyslexia,</p>	41	<p>1 Our future needs big thinkers and skilled                  2 doers. And our company needs them as well.                  3 So thank you for your support, and I                  4 encourage you to move this -- this school forward in                  5 its process of approval.                  6 Thank you.                  7 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Scott                  8 Darnell.                  9 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon,                  10 Madam Chair and Commissioners. I'm Scott Darnell.                  11 It's D-a-r-n-e-l-l, the father of two boys who                  12 attend a great public charter school here in                  13 Albuquerque. And their school has meant the world                  14 to our family. It's been the right learning                  15 environment, academic setting for them, and they've                  16 thrived as a result.                  17 We should want this same opportunity for                  18 more families across the metro area, simple, basic                  19 access to a wide range of high-quality education                  20 options. And there just aren't enough of them right                  21 now.                  22 We already heard, according to Research &amp;                  23 Polling, Inc., nearly eight in ten residents in our                  24 community say they want more high-quality public                  25 school options.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">42</p> <p>1 One of the most important questions I 2 think you can ask in deciding whether to authorize a 3 new school is this: Will the school have a dynamic 4 leader with a plan that will work and a heart for 5 the work? 6 Good leaders set high expectations. They 7 hire well. And they focus on getting results. 8 I run the Leadership Albuquerque program, 9 which develops knowledgeable and engaged civic 10 leaders in our community and Equip's founder, Mercy, 11 is a standout recent graduate of the program, and 12 I've had a chance to get to know her. 13 Mercy is someone who taught at and led 14 teachers at high-performing charters in 15 neighborhoods and communities in New York City with 16 high percentages of students living in poverty, not 17 unlike many of the students that she will serve 18 here. 19 She's proven herself. She knows what 20 she's doing. And, thank the good lord, she decided 21 to bring her talents back home to the place that she 22 grew up. 23 And when someone comes back home to make a 24 difference here for our kids, they should receive 25 our thanks, our encouragement, and, in this case, an</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">44</p> <p>1 Having worked in New Mexico, on the East 2 Coast in Baltimore and Northern Virginia, and 3 internationally in Dubai, and in schools both low- 4 and high-performing, there were a few things I 5 noticed in the proposal that I've observed have 6 contributed to great student outcomes. 7 First and foremost, a joyful and engaging 8 learning environment. We want our students to want 9 to go to school, have joy in their learning. 10 An intensive focus on reading and 11 literacy. 12 Extensive professional development for 13 teachers. 14 Exposure to the larger world of career and 15 university from a young age. 16 And opportunities to be challenged through 17 the inquiry-based learning. 18 I'm so impressed with the plans Equip 19 Academy has for students on the west side, and hope 20 one day my own daughter will be able to learn and 21 grow there. 22 Thank you. 23 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Ben Cloutier. 24 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. My name is Ben 25 Cloutier. I'm a resident -- excuse me. My</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">43</p> <p>1 emphatic yes. 2 The financing is in place. A strong 3 leadership team, impressive leadership team, is in 4 place. And I strongly urge the PEC to authorize 5 Equip Academy. 6 Thank you very much. 7 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Katrice 8 Grant. 9 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. Good afternoon, 10 everyone. My name is Katrice Grant. It's 11 K-a-t-r-i-c-e. Grant, G-r-a-n-t. 12 And I am a new mom to a six-month-old, as 13 well as a school counselor in Bernalillo Public 14 Schools, recently completing my twelfth year in 15 education. 16 I've had a chance to learn more about 17 Equip Academy by reading through some of the charter 18 application available online, and can say 19 wholeheartedly that I would love for my own child to 20 have the opportunity to go to this school and 21 kindergarten. 22 As an educator born and raised here in 23 Albuquerque, I am so excited to see high-quality 24 education being prioritized through a school like 25 Equip.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">45</p> <p>1 spelling, B-e-n C-l-o-u-t-i-e-r. 2 I'm a resident of the City of Albuquerque, 3 so I'm invested in the outcomes of our students. 4 I'm also an alumnus of one of our great 5 charter schools in Roswell, shout-out to Sidney 6 Gutierrez Middle School. And I am the director of 7 outreach at Project ECHO, where we support the 8 implementation of best practices for teachers across 9 the state of New Mexico. We support tens of 10 thousands of teachers right now. 11 And we believe that the model that Equip 12 Academy is planning to implement, especially as it 13 relates to literacy, is really needed at this time. 14 As you all know, we're in a bit of crisis statewide 15 in terms of our literacy rates, and especially the 16 west side. And we need more schools like this 17 across New Mexico. 18 Thank you. 19 MS. MELISSA BROWN: I believe it's Louie 20 or Luis Zamora. 21 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is Luis 22 Zamora. L-u-i-s Z-a-m-o-r-a. I am the procurement 23 manager of B&amp;D Industries. And I'm here today in 24 support of Equip Academy. 25 And upon approval and establishment on</p>

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1 Albuquerque's west side, I truly believe the future  
 2 of our workforce will be benefited, just due to the  
 3 charter school just instilling just a great work  
 4 ethic. And just knowing that there is a future of  
 5 hard work is very proud to be of. Thank you.  
 6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Eva Encinias.  
 7 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. My name  
 8 is Eva Encinias. E-n-c-i-n-i-a-s.  
 9 I've been an educator here in New Mexico  
 10 for 40-plus -- I was with the University of New  
 11 Mexico for 45 years where I started a flamenco  
 12 program, and also am the founding director of the  
 13 National Institute of Flamenco.  
 14 We have been in partnership -- our  
 15 nonprofit, which is the National Institute of  
 16 Flamenco, has been in partnership with a wonderful  
 17 charter school, Tierra Adentro of New Mexico, that  
 18 is a sixth- through twelfth-grade charter school.  
 19 However, the greatest challenge that we  
 20 have found is that the young people coming into the  
 21 sixth grade are -- have such issues with reading and  
 22 writing that we spend much of our time  
 23 back-pedaling, trying to make sure that these kids  
 24 can communicate well.  
 25 And so I was really excited when Mercy

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1 Herrera came, who was a student of mine at UNM, to  
 2 me, saying that she was interested in starting  
 3 this -- this charter school. Because if we have  
 4 learned -- and we have learned many things being  
 5 involved with a charter school -- one of the  
 6 greatest things is they need a strong foundation  
 7 that starts K through 5.  
 8 And so I know -- I'm totally excited about  
 9 this school going forward, because we definitely  
 10 need more of them here in Albuquerque.  
 11 I'm glad to see that this is addressing  
 12 the west side, or is hoping to address the west  
 13 side. But we need it all across Albuquerque.  
 14 Also, the importance and the focus that  
 15 Mercy Herrera has spoken about in regard to giving  
 16 the students culturally relevant experiences in the  
 17 arts I think is hugely important. In my many years  
 18 at the University, without fail, students would  
 19 always come to me at the end of a semester and say  
 20 that the inclusion of dance and music in their lives  
 21 has made a tremendous improvement in their grade  
 22 point average and their ability to learn.  
 23 So I strongly encourage this, and good  
 24 luck and -- to your great success.  
 25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Melissa Garcia.

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1 Are we looking for Melissa Garcia? Am I  
 2 just butchering -- oh, okay.  
 3 I'm not sure of this first name.  
 4 Chris- -- Chris- -- Chris Romero.  
 5 Christyn? Christyna? Christyna? Okay. Sorry.  
 6 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is  
 7 Christyna Romero. C-h-r-i-s-t-y-n-a R-o-m-e-r-o.  
 8 And I am a New Mexican resident brought up  
 9 here and a business owner -- opened my first  
 10 business here and grew up on the west side. I  
 11 currently live in Chandler, Arizona, which is out of  
 12 Phoenix. But I chose to be here in person in full  
 13 support of the Equip Academy Charter School. I'm  
 14 definitely happy to be a part of it in support of a  
 15 higher performing elementary school.  
 16 I, firsthand, dealt with having to move my  
 17 children to Phoenix, Arizona, for a better education  
 18 when it came to their elementary. And had there  
 19 been an option like Equip Academy, things might have  
 20 turned out different.  
 21 I particularly am interested in the  
 22 comprehensive literacy program that Equip is  
 23 offering. I think that New Mexicans do struggle  
 24 with the reading. That's pretty apparent. So the  
 25 fact that they're focusing on that is going to be

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1 essential for the future of our students.  
 2 The Equip team is passionate about  
 3 bringing this opportunity of a top-tier college  
 4 performing elementary charter school here. As you  
 5 can see, their passion definitely spills over and  
 6 their resume speaks for itself.  
 7 I know Mercy is definitely a good leader  
 8 here, and she has led in some of the top performing  
 9 charter schools around. And the whole team is  
 10 committed to bringing that same leadership skills  
 11 here.  
 12 It's imperative that we have the community  
 13 support. Crucial. So I think all the faces being  
 14 here today is a testimonial of the support that we  
 15 have. And I hope that we can get that approval, as  
 16 I know everyone is just as passionate about it as we  
 17 are. Thank you.  
 18 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Megan DeLaRosa.  
 19 FROM THE FLOOR: Madam Chair,  
 20 Commissioners, I'm Megan DeLaRosa. D-e-l-a-r-o-s-a.  
 21 I'm representing the Kirtland Partnership  
 22 Committee and Sandia Science and Technology Park.  
 23 The establishment of a new charter school  
 24 in Bernalillo County stands to significantly benefit  
 25 the Kirtland National Security Complex and the

50	<p>1 24,000 families residing and working on Kirtland.</p> <p>2 Education plays a crucial role for</p> <p>3 military families, enhancing stability and</p> <p>4 supporting the growth of children amidst the demands</p> <p>5 of service life.</p> <p>6 School choice provides significant</p> <p>7 benefits to military families by offering</p> <p>8 flexibility and options tailored to their unique</p> <p>9 circumstances. It allows families to select schools</p> <p>10 that best meet their children's needs, whether based</p> <p>11 on academic programs, extracurricular activities, or</p> <p>12 proximity to installations.</p> <p>13 The flexibility supports continuity in</p> <p>14 education, despite frequent relocations, ensuring</p> <p>15 children receive quality education regardless of</p> <p>16 where duty calls.</p> <p>17 As the Department of Defense increasingly</p> <p>18 considers quality-of-life factors, including</p> <p>19 education in basing decisions, the introduction of</p> <p>20 new schools will not only enrich educational</p> <p>21 opportunities, but contribute to economic growth in</p> <p>22 our community.</p> <p>23 For these reasons, we ask that you approve</p> <p>24 Equip Academy.</p> <p>25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: I believe it's Jenny</p>	52	<p>1 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon,</p> <p>2 Madam Chair, members of the Commission. My name is</p> <p>3 Isaac Rivas-Savell.</p> <p>4 Last name is R-i-v-a-s hyphen S-a-v-e-l-l.</p> <p>5 I'm the founder and executive director of</p> <p>6 Voz Collegiate Preparatory Charter School, the</p> <p>7 school proudly serving the students and families of</p> <p>8 the International District here in Albuquerque.</p> <p>9 On average, we're finding that our</p> <p>10 incoming sixth-grade students are reading at an</p> <p>11 upper second-grade/lower third-grade level. They're</p> <p>12 computing math at a mid-second-grade level.</p> <p>13 And that is why it's essential that</p> <p>14 proposed schools like Equip Academy be founded so</p> <p>15 that they can provide a strong academic foundation</p> <p>16 as our students matriculate into middle school and</p> <p>17 high school.</p> <p>18 From an equity perspective, studies show</p> <p>19 that students who are exposed to leaders who look</p> <p>20 like them and are a reflection of their community</p> <p>21 tend to perform higher from an academic perspective.</p> <p>22 Mercy Herrera, unfortunately, in 2024, it</p> <p>23 is a rarity to find women, specifically women of</p> <p>24 color, leading and founding successful charter</p> <p>25 schools here in New Mexico.</p>
51	<p>1 Soto.</p> <p>2 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is Jenny</p> <p>3 Soto. S-o-t-o. And I am a new mom. I also own</p> <p>4 Culture Club Salon. And I have a deep commitment to</p> <p>5 my son's education and future.</p> <p>6 As a parent, my goal is to ensure that my</p> <p>7 son is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and</p> <p>8 values necessary to thrive in today's world.</p> <p>9 I am incredibly excited about the</p> <p>10 possibility of enrolling him in Equip Academy. The</p> <p>11 school's mission aligns perfectly with my</p> <p>12 aspirations for my child, emphasizing not only</p> <p>13 academic excellence, but also the development of</p> <p>14 well-rounded, prepared individuals.</p> <p>15 The west side of Albuquerque is in dire</p> <p>16 need of educational institutions like Equip Academy.</p> <p>17 Our community deserves accessible programs that</p> <p>18 offer high-quality education and foster an</p> <p>19 environment where children can excel.</p> <p>20 I strongly support the establishment of</p> <p>21 Equip Academy in our community, and I urge you to</p> <p>22 consider the positive impact it will have on our</p> <p>23 children's futures.</p> <p>24 Thank you.</p> <p>25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Isaac Rivas-Savell.</p>	53	<p>1 It's also a rarity to see leaders</p> <p>2 assembling a governing board that is a reflection, a</p> <p>3 direct reflection, of the students and families that</p> <p>4 they intend to serve.</p> <p>5 And that's why I speak in support of this</p> <p>6 school, because we -- our students deserve a chance,</p> <p>7 especially on the west side, to ensure that they</p> <p>8 have a solid academic foundation to successfully</p> <p>9 matriculate and navigate the challenging curricula</p> <p>10 that they will encounter at the middle- and</p> <p>11 high-school levels. Thank you.</p> <p>12 MS. MELISSA BROWN: So I'm guessing at</p> <p>13 this one. But Julia -- I believe Julia is your</p> <p>14 first that. Sylvia? Silva?</p> <p>15 FROM THE FLOOR: Silva. Hello. My name</p> <p>16 is Julia Silva. J-u-l-i-a S-i-l-v-a. I attended</p> <p>17 all of the focus groups for Equip Academy, listening</p> <p>18 to how the teachers are going to interact with the</p> <p>19 children.</p> <p>20 It reminded me of one of my teachers, my</p> <p>21 favorite teacher, the only teacher that made me feel</p> <p>22 seen, Mr. Sanchez at Eugene Elementary. He would</p> <p>23 literally come down to my desk level. I didn't know</p> <p>24 what it was then, but it was coffee breath, and I</p> <p>25 recognized it, because now I drink coffee.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">54</p> <p>1           And I'm like, "Wow, that was his coffee 2 breath." 3           But he made me feel so special because he 4 came down to my level, to where I was, to speak to 5 me, teach me. 6           We grew up in most of the poverty areas of 7 Albuquerque, just like pretty much all of New 8 Mexicans. And I didn't get the best education due 9 to moving or whatever. 10          But one thing that I do remember is 11 Mr. Sanchez made me feel, in that school year, 12 complete, seen, heard. And I was even Student of 13 the Year that year. 14          And he made an impact. And one thing 15 about a child, and speaking to that child in me now, 16 children know if you care. They don't know how much 17 you know, and they don't care how much you know. 18 They know if you cared. 19          And even hearing Mercy's expressions and 20 even of tears, shows that she has heart, passion, 21 blood flow, and is going to pour it out onto 22 New Mexico students. And we need it. Thank you. 23          (Applause.) 24          MS. MELISSA BROWN: Sabrina Herrera, 25 unless you no longer want to speak. Oh, okay.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">56</p> <p>1           Mercy's genuine care for every student in 2 her relentless pursuit of their excellence make her 3 uniquely suited to lead this school. 4           Excellence is something she embodies, 5 (incomprehensible) on two master's degrees and 6 bachelor's, an Ivy League -- Yale -- graduate, and 7 now founding and leading her own school. 8           If you give her this opportunity, she will 9 do it to her best and bring the most. She will 10 succeed, and so, too, will New Mexican children. 11          I say this, and I approve this message as 12 her daughter, who had to grow up with her as -- and 13 had to -- and was forced to teach some students as 14 well, pull some small groups of my own. 15          So I believe if she could teach her 16 daughter, too, she could also teach New Mexico as 17 well. 18          MS. MELISSA BROWN: We should have had you 19 go last. 20          David Soto. And congratulations to Mercy 21 for not crying through that entire thing. 22          David Soto. Going once. 23          Dominica Chavez. 24          FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon, 25 Madam Chair and Commissioners. My name is Dominica</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">55</p> <p>1           FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. Oops. I'll hold 2 it. 3           Okay. Hello. Madam Chair, Commissioners, 4 my name is Sabrina Herrera. That's S-a-b-r-i-n-a 5 H-e-r-r-e-r-a. 6           I'm the proud daughter of Mercy Herrera, 7 the founder. I have witnessed firsthand her 8 unwavering dedication to the success and well-being 9 of every student she encounters. 10          Her drive and passion extend far beyond 11 the classroom walls, shaping her vision for 12 school -- sorry -- for a school that embodies 13 educational excellence and compassion. 14          At Equip Academy, evidence-based teaching 15 practices will be central, ensuring that every 16 student receives a high-quality education, 17 regardless of background or circumstances. 18          Mercy's commitment of promoting students' 19 agency and self-discovery reflects her beliefs in 20 the transformative power of education. 21          The focus on education excellence 22 underscores Mercy's dedication to supporting 23 teachers through feedback and coaching, recognizing 24 the pivotal role in shaping and learning experiences 25 of students.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">57</p> <p>1           Chavez. D-o-m-i-n-i-c-a. Chavez, C-h-a-v-e-z. And 2 I'm the advocacy manager at NewMexicoKidsCAN. We 3 are proud to speak in support of Equip Academy of 4 New Mexico. 5           As our state grapples with an ongoing 6 education crisis, we know solutions exist. And 7 access to a great school is one solution. 8           Miss Herrera and the founding board of 9 directors have created a strategic plan for a great 10 school that will deliver exceptional results, 11 advanced educational equity, and eliminate 12 disparities in student outcomes. We strongly 13 believe in Equip Academy's potential to make a 14 difference for our students, families, and the 15 greater Albuquerque community. 16          Thank you. 17          MS. MELISSA BROWN: Katrina Sweetland. 18          FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. Buenos 19 tardes. Katrina Sweetland, S-w-e-e-t-l-a-n-d. 20          I'm here in support of this Equip Academy 21 school. Just like everybody else has been talking 22 about the west side, I do reside on the west side. 23 I'm a proud grandma. So I have three grandchildren 24 that will hopefully be attending the Equip Academy, 25 due to anytime you have to cross the river, there's</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">58</p> <p>1 traffic, for days; I mean, so much, so much traffic.  2 I worked at UNM for about ten years. I  3 actually know Renee Delgado. She is a mentor for  4 one of the departments that I worked for.  5 I do believe in education. I'm a  6 first-generation college graduate. I'm currently a  7 community member, just looking to see where I can  8 volunteer. And this is one of the things that  9 sparked my interest.  10 I did reach out to Renee, because I do  11 want to see more of the caliber of school that  12 Ms. Herrera is offering.  13 So that's what I have for you guys today.  14 I hope that you all consider funding the school  15 here. And I'm so proud that it's an all-women  16 panel. That's amazing. Yeah.  17 MS. MELISSA BROWN: And, finally, Phillip  18 Benavidez.  19 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello. My name is  20 Phillip Benavidez. P-h-i-l-l-i-p  21 B-e-n-a-v-i-d-e-z.  22 Hi. I have a two-year-old and a  23 four-year-old I want to send to Equip Academy  24 because they talk about college starting.  25 Kindergarten teachers never talked to me about</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">60</p> <p>1 opportunity to engage in their own education in a  2 personal and safe environment in their classrooms  3 alongside allowing them to delineate their own  4 future goals, specifically in regards to their  5 college preparatory mindset, could have long-term  6 effects towards the success of the potential  7 students and their own educational futures.  8 Thank you.  9 MS. MELISSA BROWN: All right. Somehow I  10 was not handed Page 1. So we've got a few more  11 people.  12 We're going to start with Veronica Toledo?  13 No Veronica?  14 How about Andrea -- no. Andrea spoke  15 online.  16 Oh, gosh. There's more -- these are all  17 Y's; they're not N's. John Bennett from -- John?  18 No?  19 I apologize for not seeing this. That  20 person's on Zoom. Derrick Adkins?  21 FROM THE FLOOR: Is it on? Okay. Hello  22 my name is Derrick Adkins. I am going into my  23 twentieth year of education here.  24 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. Could you just  25 spell your last name?</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">59</p> <p>1 college in elementary, middle school, or high  2 school. It's amazing teachers prepare and believe  3 in kids like they do at Equip Academy. So I really  4 hope you guys fund them.  5 Thank you.  6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: I'm sorry. I lied.  7 There's a DeAndre Lucero.  8 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello, everyone. My name  9 is DeAndre Lucero, L-u-c-e-r-o. The reason for my  10 being here is due to the specialation [ph] of my  11 field, that being psychology, specifically with a  12 discipline in neuropsychology and developmental  13 psychology, and, on a more personal note, someone  14 who suffered with autism as a kid who went most of  15 his academic pathway without being diagnosed.  16 So when I learned about the potential of  17 an early education pathway such as Equip Academy, I  18 was fascinated in how a literacy-based program could  19 have such a long lasting benefit to the vast  20 demographic of children here in this state,  21 neurodivergent or otherwise, that could find this  22 form of education structure engaging, and both  23 socially and structurally beneficial in the pathway  24 of their development.  25 In giving our youngest generation</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">61</p> <p>1 FROM THE FLOOR: My bad. Adkins.  2 Derrick, D-e-r-r-i-c-k A-d-k-i-n-s. I'm going into  3 my 20th year in education here in Albuquerque.  4 As a dedicated school leader, I strongly  5 support the establishment of Equip Academy as a  6 charter school in Albuquerque.  7 I did have stuff prepared here to read,  8 but I'm going to speak from the heart.  9 I met Mercy a few months back at a visit  10 at our school. She shared her school's name, the  11 mission, and the vision. And it really piqued my  12 interest, given that the mission and the vision  13 represents a student-centered approach,  14 inquiry-based, a fully inclusive model that provides  15 a holistic approach to student education, exploring  16 students' curiosity, giving them authenticity,  17 putting them in the driver's seat to dictate their  18 educational journey.  19 And I began discussing ways, how we can  20 get our students involved with their students'  21 version of community that will nourish and foster  22 future positive contributors to our society and our  23 community.  24 I truly, truly believe that Equip Academy  25 is poised to become a beacon of excellence,</p>



1 fostering academic success and personal growth for  
 2 young learners in our community.  
 3 Thank you for your time and allowing me to  
 4 speak in support of Equip Academy of New Mexico and  
 5 Mercy Herrera.  
 6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Jen Mulliniks.  
 7 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. These  
 8 are tough acts to follow. Some of these  
 9 presentations, man, everyone's showing up for Equip.  
 10 My name is Jen Mulliniks,  
 11 M-u-l-l-i-n-i-k-s.  
 12 I am the charter school facilities project  
 13 manager for Homewise. My role is to provide  
 14 technical support to charter school operators who  
 15 are trained to secure purpose-built education  
 16 facilities.  
 17 I have been working with Mercy Herrera and  
 18 her team at Equip Academy since December of 2023.  
 19 We have evaluated more than 20 facilities with  
 20 careful consideration to seven of them.  
 21 Our site selection process encompasses  
 22 construction feasibility, financial feasibility,  
 23 regulatory and zoning compliance.  
 24 And I promise you not everyone shares my  
 25 enthusiasm for the built environment. But Mercy

1 Herrera is different. I think the passion that we  
 2 all witnessed in her presentation this morning, she  
 3 brings the same amount of passion to her facilities  
 4 search.  
 5 She has learned everything she can and  
 6 more about E-Occupancy, HVAC systems, fire  
 7 suppression, ingress, egress, everything. And she's  
 8 really looking at her facilities, in my opinion,  
 9 through the lens of someone who has a very  
 10 sophisticated business acumen. She's not just  
 11 trying to check the boxes, sign the lease, and be  
 12 done with it; she's making decisions about her  
 13 facility that not only impact the programming and  
 14 performance of her school, but the long-term  
 15 financial footing of her school.  
 16 And for these reasons, I am emphatically  
 17 in support of Mercy Herrera and her team at Equip  
 18 Academy.  
 19 Thank so you much.  
 20 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Jane Henzerling.  
 21 FROM THE FLOOR: Madam Chair,  
 22 Commissioners, my name is Jane Henzerling. H-e-n-z  
 23 like "Zebra" -e-r-l-i-n-g.  
 24 I am the managing director of programs  
 25 with Excellent Schools New Mexico. And I just want

1 to share that our organization stands in strong  
 2 support of Equip Academy, lead founder Mercy  
 3 Herrera, and the school's founding board.  
 4 Through our organization's Future Schools  
 5 Fellowship, I've had the great pleasure and the  
 6 privilege of working with Mercy over the last year  
 7 to support her along her journey of launching and  
 8 leading a high performing school.  
 9 And, you know, not just any school --  
 10 right? -- but a transformative school. We don't  
 11 need more mediocre schools, or, worse yet,  
 12 low-performing schools. We need exceptional  
 13 schools, because every single child in our state  
 14 deserves access to a high-quality education.  
 15 I know that's why we're all here. I  
 16 myself founded and led a high-performing urban  
 17 charter school in San Francisco, California, years  
 18 ago. I know how incredibly difficult this work is.  
 19 I know what it takes. It takes much more than you  
 20 bargain for going in.  
 21 I confidently believe Mercy and her team  
 22 have what it takes. I want to reinforce that  
 23 Excellent Schools in New Mexico has approved a  
 24 start-up grant to Equip Academy, pending charter  
 25 authorization, of course, that will pay for planning

1 expenses and first-year expenses and make sure that  
 2 the school can be financially viable in the early  
 3 years.  
 4 And we'll always be available to support  
 5 Mercy and her board with questions, connections, and  
 6 mentorship to ensure that Equip can open  
 7 successfully and effectively meet its game-changing  
 8 mission for the students on the west side of  
 9 Albuquerque. Thank you.  
 10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: DeAndre Lucero.  
 11 Jackie Baldwin.  
 12 FROM THE FLOOR: Good afternoon. Jackie  
 13 Cornejo, C-o-r-n-e-j-o, Baldwin, B-a-l-d-w-i-n.  
 14 Madam Chair, Commissioners, I'm the  
 15 executive director of Siembra Leadership High  
 16 School. We proudly serve those young people most in  
 17 need, 450 students at our school currently.  
 18 I've dedicated my entire career working  
 19 with at-promise youth. And so when I met Mercy and  
 20 I learned about her school, I told myself I have to  
 21 come here today. And there's a couple of important  
 22 reasons.  
 23 What Equip Academy and Mercy are setting  
 24 out to do with regard to teacher supports in the  
 25 community is critical at a time when teachers are

<p style="text-align: right;">66</p> <p>1 leaving the workforce exponentially. This is 2 critical to building the teacher pipeline and force 3 that our kids deserve.</p> <p>4 Another piece that I found so beautiful 5 about Equip Academy is their intentional focus on 6 reading is culturally responsive identity 7 development of young people.</p> <p>8 So we all know that we're here in 9 New Mexico, a state that's so beautiful and rich in 10 history and culture and language and heritage, but 11 also has so many disparities. And so what Equip is 12 setting out to do with their curriculum and teacher 13 support is to attack that for us.</p> <p>14 So thank you, Mercy. Thank you, team. In 15 full support of Equip Academy.</p> <p>16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Shanna Holland Jacobs. 17 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. My name is Shanna 18 Holland-Jacobs. That's S-h-a-n-n-a, H-o-l-l-a-n-d 19 hyphen J-a-c-o-b-s. It's okay. Everyone calls me 20 "Shana" when they read it, so you're not alone. 21 I'm just grateful to be here. Good 22 afternoon, everyone. I am a mother of a 15-year-old 23 son. And he has had some of his own challenges in 24 attending school. 25 And, you know, I really wish that he had a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">68</p> <p>1 for having all of us here. My name is James Abeyta 2 Stevens. J-a-m-e-s A-b-e-y-t-a S-t-e-v-e-n-s. 3 And I am the program director and chair 4 for the CNM, which is Central New Mexico Community 5 College, Department of Human Services. So that 6 includes social work, therapy, and counseling. 7 I'm also a licensed therapist in the State 8 of New Mexico, and I retired from human resources 9 after 25 years. I live and reside on the west side 10 and from here as well. 11 And I wasn't going to speak, because I 12 lost my voice. But I thought I should definitely 13 speak up on behalf of the higher education system. 14 And what I saw here today directly aligns 15 with higher ed's competency-based education, CBE, 16 that CNM is actually going to. 17 And what we're doing is we're trying to 18 prepare the students from a lower level to get up to 19 CNM. That way, they can get out and get into the 20 workforce based on what the employers' needs are. 21 We know, in specifically counseling 22 therapy and social work, we lack in that profession. 23 And we are not getting the skills needed from the 24 education to -- in order to us to pump them out as 25 quick as we need them in -- for the employer side to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">67</p> <p>1 better foundation when he was in elementary school. 2 He's on the gifted spectrum, so gets bored at 3 school.</p> <p>4 And I think it's so awesome that Equip 5 Academy is engaging those students at a young and 6 early age so that they stay engaged in learning, 7 because learning is so important, and your education 8 is so important for your future.</p> <p>9 And as someone who grew up -- when I was 10 younger on the west side, I definitely understand 11 and recognize the need for better schools, 12 especially starting so early. I think that's key.</p> <p>13 And I especially love how focused they are 14 on reading. And like the famous Dr. Seuss says, 15 "The more that you read, the more things you will 16 know. The more that you learn, the more places 17 you'll go." 18 So I'm just really in support of Equip 19 Academy and what they're setting out to do, and it's 20 definitely needed here in New Mexico and especially 21 on the westside community. So thanks.</p> <p>22 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. So, now, last 23 but not least, James Abeyta Stevens. 24 FROM THE FLOOR: Hello, everyone, 25 Madam Chair, and Commissioners. Thank you so much</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">69</p> <p>1 help with the needs of New Mexico. 2 So what I saw and what I've heard -- and I 3 do not know her. But from what I've heard, I would 4 definitely say please say yes. This is great. So 5 on behalf of all of us, thank you so much. 6 Muchísimas gracias. 7 (Applause.) 8 THE CHAIR: So we're going to take a short 9 ten-minute break before we go into our questions. 10 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Not ten into twenty. 11 THE CHAIR: Not ten fake minutes. 12 (Recess taken, 2:41 p.m. to 2:54 p.m.) 13 THE CHAIR: So thank you, everyone. And I 14 just want to say thanks to everyone who spoke 15 passionately about the school. We appreciate all 16 the input, and we take into consideration 17 everything. 18 So thank you very much. 19 We are now on to PEC questions. 20 So, Commissioners? 21 Commissioner Beck. 22 SECRETARY BECK: There it goes. Yeah. 23 I really appreciated all the comments. 24 Maybe your daughter's was especially poignant. 25 Yeah. Exactly.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">70</p> <p>1           So I'm going to put on my retired teacher 2           hat here for a second, and I've just got a few 3           questions involved. 4           The first one, I'd like to just hear what 5           your thoughts are for a culturally responsive, 6           inquiry-based lesson for a first-grader. What would 7           that look like? And a fifth grader. What would 8           that look like? 9           MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 10          Commissioners, Commissioner Beck. Thank you. 11          That's such a beautiful question. 12          So an inquiry-based lesson -- I just want 13          to make sure -- for first -- and culturally 14          responsive for first and fifth. Thank you. 15          So I'd love to talk about how important 16          our inquiry-based programming is and how it brings 17          in and values the student voice. That's number one 18          in terms of our approach and bringing them into the 19          center of learning. 20          And a prime example of this would be 21          through our what we call "close reading text." 22          Now, a close reading text is aligned with 23          the Science of Reading for a number of reasons. But 24          one of the main reasons is to prepare students for 25          comprehension.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">72</p> <p>1           example, of first-grade, culturally responsive text 2           through an inquiry-based approach. 3           SECRETARY BECK: And the green chile would 4           be the culturally responsive piece. 5           MS. MERCY HERRERA: The green chile would 6           be -- for example, a culturally responsive piece to 7           New Mexico culture and heritage. And we might think 8           we know everything about green chile. But there's a 9           whole history that comes into place. There's a 10          whole culture. There's a whole regional difference 11          from north and south, a whole difference of how to 12          make enchiladas. 13          We could go on for days on what that looks 14          like. And so we'll bring them into the -- into 15          showing them how unique and, in particular, our 16          culture is here in New Mexico to be able to really 17          shine that in a culturally responsive way to help 18          them understand their history, that is, of 19          New Mexico. 20          A fifth-grade culturally responsive text, 21          for example, might be, I think, a higher level, more 22          particular approach. So let's say, for example, the 23          study of flamenco and thinking about where that came 24          from and how pertinent it is to our community. 25          And I think there's -- flamenco is so</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">71</p> <p>1           So this close reading text, for example, 2           for a first-grader, would be above two to three 3           levels of their current reading level. And that's 4           because we want to be able to challenge them, not 5           necessarily -- the text that they have before 6           themselves is on their level, but the text that we 7           would read with them is above their level. 8           So our close reading text, for example, 9           could be about the history of green chile. And we 10          would talk them through what green chile is, the 11          history of it, and be able to -- the teacher, from 12          an inquiry-based perspective, will have the text in 13          front of her that's pre-planned with her team. They 14          all come together with what they think is the main 15          idea from an adult perspective, and coming up 16          with -- you know, this would be a nonfictional text. 17          So they'd come up with the main idea and 18          all the stopping points, so, number one, know 19          exactly what question they're going to ask, who 20          they're going to ask it to, and check for 21          understanding. 22          So it's really important that that process 23          is done through an inquiry-based lens to be able to 24          bring students into the center of learning. 25          And so that would be an example, for</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">73</p> <p>1           beautiful. It's so beautiful. If anybody who has 2           seen it, they know they had a visceral reaction to 3           how beautiful and, kind of -- and, kind of, evoking 4           it is. 5           But a lot of people don't realize there's 6           a lot of sadness and a lot of -- a lot of history in 7           terms of folks having to maintain that heritage and 8           what that looks like. And so we -- we'd up the ante 9           in terms of cognition and support for students for 10          fifth grade, because we know they're able to get 11          there and really engage with it in a dynamic way. 12          And just, really quickly, in terms of 13          inquiry-based, for a first-grader, everyone will 14          have the text. And we'll be -- again, we want 15          students to be able to independently learn how to 16          engage with the text that might be difficult. So 17          they might have highlighters in their hand 18          highlighting the important things that stand out to 19          them. 20          Whereas, fifth graders, they themselves 21          are annotating, preparing those first-graders for 22          annotation. And fifth-graders might be annotating 23          on the side of the text on what they think is 24          important, and the teacher giving an opportunity to 25          share what they think and why.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">74</p> <p>1 So that's a couple of examples of our 2 inquiry-based approach and how it responds to 3 culturally responsive learning. 4 SECRETARY BECK: Thank you. Thank you. 5 I've just got two more questions. One of 6 your points was rigorous curriculum. And you said 7 it was nationally-based. 8 So is your curriculum a nationally-based 9 curriculum? Or is your curriculum organic from your 10 teachers and yourself? Or is it a combination of 11 both? 12 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 13 Commissioner Beck, thank you. 14 It is both. It's primarily -- it's 15 primarily created from these folks who have done an 16 extensive amount of research. And it has proven to 17 work with specific communities that look like ours, 18 for example. And it's proven to be -- to lend 19 itself to our inquiry-based approach. 20 So the curriculum -- so, for example -- 21 I'll just quickly walk you through it -- is Success 22 For All, made by a program. 23 Amplify for science, which is -- which 24 teaches investigative science and super hands-on. 25 Being a Reader, Being a Writer, through</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">76</p> <p>1 libraries. And this is crucial for student 2 learning, because students will have access to books 3 on their level. They'll have five on their level 4 and five above their level. We want them to feel 5 successful in reading and we want them to feel 6 challenged in utilizing those goals that they're 7 getting from their teachers. 8 So when it comes to teacher reference, 9 everything is going to be printed out, from 10 whatever -- or they might have a book that is 11 supported and helps them -- you know, whatever 12 curriculum it is that we're working from. 13 But, oftentimes, there will be no -- 14 teachers won't be holding an iPad. Students won't 15 be holding iPads. 16 We will have Reading Resource, which is an 17 online option for families, especially families who 18 don't speak English. So there's things like Reading 19 A-through-Z, which is highly supportive and a great 20 resource that families have benefited from 21 tremendously. 22 So they'll have that. But that's more for 23 home reading. 24 SECRETARY BECK: Okay. Last question. We 25 like books. I can't read off those things. I have</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">75</p> <p>1 Collaborative Classroom, all of that, we're bringing 2 in. 3 CKLA, which focuses on social studies keys 4 from abroad. So, specifically, the close reading 5 text and read-alouds will be incorporated based on 6 the community that will be Equip Academy. So that 7 will be internally created. So I'd say 80 percent, 8 yeah. 9 SECRETARY BECK: Great. So in terms of 10 your materials the teachers and the students will 11 have, are you doing the one-on-one Chromebooks or 12 whatever -- each student will have their own they 13 can take home and work from individually and all 14 that? Is that how the materials are going to work? 15 Or is going to be book-based? 16 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 17 Commissioner Beck, we are at a very interesting 18 place in our society. And I feel like we have a big 19 competitor. And that's the Internet, and that's 20 technology. 21 As much as I love it and will prepare 22 students from the second grade, for example. 23 They're going to start getting typing classes. But 24 we're going to have good old-fashioned books. 25 So in every class, there will be leveled</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">77</p> <p>1 to have a book. 2 You have 198 hours of professional 3 development for a year, I believe. From my old days 4 of teaching, which was about three years ago, it's 5 about six and a half hours per day for a teacher 6 day, which would mean there's around 30 days of 7 development, professional development. 8 How does that get integrated into the 9 hours that you're going to have in a year? That 10 seems like a heck of a lot of hours of 11 profession- -- which I'm not against. Don't get me 12 wrong. I'm just wondering how you integrate it into 13 your classroom, the year, the classroom year. How 14 does that get integrated? 15 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 16 Commissioner Beck. So professional development is a 17 staple. It sounds like a lot. It sounds like a 18 lot. It's a staple. It sounds like a lot. 19 But we also have a lot of time in our 20 days. And we're going to utilize it. And we're 21 going to utilize it well. 22 So I'd like to break it down for you 23 annually, quarterly, and weekly. 24 So annually, as you said, 198 hours in 25 total. We start very early on with three weeks of</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">78</p> <p>1 summer educator -- Institute for Summer Educator 2 Excellence.</p> <p>3 And, yes, it is time to focus on the 4 curriculum and internalize the criticism and 5 practice different strategies to deploy the 6 inquiry-based approach methods and all of that.</p> <p>7 But it's such a beautiful time to build 8 community within our staff. And so -- to feel 9 comfortable, because throughout the year, we're 10 going to be doing what's called "deliberate 11 practice," and that means getting peer-to-peer 12 feedback from one another and support of their own 13 learning.</p> <p>14 And I have the most wonderful teacher 15 connections because of how much we leaned on each 16 other for support and for, you know, seeing the 17 strong teacher models.</p> <p>18 And that's what I would do. 19 I would say, "Hey, that teacher is an 20 amazing teacher. I'd like to go and observe her." 21 So those are some opportunities that 22 teachers might have that don't go into the 23 198 hours, so let me get back on course.</p> <p>24 SECRETARY BECK: You just took 15 days, 25 30 days, so you're halfway home.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">80</p> <p>1 goals.</p> <p>2 SECRETARY BECK: What assessments are you 3 planning to use?</p> <p>4 MS. MERCY HERRERA: So internal 5 assessments, we are using Fountas &amp; Pinnell reading 6 assessment, and then Cognitive Guiding Instruction, 7 which is our number stories program.</p> <p>8 And so we'll utilize those, and, then, of 9 course, assessments from the State level.</p> <p>10 But I -- I'd love -- is that good? Do you 11 want to say anything? Okay.</p> <p>12 We're also going to have quizzes, 13 end-of-unit quizzes. And SFA has a ton of basically 14 what I call checkpoints. And so we just want to 15 note, before doing too many letter sounds -- you 16 know, phonemes, all the things, we want to ensure 17 that we're checking for understanding. And so 18 that's a pretty cyclical thing that happens.</p> <p>19 SECRETARY BECK: Okay. My last request is 20 when you teach the first-grader about green chile, 21 make sure you tell them how much better ours is than 22 Colorado's.</p> <p>23 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Ingham. 24 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: I guess I've got to 25 ask some -- a hard one. And that is the two issues</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">79</p> <p>1 MS. MERCY HERRERA: That's 15 days. 2 That's where the bulk of it comes. So quarterly -- 3 let me start with weekly.</p> <p>4 So weekly, we'll have early dismissal. 5 And so teachers will engage in professional 6 development for several hours after the students 7 leave.</p> <p>8 And what that looks like is we're doing, 9 again, deliberate practice, unit dives in curriculum 10 internalization. We're focusing on lesson planning, 11 again, making that road map of questions for 12 students.</p> <p>13 And then quarterly, what we're doing is we 14 have our data studies. So those data studies are 15 really supportive when it comes to, number one, how 16 are we doing as a school in terms of proficiency for 17 any particular area that we're working on with our 18 students?</p> <p>19 And, number two, where can we do better? 20 And so that's when our data analysis comes 21 into play. And we will create goals and action 22 plans.</p> <p>23 So from a leader perspective, we'll do a 24 school -- a school goal, a whole school goal. Then 25 I'll do a grade-level goal, and then we'll do class</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">81</p> <p>1 of transportation and food service.</p> <p>2 And I read through your -- you know, your 3 comments. And part of it was buying buses, and 4 another one was using a contractor.</p> <p>5 I -- that's a -- buying your own bus is a 6 huge deal. I was just wondering. Could you clarify 7 that? And just give us an idea what your 8 expectations are with that, because it is a 9 difficult requirement now.</p> <p>10 So I'd love your response. 11 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 12 Commissioner Ingham, thank you for the opportunity 13 to clarify around our plan for busing.</p> <p>14 As a team, we have decided unequivocally 15 that we're going to be providing bus support, 16 because we see busing as an equity issue. And so we 17 want to ensure that kids have access. For those who 18 choose to want to attend Equip Academy, that they 19 have access to bus service.</p> <p>20 We will not be buying buses. It will be 21 contracted with the folks who have a well-versed 22 idea of what that looks like.</p> <p>23 And in terms of food service, we are 24 utilizing -- do you want to add anything? I'll 25 leave it to Janet to --</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">82</p> <p>1 MS. JANET LEUNG: Madam Chair, 2 Commissioners, part of the way we're going to pay 3 for transportation contractors is through that 4 unrestricted grant with Excellent Schools 5 New Mexico, as the funding does not cover that in 6 the first year, which is a struggle for most 7 schools, for charter schools, anyway. 8 And for food services, we plan on also 9 contracting those services in the first year. We 10 have applied for some grants. And upon charter 11 approval and approval of the grants, we would prefer 12 to have a full kitchen, eventually, so that we can 13 provide the children with wholesome food. 14 However, as mentioned, the finances don't 15 allow. We will contract, and we will train the 16 staff appropriately for food-handling services. 17 MR. IVEY-SOTO: And actually, if I may 18 just real quick, Madam Chair and Commissioner 19 Ingham, one of the interesting things in the 20 statutes right now is that charter schools are 21 allowed to contract with the -- or work with a 22 school district for transportation. 23 But -- but the statute doesn't allow a 24 charter school to work with another charter school 25 for transportation. And that's something that we</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">84</p> <p>1 The majority of that is for start-up costs until 2 enrollment, you know, occurs. 3 So that's how we're going to kick it off 4 the first year. Of course, it's mostly 5 transportation. We're hoping, based on enrollment, 6 that we'll be able to cover the other expenses that 7 may exceed those funds. 8 However, we have planned it 9 conservatively. And we are using a lot of those 10 start-up funds, aside from transportation, is to 11 have a little setup area for parents and students to 12 view. 13 From other charter school founders, they 14 have mentioned that it is difficult to ensure higher 15 enrollment without somewhere to touch and feel. So 16 those start-up costs are going to help us have a 17 little waiting area, a classroom, just so parents 18 and students can come and experience that. 19 We hope that will help increase our 20 enrollment, which will therefore help us be less 21 reliant on grants. 22 I don't know if K12 -- Rebekah, if you 23 would like to add anything to that. 24 MS. REBEKAH RUNYAN: (Off mic.) 25 MS. JANET LEUNG: Sorry. If I didn't</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">83</p> <p>1 really need to fix, because -- because, really, a 2 lot of times where the alignment is is between 3 different charter schools to be able to provide 4 enough kids to be able to provide the transportation 5 routes to be able to make that work for those 6 different communities. 7 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: The last -- you 8 brought up the grant from Excellent Schools. I 9 hear, in a lot of topics, that that's what you're 10 relying on. 11 And I don't know -- I didn't see a -- 12 well, breakdown. Have you budgeted that? Because 13 it does seem like that is the answer to a lot of 14 things. And that's going to -- it's going to run 15 out after a very short time. 16 It's a significant amount of money. But 17 it's also -- when relied on for a bunch of issues, 18 you're going to run out of money pretty quick. 19 So I was just wondering what kind of 20 budgeting you've done with that. 21 MS. JANET LEUNG: Madam Chair, 22 Commissioner Ingham, actually, I have the budget in 23 front of me. But in Fund 26999 is where we budgeted 24 it. And it's mostly across the planning year -- 25 it's only in the planning year and the first year.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">85</p> <p>1 mention, it's \$350,000. 2 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Burt. 3 COMMISSIONER BURT: I know a couple of 4 speakers already said it. But I do want to 5 reiterate, that an education, even though teaching 6 is traditionally more a female-led profession, in 7 leadership, in education leadership, it tends to be 8 much more male-dominated. So it is very -- once 9 again, one of those things I'm proud to say what 10 New Mexico is doing great, in this charter school 11 sector, especially, so having that representation is 12 wildly important. 13 I know you're up there now, Mr. Ivey-Soto. 14 But to have a panel of the governing board 15 leader, where your girl students are going to see 16 women in leadership, wildly important. So thank you 17 for that. 18 And then my question is actually mostly 19 just going to be about what your enrollment and 20 recruitment efforts might look like in your 21 implementation year. 22 I know you have a very clear vision of the 23 students you would like to serve in your school. 24 Knowing that we have an open enrollment, open 25 lottery policy, any student can join your lottery to</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">86</p> <p>1 your school.</p> <p>2 How -- what is your plan in trying to</p> <p>3 reach those students that are furthest from</p> <p>4 opportunity and access?</p> <p>5 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair,</p> <p>6 Commissioner Burt, thank you.</p> <p>7 Yes, we know that our enrollment is key to</p> <p>8 our success. And so -- and not only that, we want</p> <p>9 to reach a broad spectrum of students to ensure that</p> <p>10 they know that we're here and a potential</p> <p>11 opportunity as a school choice.</p> <p>12 So we do have a -- a plan to really</p> <p>13 support in terms of our recruitment and outreach</p> <p>14 efforts.</p> <p>15 And the first is a social media campaign.</p> <p>16 And we're going to really utilize all -- all social</p> <p>17 databases to ensure that folks know that we're out</p> <p>18 there.</p> <p>19 We're also going to hire an advertisement</p> <p>20 team to really support, in some scientific way, to</p> <p>21 be able to put grids around certain areas. There's</p> <p>22 an actually probably sophisticated term for it.</p> <p>23 But we're going to ensure that folks --</p> <p>24 it's -- it's -- it's really targeted to meet the</p> <p>25 needs of the westside community. So that's one way</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">88</p> <p>1 Aloud Pop-Ups throughout the west side. So again</p> <p>2 that's cultivating relationships with libraries and</p> <p>3 continuing our relationships with the westside</p> <p>4 community, with the westside community centers, and</p> <p>5 having Pop-Up Read Alongs where they can see what it</p> <p>6 would be like for students to attend Paso Equip</p> <p>7 Academy and get a book read to them from an</p> <p>8 inquiry-based approach.</p> <p>9 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Thank you.</p> <p>10 MR. IVEY-SOTO: And just to be clear,</p> <p>11 everybody else is leaders. I'm just the support</p> <p>12 team.</p> <p>13 COMMISSIONER BURT: Exactly. Exactly.</p> <p>14 The other question I have -- so, actually,</p> <p>15 is based off of one of the responses you gave. I</p> <p>16 know -- I mean, I'm conflicted all the time about</p> <p>17 how much students are on computers while they're at</p> <p>18 school.</p> <p>19 But I do want to just, like, kind of</p> <p>20 caution keeping it completely out. Because I have</p> <p>21 had some school leaders that, you know, really stick</p> <p>22 to, like, "We're closing these up; we're teaching</p> <p>23 this way."</p> <p>24 But then when you take an assessment,</p> <p>25 they're on the computer. And sometimes the computer</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">87</p> <p>1 we're going to do it.</p> <p>2 Another way we're going to do it is</p> <p>3 westside canvassing. So we already have, as you can</p> <p>4 see, a group of support. And we already have a</p> <p>5 recruitment ambassador team, who have decided that</p> <p>6 they're going to take time out of their day to come</p> <p>7 and do door-to-door knocking on the west side.</p> <p>8 And as well as we're going to be vigilant</p> <p>9 about following and monitoring any westside</p> <p>10 community events and fairs and try to make a</p> <p>11 presence, again with our community.</p> <p>12 And as well as canvassing westside</p> <p>13 daycares and pre-Ks, ensuring that folks know that</p> <p>14 we're here and that we're -- we'd potentially be a</p> <p>15 charter option for them to choose.</p> <p>16 And then we're going to continue to lean</p> <p>17 into our community partnerships, especially those</p> <p>18 that are particularly the west side.</p> <p>19 And I'm grateful for Melissa Sanchez, the</p> <p>20 Westside Business Association, who's already said</p> <p>21 that she's going to ensure that our information is</p> <p>22 sent to her westside networking and newsletter to</p> <p>23 make sure that folks know from the west side that</p> <p>24 we're coming.</p> <p>25 And, lastly, we're going to be having Read</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">89</p> <p>1 literacy affects the actual outcome. Like, the</p> <p>2 students have the literacy, but they don't have the</p> <p>3 computer literacy to show it on that type of</p> <p>4 assessment. So just a word of caution for your</p> <p>5 littles as you go down that pathway.</p> <p>6 And can you talk a little bit more</p> <p>7 about -- I'm very -- I'm interested about, like,</p> <p>8 your summer institute, your professional</p> <p>9 development. I -- it seems like -- so I -- have a</p> <p>10 question. But I also -- I do have a little concern.</p> <p>11 I'm interested in how much is very -- is</p> <p>12 kind of going to be prescriptive for the staff, and</p> <p>13 how much is, like, based off of what the teachers</p> <p>14 might be able to choose, if there's any choice</p> <p>15 available to the teachers themselves.</p> <p>16 My concern is that it does seem to be very</p> <p>17 heavily dependent on you, Ms. Herrera, to do a lot</p> <p>18 of that professional development, which -- amazing.</p> <p>19 It sounds like you have the background, the ability</p> <p>20 to do it.</p> <p>21 My concern is if you lose your voice,</p> <p>22 if -- you know, something happens to where you</p> <p>23 cannot be the -- the -- the provider, what might be</p> <p>24 maybe a backup -- or what could possibly happen?</p> <p>25 Because I get really worried when something is so</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">90</p> <p>1 person-based, because if something then happens to 2 that one person, how does that, then -- I don't want 3 it to all crumble around; right? 4       So can you talk a little bit about what 5 that might look like for teachers, the professional 6 development, their choice, possibly, into it, and 7 also, I mean, understanding they need to be part of 8 the system, and then what that looks like with it 9 being kind of you as the core? 10       MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 11 Commissioner Burt, thank you. I think that that is 12 a real and valid concern. 13       And for me, I am -- I always have my eyes 14 open for my predecessor, because sustainability is 15 what is key to ensuring that this continues to 16 potentially go on and -- and have -- be able to 17 fulfill more seats and ensure that students are able 18 to get access to a quality school. 19       So I'd like to address your first question 20 around prescribed versus -- I would call it -- 21 autonomy. 22       So our curriculum is -- again, it's 23 created. A lot of it is scripted; some of it is 24 not. And I think there's pros and cons to both. 25       And so what it does is it creates a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">92</p> <p>1 to professional development, we take a broad 2 bird's-eye view approach and then go in. 3       For one first-grade class, goals might not 4 be different -- are often not the same as another 5 first-grade class. And that's okay, because those 6 are different learners, and the teacher is basing 7 her particular support plan on the needs of her 8 students. 9       And so, for example, our -- our close 10 reading texts, these are not prescribed. Our 11 number stories, which is a huge part of our 12 programming, is not prescribed. Our opening and 13 closing circles are not prescribed, because they're 14 all responsive, in addition to our writing unit. 15 It's not prescribed. 16       It's married to social studies. That way 17 we're ensuring there's that culturally responsive 18 piece. It's going to have to be weaved in a way to 19 ensure that it is, again, meeting our student 20 populations and our community here in New Mexico. 21       So that will be somewhat prescribed, but 22 there's going to be some autonomy there and based on 23 the support that the students need. 24       In terms of sustainability and what that 25 looks like, my goal is to create leaders. My goal</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">91</p> <p>1 framework from folks who have done the research and 2 who have lived the experience. 3       And so this is a -- a kind of a guide to 4 help us support our students. 5       But -- and so when it comes to, I guess, 6 the high-level content, we want to ensure that 7 students are getting access to that high-quality 8 content. 9       In addition, there is -- you can't be 10 inquiry based with a superscripted lesson. So 11 there's a lot of supports when it comes to ensuring 12 that our program is -- is really student-centered. 13 Because oftentimes prescribed lessons are very 14 directive. 15       And that's why it takes so much time and 16 energy and efforts to ensure there's internalization 17 of curriculum before teachers stand before their 18 students. We want them to be able to know what 19 they're doing. 20       But we also have a very responsive -- we 21 also have a very responsive program in terms of what 22 that looks like for each class. 23       As you know, every class is different; 24 every teacher is different. And there are different 25 needs for every class. And that's why when it comes</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">93</p> <p>1 is to ensure -- so year one, we -- it is going to be 2 me ensuring that teachers feel supported and feel 3 successful in front of their students. 4       But year two, we're going to elicit and 5 encourage teachers who are being really responsive 6 to the ways in which we educate students at Equip. 7 So we want those teachers to be our grade team 8 leaders. And those grade team leaders will take 9 some of that burden -- I won't call it a burden. 10 Will take some of that workload off. 11       So we'll have them become leaders in their 12 classroom and within their grade level. And it will 13 also support as a liaison between me and the grade 14 team lead. 15       Of course, I think as a school leader, and 16 the schools that have been most successful are the 17 leaders that know the ins and outs of every 18 classroom. That's something I want to continue to 19 be strategically a part of. 20       But at the same time, I want to ensure 21 that these teachers are being developed to grade 22 leaders. 23       Then we also are going to, year three, 24 hopefully have one of those grade team leaders be 25 ready to be an assistant principal in residence. So</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">94</p> <p>1 they'll have that training under me, take a couple 2 of class loads, or grade bands. And depending on 3 where they're at, again, it's all responsive to the 4 folks that we get in the -- basically, the call to 5 action here at Equip Academy. 6 So we'll have an assistant principal in 7 residence who will then transition to assistant 8 principal the following year. Our plan is 9 sustainability and ensuring that there is -- there 10 is a shared responsibility. Because at the end of 11 the day, it's not just me. It's something I can't 12 do independently. It's something I have to do with 13 a team of people. 14 So that's kind of the plan for ensuring 15 that there's growth happening inward and upward. 16 COMMISSIONER BURT: Thank you. I don't 17 have -- my last question is more a comment. 18 It was just a really easy and very happily 19 surprising mix of folks that you had come to 20 support, you know, from the -- from the business 21 communities, the nonprofit sector, the 22 organizations, the families in the community that 23 came. 24 And also I also want to say, in your 25 application, I love that you refer to families in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">96</p> <p>1 their why and know the ins and outs of the units 2 that they bring. 3 We're also going to bring in Leap, which 4 is our math curriculum. So we're going to 5 definitely bring in those experts. 6 So I think, again, when it comes to -- 7 that's an absolute must. But when it comes to the 8 approach to how -- to what teaching looks like, that 9 will come from me. 10 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank you. And then 11 I wanted to switch over to the literacy and language 12 acquisition, and, you know, bilingual students of 13 whatever the home language is. 14 I just want to understand a little bit 15 more, maybe, about your approach to that and how to 16 be sure that students don't lose their home 17 language. 18 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 19 Commissioner Armijo. So we're committed -- we're 20 committed to serving all students effectively. And 21 that is also seen within -- that includes ELL 22 students. Although we are not a bilingual school, 23 it'll be predominantly in English, we want to 24 ensure, again, that we're valuing student voice and 25 their heritage and where they come from.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">95</p> <p>1 your school, not parents. Because we know that 2 families look a lot different than just parents. 3 So it feels like your -- the 4 responsiveness to who you know in the community is 5 unmatched. And the obvious work that this team has 6 done in collecting community partners is really 7 impressive. 8 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Armijo. 9 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank you. Hello. 10 So I just want to kind of take you back on 11 the PD. I noticed that you didn't have much budget 12 for PD. So it sounds like you're going to 13 incorporate that. That's what it sounded like to 14 me. 15 So I just wanted to make -- I guess my 16 question is it sounds like you're not going to be 17 doing too much of outside PD. It's all going to be 18 inside. And that sounds great to me. Is that what 19 I'm hearing, for sure? 20 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 21 Commissioner Armijo, we are going to definitely -- 22 there is -- there is quite a bit of funds for 23 bringing in experts into the field. So, for 24 example, Success For All, we're bringing them in to 25 ensure that our teachers are well-grounded, based on</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">97</p> <p>1 So I think our ELL program -- and then -- 2 is -- consists in three ways: That's, number one, 3 accurate identification, customized plans on data. 4 And then also providing books in their native 5 language for them to take home. 6 And our accurate identification, we want 7 to know who these students are so that way we can 8 accurately identify them and be able to support them 9 based on their particular needs. 10 And so we'll also be able to monitor them 11 through data based on the assessments as well as 12 teacher observations in a very logistical and 13 purposeful way through our SAT team. 14 And then we'll also have, based on that 15 data, customized plans thinking about how we can 16 support them. 17 One of those things are, for example, 18 strategic grouping and strategic seating; right? So 19 putting a student who is absolutely new to English 20 with somebody who is -- who knows their language but 21 might have more proficiency. So we'll have that 22 strategic seating as well. 23 We'll also group them in small groups 24 within their particular level reading band. And so, 25 for example, at an earlier level, we'll ensure that</p>

98	<p>1 we're really maximizing the supports that they'll 2 need.</p> <p>3 So, for example, phonemic awareness, 4 phonics, letter-sound-letter identification, really 5 providing ample opportunity within that small group 6 for that knowledge development.</p> <p>7 I think the last thing is, and what we 8 really, really -- that's kind of like phonics 9 fluency.</p> <p>10 But when it comes to comprehension, we 11 really want to encourage families to read in their 12 home language. So that's something that we will 13 support families with and provide books based in 14 their home language.</p> <p>15 And again, those will be at a higher level 16 of books. So that way, I want to say part of our 17 homework -- I won't say policy -- but our homework 18 layout -- is students reading independently from 19 their book baggies that they have, but also somebody 20 reading to them.</p> <p>21 So that's where we're going to include 22 those Spanish books. Because there's so much power 23 that can happen when it comes to the fluency and the 24 comprehension piece for kids reading books in their 25 language.</p>	100	<p>1 because there's -- because south of Central, 2 there's -- that's where all the charter schools are 3 mainly populated, from my understanding.</p> <p>4 And so, again, we want to go where there's 5 a need. We don't want to -- we don't want to take 6 from other charter organizations and -- or, you 7 know, students.</p> <p>8 So we want to ensure that we're at a 9 place -- we're really trying to get central -- 10 central west side in terms of north of Central. 11 South of Paseo, and working with Jen Mulliniks. She 12 is working day and night, as I am, continuing to 13 drive back and forth to figure out what are some 14 potential opportunities for Equip Academy.</p> <p>15 Do you want to add anything? (Voice 16 inaudible.)</p> <p>17 So thank you.</p> <p>18 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: And do you have any 19 plans on communicating or collaborating or just 20 talking things over with any of the other charter 21 schools that are there already?</p> <p>22 MS. MERCY HERRERA: I'm happy to open that 23 as a conversation. I think that -- it's not in our 24 plan as of right now. But I'm not opposed to it. 25 There's no -- there's no distance that is maintained</p>
99	<p>1 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank for you that. 2 That was one of my things was the books and the 3 language. That's key. Now I'm going to jump a 4 little bit to location.</p> <p>5 I believe this school is going to be in my 6 district. So that's exciting. I know there's 7 plenty of population in that district.</p> <p>8 I didn't see where -- I saw, like, a 9 general area of where you-all were looking. Can you 10 give me more specific area?</p> <p>11 And then I also wanted to talk about -- I 12 believe there's at least four or five K-through-5 or 13 K-through-6 charter schools in that district 14 already. And, like, what are your plans to maybe 15 collaborate or communicate with those other schools? 16 And, you know, what is your plan for that?</p> <p>17 MS. MERCY HERRERA: So that's location. 18 Madam Chair, Commissioner Armijo. So we 19 are casting our net wide in terms of -- in terms of 20 the west side. Of course we want to be west of the 21 river; that's number one.</p> <p>22 But when it comes to busing, our theory is 23 that we can really kind of go along the whole 24 westside, Coors-Ladera area. So we are looking 25 really south of Paseo and then north of Central,</p>	101	<p>1 there. But, yeah.</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: Thank you. And I 3 also -- what is my last thing?</p> <p>4 I saw your enrollment cap was 450. If you 5 divide that up by six; right? So it's K through 5. 6 That's about 75 per age, I guess.</p> <p>7 And I know you have a plan for that. I'm 8 just -- 450 is a lot. I thought that was a little 9 bit -- but I think you have a plan.</p> <p>10 Can you just expand a little bit more on 11 how you intend on getting to that 450?</p> <p>12 MS. JANET LEUNG: Madam Chair, 13 Commissioner Armijo, in the first year, we plan on 14 opening enrollment for 50 kindergarteners, 15 25 first-graders. And then the following year, 16 we're going to add 25 to each grade level and open 17 up second grade. And then in the third year, we're 18 going to add another 25 to each grade level that 19 already exists, and then add a third grade, and on 20 and on. So we won't reach our max cap at 450 until 21 year six actually.</p> <p>22 COMMISSIONER ARMIJO: All-righty. Thank 23 you. I think that's all I have.</p> <p>24 I do want to echo what Commissioner Burt 25 said and what everybody has said here. It's great</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">102</p> <p>1 to see a panel of women of color who are doing such 2 great things. And I appreciate you all. Thank you 3 very much.</p> <p>4 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo?</p> <p>5 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Thanks for being 6 here and everyone that came to speak on your behalf. 7 It's a super duper impressive group, varied. With 8 what Commissioner Burt said, it's just fantastic to 9 hear all the different points of view, the business 10 sector coming in especially, and really kind of a 11 common denominator being people in education saying, 12 "You gotta do something, man. When kids get to 13 sixth grade, they're reading at a second-grade 14 level."</p> <p>15 And we hear that all the time. It's what 16 charters are trying to working on, especially at the 17 elementary level.</p> <p>18 I have categories here, but I'll only 19 touch on a couple and let others -- I'll come back 20 to stuff, because I always have a Columbo moment.</p> <p>21 Do you remember Columbo? Thank you.</p> <p>22 So the -- I've never seen the Scarborough 23 Reading Rope before. That's, like, the coolest 24 thing ever, integrating all the different types -- 25 so that eventually everything integrates together.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">104</p> <p>1 because everyone's always listening. And I always 2 say, "Honestly, it's the quality of who's in front 3 of the classroom."</p> <p>4 Nobody wants to say it out loud, because 5 then they think you're ragging on teachers. And 6 you're not. You're only ragging on teachers that 7 just meet expectations every year, don't grow their 8 kids appropriately.</p> <p>9 So I'm really happy to know how committed 10 you are to -- to bringing in teachers that are 11 really educated, but also educating teachers all 12 along, you know? And I'm expecting really big 13 things from Ms. Zamora on how she's going to 14 contribute to this in the future.</p> <p>15 So much of -- and this kind of piggybacks 16 a little bit on what Ms. Armijo said. I see a real 17 dependency on parents and families to engage at a 18 much higher level than maybe than is definitely 19 normal. I think a lot of it is going to be new.</p> <p>20 So you have these really cool things like 21 the sight word ceremony and just aligned family 22 activities that you're doing. And at least I found, 23 in my experience with Santa Fe Public Schools, 24 parent engagement is a super duper hard piece. 25 Now, granted, there's a built-in thing on</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">103</p> <p>1 I didn't have that growing up. I could 2 read aloud with the best of them when I was in 3 second or third grade. My comprehension? No.</p> <p>4 So it was really hard for me. I'm, even 5 still now, kind of a really slow and deliberative 6 reader. But I just really got a kick out of the 7 learning about the Scarborough Reading Rope.</p> <p>8 You mentioned mentorship for teachers. 9 You used a different term, though, and I can't 10 remember what it was. But it was, just, I'm glad 11 you're building that in, because that's all too 12 often too absent in schools.</p> <p>13 And I even -- when I was on the Santa Fe 14 Public Schools board, we actually had somebody on 15 the board that was against having a policy where 16 teachers had to mentor one another. And I was 17 just -- like, I was aghast at that.</p> <p>18 I spoke with Alyssa Zamora -- I'm going to 19 call you out over there -- because one of the things 20 she mentioned was the importance of -- of great 21 educators and really focusing on that, which I know 22 you are. Because so often when I'm asked, "Is there 23 a silver bullet, what would you do about schools in 24 Santa Fe," or whatever?</p> <p>25 And I always look over my shoulder first,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">105</p> <p>1 the charter level, because they're making that 2 decision. But what are you going to do to get them 3 engaged, keep them engaged, hold them accountable if 4 they signed up for this and they're not engaged?</p> <p>5 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 6 Commissioner Carrillo, in all the schools that I've 7 worked at, the engagement, regardless -- it was in 8 the South Bronx, Brooklyn, in the lowest 9 impoverished kind of places that one potentially can 10 be -- families are all in if you give them an 11 opportunity.</p> <p>12 So it's a part of our school values is 13 partnership. It's parent partnership. It's the "P" 14 in our "Equip." When we believe in -- it's the 15 trifecta to success. That's the parents, the 16 teachers, and the students. I say with our powers 17 combined, anything is possible.</p> <p>18 And so we have these events. And 19 parents -- it's just not -- it's really not a 20 concern of mine.</p> <p>21 But at the same time, what we're going to 22 do is we're going to provide an opportunity. And 23 then it's so beautiful to see people and families 24 show up for their kids.</p> <p>25 And it's actually something that came up</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">106</p> <p>1 multiple times in our focus groups that said, "I -- 2 my daughter was in this school, and then I moved to 3 this school. And they had a harvest event. You 4 guys should really do a harvest event." 5 So families really want to help, and they 6 want to support. But, oftentimes, their experiences 7 within education can prevent them from doing that. 8 So we provide these little small ways to show them 9 how. 10 For example, our sight word. Students are 11 going to learn 100 sight words a year that are on 12 their grade level. As we know from ELL students and 13 special population students, you can't sort out 14 sight words. You can't do that. You see it; you've 15 got to know it. 16 So we have a strategy that's embedded 17 within our homework. And we have these 18 opportunities to celebrate their success. We put 19 their pictures on the wall when they're able to 20 get -- the pictures. And the parents take pictures 21 of them on the wall of fame. And then the other 22 parents walk by and say, "What's this? Why isn't 23 your picture here?" 24 "Come sit down. Let me show you how. 25 This is what you got to do. Listen. We have this</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">108</p> <p>1 end of that, we also know and -- speaking from 2 experience -- is sometimes families won't come to 3 their -- to events. And we're still going to 4 support that student. 5 We know that it's our job as an education 6 system to educate these students. And so we're 7 going to provide them with every opportunity to 8 learn and grow. 9 And I've done that before, where families 10 couldn't help their kids with the sight words. So I 11 pulled this one kid, as an assistant principal, 12 every day for five minutes. That's all it takes. 13 It takes five minutes. 14 And they were able to pass, by the end of 15 the year, their 100 sight words, and they were so 16 excited. So it's both/and. We want to provide lots 17 of opportunities. But we know it's our job as an 18 entity to know we're educating those students. 19 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: So there's two kinds 20 of follow-ups on that. 21 One is when you talked about sight words, 22 like, for instance, the word sight; right? I mean, 23 there's c-i-t-e, s-i-t-e, s-i-g-h-t. I mean, 24 English is so quirky. 25 It made me think of flashcards. When I</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">107</p> <p>1 event. Come and support your children." 2 And, oftentimes, we will oscillate between 3 having them during school hours and during 4 after-school hours, because sometimes it's really 5 difficult for people to come during school hours. 6 So we'll also have opportunities for them to come in 7 person. 8 And one strategy that we -- that we use 9 is, from the start, attendance is crucial to success 10 of students. And so that's why our two-adult model 11 is extremely important; right? Having a lead 12 teacher who's credentialed to be leading the 13 teaching in their classroom. And at 8:00 a.m., 14 little Luis hasn't come yet. We have that education 15 teacher calling at 8:00 a.m. 16 That's an actual thing that we do every 17 single day, relentlessly, to say, "Hey, we care 18 about little Luis, and we want to make sure that 19 he's learning. In order for him to do that, he has 20 to be in class. Is everything okay?" 21 Unless they've called and have said 22 something has happened. We don't want to bombard 23 them. 24 We want to make a presence known that 25 their partnership is really needed. And at the same</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">109</p> <p>1 was growing up with math, most of us on the 2 Commission, we can just look at numbers and add them 3 up, because we grew up with flashcards. And it's 4 just embedded. 5 So that's what I think about when I think 6 about sight words. Because I was privileged to be 7 in a K-3 behaviorally challenged class, elementary, 8 as a permanent sub for a year. That's why I'm here. 9 It was a life-changing experience to be with these 10 kids. They learned really well. They just crack 11 you up. 12 But -- so because you just -- you 13 mentioned something relative to attendance and 14 calendar. Just a note to jot down, that anybody 15 being out for religious observances, that's not 16 counted as an absence. We had to develop that as a 17 policy for Santa Fe, because with our Jewish 18 population -- and I'm Jewish -- all these kids in 19 different schools, it was counted against perfect 20 attendance. 21 And that's just not right. Just something 22 to jot down. 23 Math. So I -- first off -- and I'm sure 24 others will talk about literacy. It's the 25 cornerstone of absolutely everything, and I'm not</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">110</p> <p>1 even going to go there for the literacy part.</p> <p>2       What about the math part? There are at</p> <p>3 least, when you look at, just, whatever, probably --</p> <p>4 well, probably, like, 50 -- even as probably as high</p> <p>5 as 100 schools, where math proficiency is less than</p> <p>6 15.</p> <p>7       And we have schools where math proficiency</p> <p>8 is less than 5.</p> <p>9       And so, yes, we have to learn to read.</p> <p>10 But what are your plans on the math side, to make</p> <p>11 sure that when they get into sixth grade, that</p> <p>12 they're not on a second-grade math, third-grade math</p> <p>13 level -- not that I'm ever saying you would even let</p> <p>14 that happen.</p> <p>15       But what's your plan for math? And in</p> <p>16 that, one of the things that we learned -- or that I</p> <p>17 learned -- is that kids are math-phobic, sometimes,</p> <p>18 in today's culture. How are you going to address</p> <p>19 that, so in the same way you're making literacy</p> <p>20 relevant, making math relevant and fun?</p> <p>21       It actually was fun for me, math, growing</p> <p>22 up. And it was the teacher, Ms. Loftus, that made</p> <p>23 it that way, so something that I really enjoyed. So</p> <p>24 tell me about math.</p> <p>25       MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">112</p> <p>1 approach, where the teacher and -- teachers come to</p> <p>2 the rug for a lesson. Then students go and do</p> <p>3 things independently. And then we support them</p> <p>4 around their learning through math workshop.</p> <p>5       It's very -- it's very staple and as-is,</p> <p>6 based on whatever is particular focused for math</p> <p>7 workshop.</p> <p>8       But we also have number stories. And our</p> <p>9 number stories is where we really see mathematical</p> <p>10 thinking, development taking place, because through</p> <p>11 number stories -- it's called "cognitive guided</p> <p>12 instruction," and that's what one of our</p> <p>13 Mission-Specific Goals.</p> <p>14       So, basically, what students do is they</p> <p>15 work on one problem for the entirety of the lesson.</p> <p>16 And the teacher -- it's called the number story. So</p> <p>17 the teacher tells it in a very fun way. We don't</p> <p>18 even say the problem. It's a story.</p> <p>19       And then three students stand up,</p> <p>20 strategically selected, to restate the problem in</p> <p>21 their -- in their -- in their own words.</p> <p>22       And then that practice really helps with</p> <p>23 understanding what's happening in the story and</p> <p>24 helps a student and helps the teacher know who might</p> <p>25 need more support in terms of figuring out what is</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">111</p> <p>1 Commissioner Carrillo, yes. Yes to it all.</p> <p>2       Our math program here in New Mexico, too,</p> <p>3 it's -- there are stark percentages, and there is</p> <p>4 definitely a need for ensuring that we have a strong</p> <p>5 math program and that we do.</p> <p>6       Just, we have 120 minutes dedicated to</p> <p>7 ELA, and we have 120 minutes dedicated to math. So</p> <p>8 we want to ensure that students are just as well</p> <p>9 versed in their math abilities that they are in</p> <p>10 their reading ability.</p> <p>11       We believe reading ability is the</p> <p>12 cornerstone that will be a domino to all other</p> <p>13 components.</p> <p>14       Our math program is really supportive.</p> <p>15 It's done in four ways.</p> <p>16       So we have what we call "math workshop."</p> <p>17       Then we have number stories, which is our</p> <p>18 problem-solving program.</p> <p>19       And then we have math routines and math</p> <p>20 facts, which are "NHM," "No Hesitation Math."</p> <p>21       Math workshop. For example, students are</p> <p>22 learning grade-level, standard-aligned concepts.</p> <p>23 So, like algebra, geometry, operations, data</p> <p>24 measurement, whatever is particular to each grade.</p> <p>25       And so that's done from a workshop</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">113</p> <p>1 happening in the story, because once those three</p> <p>2 students restate that question, then they really</p> <p>3 delve into what do we know, what don't we know, and</p> <p>4 what is the question asking?</p> <p>5       Then they're able to go back, and from an</p> <p>6 inquiry-based approach solve the best way that they</p> <p>7 see fit.</p> <p>8       For example, they might solve with</p> <p>9 pictures, manipulatives, in numeric form. And then</p> <p>10 the teacher is circulating, supporting students and</p> <p>11 thinking about who is going to share, because then</p> <p>12 the students become the teachers at that point and</p> <p>13 they're so invested in wanting to share.</p> <p>14       One thing I'd want you to know about</p> <p>15 number stories is it's really a culture of error.</p> <p>16 So we're learning about the process of learning.</p> <p>17 And that's what math is and I think where you get</p> <p>18 that kind of -- that phobia.</p> <p>19       But we -- don't have a culture -- we</p> <p>20 really try to move away from that culture of right</p> <p>21 and wrong, and more of, like, a learning process.</p> <p>22 So that's where it's really supported for students</p> <p>23 in their mathematical development.</p> <p>24       And it's really engaging, because they get</p> <p>25 to go and lead. All the teacher is doing is</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">114</p> <p>1 transcribing what they did. And then students get 2 to sit down and notice what are the similarities and 3 differences in how they solved. 4 And there's an opportunity for them to 5 revise. Students who may not have got it the first 6 time -- and that's okay -- they go back to their 7 seat, and they're able to revise based on what they 8 see. And they can use a new strategy or they can 9 try one of their friends' strategies who just 10 presented. 11 So that's really supportive when it comes 12 again to the mathematical thinking. 13 Then our other two is our math routines. 14 So math routines is just 15 minutes that we really 15 focus on throughout the day. That is, again, honing 16 in on those skills they're learning for math 17 workshop, because math workshop is something that is 18 quickly going and quickly moving. 19 We want to make sure that students have 20 things -- for example, have a good number sense. 21 And so, for example, we might do plus one, minus 22 one; plus ten, minus one. Start at this number. 23 Stop here, really breaking -- for a kindergarten, 24 they might be breaking down the word 15 -- right? -- 25 number of the day.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">116</p> <p>1 level. 2 It sounds like the plan, like, everything 3 else, just knocks it out of the park, and you have a 4 way to do so. 5 On the leadership side -- and I'm going to 6 leave some categories to others until -- and I have 7 to go back. 8 We've seen, as a Commission, schools 9 struggle because there's an absence of real 10 leadership; right? So then what happens is maybe 11 you have staff just running amok in a way. That 12 doesn't serve anybody. There's not focus. 13 So we've heard a lot about you, 14 Ms. Herrera, about what an exceptional person you 15 are, what a great leader you've been. And I told 16 myself after some of these conferences that we go to 17 that I was going to ask questions of you, and then 18 also of -- I got your last name totally wrong, 19 Renee. 20 But because you're going to be the board 21 chair, that's a leadership role, right? And we've 22 seen things go really south with -- all of us can 23 think of a couple of people, board leaders; right? 24 So what would you say your management 25 style is? Because you're going to have a large</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">115</p> <p>1 For third grade, they might be breaking 2 down the number 1,015. So it's really supportive in 3 finding fun and unique ways to solve math -- to 4 really internalize the -- the math -- math 5 competencies. 6 And then we have No Hesitation Math, which 7 is essentially the sight words of math; right? -- 8 being able to look at those and know automatically. 9 And I just want to make a quick note, is, 10 like, we create note cards for students weekly, 11 based on -- within their homework packet. And all 12 families have to do is cut them out and then 13 practice. 14 So that's a resource we provide for them; 15 also, a resource we provide for grade-level number 16 stories, math facts, as well, in their homework. 17 That's a way that families support us, so that way, 18 we can get to the content of learning, and these 19 things become automatized. 20 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Thank you. That was 21 an excellent explanation. And when we see, you 22 know, math scores down the road, you know, in the 23 three-year, four-year mark, I'll be just really -- 24 I'll still be on this Commission and really 25 interested to see how you guys are doing on that</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">117</p> <p>1 staff to manage, both in hiring and firing, because 2 I think -- and in speaking with what Ms. Zamora and 3 I talked about, all too often, people are kept on -- 4 we love accountability until we're the ones held 5 accountable. 6 But what about the consequence piece? 7 What about when someone isn't meeting the norms that 8 you've set out for them? How are you going to coach 9 them, and how are you going to fire them if that's 10 necessary? And how long do you keep someone on like 11 that, because it's the kids that are just suffering? 12 So you, as a manager, tell me about you. 13 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: Madam Chair, 14 Commissioner Carrillo, I appreciate that. I think 15 leadership is very important. I'll let Mercy talk 16 about the day-to-day management, and be clear that 17 as a proposed board, we have four key areas that 18 we're going to focus on. 19 The first is monitoring the success of our 20 academic program, the fiscal accountability, being 21 held accountable to our community, and the latter is 22 hiring our awesome head of school who will be able 23 to do the day-to-day things. 24 But I just want to emphasize a little 25 about our leadership. Coming back to New Mexico</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">118</p> <p>1 after being gone for a long time, I had a little bit 2 of PTSD about working in New Mexico, because I 3 didn't have a very positive experience in my last 4 university. 5 But I've got to say this group of women, 6 we've all come together. We're so passionate. And 7 this is above and beyond. We're not getting paid 8 for this. And we're all very busy. And it's just 9 been very exciting and invigorating to come together 10 on a single thing. 11 And every time Mercy calls or texts me, I 12 take it, no matter what hour of the night, because 13 I'm very passionate about this program. 14 So I think from our leadership style, 15 we're here to make sure we have a great head of 16 school. Obviously, you've heard today that she's 17 the perfect candidate. And I'm excited about that 18 as someone who's passionate and grew up in the area. 19 For me, someone who grew up in the area, 20 my mom sacrificed a lot for me to go to a private 21 school. I would have gone to a high failing school 22 if she didn't do that for me. And I truly believe I 23 would not be where I am today if it were not for 24 that opportunity. 25 For me, I'm also very passionate about the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">120</p> <p>1 If we're seeing truancy and attendance 2 issues, we want Mercy to be able to bring that to us 3 so that we can talk about it. 4 As you can see -- I'm a numbers person -- 5 107 partnerships with the community. And we want to 6 rely on them as well to be empowered to come to our 7 board meetings and speak up and feel free to be able 8 to do that and feel agency in that process. Because 9 we know from the research, in a lot of marginalized 10 communities, people feel afraid to speak up. 11 And we know that speaking up and family 12 engagement, as we alluded to earlier, is critical 13 for that process. 14 So I think providing the space to be able 15 to do that. We have so many talented people on our 16 board that I feel ready to do this. I think I was 17 ready ten years ago. But Mercy came to me, and 18 basically, I'm just happy to be part of this 19 process. 20 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Great. I love that 21 you said "ongoing monitoring." Because if that's 22 not done, that's the beginning of the end, because 23 you don't even know what problems are even 24 happening. 25 Ms. Herrera.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">119</p> <p>1 students. Because I grew up there, I think about 2 Lavaland and John Adams, where I went to school. 3 For me, I'm passionate about bringing my 4 expertise on everything that I do. I studied child 5 development. I have a degree in educational 6 psychology. So I'm really passionate about the 7 underpinnings and research. 8 And when I read through the charter I'm so 9 impressed about all of these evidence-based pieces. 10 But I think in terms of our leadership, we 11 all have our specialties, but we're all 12 interdisciplinary at the same time. 13 And I think, as a successful board, it is 14 our obligation not only to hire a great head of 15 school, but to provide adequate space at every one 16 of our board meetings to make sure we're meeting our 17 Mission-Specific Goals, specifically, in this 18 academic achievement, because that is so critical in 19 the area of that we're going to serve. 20 And so just making sure that we're 21 monitoring student progress on a regular basis. 22 We're not just relying on a summative assessment 23 from the State, but that we have this ongoing 24 assessment that Mercy is bringing to us so that we 25 can discuss this.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">121</p> <p>1 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 2 Commissioner Carrillo. Our -- so when I think about 3 supporting teachers and helping them become their 4 best selves in front of students and be able to 5 internalize everything, it's not an easy task. 6 But my -- I have two strategies. We have 7 a very specific model. We have folks who want to -- 8 if you want to apply to Equip Academy, it's going to 9 be a different process. 10 We want folks, number one, who appreciate 11 that model and want to take part in that. 12 But I really do -- I do two things. And 13 the first is I support through asset-based coaching. 14 And, so, basically, what that means is I think about 15 what are my teachers' strengths and how can I 16 leverage those to support their weaknesses. 17 And -- and sometimes I shy away from using 18 the word "weaknesses," because I think -- I think 19 there's growth -- there's opportunity for growth in 20 every area of -- of educating and teachers. And we 21 not only create a culture of error for students, 22 which means that they feel comfortable making 23 mistakes; I create a culture of error for my 24 teachers as well. 25 So the goal is for them to say, "Hey.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">122</p> <p>1 Okay. Set goals, set expectations, show models on 2 what it's supposed to look like, and invest them in 3 the why. Why are we doing this? We're not just 4 doing this because so-and-so said to; it's because 5 it works." 6 And we always stay student-centered. 7 So when it comes to thinking about the 8 growth of the teachers, it really is going to be 9 reflective of the growth of the students. And so 10 it's a -- it's a pretty clear line that's indicated 11 on who needs support and how they need support. And 12 so who needs more, you know, monitoring rather than 13 others. 14 And from my experience, if there is, for 15 example, 21 teachers that I oversee, I may not be 16 seeing half of them weekly. I might be seeing them 17 once every two weeks or once every three weeks. 18 Whereas, I want to ensure that teachers 19 who are needing more support are getting those 20 measurable goals, something that they can -- 21 something that is reasonably -- reasonable that they 22 could -- that would benefit their class in terms of 23 the support and growth. And then monitor with an 24 actual date and say, "Okay, this was our goal. This 25 was our end date. How are we feeling about it? Did</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">124</p> <p>1 established school is that you've got folks who have 2 been there for a long time, whose attitude is, "I 3 was here before you," the principal, "showed up, and 4 I'll be here after you leave." 5 And -- and the advantage of -- of Mercy 6 starting the school and growing the school from a 7 couple of grades and then growing out is that she's 8 going to have a really good handle on the pulse of 9 what's happening in each classroom, so that, as we 10 build out the staff, people who are outliers, we're 11 going to know that, and we're going to be able to 12 intervene, first, in a constructive way, to -- as 13 she was talking about, to see if we can build that 14 teacher and build the capacity of that teacher, and 15 if that's just not there, to try to help that person 16 find a career somewhere else. 17 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Thank you for that. 18 And just a side note, on-boarding. If you get 19 teachers -- I mean, if I was a teacher and I was 20 coming to New Mexico, this would excite me. Or if I 21 wanted to look for something in New Mexico, this 22 would excite me. 23 And then in the on-boarding process, 24 getting integrated into their community, I think it 25 was the Pauhegan [ph] district in Wisconsin.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">123</p> <p>1 we meet it, or did we not?" 2 And I think that, continuing to, again, 3 utilize data, think about student -- teachers as, 4 you know, entities of learners is from the learning 5 perspective. 6 And -- and -- and sometimes teachers do 7 really, really well, and they're able to meet those 8 goals, like, graduate from that kind of more 9 one-to-one support within their classroom. And 10 sometimes we can see pretty quickly that it might 11 not be the best fit, maybe not -- not the best fit, 12 I'm not saying for teaching, but the best fit for 13 Equip Academy. 14 So that's something I think remaining 15 student-centered and focusing on growth, I think, 16 like, again, transparency and accountability, is key 17 to student success. So those are two things that we 18 monitor regularly and incorporate. 19 MR. IVEY-SOTO: And if I may real quick, 20 Madam Chair and Commissioner Carrillo. Let me give 21 you an exact answer to your question. 22 No more than two years minus one day, in 23 terms of how long. 24 But this is the advantage, really, of 25 starting a school. The problem that happens with an</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">125</p> <p>1 They did a presentation on on-boarding, 2 just things they did to bring everybody together, 3 but also people that weren't from the community 4 to -- and other businesses chipped in. 5 Everyone was invested in teacher retention 6 and making sure that they felt they were a part of 7 things if they were coming from outside, because in 8 so many ways, we're very insular. 9 But that's all for now, and I reserve my 10 Columbo moments, and there you go. 11 THE CHAIR: The building has officially 12 closed. 13 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: This one has? No 14 way. Seriously? 15 THE CHAIR: So, thanks. I just have a 16 couple of quick things. 17 And I appreciate the comments about 18 asset-based management. 19 But are you looking at any peer coaching 20 opportunities within -- within the school? Because 21 aspirationally, you're sitting here as a potential 22 head administrator, and the first day of school 23 hasn't started. And you become the transportation 24 coordinator and the lunch coordinator and the 25 everything else, because you have a small budget.</p>



<p style="text-align: right;">126</p> <p>1           So to be able -- considering that you're 2 spending a lot of thoughtful time in hiring 3 individuals, using those assets of those individuals 4 to be -- for the opportunity for peer coaching. 5           So I was just wondering if there was 6 anything that you were considering. I didn't see 7 anything necessarily that would -- and we don't -- 8 we look at calendars. We don't necessarily look at 9 what the day looks like. 10          So the opportunities for the staff -- 11 albeit tiny when it's first starting, but it's going 12 to grow -- to be able to engage with each other and 13 grow with each other. 14          MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, thank 15 you. 16          So one thing I neglected to state was that 17 our teacher preparation is very inquiry-based and 18 formed. And so what that looks like is it's not me 19 telling them what they're doing wrong; it's me 20 creating a precedence and showing them -- again, 21 grounding them in the why we're doing what we're 22 doing, and then how we do it that best supports 23 students. 24          Sure, I might start with a model. But 25 post that, I will continue to think about what</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">128</p> <p>1           really great results. And their class becomes what 2 we call a lab site. So we're able to go and observe 3 within that classroom. 4           That's a common thing that'll happen among 5 the -- among the particular grade. That doesn't 6 mean that we can't -- just because somebody who 7 isn't a grade team lead, we can't go and utilize 8 their amazing skills that they've really 9 incorporated based on the feedback and the 10 internalization of whatever component it is that 11 we're working on. 12          So it's really helpful when that happens. 13          I also know in charter worlds, folks wear 14 lots of hats. So when it comes to our operational 15 staff, they'll be cross-trained. We want to ensure 16 that there's always somebody who knows how to do and 17 respond to things in the moment. 18          Cross-training is really important for 19 folks to ensure that students are supported at a 20 high level, because things do happen; right? We're 21 having a field trip, and somebody who knows exactly 22 what's supposed to happen about the day is gone. 23 Well, we're going to have what's called a logistics 24 meeting. That's why we have so many hours -- it's, 25 like, everything will have a logistics meeting.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">127</p> <p>1           teacher can really model this at a high level, and 2 then, "Let's go ahead and share around the room. 3 What are some -- notice things. What are some 4 things that they did really well, and what's 5 something that they can work on?" 6           So that peer-to-peer feedback is a staple 7 within our program when it comes to professional 8 development. And it's really -- again, it's really 9 helpful. 10          And we also have other opportunities for 11 folks to say, "Oh, wow." 12          And, again, there's always strengths that 13 one teacher has that the other hasn't. And that 14 is -- that's shared; it's celebrated within our 15 staff. And there's opportunity for staff to go and 16 observe in other folks' classrooms. 17          And so that becomes really helpful for 18 teachers to be a -- to shine in one particular area 19 where they might be doing really well. 20          And so that peer-to-peer feedback and that 21 peer-to-peer coaching is really supportive, and it 22 really comes into play when the grade team leads 23 take that role of supporting their grade at a grade 24 level and providing that mentorship. 25          It's usually a teacher who is having</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">129</p> <p>1           Who's going to doing what? What does it 2 look like? What time does it start? And who are 3 the back-ups? They're not actual subs, but they're 4 going to sub for folks who aren't in there. 5           So that's what we call pre-mortems; right? 6 We're planning for a problem and thinking about, 7 "Okay, if this is a potential problem, what are the 8 solutions?" 9           And, oftentimes, that's very supportive 10 when we're looking at the logistics. Education is 11 far more than just educating and teaching. There's 12 lots of things that go in between in terms of 13 setting everything up for assessments. 14          We're going to have a logistics meeting. 15 Who's going to the bathroom when? When they should 16 be -- to that minute level, we'll get to ensure that 17 folks are really supported and know who's going to 18 be doing what. 19          Because sometimes it could be, like, "Oh, 20 so-and-so is out as a teacher, she has something 21 going on, and she was depending on that person." 22          Well, we have a second. We're going to 23 support. That's the one thing that is really 24 important when it comes to Equip Academy is having 25 those logistics sheets, but also the peer-to-peer</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">130</p> <p>1 opportunities.</p> <p>2 THE CHAIR: So just for clarity. So built</p> <p>3 into the schedule of the day would be time committed</p> <p>4 to -- for peer interaction.</p> <p>5 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, thank for</p> <p>6 you this opportunity to clarify.</p> <p>7 So weekly, they'll have the opportunity.</p> <p>8 And it depends on what we're doing. So, for</p> <p>9 example, if we are starting a new unit, we're going</p> <p>10 to spend lots of time delving into that unit. What</p> <p>11 does happen is sometimes a unit is massive.</p> <p>12 So each teacher might take on a piece and</p> <p>13 come and present it to the rest of the team. That's</p> <p>14 sometimes an approach that we'll take. But</p> <p>15 depending on what the unit is, we might come with</p> <p>16 the entire thing kind of laid out based on the</p> <p>17 teacher's understanding.</p> <p>18 But let's say, for example, we're focusing</p> <p>19 on deliberate practice that Wednesday. That's when</p> <p>20 the peer to peer is going to happen. And it's --</p> <p>21 okay, we've been focusing on number stories,</p> <p>22 practicing our launch and getting kids excited about</p> <p>23 this story. So so-and-so is going to go and -- and</p> <p>24 practice her launch based on, you know, the things</p> <p>25 that we've really identified that are key</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">132</p> <p>1 and they handle it very differently.</p> <p>2 Or is it just you've bought into this</p> <p>3 program, and this is what it takes?</p> <p>4 MS. JANET LEUNG: Madam Chair, we have</p> <p>5 accounted for that in the budget. Per the APS</p> <p>6 salary bands, we have allocated an additional</p> <p>7 10 percent for those teachers to account for the</p> <p>8 extra days that they will be there.</p> <p>9 THE CHAIR: And just one last thing.</p> <p>10 When I was looking at your budget -- and</p> <p>11 I'm not the -- I'm not the person to often look at</p> <p>12 budgets accurately. So I just have a -- a question.</p> <p>13 It didn't look like the first year, you had budgeted</p> <p>14 for a diagnostician or most of the SpEd servicing.</p> <p>15 And I may have looked at it incorrectly,</p> <p>16 because there's multiple -- you know, spaces</p> <p>17 sometimes. But it did not look like there was an</p> <p>18 allocation or a contemplation for the -- for the</p> <p>19 need for that.</p> <p>20 MS. JANET LEUNG: Madam Chair. So in our</p> <p>21 peer review response, we did decide to reallocate</p> <p>22 the budget so that we could have a full-time special</p> <p>23 education teacher to support those students. And</p> <p>24 then depending on what students present upon</p> <p>25 enrollment, we have a plan to submit budget</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">131</p> <p>1 contributors to success when it comes to learning a</p> <p>2 particular problem.</p> <p>3 Let's give them feedback. What did they</p> <p>4 do really well? And what's one thing they can work</p> <p>5 on moving forward? Sometimes there's nothing. They</p> <p>6 did a great job and we can move on. Great. Next</p> <p>7 person; right?</p> <p>8 So that's a really great opportunity for</p> <p>9 teachers to get that peer-to-peer feedback. It's</p> <p>10 not always going to be me. I don't want that job,</p> <p>11 to just always tell folks what they're doing wrong.</p> <p>12 It's an asset-based approach, and it's really</p> <p>13 supportive because it's collective.</p> <p>14 Oftentimes teachers have other kids'</p> <p>15 (verbatim) students. So we take it all very</p> <p>16 seriously when it comes to teaching and leading our</p> <p>17 school.</p> <p>18 So it is kind of like a -- the goal is to</p> <p>19 have a one mindset, like, culture.</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: Thanks. And speaking of</p> <p>21 professional development, with that allotted time in</p> <p>22 July, the two and a half weeks or whatever it is,</p> <p>23 have you been able to adjust salaries for</p> <p>24 individuals for that additional time? Or is that</p> <p>25 just -- and we have a lot of schools that do this,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">133</p> <p>1 adjustment requests for what's needed and pull some</p> <p>2 of those positions forward. Because not every</p> <p>3 student might need a social worker or a counselor;</p> <p>4 right? Like, but they might need a diagnostician.</p> <p>5 And we will adjust as needed.</p> <p>6 The budget was planned conservatively. So</p> <p>7 we have plans to, like, if enrollment numbers are</p> <p>8 not met, we can decrease the administrative position</p> <p>9 by another .2, and other places in the budget that</p> <p>10 we can adjust to account for that.</p> <p>11 THE CHAIR: (Off-mic.)</p> <p>12 MS. REBEKAH RUNYAN: So the school did</p> <p>13 budget for diagnosticians and other special ed</p> <p>14 services. It's a (inaudible) 2100 function.</p> <p>15 THE CHAIR: Okay. I'll look at it later.</p> <p>16 Thank you. Commissioners?</p> <p>17 SECRETARY BECK: One comment. I really</p> <p>18 like the idea that you're taking your time with your</p> <p>19 school. I think that's wonderful. You know, you're</p> <p>20 not just going in K through 5, here we go, and, you</p> <p>21 know, a big organizational chart and all that stuff.</p> <p>22 I like the process of the next five years.</p> <p>23 I think it's really thought out and very thoughtful.</p> <p>24 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: So -- I'm sorry.</p> <p>25 I'll echo that, because oftentimes people have a</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">134</p> <p>1 school they start K-1-5-6. It sounds to me like for 2 you to reach your goals by having students go into 3 sixth grade being super proficient at fifth, you 4 have to grow your own. You can't bring them in. 5 So where is art going to fit in to what 6 you're doing at your school to build these little 7 creative minds? 8 And while we're on that, science. 9 MS. MERCY HERRERA: Madam Chair, 10 Commissioner Carrillo. So our enrichment program, 11 we want to ensure is really supported to our student 12 populations and their particular needs. 13 So we're really excited to partner with 14 National Institute of Flamenco. And they are -- 15 we're committed to trying to bring them into -- 16 during our in-school hours during enrichment time. 17 So that's one thing that I'm really 18 excited about Eva's support about Equip Academy of 19 New Mexico, because we're a firm believer in 20 creativity and that being really supportive when it 21 comes to inquiry-based learning, but also to give 22 students another outlet for expressing themselves. 23 So our enrichment, we're really hoping to 24 contract and ensure that there is appropriate -- 25 well, we have appropriate credentialed staff for</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">136</p> <p>1 So it's really -- it's really fun and 2 exciting. And so we want to make sure that those 3 two aspects are not just being looked over for Equip 4 Academy and for the students. 5 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Cool. Thank you. 6 Ms. Renee -- I know Renee, your first name. But I 7 learned that when I was in elementary school -- 8 "Mr. Steve." 9 So you have five board members right now. 10 What are you looking for -- you're probably going to 11 have at least seven so you can have subcommittees 12 not have to notice everything. 13 What are you going to be looking for in 14 the two people you bring on? Right now, you've got 15 this incredibly great, diverse team. So what are 16 you going to be looking for in the next two? 17 DR. RENEE DELGADO-RILEY: Madam Chair, 18 Commissioner Carrillo, that's a great question -- 19 right? -- because we want to make sure we have 20 representation. 21 Mercy has done a lot of work. I want to 22 give her due credit where credit is due in pulling 23 us all together. 24 So we have a lot of great skill set 25 already. But I think the one area we want to hone</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">135</p> <p>1 enrichment to be able to provide flamenco to the 2 students, starting from K. 3 And then we also have a -- a -- really 4 supportive partnerships again with our community. 5 We don't see just learning happening in the 6 classroom. We see the community as an extension of 7 learning. 8 And so we're really looking forward to 9 partnering with the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, 10 which has a lot of art-based programming that 11 students can attend annually. 12 We'll also partner with the Hispanic 13 Cultural Center for students to engage in art 14 programming that way. 15 And then, in terms of science, we're going 16 to use, again, Amplify, and then internally created 17 materials as it is representative to New Mexico. 18 And we also have a partnership with Bosque 19 School, where, annually, students will be bussed. 20 And they're going to be able to take a habitat 21 preview of the -- of the -- the wildlife there and 22 be able to track wildlife. 23 And before that, we're going to learn 24 about wildlife, particularly as it pertains to 25 New Mexico, in addition to outside New Mexico.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">137</p> <p>1 in on is communications, that design piece, that 2 creative piece. I think there's a lot of 3 opportunity there to have somebody strategically 4 think about the pieces around communication and 5 marketing and areas of that, especially in the local 6 community. 7 So that's an area that all of us will lean 8 into our networks. A lot of us are from here. A 9 lot of us have a lot of great networks. So we're 10 going to lean in to try to recruit that. 11 I can give it over to Sara to talk a 12 little bit more about recruitment. 13 That's an area we're looking into. We've 14 got a lawyer, Mary Jones. So that's really great. 15 So I think those are some areas -- oh, 16 yeah. And honor to one of our board members who 17 wasn't able to make it today due to health reasons. 18 She has an HR background in a tech 19 company. So that's been really great to have that 20 on. But I think additional- -- twenty years. 21 That's impressive. 22 This is a great group. If you add up all 23 our history, it's awesome to see that in practice. 24 Communication and marketing, I think is an 25 area of need. And, specifically, maybe a little bit</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">138</p> <p>1 more about HR.</p> <p>2 But a lot of us have interdisciplinary</p> <p>3 experience. So even though Janet is our finance</p> <p>4 guru, we all have finance experience. We all have</p> <p>5 done grant writing. So we have interdisciplinary</p> <p>6 with our skill set. So that's exciting to see.</p> <p>7 MS. SARA FITZGERALD: So, Madam Chair,</p> <p>8 Commissioner Carrillo, if I could just add to that</p> <p>9 as well.</p> <p>10 You know, we really have a process of</p> <p>11 trying to be as strategic as we can in how we reach</p> <p>12 out to these folks. So Renee has alluded to that in</p> <p>13 trying to identify weaknesses -- or deficiencies --</p> <p>14 maybe too strong of a word -- what are the skill</p> <p>15 sets and assets we need represented on the board?</p> <p>16 And Renee did a great job of, yes,</p> <p>17 marketing. Definitely, we want to prioritize that.</p> <p>18 I also say -- I'll speak for myself. I have been</p> <p>19 surprised at how intensive this has been.</p> <p>20 I don't regret a minute of it. But it has</p> <p>21 been a -- a tremendous learning process.</p> <p>22 And so I think one of the things that we</p> <p>23 absolutely need to prioritize, perhaps above all</p> <p>24 else, is the willingness to commit to the time and</p> <p>25 the effort, and are you willing to contribute your</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">140</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: So I want to thank you.</p> <p>2 Regardless of however anything turns out, I fully</p> <p>3 understand the time, the commitment, the energy that</p> <p>4 it's taken to gather all these people here, reaching</p> <p>5 out.</p> <p>6 You know, we had an applicant one time</p> <p>7 turn to us in the middle of the input hearing and</p> <p>8 say, "Do you know what you're asking me to have to</p> <p>9 do all this stuff?"</p> <p>10 And it's, like, actually, we do, because</p> <p>11 do you know what you're asking us to allow you to</p> <p>12 do?</p> <p>13 So it's -- it's a commitment on both</p> <p>14 sides. It truly is.</p> <p>15 And we do a lot of work throughout the</p> <p>16 year. And this is a lot of just intensive work</p> <p>17 that's packed into here with, obviously, a lot of</p> <p>18 passion.</p> <p>19 So I truly do appreciate everything that</p> <p>20 you've done.</p> <p>21 And we will be in recess until tomorrow</p> <p>22 morning at 9:00 a.m. at Mabry Hall.</p> <p>23 And we will see you all in August.</p> <p>24 So thank you.</p> <p>25 Actually, in case there's any confusion,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">139</p> <p>1 skills?</p> <p>2 This is -- in an ordinary year, once we're</p> <p>3 up and running, maybe the commitment is only ten</p> <p>4 hours a month. We're not there right now.</p> <p>5 And so I think being really open in those</p> <p>6 conversations and really targeting the kind of</p> <p>7 people that we know have the capacity and have the</p> <p>8 willingness to contribute that, I think is something</p> <p>9 that we'll absolutely put first, I think, in those</p> <p>10 conversations.</p> <p>11 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: People often don't</p> <p>12 know what they're getting into when they get on a</p> <p>13 charter board. It's a lot of work. Everything is a</p> <p>14 lot of work. It's not just a show-up-and-feel-good</p> <p>15 moment, all the stuff that you're mentioning.</p> <p>16 And I know that, just based on everything</p> <p>17 that you've said already today, there's going to</p> <p>18 be -- parents are going to feel that your board is</p> <p>19 approachable; that's a huge piece. And there's</p> <p>20 going to be a lot of transparency in your work.</p> <p>21 That way, everyone feels good about what you're</p> <p>22 doing.</p> <p>23 Thank you very much. Very impressive</p> <p>24 group. This is -- that's for sure. Yeah. I'm</p> <p>25 done. They're going to close the building; right?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">141</p> <p>1 during our work session portion of our meeting on</p> <p>2 Friday, because we're condensing our work session</p> <p>3 and our regular meeting, we will be discussing if</p> <p>4 Commissioners -- especially because we have a number</p> <p>5 of Commissioners who were not able to be here, if</p> <p>6 there's any additional questions they have of the</p> <p>7 school -- and there will be a letter populated that</p> <p>8 will come from me probably Tuesday a week from now</p> <p>9 that will have those questions, so that the</p> <p>10 school -- the applicant would be prepared with those</p> <p>11 responses at the August meeting.</p> <p>12 So there's no need to be -- you're welcome</p> <p>13 to listen in. But there's no -- you're not going to</p> <p>14 be able to offer any input in that conversation at</p> <p>15 the work session. All right?</p> <p>16 So thank you. We really do appreciate it.</p> <p>17 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Thanks very much.</p> <p>18 (Proceedings in recess at 4:27 p.m.)</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>

BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO

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In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand on July 18, 2024.

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CASE CAPTION: In Re: Equip Academy of New Mexico

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14  
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16                                   *Cynthia Chapman*

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## A

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## **Equip Academy of New Mexico Community Input (for/against):**

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