

BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

-and-

NEW SCHOOL APPLICATION MEETING  
SUN MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

August 15, 2024

9:00 a.m.

Jerry Apodaca Education Building, Mabry Hall  
300 Don Gaspar Avenue  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

-AND-

Via Zoom Webinar

REPORTED BY: Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219  
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JOB NO.: 9804N (CC)

<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p>1 APPEARANCES</p> <p>2 COMMISSIONERS:</p> <p>3 PATRICIA GIPSON, Chair</p> <p>4 STEVEN J. CARRILLO, Vice Chair</p> <p>5 TIMOTHY E. BECK, Secretary</p> <p>6 ALAN BRAUER, Member</p> <p>7 REBEKKA BURT, Member</p> <p>8 STEWART INGHAM, Member</p> <p>9 K.T. MANIS, Member</p> <p>10 MICHAEL TAYLOR, Member</p> <p>11</p> <p>12 STAFF:</p> <p>13 CORINA CHAVEZ Director</p> <p>14 Charter School/Options for</p> <p>15 Parents and Families Division</p> <p>16 BRIGETTE RUSSELL Deputy Director</p> <p>17 Charter School/Options for</p> <p>18 Parents and Families Division</p> <p>19 LUCY VALENZUELA Technical Assistance and</p> <p>20 Training Specialist</p> <p>21 Charter School/Options for Parents</p> <p>22 and Families Division</p> <p>23</p> <p>24 MELISSA BROWN Technical Assistance and Support</p> <p>25 (MISSY) and Training Administrator</p> <p>Charter School/Options for</p> <p>Parents and Families Division</p> <p>CONSUELO CONSTANTINE NMPED Liaison to the PEC</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone. I'm</p> <p>2 going to reconvene this meeting of the Public</p> <p>3 Education Commission.</p> <p>4 It is Thursday, August 15th, and it is</p> <p>5 9:06 a.m., and we are here once again, continuing</p> <p>6 with our hearings on new applications.</p> <p>7 And our first applicant that we will hear</p> <p>8 from is Sun Mountain Community, but Commissioner</p> <p>9 Beck needs to take roll first.</p> <p>10 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Armijo.</p> <p>11 Not present.</p> <p>12 Commissioner Taylor.</p> <p>13 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Here.</p> <p>14 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer.</p> <p>15 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Here.</p> <p>16 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis.</p> <p>17 COMMISSIONER MANIS: I'm here.</p> <p>18 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Burt.</p> <p>19 COMMISSIONER BURT: Here.</p> <p>20 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner</p> <p>21 Clahchischilliage.</p> <p>22 Not present.</p> <p>23 Commissioner Ingham.</p> <p>24 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Here.</p> <p>25 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">3</p> <p>1 INDEX TO PROCEEDINGS, Continued</p> <p>2 PAGE</p> <p>3 3 Discussion and Possible Action on 4</p> <p>4 New School Applications, Continued</p> <p>5</p> <p>6 c. Sun Mountain Community School 4</p> <p>7 i. Tribal Input 7</p> <p>8 ii. Public Comment 7</p> <p>9 iii. Applicants 35</p> <p>10 iv. CSD Input 51</p> <p>11 v. PEC Questions, Discussion, 55</p> <p>12 and Decision</p> <p>13 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE 124</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">5</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: Here.</p> <p>2 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo.</p> <p>3 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Here.</p> <p>4 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck here.</p> <p>5 There is a quorum of eight.</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: And before we start, we are</p> <p>7 now moving towards a Discussion and Possible Action</p> <p>8 on New School Applications.</p> <p>9 I wanted to note a few things regarding</p> <p>10 the record we will consider for each school.</p> <p>11 The full documentation of the New School</p> <p>12 Applications is posted to the PEC website under the</p> <p>13 2024 New Applications page. For each school, the</p> <p>14 record of the application process that we will</p> <p>15 consider is:</p> <p>16 1, the application, which includes the</p> <p>17 executive summary, the application, the appendices,</p> <p>18 the facilities, and the 910B5 budget.</p> <p>19 Second, the peer review analysis;</p> <p>20 3, input hearing transcript;</p> <p>21 and 4, final PED recommendation.</p> <p>22 I wanted to note a few other things.</p> <p>23 No. 1, we have uploaded into the PEC</p> <p>24 meeting folder the letters that went to each school</p> <p>25 with questions raised on their application. This</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">6</p> <p>1 will also be considered as part of the record.                  2 No. 2, the applicant's responses to the                  3 peer review -- to the peer review that been uploaded                  4 as well.                  5 No. 3, in creating the analysis                  6 contemplated in NMAC 6.2.9.15, the PEC has asked CSD                  7 to identify, in each written analysis or                  8 recommendation, the participating CSD staff members,                  9 peer reviewers and members, applicant team by name,                  10 position, and contact information.                  11 The list of peer reviewers is uploaded to                  12 the PEC drive for Commissioners to review. It's                  13 Folder 424, New Applicant folder. Next year the                  14 chart of this information will be included in the                  15 documents listed above.                  16 And No. 4, to prepare for a possible                  17 appeal hearing, as outlined in NMAC 6.2.9.15, the                  18 PEC has asked CSD to identify a team lead for each                  19 New School Application, and is knowledgeable that                  20 the contents of the recommendations and reports                  21 regarding that application and who can provide                  22 witness testimony, if needed.                  23 My understanding, that this person is                  24 Director Chavez.                  25 So good morning once again. And welcome.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">8</p> <p>1 of kindergarten, and twelve years of the grades.                  2 I have worked in Santa Fe Public Schools                  3 for the last seven years in various capacities. I'm                  4 a substitute. I have been a long-term substitute in                  5 libraries as a tutor, education assistant, and a                  6 teacher.                  7 I've been to most of the schools.                  8 THE CHAIR: Could you speak louder,                  9 please?                  10 FROM THE PUBLIC: Speak louder? Okay. Is                  11 this okay? Can you hear me?                  12 THE CHAIR: It certainly is.                  13 FROM THE PUBLIC: I have been in most of                  14 the schools in Santa Fe from pre-K to grade 12. I                  15 think I have a unique perspective.                  16 And I love what I do. I love moving                  17 around the school district. What I observed in many                  18 cases is that students are turned off to learning,                  19 and their parents and their guardians are concerned.                  20 And I've spoken with those parents and guardians.                  21 And, recently, when the idea of a charter                  22 school that uses Waldorf methods came about, I                  23 started to talk about the possibility of this                  24 school. And these parents and guardians who did not                  25 know anything about Waldorf were very interested,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">7</p> <p>1 Thank you for joining us again.                  2 This is Sun Mountain Community School.                  3 And we are -- the first thing I'm going to ask. Is                  4 there any tribal entity that wishes to offer                  5 comment?                  6 (No response.)                  7 THE CHAIR: No? Okay.                  8 So then we are on to the Public Comment on                  9 the application.                  10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We have 25 people                  11 signed up for Public Comment, two online, and the                  12 rest in the room.                  13 We will start with those in Zoom. We will                  14 ask you to please spell your first and last name.                  15 You'll have two minutes. I will start the timer                  16 when you are done spelling your name. Please wrap                  17 up when you hear the chimes.                  18 First, we have Rachel Dixon -- I just need                  19 to find you -- no. Went away. If Rachel isn't                  20 there anymore, we will go to Carolyn Clark, if                  21 she --                  22 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hello. My name is                  23 Carolyn Clark. C-a-r-o-l-y-n C-l-a-r-k.                  24 I was a Waldorf parent for 16 years. My                  25 daughter went to two years of preschool, two years</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p>1 because they are desperate for their child to enjoy                  2 school.                  3 In one instance, the child started during                  4 the pandemic and hated school, and the parent wanted                  5 to know more about the Sun Mountain Community                  6 School.                  7 And I pass.                  8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. So I -- is                  9 "Bella" Rachel Dixon?                  10 FROM THE PUBLIC: Yes, I am here. I'm so                  11 sorry about the name confusion there.                  12 THE CHAIR: Who was the first person?                  13 MS. MELISSA BROWN: She ceded her time.                  14 She was done with her time, and she ceded it. That                  15 was how I interpreted that.                  16 THE CHAIR: It was hard for me to hear. I                  17 didn't hear that.                  18 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Carolyn, if you're                  19 done talking? If you're not done talking, please                  20 raise your digital hand.                  21 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hello. Can you hear me?                  22 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We can still hear you.                  23 So continue. You have 20 seconds left.                  24 FROM THE PUBLIC: I'm interested in the                  25 part that you didn't hear. I'd like to speak again</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">10</p> <p>1 on that.</p> <p>2 (The record was read.)</p> <p>3 FROM THE PUBLIC: I'm finished. Thank</p> <p>4 you.</p> <p>5 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next, we have Rachel</p> <p>6 Dixon. Please spell your name.</p> <p>7 FROM THE PUBLIC: Hello. Are you able to</p> <p>8 hear me?</p> <p>9 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We are.</p> <p>10 FROM THE PUBLIC: Okay. My name is</p> <p>11 R-a-c-h-e-l D-i-x-o-n. And I am in favor of the</p> <p>12 Sun Mountain Community School. Shall I begin?</p> <p>13 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Yes.</p> <p>14 FROM THE PUBLIC: Okay. I would like to</p> <p>15 say that I truly feel that Waldorf education -- a</p> <p>16 Waldorf-inspired education charter school would</p> <p>17 benefit the greater community of Santa Fe in ways</p> <p>18 that we can really only imagine.</p> <p>19 I am a fourth-generation New Mexican. I'm</p> <p>20 raising my children here. I attended Santa Fe</p> <p>21 Public Schools through high school. And while I got</p> <p>22 a great education, going out into the world for</p> <p>23 college, I found there were holes, for sure, in my</p> <p>24 education. And now that I'm raising my children</p> <p>25 here, I have been fortunate enough to have my kids</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">12</p> <p>1 over 30 years. I have three grandchildren who all</p> <p>2 went through the previous Waldorf school that was on</p> <p>3 campus here. They've done very well. They all have</p> <p>4 master's degrees. They're very interested in</p> <p>5 community.</p> <p>6 And I think that's why I want to talk</p> <p>7 about what a school such as this that offers a very</p> <p>8 rich community life, that's nurturing to children.</p> <p>9 They love to learn. The whole education is very</p> <p>10 much imbued with a love for learning. It's also a</p> <p>11 resource for parents, because these children go</p> <p>12 through this developmental journey. It's academic,</p> <p>13 yes, and academics, yes.</p> <p>14 We also offer an insight into child growth</p> <p>15 and development for parents that includes their</p> <p>16 social-emotional growth and (audio distortion)</p> <p>17 working together as community to become students of</p> <p>18 the land, which has a ripple effect out into the</p> <p>19 whole world.</p> <p>20 When they go out into the world after</p> <p>21 going through this education, they know how to be</p> <p>22 responsible community members and responsible</p> <p>23 partners and take responsibility for the world</p> <p>24 around them.</p> <p>25 So I think that's what I really want to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">11</p> <p>1 in -- at the previous Santa Fe Waldorf School for</p> <p>2 the younger elementary years. And I've just seen</p> <p>3 amazing positive benefits for my children and my</p> <p>4 family. And making this publicly available to our</p> <p>5 community in Santa Fe just feels like such an</p> <p>6 amazing opportunity.</p> <p>7 The divergence of -- well, I just feel</p> <p>8 like it would be such an opportunity to see what we</p> <p>9 could do if we could make this education that has</p> <p>10 only previously been offered privately to those with</p> <p>11 means to -- if we could offer it to people who -- in</p> <p>12 our community who need it.</p> <p>13 So thank you so much for considering this,</p> <p>14 and I look forward to hearing what everyone says.</p> <p>15 MS. MELISSA BROWN: We go to the room</p> <p>16 next. I presume Nicholas Stinson is not here yet?</p> <p>17 Okay.</p> <p>18 So we'll go to the second person, Jill</p> <p>19 McCormack. If you can come up here, please remember</p> <p>20 to spell your name for the court reporter, and I'll</p> <p>21 start the timer.</p> <p>22 FROM THE FLOOR: Okay. Is this on?</p> <p>23 Okay, my name is Jill McCormack. J-i-l-l</p> <p>24 M-c-C-o-r-m-a-c-k.</p> <p>25 I have been a Waldorf teacher for well</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">13</p> <p>1 offer is just that incredible love for learning.</p> <p>2 And everything is -- the education is brought to</p> <p>3 life. It's all relevant to the child. It's not</p> <p>4 abstract. It's a real doing.</p> <p>5 There are so many children in the world</p> <p>6 right now who have incredible anxiety because life</p> <p>7 doesn't have purpose and because their education is</p> <p>8 kind of separate from being a child.</p> <p>9 This education meets the child where they</p> <p>10 are. We need a world where children grow up with</p> <p>11 hope, with purpose, with love for learning. And</p> <p>12 that's what I have to say.</p> <p>13 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Andrea</p> <p>14 Fiegel.</p> <p>15 FROM THE FLOOR: I'm Andrea Fiegel.</p> <p>16 A-n-d-r-e-a F-i-e-g-e-l.</p> <p>17 I've been a Waldorf parent since 2012. We</p> <p>18 started when my oldest was three, and he's driving</p> <p>19 this summer. We were attracted to Waldorf first for</p> <p>20 its nature-based environment with lots and lots of</p> <p>21 time outdoors.</p> <p>22 Our family chose to avoid television</p> <p>23 screen time for the kids for years, and we</p> <p>24 appreciated the school's philosophy aligned with</p> <p>25 that.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">14</p> <p>1 We placed great value on the arts and 2 observed the integration of the arts into each day's 3 expression through the creative expression of the 4 teachers' gifts of music, picture-making, and 5 storytelling. 6 Santa Fe has an array of charter schools 7 to be very proud of. The New Mexico School of the 8 Arts is a jewel, and The MASTERS Program makes me 9 wish I was in high school. 10 The teams I know at those two high schools 11 are former Santa Fe Waldorf classmates, and they are 12 all thriving. 13 There's ATC, Monte del Sol. We have six 14 charter high schools, meaningful options from which 15 to use the best specialized environment and 16 curriculum to support our teens. 17 For Santa Fe's youngest learners, there 18 are two. Wanting to provide a nature- and 19 arts-based educational foundation for our kids, our 20 best available option was a private school. And 21 keeping them there represented a tremendous 22 financial commitment. With the creation of the 23 Sun Mountain Charter School, a Waldorf-based 24 elementary education would be available to all 25 Santa Fe families.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>1 I don't think most forms of education can show the 2 social part, but it's very important. 3 With that, I think the lack of screens is 4 very important. There's been a lot of studies 5 showing that those are detrimental, especially to 6 very small children. 7 So I think environments where children are 8 learning outside and with books, versus staring at a 9 screen, is very important for their educational and 10 mental development. 11 We were a part of the prior Santa Fe 12 school. And one thing I did notice about it was 13 that it had a really strong sense of community, both 14 within the school, and I felt it connected me more 15 to a community at large. And now being at another 16 school, I feel that much more profoundly, that lack 17 of community. 18 So I think it would be great for Santa Fe 19 to feel that sense of community with this type of 20 school. 21 And, lastly, I wanted to say I think it 22 would be good for the community that's already here. 23 I think it would be good at attracting people to 24 Santa Fe. Five years ago, I lived in Atlanta, 25 Georgia, and was looking for a new position. I</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">15</p> <p>1 The diversity we experienced at Santa Fe 2 Waldorf was real. But this public charter school 3 would embrace a full and fair representation of 4 Santa Fe's children. 5 I so value what we provided for our kids' 6 Waldorf education. I'm asking you to make a 7 Waldorf-based charter school available to all 8 Santa Fe families. 9 And I just want to add. The folks working 10 to make the Sun Mountain Charter School a reality 11 are some of the best of the best of Santa Fe 12 Waldorf. Thank you. 13 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you. Next we 14 have -- and I love that you guys are stretching my 15 abilities here -- Tesha Gilroy [ph]? There's no 16 medal for Tesha. 17 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. I'm Tesha Guillory. 18 That's T-e-s-h-a G-u-i-l-l-o-r-y. I live and work 19 in Santa Fe. I'm a physician and I'm a mother of 20 two daughters, six and nine. I'm in favor of the 21 Sun Mountain charter school. 22 I think Waldorf-inspired education is very 23 important. It's a type of education that's taught 24 all over the world. It's well-studied. It shows 25 good outcomes, both academically and socially, which</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">17</p> <p>1 interviewed here, and I liked the position. But I'm 2 not 100 percent I would have moved here if there had 3 not been a Waldorf-style charter school for my 4 children to attend. 5 I interviewed here, and then I flew out a 6 few weeks later to come and check that school out. 7 I looked at no other schools in Santa Fe, because 8 that's how much I feel Waldorf school is very 9 important to a community. 10 And I think it's very sad that there is 11 now no Waldorf-inspired school within the state of 12 New Mexico, and it would be important and vital for 13 our community to have. 14 Thank you. 15 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have 16 Fletcher -- and I know I mispronounced it last 17 time -- Lappup [ph]? Laypup [ph]? Fletcher. 18 FROM THE PUBLIC: My name is Fletcher 19 Lathrop. F-l-e-t-c-h-e-r L-a-t-h-r-o-p. 20 I was a principal founder of the Santa Fe 21 Waldorf School. I've been a Waldorf teacher for 22 38 years, the last 20, teaching principally 23 woodcarving and sculpture at Santa Fe Waldorf 24 School. 25 Since its inception, one of my primary</p>

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1 concerns has always been our inability to address  
 2 the full Santa Fe community, because of the --  
 3 because we had to charge tuition. I believe that  
 4 this education is the finest educational system in  
 5 the world, in my humble opinion. And it would be  
 6 hard to exaggerate the benefits to the community  
 7 which I expect would result from the founding of a  
 8 charter school, publicly-funded school, open to all  
 9 students in the Santa Fe area.  
 10 Thank you very much for your consideration  
 11 and your service.  
 12 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Rene  
 13 Vargas.  
 14 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. My name is Rene  
 15 Vargas. R-e-n-e V-a-r-g-a-s. I'm here to support  
 16 the Sun Mountain Community School. I'm a parent of  
 17 a ten-year-old and a four-year-old, Lucia and Teo,  
 18 with my wife, who's a tenth-generation New  
 19 Mexican -- Northern New Mexican. My kids  
 20 (incomprehensible) love it now.  
 21 I think it's really important for us to  
 22 approve this school, honestly. We come from -- I  
 23 come from -- I come from a different place. I'm  
 24 a -- my parents are immigrants from Mexico. I was  
 25 born and raised in Chicago.

19

1 But in my time in traveling this country  
 2 and living in different places, Santa Fe is the only  
 3 place that, since Chicago, I've ever been able to  
 4 call home.  
 5 My kids and my wife, we've been involved  
 6 with Waldorf, I would say, since the womb, because  
 7 my wife has been a big proponent of the Waldorf  
 8 system. And the only thing I see that system has is  
 9 a way to be able to allow our kids to flourish and  
 10 be themselves.  
 11 My kids are absolutely wonderful community  
 12 members, I would say. There isn't a place in this  
 13 town that we don't go to, where, regardless of age,  
 14 like, every individual looks at our kids and says,  
 15 "Wow, you have amazing kids. You have some  
 16 wonderful kids."  
 17 And I can't take any kind of  
 18 accountability for that. I owe that all to the  
 19 Waldorf system. It's allowed us and given us a  
 20 method to be able to raise our kids in -- just in a  
 21 way that I don't think our public school system can  
 22 actually provide.  
 23 And I do believe that if this becomes a  
 24 part of the system, it will change things. It'll  
 25 give people like myself and my kids an opportunity

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1 to flourish in this community.  
 2 Thank you.  
 3 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Appreciate that.  
 4 Thank you.  
 5 Deb Midgett?  
 6 FROM THE FLOOR: Midgett. I think that's  
 7 one of the letters, yes.  
 8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: So for the court  
 9 reporter, we are going to have some letters read by  
 10 members of the audience that will be -- this one is  
 11 going to be read in -- instead -- for Deb, D-e-b;  
 12 last name, M-i-d-g-e-t-t.  
 13 FROM THE FLOOR: "I would love to be there  
 14 today. But I am working, and I am in full support  
 15 of the Sun Mountain Community School."  
 16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Okay. Next is --  
 17 yeah -- Karl Johnson.  
 18 FROM THE FLOOR: "Dear Sun Mountain  
 19 Charter School Initiative: I would love to be there  
 20 tomorrow, but I am working. Best wishes on this  
 21 important initiative."  
 22 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Angela Gordon.  
 23 A-n-g-e-l-a G-o-r-d-o-n.  
 24 FROM THE FLOOR: "I would love to be there  
 25 but I'm working tomorrow. I believe a

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1 Waldorf-inspired charter school would be a benefit  
 2 to the Santa Fe community. Two of my kids attended  
 3 Santa Fe Waldorf School. And the teachers and  
 4 curriculum are both fantastic and promote a love of  
 5 learning."  
 6 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Arina Pittman.  
 7 A-r-i-n-a P-i-t-t-m-a-n.  
 8 FROM THE FLOOR: "Greetings and thank you  
 9 for your time. My name is Arina Pittman. And I am  
 10 a State-licensed early childhood teacher, general  
 11 education, and SpEd teacher, grades K through 12.  
 12 "I'm also a trained Waldorf teacher for  
 13 grades 1 through 8 and a former Waldorf pre-K and  
 14 kindergarten teacher. I've been a resident of  
 15 Santa Fe County for the past 27 years.  
 16 "As a professional educator, I am writing  
 17 to express my strong hope for the public  
 18 Waldorf-inspired option for the Santa Fe community.  
 19 Every day I (audio distortion) Waldorf approach and  
 20 methodology to my teaching practices. When working  
 21 with my class as a general teacher and when working  
 22 as a SpEd teacher, the children with  
 23 exceptionalities, I employ the unique practices of  
 24 the Waldorf pedagogy and the wide spectrum of  
 25 innovation that I have learned in that field of

<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p>1 work.</p> <p>2 "Every day I see the tremendous effect</p> <p>3 that this pedagogical approach has on children, all</p> <p>4 children, but, notably, on children with IEPs and</p> <p>5 early intervention services.</p> <p>6 "I see children grow and blossom in</p> <p>7 response to the gentle rhythmical approach to the</p> <p>8 daily flow of instruction. I see children with</p> <p>9 speech and language impairments develop their speech</p> <p>10 in response to a daily language-rich, media-free,</p> <p>11 human-centered environment rooted in chanting,</p> <p>12 rhythmical circle time, clapping, and melodic</p> <p>13 instruction.</p> <p>14 "I work with a speech and language</p> <p>15 therapist, and we can see the difference that this</p> <p>16 approach makes. I see children respond with</p> <p>17 increased social and emotional skills as a result of</p> <p>18 carefully supported social life of the class with</p> <p>19 daily group conversations, choral singing, dramatic</p> <p>20 play, and other Waldorf-inspired</p> <p>21 pedagogically-informed activities aimed to create</p> <p>22 growth and development of a young member and future</p> <p>23 leader."</p> <p>24 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next is Sunny Rose</p> <p>25 Healy. S-u-n-n-y R-o-s-e H-e-a-l-y.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p> <p>1 you know that I'm in support of the charter Waldorf</p> <p>2 school. The education is developed on the image and</p> <p>3 understanding of the human being and speaks to the</p> <p>4 needs of humanity at this time.</p> <p>5 "Thank you for all you and the charter</p> <p>6 school are doing and have done.</p> <p>7 "In appreciation, Micky."</p> <p>8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next is John Rubottom.</p> <p>9 J-o-h-n R-u-b-o-t-t-o-m.</p> <p>10 FROM THE FLOOR: "I am unable to attend</p> <p>11 the meeting of the Public Education Commissioners on</p> <p>12 Thursday, August 15th, as I will be assisting in the</p> <p>13 childcare of my two-and-a-half-year-old grandson</p> <p>14 while his parents are working. Please convey my</p> <p>15 strong support for the Sun Mountain Community</p> <p>16 application and the prospect of bringing Waldorf</p> <p>17 education to the Santa Fe community. My daughter</p> <p>18 was a K-through-12 Waldorf graduate and provides an</p> <p>19 excellent example to all who know her of the</p> <p>20 profound benefits of a Waldorf education.</p> <p>21 "I would encourage the Commissioners to</p> <p>22 approve the Sun Mountain Community School</p> <p>23 application. The children of Santa Fe will greatly</p> <p>24 benefit from access to a Waldorf education."</p> <p>25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next is Angie</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>1 FROM THE FLOOR: "Hello. I'm writing in</p> <p>2 support of the Waldorf-inspired charter,</p> <p>3 Sun Mountain Community School in Santa Fe. I wish I</p> <p>4 could be at the meeting tomorrow. Unfortunately,</p> <p>5 I'm unable to attend due to work.</p> <p>6 "As a mother of two children who attended</p> <p>7 Waldorf for many years and sharply feeling its loss</p> <p>8 in our lives and their learning, I want to express</p> <p>9 my full support of a Waldorf-inspired charter school</p> <p>10 in this community. The depth and breadth of the</p> <p>11 education my children received there set them up for</p> <p>12 excellence in their current school situation.</p> <p>13 "What's missing, however, is the emphasis</p> <p>14 on the full being that Waldorf philosophy provides</p> <p>15 and the type of curriculum I feel helps them grow</p> <p>16 and flourish in innumerable ways.</p> <p>17 "I hope that my younger child will have</p> <p>18 the opportunity to return to a Waldorf school right</p> <p>19 here in Santa Fe, and that other children will have</p> <p>20 the opportunity to experience the gifts that Waldorf</p> <p>21 gifted to my older child.</p> <p>22 Sincerely, Sunny Rose Healy."</p> <p>23 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next, we have Micky</p> <p>24 Leach. M-i-c-k-y L-e-a-c-h.</p> <p>25 FROM THE FLOOR: "Hi, Zoe. I want to let</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p> <p>1 Rubottom. A-n-g-i-e R-u-b-o-t-t-o-m.</p> <p>2 FROM THE FLOOR: "Dear Public Education</p> <p>3 Commissioners: I would love to be at your meeting</p> <p>4 tomorrow to support the Sun Mountain Community</p> <p>5 School decision, but I am taking care of my</p> <p>6 grandchild while his mother and father work.</p> <p>7 "I have encouraged so many families in</p> <p>8 Santa Fe who have a longing for a Waldorf-inspired</p> <p>9 education for their children. Even prior to the</p> <p>10 closing of the independent, private Santa Fe Waldorf</p> <p>11 School, many of those families could not afford</p> <p>12 private school tuition, even with a generous</p> <p>13 financial aid package. So many young families</p> <p>14 struggle with the high cost of real estate in this</p> <p>15 area and with inflation of costs in general over the</p> <p>16 last four years.</p> <p>17 "My daughter was blessed to be able to</p> <p>18 attend a Waldorf school in another state from K</p> <p>19 through 12th grade. She and many other students in</p> <p>20 her classes thrived, each in their own very</p> <p>21 individual ways.</p> <p>22 "The community members surrounding the</p> <p>23 school, faculty, staff, students, parents, and</p> <p>24 neighbors were all enhanced by their participation</p> <p>25 in the school. To not have a Waldorf-inspired</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">26</p> <p>1 education option in Santa Fe after 40 years of its 2 presence could be a factor in young families moving 3 away and seeking a Waldorf education in another 4 state. 5 "While I could go on and on about the many 6 benefits of the Waldorf educational philosophy, I'm 7 sure that those have been articulated in the charter 8 application documents. I hope that your votes will 9 be to approve the Sun Mountain Community School 10 charter application." 11 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we Eirini Boutasi 12 E-i-r-i-n-i B-o-u-t-a-s-i. 13 FROM THE FLOOR: "I would love to attend 14 the meeting, but, unfortunately, I will be at work 15 around that time. I am highly supportive of the 16 Waldorf charter school, Waldorf teaching emphasis on 17 imagination, creativity, community thinking and 18 beyond, all the wonderfulness of being a human. 19 "I am so looking forward to hearing the 20 good news." 21 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next is Lauren Lewey. 22 L-a-u-r-e-n L-e-w-e-y. 23 FROM THE FLOOR: "The philosophy of 24 Waldorf really supported my son's development 25 mentally, physically, and emotionally, after being</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p> <p>1 Withers. R-e-b-e-c-c-a W-i-t-h-e-r-s. 2 FROM THE FLOOR: "Hello. A school with a 3 Waldorf-based education curriculum is a community 4 asset, as Waldorf education has for centuries 5 championed educating children for the future, not 6 merely to reach individual personal academic 7 benchmarks, but also to be active contributing 8 members of society. 9 "Waldorf education is dedicated to 10 improving communities and interpersonal connections 11 by raising children to be good citizens, actively 12 engaged in uplifting their communities. 13 "All the best, Rebecca Withers." 14 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next is Amy Pine. 15 A-m-y P-i-n-e. 16 FROM THE FLOOR: "I would love to join to 17 show my support to this initiative, but I'll be 18 working. 19 "Santa Fe needs a Waldorf-inspired school 20 option to support our children and families. We 21 need other perspectives to our current educational 22 models, and we just do not have that in Santa Fe 23 right now. 24 "With kindness, Amy Pine." 25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next is Susie George.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">27</p> <p>1 at a prep school, which was basically all behind the 2 computer and being exhausted because it was not 3 supportive of the whole child's development. 4 "Waldorf, for us, was a godsend. It was a 5 joy to watch the tension and stress leave their 6 little bodies, as learning centered around the whole 7 child's development, and development was put center. 8 "I hope you say yes to allowing this to 9 move forward." 10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next is Robyn Machney, 11 R-o-b-y-n M-a-c-h-n-e-y. 12 FROM THE FLOOR: "Hello. We wish we could 13 be at this decision-making meeting and just wanted 14 to add our voices of support for this 15 Waldorf-inspired charter school to benefit our 16 Santa Fe community. 17 "In our technologically overloaded era, it 18 is more important than ever to have options for 19 schools that nurture imagination and support, 20 emotional development, the way Waldorf education 21 uniquely specializes. We hope our child will have 22 the option to attend a Waldorf-inspired school in 23 Santa Fe. 24 "Sincerely Robin and Joe Machney. 25 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Rebecca</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p> <p>1 S-u-s-i-e G-e-o-r-g-e. 2 FROM THE FLOOR: "I cannot attend the 3 decision-making meeting for the Sun Mountain 4 Community School because I am working. However, I 5 want to show my support as a Santa Fe community 6 member. Our society, both locally and beyond, is 7 becoming more screen-addicted than ever. The impact 8 of this -- the impact this has on the developing 9 child is great, and there is much research to back 10 this claim. 11 "Many of the school options here in 12 Santa Fe use screen time more than necessary, and, 13 in my opinion, unhealthfully, in place of other 14 modes of learning like outdoor learning, relational 15 learning with a teacher, group problem-solving, 16 free imaginative rendering, integrative movement 17 activities, et cetera. 18 "The Sun Mountain Community School, whose 19 screen time use in classroom learning would 20 consciously be minimal, would be an antidote to our 21 society's mass addiction and be a sanctuary where 22 children can be their most imaginative, 23 free-thinking selves. It also will be a space where 24 nature and the outdoors will be an integral part of 25 the curriculum and school culture.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">30</p> <p>1 "Don't we want to be bringing free 2 thinking, full imaginative, socially intelligent 3 humans into this world who actually notice and care 4 for their environment? 5 "I hope so. And this is why I support the 6 Sun Mountain Community School, because its mission 7 would ultimately be just that. 8 "Thank you for your time. 9 "Sincerely, Susie George." 10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Adrienne 11 Harper. A-d-r-i-e-n-n-e H-a-r-p-e-r. 12 MS. ZOE WILCOX: "Good morning. I regret 13 that I am unable to attend the charter hearing this 14 morning, but want to express my support to a 15 Waldorf-inspired charter school here in Santa Fe. 16 "We attended the Santa Fe Waldorf school 17 until it closed. Since that time, we have struggled 18 to find the right school fit for our daughter. The 19 Waldorf curriculum is unique and we are missing 20 having the option for that purposefully patient 21 approach to child education. 22 "We really value how Waldorf education 23 protects and celebrates childhood. I think it would 24 be an incredible offering to have a charter Waldorf 25 school here, as I know the tuition of private model</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">32</p> <p>1 And, you know, if it doesn't continue, I'm 2 just really glad that they got that in their lives. 3 Thank you. 4 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Jennifer Gutierrez. 5 FROM THE FLOOR: Jennifer Gutierrez. 6 J-e-n-n-i-f-e-r G-u-t-i-e-r-r-e-z. 7 I have a five-year-old daughter who 8 attended Waldorf, the previous Santa Fe Waldorf, 9 from age three till last year when they -- when they 10 closed. 11 I -- I actually worked at the school, too. 12 And if it wasn't for that reason, I wouldn't be able 13 to afford the tuition. But because I was an 14 employee, my daughter was able to attend for free. 15 And the benefits that -- that she got are 16 just -- you could see it even from the first day. 17 And now she's in public school, and she is thriving 18 at Eldorado public school. But it's much in part 19 because she got this early education at Waldorf. 20 And although we do love the school that 21 she is in now, she is in kindergarten. And we just 22 found out that she has to get a Chromebook, which to 23 me was -- was very strange, because a five-year-old 24 with a computer doesn't make sense to me. 25 But I understand that they need to -- they</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">31</p> <p>1 prevented families from attending who would 2 otherwise opt for this style of education for their 3 child. It was becoming a real struggle for us as 4 well. 5 "Please approach -- please approve the 6 Waldorf-inspired charter school. Thank you. 7 "Adrienne Harper." 8 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Next we have Matt 9 Naivar, maybe? 10 FROM THE FLOOR: My name is Matt Naivar. 11 It's M-a-t-t N-a-i-v-a-r. 12 I'm affectionately known in the Waldorf 13 community as "Uncle Matt." I'm Uncle Matt to Zoe 14 and Jemma [ph] Estes. They were previous Waldorf 15 students. Unfortunately, the school closed or 16 they'd still be there. 17 I know that, you know, moving here from 18 Texas -- their parents, and eventually myself -- I 19 know the Waldorf being here was a huge draw and a 20 big reason why they moved here at all. 21 Just kind of being an outsider, I'm able 22 to say, after having attended festivals, community 23 gatherings at the campus, field trips, getting to 24 know the teachers and the other parents, that it's 25 an awesome school.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">33</p> <p>1 need to learn, because this is where our society is 2 going to. But I don't understand why it has to be 3 at five years old. 4 They should be outdoors playing. They 5 shouldn't be at a desk. They should be in circle 6 time, story time, and all these things Waldorf has 7 proven -- by doing all these things, Waldorf has 8 proven that kids can learn to read by not sitting at 9 a desk. Okay. 10 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Nicholas Stinson. 11 FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. Thanks again for 12 your time and efforts on both sides of the 13 situation. I just -- my name is Nicholas Stinson. 14 Me and my child here moved here from the -- 15 THE CHAIR: Spell your last name, please. 16 FROM THE FLOOR: S-t-i-n-s-o-n. 17 We moved here from Atlanta, Georgia, in 18 large part because there was a Waldorf. We've been 19 attending Waldorf in Atlanta. 20 It was heartbreaking when it closed. 21 And, again -- and I said (audio 22 distortion) earlier that I'm really excited to see 23 what can happen when Waldorf pedagogy world view has 24 to meet and ground itself with the public education 25 system. I think it'll be -- it's best for both</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">34</p> <p>1 sides, best for Waldorf, to be a little bit more 2 grounded and more engaged with the actual (audio 3 distortion) of the world as it is now, not as it was 4 100 years ago when Steiner founded the philosophy. 5 Also I look forward to helping out on the 6 financing, if this is approved, to making sure that 7 the fiscal framework is (audio distortion), and that 8 the school can continue and be a valued part of the 9 community for a long time. 10 I speak as a former business owner and a 11 current market manager for the Santa Fe Farmers 12 Market. 13 Anyway, thank you so much and have a 14 wonderful day. 15 (Reporter cautions re microphone use.) 16 MS. MELISSA BROWN: Thank you, Cindy. 17 That concludes Public Comment. 18 There's nobody else signed up for public 19 comment for this school. There are people waiting 20 for Sacramento, but they will be heard at 1:00. 21 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: That was really a 22 question for Missy. I had a question for you, 23 Missy. So over the last three and a half years, I 24 don't recall having these kinds of sound problems. 25 I recall having a mic like this available there or</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">36</p> <p>1 spelled S, as in Sam, a-h-n, as in Nancy, i, as in 2 Irene. I am the facilities expert on our team. 3 To my right is Zoe Wilcox, W-i-l-c-o-x. 4 She is our academic team lead expert on our team. 5 And to Zoe's right is Jessica Wireman, 6 W-i-r-e-m-a-n. Jessica is our budget expert. 7 These are the core members of our team. 8 We were supported, as we mentioned, in the community 9 hearing by seven additional educators, who, many of 10 whom are now teaching in the public school system 11 and four of who are licensed -- PED-licensed. 12 MS. ZOE WILCOX: Good morning, everyone. 13 Nice to be with you again. My name is Zoe Wilcox. 14 I was the head writer on the application. And thank 15 you for your dedication to offering school choice in 16 New Mexico. 17 We'll dive right into Slide No. 2, please, 18 because we have a lot of questions you have 19 presented to us that we would like to address. 20 We had some lingering questions at the end 21 of our hearing last time that we're going to dive 22 into. 23 The first is given our unique model, why 24 does the applicant believe that the State 25 assessments we chose are the most appropriate for</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">35</p> <p>1 there, where she's -- our reporter was much better 2 able to hear, and we were much better able to hear, 3 because everyone is -- because if they're 4 soft-spoken, it's like there's always a problem with 5 volume. I'm just curious about that, because it's 6 been ongoing yesterday and so far today. 7 THE CHAIR: Can we save those questions 8 for -- thanks. 9 Okay. We are now on to the 20 minutes for 10 the applicant team. So welcome once again. Remind 11 to -- if you want to introduce the team, spell your 12 name for the record, and then you don't have to do 13 that as you continue to talk. 14 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: Missy, can you pull up 15 our presentation? 16 While she's pulling it up, I'll go ahead 17 and introduce our team. 18 Good morning and thank you once again for 19 giving us the opportunity to present in front of 20 you. 21 To my left is Briana Bassler. Her last 22 name is spelled B-a-s-s-l-e-r. She is our legal 23 expert. She's an attorney and our legal expert on 24 our team. 25 I am Jayita Sahni. My last name is</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">37</p> <p>1 the school and how we chose them. 2 In the end, we, SMCS, in our application 3 process, because we have committed to aligning 4 Waldorf-inspired curriculum to State standards, we 5 believe that the choice of state-supported interim 6 assessments, iMSSA, would be the quickest track to 7 assure that alignment as we are getting started. 8 Secondly, we have -- to be honest, we were 9 being very careful with our budget. And as you 10 know, iMSSA is free; the State option is free. 11 I do think it's very interesting that you 12 brought this question up, as it was discussed and 13 debated typically through our application process. 14 We had one on our education team. She actually took 15 the different tests to see the differences. She 16 said she got one wrong in the third-grade test. 17 But I had multiple conversations with 18 Gregory Howell. He is the client service director 19 for Cognia. He goes around the state and teaches 20 teachers how to implement tests. 21 We spoke several times regarding which 22 test to use for our school. And at the end, he 23 said, you know, you've just got to go and talk with 24 Montessori of the Rio Grande, the head of school 25 there, as they are doing as close to what you are</p>

1 doing as anyone in the state. They also use the  
2 developmental method in Montessori that's relatively  
3 similar to ours.

4 So that started a warm relationship  
5 between me and Deborah Henwood. And many of our  
6 things in our application, our development of our  
7 school proposal, came out of our relationship.

8 They use Istation beyond second grade to  
9 keep that -- to keep it consistent and to best  
10 assess student -- student progress from early grades  
11 on.

12 We originally had that in our application.  
13 And in an eleventh-hour debate, we said, "Let's  
14 start with what the State proposes with the  
15 agreement that we would take Implementation Year to  
16 further look into those tests." So that was our  
17 process.

18 Next slide, please.

19 The PEC, you also wanted to hear about our  
20 outreach outside the previous Waldorf school  
21 community. And we -- we feel that our outreach  
22 efforts were broad and diverse.

23 We -- yes, we had surveys. But we did not  
24 rely solely on our surveys for outreach. Santa Fe  
25 is a word-of-mouth town, which is why our

1 We met with 17 representatives from local  
2 and national organizations. And, from those, we  
3 gained articulated support and partnership from many  
4 of them.

5 There are several letters in our  
6 application from many of these organizations. And  
7 they are listed there, including a lump sum of  
8 several community local and public schools.

9 Next slide, please.

10 The Public Education Commission also asked  
11 us to be more specific on our outreach and  
12 communication with local tribes. So we reached out  
13 to the Cochiti Tribe in April 2024.

14 We e-mailed the principal, Molly Gurule.

15 We e-mailed the Pojoaque Tribe, Cristal  
16 Suazo, also in April 2024.

17 And we had a connection at the Tesuque  
18 Tribe, and we reached out to that person who acted  
19 as a bridge to us to the Tesuque -- to the Tesuque  
20 Tribe also in April of 2024.

21 Our intention with that was to notify  
22 these tribes of our proposed school. Personal  
23 conversations with a tribal member who has been  
24 involved with our community for years, informed us  
25 that there is a general momentum to keeping tribal

1 conversations at our outreach booths were also very  
2 significant.

3 There were an estimated 160 of them at  
4 three outreach booths through the 87507 and 87501  
5 area codes (verbatim). 100 percent of these people  
6 were not previously enrolled in the previous school.

7 Of the hundred conversations just at the  
8 Santa Fe Farmers Market, 21 of them signed up to  
9 hear more information as we progressed. So that  
10 means, as we were talking to people of all ages, old  
11 people, you know, college students, and family  
12 members, one out of five of them wanted yet another  
13 e-mail in their e-mail server to -- as long as it  
14 told them if we were moving closer to a charter  
15 school or not.

16 We had 115 respond to our surveys. 140  
17 responses to our name vote. Yes, these were  
18 distributed to the former school e-mail list. They  
19 were also distributed in our outreach booth, Wise  
20 Fool e-mail lists, one of our partners, and our  
21 La Cienega community breakfast.

22 We also have a continued outreach plan  
23 that serves the broader public of Santa Fe in our  
24 application, Page 20 to 22, and 209 to 213.

25 Next slide, please.

1 students in tribal schools. However, they said that  
2 they are open on a one-on-one basis to meet  
3 individual students with a school that is  
4 appropriate for that student.

5 So our intention in reaching out to these  
6 tribes was one of respect, to respect the autonomy,  
7 for them to make their own decision, to be welcoming  
8 and warm, and let them know what we're doing.

9 And when they said, "No, thanks," we will  
10 just then be welcoming and responsive to these three  
11 communities as we proceed.

12 Next slide.

13 We are also excited to inform you, since  
14 we last met, we have our five members for our Board  
15 of Finance ready to go. They are Jayita Sahni, 15  
16 years of project management, financial planning,  
17 architectural design and planning in the private  
18 sector, and over nine years of project management,  
19 financial planning, and facilities management in the  
20 public sector.

21 We have Jessica Wireman, who is -- has  
22 18 years of small business management, is a  
23 restaurateur, and a County commissioners' advisory  
24 board member.

25 We have Nicholas Stinson, the Farmers

42	<p>1 Market manager here in Santa Fe, a restaurateur for                  2 15 years, and an expert in finance business                  3 management, and community outreach.                  4 We have David Bulger, board president                  5 experience, experience in governance, the nonprofit                  6 sector, entrepreneur, investor, and 14 years                  7 experience as a law practitioner and in finances.                  8 And we have Mary Freitas. Her experience                  9 comes from her involvement in government,                  10 administration, as a college guidance counselor, and                  11 in academics. And we continue our outreach and                  12 vetting additional board members and interested                  13 people who want to be involved in this exciting new                  14 endeavor.                  15 The interest and enthusiasm in our                  16 community is palpable.                  17 Next slide, please.                  18 We'd also like to take this opportunity to                  19 address the letter from the CSD to the Commissioners                  20 on our peer review analysis.                  21 In the world of academics, we ask that you                  22 see our official response to the peer review and the                  23 presentation that we gave in our July community                  24 input hearing.                  25 We repeat there in writing and verbally</p>	44	<p>1 We feel that we have demonstrated                  2 incredible community support. We have the 25 people                  3 who spoke here today, in addition to 49 letters of                  4 support that came in, over 40 speakers that showed                  5 up to our community input hearing. They spoke for                  6 over an hour and a half. 81 town hall member                  7 meeting attendees, 160 community conversations that                  8 took place, and 115 survey takers, 140 charter                  9 school name voters, and 17 potential community                  10 partners.                  11 Next slide, please.                  12 So of the 46 people who attended our                  13 community input hearing, you heard from families                  14 interested in enrolling their children at SMCS, who                  15 were part of the private previous school and those                  16 who were not.                  17 Testimonials were heard from alumni                  18 families regarding the effectiveness of their                  19 children's Waldorf education. They spoke directly                  20 to the concerns of academic rigor, literacy skills,                  21 and college and career readiness.                  22 You heard from board members, interested                  23 in serving on the SMCS school board. Experienced                  24 educators who spoke to the effectiveness of their                  25 Waldorf teaching tools in their current public</p>
43	<p>1 over and over that we are committed to aligning with                  2 New Mexico educational and inclusiveness standards.                  3 We address some -- brought clarity to some                  4 misunderstandings, and we are very confident in our                  5 team's ability to run a successful and add value --                  6 value-added New Mexico public school. And we are                  7 honored to be a part of the public school system.                  8 Our founding team went through hundreds of                  9 Common Core standards line by line that resulted in                  10 hundreds of pages of attachments to ensure that we                  11 were knowledgeable of and following these standards.                  12 We also have specific plans of how we will                  13 continue this work.                  14 The evaluation back-and-forth process has                  15 also given us knowledge of where to grow and learn,                  16 and we continue to do that.                  17 We feel that the organizational framework                  18 is solid, and we are confident that we will run a                  19 successful charter school within our projected                  20 budget. We have specifically identified board                  21 members with a breadth and depth of financial                  22 experience to oversee our budget.                  23 Next slide.                  24 And we would like to also address a                  25 concern by the CSD about our community support.</p>	45	<p>1 school classrooms. Families who spoke to the                  2 financial sacrifices they made to provide their                  3 children with a Waldorf education.                  4 And, most importantly, you heard from                  5 students who spoke with confidence and articulation                  6 and who were clearly community-minded.                  7 Of these hundreds of participants in our                  8 outreach campaign, they are members of our broad                  9 Santa Fe community, and their voices, needs, and                  10 support count.                  11 Next slide, please.                  12 So we are left, as the founding team, to                  13 wonder why these -- these voices felt discounted.                  14 And so we think that we need just to take a little                  15 look into what is the community that supports                  16 Waldorf education in Santa Fe.                  17 They are economically diverse. They are                  18 ethnically and socially diverse. And they come from                  19 a variety of living situations.                  20 It includes single-parent households,                  21 children living with grandparents, separate                  22 households with two parents, two-parent households,                  23 rural households, working parents, stay-at-home                  24 parents, immigrant children, and refugees.                  25 And, most importantly, as you've heard</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">46</p> <p>1 from many of our community members, it is a 2 community with immense potential to grow. As one of 3 our supporters said in her letter, this is not an 4 elitist education, but one of inclusion. 5 Next slide, please. 6 There -- the common thread among all these 7 community members is simply their belief in this 8 system of education. And what they are not is 9 across-the-board rich. They were certainly not rich 10 enough to maintain a private school in Santa Fe. 11 This is the economic diversity of the 12 Santa Fe -- the previous Waldorf school, their 13 families, and this is in our application. 14 The numbers of families requesting 15 financial aid steadily increased every year. By 16 spring of 2022, 90 percent of families requested 17 and/or received financial aid. 18 Over 50 percent of the student population 19 received it. 20 42 students out of 216 had full tuition 21 remission, because at least one of their parents was 22 a full-time faculty or staff member. 23 And that also included sacrifice, as 24 starting salaries for Santa Fe Waldorf 25 schoolteachers began \$10,000 less than starting</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">48</p> <p>1 Some said yes, they would send their child to a 2 private school. 3 And how much can you pay? Zero dollars. 4 That is not a private school tuition; that 5 is public sector. 6 This aligns with the number of survey 7 takers who were actually sending their children to 8 private schools when they took the survey. Seven of 9 115, 6 percent, when they listed where their 10 children were going to school, were going to private 11 sector. So the vast majority of the families that 12 took our survey were attending private schools -- 13 public schools. Sorry. Thank you. 14 Next slide, please. 15 So let's talk about the ethnic diversity 16 of the Waldorf community in Santa Fe. Who supports 17 the Sun Mountain Community School? 18 Next slide. 19 This is a letter from a member of our 20 community, from a Native American family. She says, 21 "The Waldorf model was originally conceived and 22 implemented for children of factory workers. This 23 is not an elitest education, but one of inclusion. 24 One of the basic tenets of Waldorf is that children 25 of diverse cultural and economic backgrounds be</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">47</p> <p>1 salaries as a public schoolteacher. 2 And there were eight high school students 3 receiving full scholarships designed to meet 4 dedicated students whose parents could not afford 5 the tuition. 6 So the former school was always hanging on 7 by a thread by tuition assistance and fundraising. 8 This -- the common thread among that group 9 was sacrifice to make this choice for a 10 Waldorf-inspired education. And the economic 11 capacity of our 115 survey takers also reflect those 12 same numbers. 13 Oh, thank you. 14 Now, 27 percent of our survey takers said 15 they would not consider sending their child to a 16 private school. But as we looked further into it, 17 the rest, the 73 percent, weren't exactly honest 18 with themselves. 19 As they considered -- they said they would 20 consider sending their child to a private Waldorf 21 school. However, only 10 percent of them, in a 22 further question on how much they could afford, 23 could actually afford a private school tuition. 24 The rest all said their enrollment was 25 contingent on significant financial assistance.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">49</p> <p>1 schooled together. During my involvement with the 2 school, the student body included Hispanic, 3 African-American, Asian, and Native American 4 students, of which my son was one." 5 Thank you very much. We're going to move 6 on. 7 Next slide. 8 This is a member of our community, a 9 Mexican-American member of our community, who wants 10 her two children to attend the school. This member 11 is a member of our community who brags about her two 12 Hispanic boys -- oops -- yes, I'm doing it here, but 13 I forget to tell you, Missy. 14 Who wants Waldorf education for all 15 students? 16 Next slide, Adrianna Hershey, this is a 17 Mexican immigrant member of our community who has 18 two children she is waiting to sign up for 19 Sun Mountain Community School. 20 Next slide. 21 Dina Jensen says that their daughter 22 attended Waldorf only because she received the 23 Renaissance Scholarship, which covered her full 24 tuition. And she would not have been able to access 25 this education without her scholarship, and it was a</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">50</p> <p>1 game-changer for her daughter.  2 Next slide, please.  3 And this student actually is from a family  4 that could afford full tuition. And she is 20 years  5 old. And she is now so passionate about Waldorf  6 education that she is becoming a teacher and wants  7 to specialize in special education.  8 And she says, "As a 20-year-old..." -- she  9 took time out to write you a four-page letter and  10 says, "Everyone should be able to send their  11 children to Waldorf schools if they so choose."  12 Next slide -- 30 seconds. These voices  13 count, and these voices matter.  14 Next slide, please.  15 There is something special in the Waldorf  16 students. So what is it?  17 If you haven't experienced it, it is easy  18 to confuse for the privilege of economic status or  19 being a part of the ethnic majority. But our  20 community support shows the privilege is not that;  21 the privilege is the education itself.  22 Final slide.  23 So voting yes to the Sun Mountain  24 Community School brings the gift of a  25 Waldorf-inspired education to students throughout</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">52</p> <p>1 to each of the indicators, and then a team of peer  2 reviewers dug deep into the application, reviewing  3 every part of it thoroughly and conducted a --  4 conducted a capacity interview, and then wrote this  5 all up in the preliminary analysis, which was sent  6 to PEC and the applicants on June 28th.  7 On July 8th, the team -- the Waldorf  8 team -- submitted a response to the peer analysis,  9 and it was e-mailed to the PEC.  10 We held the community input hearing in  11 this very hall on June -- July 10th. And then PEC  12 sent a letter on July 19th. Today, we learned a lot  13 of new information based on the questions that the  14 PEC asked of the school.  15 CSD sent a final recommendation both to  16 the school and to the PEC on August 2nd.  17 When we reviewed the response to the peer  18 analysis, there was 68 pages of rebuttal to what the  19 peers had written. Some was acknowledging a typo;  20 for example, using WIDA for SpEd students. We know  21 that that's for ELs.  22 Or in some places, the applicant team  23 expanded on their plans, as they also articulated  24 today, and, at one point, critiquing nomenclature  25 that the peer review team used, operations managers</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">51</p> <p>1 the broad and diverse Santa Fe student community.  2 Thank you.  3 DIRECTOR CORINA CHAVEZ: Thank you. Good  4 morning, everybody. Thank you for coming to the  5 hearing. Thank you for your presentation, Team  6 Sun Mountain.  7 I am first going to go through the  8 timeline of this process, just to remind everybody  9 how we got to where we are today.  10 In January, this school submitted a Notice  11 of Intent to the Department. And this year at the  12 Public Education Commission's request, Ms. Brown and  13 I conducted an NOI review and provided feedback.  14 Our message was the same to all  15 applicants: "Respond to all indicators. No shame  16 in postponing or reapplying next year."  17 Typically, we've had schools pull out of  18 the process and come back. I don't know that we've  19 had that many that were voted by the PEC and then  20 come back. But during this process, before we get  21 to the hearing, we have had several. That didn't  22 happen this year with any of the applicants.  23 The applications were submitted on time,  24 on June 1st. This application was fully responded  25 to in terms of each of the -- there was a response</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">53</p> <p>1 saying that they've proposed an operations director;  2 but then on Page 188, the application listed an  3 operations manager.  4 And we could go back and forth and back  5 and forth with this kind of, "They said this." "No,  6 they said this." "Oh, yes. Actually, it was  7 there."  8 But I didn't choose to get into that level  9 of detail when I wrote the recommendation to the  10 PEC.  11 Our recommendation concluded that the  12 application was inadequate for the reasons described  13 in the recommendation for denial, that the  14 application met none of the criteria for the  15 academic program and alignment to the New Mexico  16 Common Core standards, assessments, supports for  17 ELs, for students with IEPs.  18 And in reading the application as  19 submitted, there was a comment made by the peer  20 reviewers that really struck me. And it was that  21 rather than it seeming that the applicants were  22 looking at the New Mexico Common Core standards to  23 see how Waldorf fit in, it was the other way around,  24 that they were looking at the Waldorf standards to  25 see how the New Mexico Common Core standards would</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">54</p> <p>1 fit in.</p> <p>2 That really stuck with me as I was</p> <p>3 considering this application.</p> <p>4 I also maintained a concern about the</p> <p>5 Waldorf approach fitting into the public school</p> <p>6 framework -- there will be a little bit more about</p> <p>7 that here in a minute -- and about how the</p> <p>8 application -- how that framework would fit.</p> <p>9 Few of the indicators for the financial</p> <p>10 framework met or approached criteria. And in most</p> <p>11 of the organizational framework, they were rated as</p> <p>12 Approaching.</p> <p>13 There was concern that there was little</p> <p>14 prospective parents reflecting the diversity of</p> <p>15 Santa Fe; although, I must say that the team has</p> <p>16 done a really excellent job today of organizing</p> <p>17 supporters and pointing out how there are supporters</p> <p>18 of the school that are a little bit more diverse and</p> <p>19 that represent prospective parents.</p> <p>20 One of the speakers today talked about</p> <p>21 becoming -- how becoming a public school might</p> <p>22 change this school. And I just sort of -- I thought</p> <p>23 that was very insightful. That is true, for better</p> <p>24 or for worse.</p> <p>25 And I've worked with charter schools for</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">56</p> <p>1 responses. That was awesome. You just took it</p> <p>2 piece by piece and did that. That was great.</p> <p>3 You answered a lot of questions, very</p> <p>4 honestly.</p> <p>5 The concern I have is probably the concern</p> <p>6 I've had before. And I appreciate what you said</p> <p>7 about, you know, all the different areas and the</p> <p>8 diversity and all the interviews and all that.</p> <p>9 The concern I had is this was almost a</p> <p>10 replay of the community input hearing. It seemed</p> <p>11 like everybody that came forward had a connection</p> <p>12 with the old Waldorf school. I was hoping to hear</p> <p>13 from businesses, different organizations, people in</p> <p>14 the community that had no contact with the Waldorf</p> <p>15 school, or were, like me, when I had to look it up</p> <p>16 on the Internet to know what a Waldorf education</p> <p>17 was, I had no clue.</p> <p>18 I taught IB for 13 years. I know what</p> <p>19 that is. I barely know Montessori, and I had no</p> <p>20 idea about Waldorf. So my concern is just the same.</p> <p>21 It's not a critical concern, but it's a concern,</p> <p>22 that what I wouldn't want to see is the private</p> <p>23 Waldorf community become the public Waldorf</p> <p>24 community. That's what I was hoping -- I was hoping</p> <p>25 I would see a different reflection on that. And</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">55</p> <p>1 the past 20 years. I've seen a huge shift in the</p> <p>2 expectations for charter schools to fit more closely</p> <p>3 into the public education model. And I feel like</p> <p>4 that would be a bit of a struggle.</p> <p>5 I do think should PEC make the decision to</p> <p>6 consider some of the shifts in the plan, because I</p> <p>7 think that what I've heard is what we've seen in the</p> <p>8 application and what we've heard in the</p> <p>9 presentations. And, certainly, today, I feel like</p> <p>10 this application team has worked really hard on all</p> <p>11 parts of the application process -- today is a</p> <p>12 testament to this -- and has listened to feedback.</p> <p>13 So good luck, PEC members, in making the</p> <p>14 decision. I think this is really tough, because</p> <p>15 what was written might vary from what we are hearing</p> <p>16 and seeing today.</p> <p>17 Thank you.</p> <p>18 THE CHAIR: Thank you. And we're going to</p> <p>19 take a ten-minute break.</p> <p>20 (Recess taken, 10:19 a.m. to 10:37 a.m.)</p> <p>21 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much</p> <p>22 once again.</p> <p>23 Commissioners?</p> <p>24 Commissioner Beck.</p> <p>25 SECRETARY BECK: I -- thank you for those</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">57</p> <p>1 I -- you know, my -- I don't know who quoted this</p> <p>2 one. But actions speak louder than words. And I</p> <p>3 was hoping to see the action of other people outside</p> <p>4 the Waldorf community. But I appreciate greatly you</p> <p>5 responding as you did to those questions.</p> <p>6 Thank you.</p> <p>7 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Taylor.</p> <p>8 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: So I'll be brief. I</p> <p>9 do appreciate the fact that you responded to the</p> <p>10 concerns with care and -- and lots of thought. So</p> <p>11 I'm of the -- of the belief that I don't -- first of</p> <p>12 all I don't think that there were any major shifts</p> <p>13 in what you've presented today and what your</p> <p>14 application presented; all right? So I don't -- and</p> <p>15 I think it's perfectly acceptable to clarify</p> <p>16 positions that you have in the application today.</p> <p>17 So I think that was -- that was wise of you, and I</p> <p>18 accept that as just, "Hey, we're just kind of</p> <p>19 clarifying our position in these areas." So that's</p> <p>20 fine.</p> <p>21 I don't think you could ever walk into</p> <p>22 a -- in an application before school has started, I</p> <p>23 don't think you can ever anticipate everything and</p> <p>24 explain it well enough that everybody will</p> <p>25 understand. So I'm fully on board with what you</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">58</p> <p>1 guys presented today. So thank you.  2 In regards to what Commissioner Beck  3 talked about, a little bit about the diversity and  4 the fact that most of the respondents have been  5 former Waldorf -- have had a former -- affiliation  6 with a former Waldorf school, I believe that that's  7 naturally going to be the case, because those people  8 have been at the Waldorf school, are fully vested,  9 and they want it to continue. So I think that's  10 fine.  11 I do echo the -- the concern that that  12 should be on your "to do" list in an implementation  13 year, you know, to really get after that aspect and  14 that dynamic. So I -- like I said, I really  15 appreciate what you've presented today and am  16 looking forward to the rest of the conversation. So  17 thank you.  18 MS. ZOE WILCOX: Commissioner Gipson, may  19 I just do a quick response to Commissioner Taylor?  20 THE CHAIR: Sure.  21 MS. ZOE WILCOX: Actually, a response to  22 all -- although I didn't read it in my presentation,  23 on each of those slides, it quoted the page number  24 in our application from which that information came.  25 And I just wanted to express that.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">60</p> <p>1 Commissioner Carrillo, I really appreciate  2 your suggestion to look out of state. So we have  3 been reaching out to other state-chartered Waldorf  4 schools in other states for recommendations, because  5 there can be sometimes a lot of movement between  6 schools.  7 So as part of the steps leading up to  8 becoming a Board of Finance, I personally am keeping  9 a list and having multiple conversations with  10 community members and interested parties in hiring a  11 head of school.  12 That doesn't give you a specific strategic  13 plan. But without an approval, that was the best  14 that I could do.  15 COMMISSIONER BURT: Yeah. No, that makes  16 sense. Is there -- did you all think about trying  17 to get a proposed head administrator when you  18 started the application?  19 The one thing I notice is when we've had  20 schools that start without -- with a board and  21 without the head -- proposed head administrator as  22 part of that application process, that it -- I've  23 noticed more transition, more -- a little bit more  24 shaky turmoil and more difficulty to have someone  25 stay for a long time, because they're not a part of</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">59</p> <p>1 Thank you.  2 COMMISSIONER BURT: Thanks. Good morning.  3 MS. ZOE WILCOX: Good morning.  4 COMMISSIONER BURT: Can you talk to me a  5 little bit about what your plan is to hire the head  6 administrator of the school?  7 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: So we have been -- and  8 am I too close or am I too far?  9 THE REPORTER: You're good.  10 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: As we mentioned in our  11 slide, we have five committed members, board  12 members, ready to go. So the first order of  13 business will be to become an approved Board of  14 Finance. And we are well aware that five board  15 members is not enough to run a charter school, but  16 it is enough to become an approved Board of Finance.  17 So that's step one.  18 We have been having soft conversations  19 with several candidates that we are either  20 personally connected to or have had a history at the  21 former school or from the networks of people at the  22 former school.  23 We have not been able to make anybody any  24 offers, but we have been working and having  25 conversations. So we do have a long list.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">61</p> <p>1 your founding team.  2 So can you talk a little bit about what --  3 like, what inspired you guys to go ahead and get  4 started and do the board first and -- yes, that  5 concern.  6 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: Yes. In the first  7 charter school training, what we heard was while  8 what you just said is true -- and we've observed it  9 ourselves in our community -- it is kind of nebulous  10 for the person who is running the school to then go  11 find their bosses, because the board is the head  12 administrator's boss.  13 So we wrote the application -- and this  14 was excellent advice from Missy. "Write it as if  15 you are not going to be the people running it, as if  16 that is -- this is a blueprint, and you hand it to a  17 different set of people, and they will be able to  18 read it and run it."  19 And from an architectural background this  20 is what we do. We don't build buildings. We design  21 them. We hand the plans to a totally different  22 person, whom we've never met before, and they are  23 supposed to build it exactly the way we've  24 envisioned it.  25 That was my approach as the application</p>

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1 manager. The team felt comfortable with that  
 2 approach. That is why we took this approach. We  
 3 wrote it as if we were not the ones going to be  
 4 running it.  
 5 Obviously, we're not going to leave the  
 6 ship, because we've invested so much energy into it.  
 7 But the reason we made the choice we did is because  
 8 we didn't want the head administrator to go out and  
 9 hire their bosses. We wanted the board to hire the  
 10 head administrator. Does that speak to your  
 11 question?  
 12 COMMISSIONER BURT: Yeah, definitely. And  
 13 I will say -- so I know -- I know it's in many  
 14 industries that oftentimes you'll hear that, like,  
 15 oh, they weren't even teachers, and they did this.  
 16 So you saying you're an architect and how  
 17 you're able to translate that is one of the reasons  
 18 why I firmly believe lots of people outside  
 19 education should be involved in education, because I  
 20 think sometimes you get teachers who are so in their  
 21 head and they know exactly how to do it that it's  
 22 hard to translate it to paper.  
 23 That is something that I will say with  
 24 this application, that -- once again, it is great  
 25 advice from Missy, because it is what I look for.

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1 Like, if everybody here disappears, what we have in  
 2 black and white is what we have to go off. And it  
 3 needs to be succinct, clear, but also complex and,  
 4 like, detailed at the same time.  
 5 And I do think your application was.  
 6 I'm really not too concerned about the  
 7 curriculum alignment. I -- I've gone through scope  
 8 and sequence work where you have a curriculum, and  
 9 you have standards, and you figure out how to do a  
 10 scope and sequence where you align all those things.  
 11 So I'm not concerned about that part.  
 12 And I actually do love the idea of having  
 13 different, unique, innovative ways of learning  
 14 provided to the community. So I do think your  
 15 school fits in that.  
 16 My concern is going to be echoed by what  
 17 the other Commissioners already said. I am really  
 18 concerned -- I think there's a couple -- I think  
 19 there's a practical part of it, which is what  
 20 Commissioner Taylor said and Commissioner Beck said  
 21 was, like, I do -- if I could have heard from  
 22 several families who said, "We never -- we didn't  
 23 even know about this school," or, "We knew about  
 24 this school and could never have gone to it, but if  
 25 this was a public school, we could," if I could have

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1 heard from some of those folks, it would have helped  
 2 a lot.  
 3 Because, for me, I think there's a little  
 4 bit more of the spirit of a charter school that I do  
 5 care deeply about, the health of the sector. And I  
 6 am concerned about the optics of looking like we can  
 7 take a private school and make it a public school,  
 8 and then the kids who were in the private school now  
 9 get a public school education with the same funding.  
 10 So it's not necessarily -- I know that's  
 11 not your -- your intention is to go full-blown.  
 12 You're going to follow every State standard; you're  
 13 going to follow all the State requirements; you're  
 14 going to really take the heart of being it.  
 15 But my concern is more for the broader  
 16 view of when people look at how is New Mexico doing  
 17 charters, and it's like, "Oh, they're taking private  
 18 schools and making them public," so being able to,  
 19 like, have some data behind me to combat that would  
 20 have been very helpful to kind of lower that, and be  
 21 like, "No, they actually" -- like, "They did it the  
 22 way in which I would have expected, and they have  
 23 all these new folks coming in, and they want these  
 24 new folks that didn't have access. They did the  
 25 work already..." to show that you have all of the

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1 extra people to include into the community.  
 2 So that's -- that's still my -- I would  
 3 say my biggest concern.  
 4 And I know you've already -- I know you've  
 5 done a lot of work to try to show how you've tried  
 6 to do that. I think it's just like -- to me, it's  
 7 like the tip of the iceberg is where I see where  
 8 that could have been.  
 9 So that's going to -- I'm open. I'm  
 10 listening to other Commissioners today. But that is  
 11 my -- that's my biggest concern and what I'm kind of  
 12 grappling with, as someone who cares deeply about  
 13 the charter sector and the health of the community.  
 14 And the misconceptions that we always have  
 15 to always fight against with charter schools --  
 16 charter schools are public schools; right? When I  
 17 always say it, it always just gives me a little bit  
 18 of grievance inside of me when I hear "public  
 19 schools" and "charter schools."  
 20 No, charter schools are public schools.  
 21 It's traditional schools and charter schools, but  
 22 they're all public; right?  
 23 So we already have the misconceptions that  
 24 are rampant in the charter community that sometimes  
 25 the national charter sector influences our state and

<p style="text-align: right;">66</p> <p>1 how people perceive it. A lot of New Mexicans think 2 that charter schools are tuition-based -- right? -- 3 and so they're, like, "Wait. I didn't realize 4 charter schools are public here." 5 So there's all these misconceptions that 6 we have to care about because it matters to our 7 charter communities. 8 And so that's what's going through my mind 9 is I'm trying to, like, get to -- like, I like the 10 idea. I think you -- I imagine the support being -- 11 you have support already. So I imagine it can be 12 expanded. I believe that. 13 I just don't have it behind me to feel -- 14 I'm such a data -- I love -- that's why I like the 15 black-and-white writing you had, because it was 16 good, detailed. But I didn't have the 17 black-and-white data behind me to feel super 18 confident in talking to folks, "No, it's not just a 19 private school coming to charter. That's not what's 20 happening." 21 This is all -- this is actually the spirit 22 of charters is to provide access to everybody; 23 right? And I don't know if I, can, like fight that 24 fight right now with what I have. So I'm going to 25 be listening and considering. That's what's</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">68</p> <p>1 how this can really be something, that, "Oh, my 2 gosh, this is a place where my kid will thrive," you 3 know? 4 It's like the kids that are at The MASTERS 5 Program. They're there because they're on a college 6 prep track, and it's what they want or they wouldn't 7 be there. The kids that are at NMSA, they're there 8 because that's the track, that they're inspired by 9 their love for the arts. 10 And (audio distortion), when that school 11 opened, when I was on the board for Santa Fe Public, 12 there was a lot of people that were very upset with 13 that school opening, because it's, like, "We have a 14 great program. Why can't they use our great 15 program?" 16 It's, like, nobody in the state could do 17 what they're doing. Right? No one. 18 Nobody in the state can probably offer 19 what AIMS, which is the Albuquerque Institute for 20 Math and Science, offers, that kind of rigor. So 21 let's -- let's respect the diversity for choice for 22 parents and families; right? 23 I think that that piece can be met. 24 One of the things I wrote down that I 25 think might guide what I -- other things I have to</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">67</p> <p>1 blocking me a little bit right now. 2 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Carrillo, and 3 then Commissioner Brauer. 4 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Thank you. Thank 5 you, Commissioner Burt. I appreciate so much always 6 learning from you in some of the things you have to 7 say, like the protection of the charter community 8 and just taking it private and turning it to public, 9 you know. 10 I don't get the sense that you're just 11 saying, "Hey. Now we have public money, so we can 12 do whatever, and we can run our thing." I think 13 it's much, much deeper. But I appreciate the 14 comments very much. Okay. 15 The biggest concern I have -- and to me, 16 it's not a deal-breaker, even slightly. It's 17 concerning the (audio distortion). And that's the 18 diversity and inclusion piece; right? And while I 19 respect and understand the steps that you took, to 20 me not even clear enough. And so -- but there's 21 ways to do that. And there's ways to do that in 22 your Implementation Year. How to reach out to these 23 parts of the community much more aggressively so 24 they understand what it is you're offering. 25 And -- and they know their kids best. So</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">69</p> <p>1 say based on the application and recommendation from 2 CSD is, "If you build it, they will come." 3 We've seen that here. There's a reason 4 that the magnet school -- the IB magnet, the Nelson 5 Mandela School, was so successful in Santa Fe, 6 because we took a really big risk to open an IB 7 magnet. And (audio distortion). And was the vote 8 five to zero? No. 9 Were there always a few people on the 10 board that were just waiting to close it because 11 they thought it was wealthy, White education? Yeah. 12 They were opposed to the IB program and to 13 that magnet. They said there's other things we need 14 to do. Mandela is thriving; right? 15 ATC, a charter school within the district, 16 consistently number two in the state, behind AIMS; 17 right? -- as best school in the state. NMSA, one of 18 the highest performing schools in the state, 19 catering to specific needs for specific kids and 20 families. 21 And I'm very -- and Tesha, who I think 22 left -- but Tesha (audio distortion) and Nicholas 23 all spoke of coming to Santa Fe to fight for a 24 Waldorf school; okay? 25 I grew up around people in LA whose kids</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">70</p> <p>1 went to Highland Hall, which was the Waldorf -- no 2 way. Seriously? (Audio distortion.) No way. Oh, 3 my gosh. 4       Anyway, so -- oh, my gosh. 5       Anyway, so I have experience with Waldorf, 6 and I love Waldorf education. And if you build it 7 they will come. 8       I think I had mentioned this to Tim. I 9 only talked to a few others because of the (audio 10 distortion). 11       And I said, "You mark my words. I'll even 12 take you to the Bull Ring if it doesn't happen. At 13 least five families are going to move here within a 14 year when they find out there's a public charter 15 school in Santa Fe. I believe at least five 16 families will move to Santa Fe because we have a 17 public Waldorf." 18       Because let's face it. Money, especially 19 these days, is a huge -- it's just a huge hurdle for 20 people. 21       And when I look at money and I look at the 22 demise of your school before, a lot of it had to do 23 with money, okay? I think I wrote down here, you -- 24 your generosity was not sustainable financially. 25 And it doesn't matter how much you want to give and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">72</p> <p>1 your analogy of the architect. And I wrote that 2 down. "Archi-technology." 3       I thought that was great. Because so 4 often what happens is we have the founder is the one 5 that gets the ball rolling at all levels, and 6 they're the ones that help recruit the board. 7       So, really, sometimes there can be a -- a 8 borderline and confessional, also, relationship 9 because of the friendships and/or nepotism that 10 exists between founders and boards. And I like this 11 idea that you're going to go and do a search for the 12 right person. 13       And I really do think who wouldn't want to 14 live in Santa Fe? Has anybody been outside this 15 week? It's, like, the greatest place ever. 16       Now we have Indian Market. 17       I think you're going to have a lot of 18 people biting at the apple if you're approved, and 19 it's out there in the education world, in the 20 Waldorf world, that you're looking for a head 21 administrator. It's kind of clear where I'm going 22 with all of this. 23       The concerns that the -- the economic, I 24 talked about that. 25       Financial roadblocks, talked about that.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">71</p> <p>1 how much this family says, "My kid's going to thrive 2 here, I really want them to go there," there's only 3 so much you can give away and still be able to 4 operate a business. 5       I look at things -- mostly, I look at 6 things with a private sector sensibility. And -- 7 you know. So this is -- I think this is, like, the 8 greatest opportunity ever, because so many of those 9 things you're saddled with as a private school 10 operator, we're doing, or CSD is doing, or it's 11 required by the State. 12       There's all sorts of things. There's all 13 sorts of the levers you can pull and departments 14 there to help you. 15       And I'm so glad you have a board in place 16 right now. And I'm so glad that we have Missy who 17 does the most amazing job ever training board 18 members. That's critical. The minute your board 19 starts to go in an eddy down a hole -- wheesh. 20       How many times have we seen that happen? 21       I'm thrilled that you have a board of 22 finance right now. And I mentioned this to Tim. I 23 never thought of it that way. You hire the head 24 administrator. So why have them -- what you were 25 talking about in terms of them finding the board and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">73</p> <p>1       I mean I remember, actually, the -- did 2 you guys have a chance to read that ridiculous 3 editorial today in the New Mexican? They said the 4 Commission should not approve this charter. 5       And -- but you ought to know, you've got 6 to take it with a grain of salt. Because The New 7 Mexican has never met a charter they did like. They 8 have the old trope that we're stealing kids from 9 districts. 10       That's so not the case because you're 11 going to create a public school. And I love the 12 comments about you're creating kids that -- yeah, 13 they're going to be academically proficient. 14       But the thing that they're going to 15 provide the community is beyond sense of self and 16 sense of community. And the kids that I know that 17 have been through Waldorf -- I'm so sorry that 18 Melissa couldn't be here today. What a remarkable 19 young person; right? And I know (audio distortion) 20 in LA. And just the kind of kids that Waldorf 21 (audio distortion) fosters; okay? 22       Okay. I'm just looking at what's here, 23 because I don't want to miss anything. 24       The hurdles that you have, I think are 25 definitely -- the biggest one is the diversity</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">74</p> <p>1 piece. Can all be handled in the Implementation 2 Year. You said it best, Commissioner Taylor. 3 It's -- are you doing the tapping finger 4 thing? 5 You said it best, Commissioner Taylor. 6 Okay. I'm repeating myself. 7 You can't expect everyone to knock 8 everything out of the park in their original 9 application. It just doesn't happen. And if it did 10 happen, there's something wrong with the rigor of 11 our application. 12 This needs to be a super rigorous process. 13 We need to rake you over the coals and find out 14 what's what. 15 These are taxpayers' dollars, and these 16 are our kids (audio distortion). And it's us having 17 an (audio distortion) of trust in what you're doing. 18 The other thing I want to say, and close 19 and have a possible Columbo moment -- is look at who 20 we've approved from the past and even schools that 21 we brought into the State charter system that were 22 chartered by their local districts, and had a sense 23 of empathy and compassion of where they were, where 24 they thought they could be. And we approved them. 25 And there's four schools, specifically,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">76</p> <p>1 Santa Fe -- what community deserves a Waldorf more 2 than Santa Fe; right? 3 THE CHAIR: Didn't you finish? 4 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: For now. 5 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Brauer. 6 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you, 7 Madam Chair, members of the founding team. Thank 8 you so much for all the work you put into this. 68 9 pages of a rebuttal sounds like a lot of work and 10 almost like a charter application in itself. 11 I know you all took it seriously. I did 12 not get a chance to go to the community input 13 hearing. I've read over the information from that. 14 I just applaud you for bringing in an application, 15 as you have, at this moment. 16 I am almost a novice when it comes to 17 Waldorf education. But, thankfully, I'm much 18 further ahead than I was seven months ago when one 19 of my best friends where I was his instructional 20 coach -- I'm an educator and a farmer. So Waldorf 21 education really connects to me in different ways, 22 even though it's slightly odd to me in terms of my 23 worldview, just like Montessori is, just far away 24 from how I was raised and what opportunities maybe 25 were allotted to me as a young person.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">75</p> <p>1 that I'm thinking of where their proficiency scores 2 and performance at pretty much all levels were 3 horrible. But we approved them. We gave these 4 schools a chance, and are giving them a chance right 5 now. And they weren't nearly as prepared as you are 6 on any level: on finance, on leadership, on even 7 having a head administrator. Okay? 8 And some of these schools were, in 9 particular, having decades -- right? -- of failure 10 behind them. But our kind of philosophy was, "You 11 know what? You didn't have the support you needed, 12 and now you will. And we are going to help you with 13 those things that you were very weak on. But your 14 commitment to us is you're going to listen." 15 And to their boards is, "You are going to 16 pay attention." 17 Because, like I said, when the board 18 starts to go downhill, the school goes downhill. 19 You have to have constant oversight as a board. And 20 I think that what you've lined up gives me that 21 confidence that that's going to happen. 22 So I'll say one more time. 23 I'll save this for my Columbo moment, 24 okay? Patty tires of me sometimes. So, you know, 25 I'm so -- come on. Look at Santa Fe. Does</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">77</p> <p>1 But having a chance to go to a charter 2 school in California -- I think it's Northern 3 California, near Sacramento, Yuba River Charter 4 School. It was one of the -- it was the first 5 charter school in California to be a Waldorf school 6 20 some-odd years ago. And so my friend is the head 7 director now there. 8 So I got a chance to visit that in March. 9 And I kind of -- it helped me demystify a little bit 10 about what education looks like through a Waldorf 11 model, and again, spoke to my heart as a farmer and 12 as an educator. 13 A couple of questions I have for you. 14 I don't know if -- I didn't see this in 15 the application. But apologies. I know you did 16 research on different schools, different charter 17 schools that were Waldorf. 18 How many did you talk to or connect with 19 or learn from directly in a more relationship sense 20 as you prepared your application and as you prepared 21 for today? 22 (Off-mic discussion.) 23 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: Commissioner Brauer, 24 thank for you that question. The reason we had to 25 confer is because we have all done research</p>

78	<p>1 separately and as a group.</p> <p>2 So we got a considerable amount of support</p> <p>3 from the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education.</p> <p>4 They have over 60 member schools statewide</p> <p>5 (verbatim).</p> <p>6 We also received sample applications from</p> <p>7 eight or nine different Waldorf charter schools</p> <p>8 nationwide that we researched and looked at how they</p> <p>9 were doing their things and what could possibly work</p> <p>10 in New Mexico.</p> <p>11 And then we had further conversations with</p> <p>12 the charter school in Paonia, Colorado, the Waldorf</p> <p>13 charter school in Paonia, Colorado, several</p> <p>14 conversations with Mountain Song Community School in</p> <p>15 Colorado Springs, I believe. They are the school</p> <p>16 that I spoke of at the community input hearing that</p> <p>17 has a really robust special ed department.</p> <p>18 We had some back-and-forth, mainly through</p> <p>19 e-mail, with Mountain Phoenix Community School,</p> <p>20 which is another Waldorf charter school in Colorado.</p> <p>21 And I'm forgetting one. The Ocean -- Ocean Charter?</p> <p>22 FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.</p> <p>23 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: I don't want to say the</p> <p>24 name in the public record. There was another public</p> <p>25 school in California. We have done so much Waldorf</p>	80	<p>1 charter? And what did you incorporate into your</p> <p>2 work so far in that respect?</p> <p>3 I'd love to hear, just for my own</p> <p>4 understanding and how you all have taken feedback,</p> <p>5 what were some -- any alarms or warning signs or</p> <p>6 things of that nature that you heard from them?</p> <p>7 MS. ZOE WILCOX: I think -- from the</p> <p>8 school in New Hampshire that we have interviewed,</p> <p>9 Gathering Waters, we learned that the transition is</p> <p>10 a process, and that they described to us how -- how</p> <p>11 it looks behind the scenes is messy and what is</p> <p>12 presented to the community looks a lot different</p> <p>13 than the work going on behind the scenes, until, you</p> <p>14 know, until they had their footing under them. That</p> <p>15 was my initial impression.</p> <p>16 And our response to that is to do -- to</p> <p>17 bring in experience that has -- that has had a foot</p> <p>18 in both worlds already, so that even, as teachers,</p> <p>19 we have a lot of candidates.</p> <p>20 We did a teacher survey in our</p> <p>21 application. A lot of candidates have taught in</p> <p>22 both realms. Those are excellent candidates to come</p> <p>23 into our school as if everyone involved understands</p> <p>24 that bridge and we can help each other out.</p> <p>25 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: I have two more things</p>
79	<p>1 research that it's all kind of faded into a</p> <p>2 spectrum, if you will.</p> <p>3 Does that answer your question adequately?</p> <p>4 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you. Were any</p> <p>5 of those that converted from private charter?</p> <p>6 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: We also talked to -- we</p> <p>7 also had an exchange with a school in New Hampshire</p> <p>8 which was a private Waldorf school that converted to</p> <p>9 a K-through-12 charter school, and I believe the one</p> <p>10 in California as well.</p> <p>11 We -- one of the candidates that I've been</p> <p>12 having soft conversations with has been the founding</p> <p>13 teacher at both Mountain Song and, I think, Mountain</p> <p>14 Phoenix. So there is a lot of dialogue, if you</p> <p>15 will, between Waldorf schools nationwide and a lot</p> <p>16 of exchange of ideas and a professional development</p> <p>17 program.</p> <p>18 So we have a nationwide community of</p> <p>19 schools to lean on.</p> <p>20 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: That's great. I was</p> <p>21 just curious.</p> <p>22 What -- and I don't mean to take up all of</p> <p>23 our time on this. But I was just curious. What did</p> <p>24 you glean from that in terms of the good, the bad,</p> <p>25 and the ugly about transitioning from private to</p>	81	<p>1 to add, if I may.</p> <p>2 The common running theme in all the public</p> <p>3 Waldorf charter schools nationwide was the -- they</p> <p>4 all stressed the importance of hiring trained</p> <p>5 Waldorf teachers. If you want fidelity to the</p> <p>6 Waldorf program, you have to have teachers who have</p> <p>7 an understanding of Waldorf education. Because you</p> <p>8 can bridge Waldorf into the Common Core standards</p> <p>9 into State standards. But that way of nurturing a</p> <p>10 child and meeting an individual is unique to</p> <p>11 Waldorf.</p> <p>12 And that is the essence of what makes a</p> <p>13 Waldorf school a Waldorf school. Much more than</p> <p>14 watercolor paintings and wooden toys and wooden</p> <p>15 desks, it is the humanity and the human-to-human</p> <p>16 relationships. So number one. And you will see</p> <p>17 that in our application where we have stressed</p> <p>18 Waldorf training.</p> <p>19 The second thing that we -- and I forgot</p> <p>20 to mention the school earlier. But we -- the</p> <p>21 Santa Fe Waldorf School had hired a teacher from</p> <p>22 Peace Valley, which is a Waldorf school in Idaho.</p> <p>23 She was going to be my child's teacher, and I</p> <p>24 interviewed her extensively.</p> <p>25 And her experience was you do not separate</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">82</p> <p>1 your special ed department from your faculty.  2 You -- because in that school, in its growing pains,  3 there was, like, this, like, "Oh, we are Waldorf,  4 and you are not, so you should listen to us,  5 and..." -- "But we know how to do special ed, and  6 you don't, and so you should listen to us."  7 You will see that reflected in our org  8 chart. When we created our teachers council,  9 everybody is represented. That is why our head  10 looks like a triangle. The head administrator is at  11 the top of the triangle. But the two bases of the  12 triangle are the pedagogical director and the  13 special ed director.  14 So when we organized this in our minds as  15 a system, we are giving equal weight to the entire  16 fabric of the system, because all of these people  17 are meeting the needs of all of our students. There  18 is no separation here. And from the get-go, it has  19 been to create a holistic, unified school, where  20 everybody works together towards a common goal.  21 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you very much.  22 Just, given the time, I don't have any good, like,  23 transition to my next question. And then I have a  24 few just quick comments.  25 When the school closed at the end of the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">84</p> <p>1 previous school when it was private.  2 So my biggest thing, similar to what  3 others have shared, I think that -- first off, I  4 think it's wonderful when we have a room of people  5 that come to talk about this school and the amount  6 of messages of support that were discussed today. I  7 think that speaks to my heart as a Commissioner. I  8 think it's important to see that there is -- there  9 are people, there's the public that want to see this  10 to some degree.  11 And I think it's, like, really great to  12 hear that, even if a lot of these folks are in the  13 family, so to speak, who have a connection to the  14 school that was closed or that closed. And so I  15 think I just applaud that. I think that is great.  16 It still takes a lot of work to get people  17 to show up on a day at 9:00 a.m. and to hear us talk  18 for about three hours about this opportunity. So I  19 just want to thank everybody for that.  20 I really appreciate the overview of what  21 you did to connect with other community members  22 outside of your -- of your realm of proximity. I  23 think that's really important, and I applaud you for  24 that as well.  25 Waldorf -- and I hope I don't offend any</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">83</p> <p>1 year in 2023, approximately how many students were  2 enrolled? Was it 215 or so? Or how many students  3 were enrolled?  4 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: I can answer that.  5 Thanks, Commissioner. At the end of our final  6 school year, we closed out with 216 students. But  7 for the following year, we had about 160 enrolled at  8 that point.  9 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: You had how many  10 enrolled?  11 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: 160 for this school  12 year that we didn't function.  13 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: So 216. So, again,  14 I was one off.  15 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: Where did you get  16 those numbers?  17 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Did a little  18 research.  19 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: Pre-K through 12.  20 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Got you. So my  21 question. Your enrollment cap is 208; is that  22 right? So not having the ninth through twelfth  23 grade and the pre-K, you know, that is kind of  24 almost -- I mean, that's a larger number than what  25 you had from the previous year -- or from the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">85</p> <p>1 people -- Montessorians is what you call people in  2 Montessori. Waldorfians?  3 Okay. I'm just going to go with what you  4 shared.  5 So people don't take offense to this --  6 but it's different. It's odd. It's not the norm  7 for a lot of people who are in public education or  8 private education, for that matter, or parochial  9 education. It's like another thing outside of that  10 trifecta of opportunities for students.  11 So I think that that is a big burden that  12 you all have, to, like, move out of and push out of  13 the oddity of, like, something that's just so  14 different for families, especially the families that  15 you have to sell, for lack of a better way of saying  16 this, that you have to sell that to the families,  17 any who are furthest away from school choice  18 options. And that's a big burden.  19 I don't know -- and, again, don't take  20 offense to this, but I'm just playing it out. I  21 grew up on a dairy farm. Farming is still in my  22 bones. I still do it each day. I did it this  23 morning.  24 Going to the Farmers Market is just  25 awesome. I think it's great that you went to that.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">86</p> <p>1 Truth be told, a farmers market is not where -- I'm 2 a man of the people, so that's not where the people 3 go. That's not everyone in Santa Fe. That's not a 4 cross-section at all. That's for the -- that's kind 5 of far away from a lot of people's experience in 6 Santa Fe.</p> <p>7 And I know you all know that. I'm not 8 trying to, like, beat you up on that. You go where 9 people are going to -- where commerce centers are, 10 those sorts of things.</p> <p>11 I think the challenge is is to get out 12 into communities and talk to people who are furthest 13 away from even thinking about this as an option, let 14 alone school choice in general. A lot of people 15 don't know there are choices that are available from 16 public funds. Similar to what you shared, 17 Commissioner, you know, charter schools is still not 18 completely demystified for many of our people.</p> <p>19 And so I think the challenge is, for me, 20 like, is to, like, do more of that, reaching out to 21 people, reaching out to people who are further away 22 from even understanding this and having to sit down 23 and tell them, like, who is this Rudolf Steiner guy? 24 Why did this, like, come out of Germany? How is 25 this connected to New Mexico's culture and to the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">88</p> <p>1 approved, and then you start to recruit in 2 January-February. If you don't already have a bunch 3 of people who are already really connected at this 4 stage, it's just so hard to do that.</p> <p>5 It's not impossible. But it's, like, hard 6 to do that. And I think it would put you further 7 faster in that process. And you would have the 8 school that you hoped for in terms of having the 9 right -- you know, a balanced student population and 10 really connecting with all students.</p> <p>11 So, you know, I just want to share. Thank 12 you so much for all the work. I'm still not 13 completely 100 percent on my decision. I know I 14 need to make that soon. But I think that regardless 15 of what it is, like, I feel like you have a great 16 team. I think, like, having more people who may not 17 be Waldorfians to help sit down with you and co- -- 18 whether it's this year to collaborate, whether it's 19 this year or maybe the next time, I did read the 20 Santa Fe New Mexican's article, that you all said, 21 you know, after this day, you're still going to -- 22 you plan to reapply if it doesn't go in your favor 23 this year. I think you said that. I think that was 24 the quote.</p> <p>25 If that's the decision, I want you to hold</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">87</p> <p>1 experience that maybe students can really glean 2 from?</p> <p>3 And, again, I'm not saying I'm not in your 4 shoes. Take this for what it's worth.</p> <p>5 I don't know the work you've done. I'm 6 thinking about this from a parent that's so far away 7 from Waldorf education, and how can you do it so we 8 can have a school that is really reaching students 9 of all backgrounds in Santa Fe and can see the 10 beauty of this.</p> <p>11 And that's the thing that I feel really is 12 essential for all of our charter schools, that it 13 represents the population of the community in which 14 we're serving. And it should -- and I think the 15 school is needing to do that.</p> <p>16 And I think New Mexico is a relational 17 state. It's, like, the most relational place I've 18 ever been. I've only been two places, Maryland and 19 here. It's more relational than Maryland. There's 20 a great opportunity to meet with people, meet on 21 their terms in their communities, in places you can 22 talk with them and really build their understanding 23 about why they are going to say yes to Waldorf and 24 to the school.</p> <p>25 It's so hard to do that when you get</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">89</p> <p>1 yourself on that account, that thinking, that 2 mindset. Because I do think there's an opportunity 3 here. I think that the challenge is to make sure 4 that the school is representative of all Santa Fe.</p> <p>5 Thank you.</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: So thanks. And I'm not going 7 to echo a lot of what folks have said here. But -- 8 and I'm, like Commissioner Brauer, sitting on the 9 fence right now. It's difficult.</p> <p>10 I'm a little familiar with Waldorf. There 11 was one in Princeton, not far from where I lived in 12 New Jersey. So I am familiar.</p> <p>13 But I've also, here in New Mexico, seen 14 the challenges of Montessori Schools as they've come 15 into the charter -- the charter world. And it's 16 been -- it's been rough, because you want to honor 17 the mission of the Montessori. And that blending, 18 yeah, is rough and ugly. And sometimes it creates 19 tension with the authorizer that you don't want. 20 But you're obligated to fulfill the public education 21 pieces.</p> <p>22 And part of my challenge is it appears to 23 me that the Waldorf model creates an even bigger 24 hurdle than a Montessori in some areas. So that, to 25 me, is a challenge.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">90</p> <p>1 But I want to tag onto a little bit of 2 what Commissioner Burt was talking about. And I 3 would wholeheartedly agree you shouldn't have a head 4 administrator and then make the board. But I am 5 very much in support of once that board is created, 6 which, thank you, you've done that now, you're 7 working hard on that. But that head administrator 8 is critical for the Implementation Year, because 9 there's a big lift. 10 And when the planning phase comes in and 11 all of this has been created, and then you just 12 stick someone in the middle of it, and they haven't 13 been able to be part of the conversation, that makes 14 it even messier. 15 So -- and I know it's difficult to ask 16 someone to commit that kind of time when they're not 17 getting funded for that. That's -- you know, I 18 acknowledge that. It's the stress of the charter 19 community in New Mexico. 20 Before any of us were here, there was a 21 federal grant that was start-up money. So from the 22 time you did your application, the federal monies 23 came in. And it was big money. And that was 24 incredibly supportive. 25 It doesn't exist any longer. The only</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">92</p> <p>1 transition period when they both overlap for a 2 seamless transition. 3 In front of you are represented both those 4 roles, the interim or acting head of the board and 5 the interim administrator. 6 We want to move on hiring the head 7 administrator quickly, and we're going to lean 8 heavily on our networks. 9 To the point of hiring Waldorf-trained 10 teachers, we are a little bit lucky in that regard, 11 in that the former school had a whole roster of 12 trained teachers, many of whom have gone into the 13 public school system and already got their PED 14 licensure. 15 You heard from one member today who has a 16 licensure in early childhood education and special 17 ed. You heard at the community hearing from a 18 member who is a trained Waldorf teacher and now has 19 a K-through-8 teaching license. 20 So we have had several subject teachers 21 and class teachers and general education teachers 22 that bridged this -- this divide already. So, you 23 know, we're going to lean heavily into that. And 24 we've been working with them already, and many of 25 them are interested in teaching in a public Waldorf</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">91</p> <p>1 thing that exists is CSP. And that comes in 2 after -- and it's not -- it's way less money. So 3 the opportunity is less. 4 So can you talk to me a little bit about 5 how you envision being able to hopefully bring 6 someone on board during that Implementation Year and 7 what that might look like? Because you also have 8 something else along with that, because you 9 mentioned hiring staff and knowing that staff needs 10 Waldorf experience, presuming that head 11 administrator would certainly need it, too? 12 And we've seen this with Montessori 13 schools, the difficulty in finding 14 Montessori-trained, New Mexico-licensed faculty. 15 And even -- you know, national searches, you're 16 asking people to move to the most expensive city in 17 New Mexico, and teacher salaries are difficult to 18 live on and to move. 19 So can you talk a little bit about what 20 that looks like? 21 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: So we are well aware 22 that it'll take some time to hire a head 23 administrator, which is why we have identified an 24 interim head administrator to run with many of those 25 duties while we hire the final person and have a</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">93</p> <p>1 school. There's actually palpable excitement among 2 the teachers to be able to do this in a public 3 education model, outside of the private model. 4 I'm going to tell a little joke to your 5 point that we are odd. We are definitely odd. The 6 affectionate slogan of the private Waldorf school 7 was Powered By Gnomes. 8 And my joke was we should update that to 9 "Powered By Gnomon." 10 Does any of you know what a gnomon is? A 11 gnomon is the stick on the sundial that casts a 12 shadow to tell the time. 13 That perfectly encapsulates what we are 14 trying to be. We do acknowledge that we are odd. 15 But we are confident we can find our place in the 16 public education system. And a lot the pieces that 17 we need to put that puzzle together and build it 18 exist also in Santa Fe. 19 It is a great opportunity to pull it all 20 together and braid the rope and make it really 21 strong. 22 THE CHAIR: And I appreciate that. But I 23 still need a little bit of clarity. 24 What's the time frame when you're saying 25 you -- you've appointed an interim head</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">94</p> <p>1 administrator? What are you looking at in terms of 2 that interim head administrator? Are you starting 3 that school year? Or is it just for the 4 Implementation Year? That's where I'm kind of 5 confused.</p> <p>6 MS. ZOE WILCOX: While they are looking -- 7 I know our date is November 30th.</p> <p>8 THE CHAIR: November 30th for what?</p> <p>9 MS. ZOE WILCOX: For the head of school 10 hire, for the Implementation Year.</p> <p>11 THE CHAIR: For the Implementation Year.</p> <p>12 MS. ZOE WILCOX: Yes, Commissioner.</p> <p>13 THE CHAIR: The offering would be made, 14 but there's no funding for that person. The offer 15 is for August of -- whatever.</p> <p>16 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: We would be working on 17 private fundraising, grant-writing in the interim 18 for funding if we don't get the CSP grant.</p> <p>19 THE CHAIR: So it's contin- -- so 20 there's -- so there -- okay. So there is still just 21 that possibility. Because if you don't get private 22 funding, you're not going to be able to do that.</p> <p>23 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: We will not be able to 24 pay them a salary December 1st. Is that what you're 25 asking?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">96</p> <p>1 plan to hire a head administrator is in our 2 application on Page 166.</p> <p>3 THE CHAIR: I get that. But my question 4 was if there's not funding, if you don't get the CSP 5 grant, is there a contingency plan? You know, 6 not -- I'm fine. I'm fine.</p> <p>7 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: So we have looked at 8 other Waldorf specific grants as alternates to the 9 CSP grant. And one of them is called the Rudolf 10 Steiner --</p> <p>11 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: RSF Social Finance.</p> <p>12 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: -- RSF Social Finance. 13 So we are looking into alternative methods of 14 funding certain key positions for the Implementation 15 Year as a contingency if we don't get the CSP grant.</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: So along with the CSP -- 17 talking a little bit about the CSP grant and along 18 the lines of concerns about the diversity, I 19 appreciate the fact that you said you wanted to 20 offer transportation the first year; but that, once 21 again, is contingent on the CSP grant.</p> <p>22 And I think that transportation piece is a 23 key element to be able to reach out to those 24 communities that don't know there's a choice. Those 25 are the folks that you want to bring in. And if you</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">95</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: During the Implementation 2 Year, yeah.</p> <p>3 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: If we don't have money 4 to pay them, we won't have money to pay them a 5 salary. That's why our first step is to become an 6 approved Board of Finance, so we can start obtaining 7 money, have a bank account and start making 8 financial transactions.</p> <p>9 THE CHAIR: I was asking for the plan for 10 getting the money.</p> <p>11 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: Oh. The money. Not 12 the people? Because you talked about hiring 13 teachers and hiring the administr- --</p> <p>14 THE CHAIR: No, not teachers. I am fully 15 aware that you wouldn't be hiring teachers until the 16 school year was starting. The offer wouldn't be. 17 But the head administrator, my comment was head 18 administrators, we have found, is critically 19 important to be an integral part of the 20 Implementation Year planning.</p> <p>21 So what was your plan on obtaining a head 22 administrator during the Implementation Year so that 23 they would be part of the conversation in that 24 Implementation Year planning?</p> <p>25 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: Okay. So the -- the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">97</p> <p>1 don't get the CSP grant, you're not going to be able 2 to do that. So that's going to change the landscape 3 of the school significantly.</p> <p>4 So that's one of my concerns of not being 5 able to offer -- the possibility of not being able 6 to offer that, but you can only do as much 7 reach-out, but some of those families are going to 8 say, "I can't get my kid there."</p> <p>9 And if the CSP grant money isn't there, 10 you're going to have to tell those families --</p> <p>11 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: "We don't have a bus 12 for you."</p> <p>13 THE CHAIR: Right.</p> <p>14 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: So we've been 15 brainstorming creative solutions to that problem. 16 And we've considered doing some sort of community 17 carpooling. We have access to four small vans. So 18 we are kind of brainstorming our way around that, 19 because we are well aware.</p> <p>20 Our first preference, would obviously be 21 to contract a school bus and do this very simply. 22 We've talked to a neighboring charter school with 23 partnering with them to reduce costs, perhaps, for 24 transportation with both of us.</p> <p>25 We are aware of the funding constraints of</p>

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1 starting a charter school in New Mexico, and we are  
 2 heavily considering alternatives on how to solve  
 3 these problems.  
 4 I don't have a plan for you right now.  
 5 But it's not that we haven't given them thought.  
 6 THE CHAIR: Please be aware that there are  
 7 the guidelines in transporting public school  
 8 children.  
 9 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: We are aware. Yes, we  
 10 are aware.  
 11 THE CHAIR: So -- okay. I appreciated  
 12 that triangle representing the special education  
 13 support. When I read your budget -- in the  
 14 application, you talked about a special ed director,  
 15 special ed teacher. Greatly appreciated the fact  
 16 that you want to fund for the part-time social  
 17 worker. I didn't see that reflected in your budget  
 18 entirely, and that's a concern.  
 19 The applications say this is -- these are  
 20 all where we're going to build that with. And then  
 21 when I look at your budget, the funding isn't there.  
 22 So I have a concern about being able to do  
 23 what you say you want to do, because that budget  
 24 doesn't reflect it.  
 25 MS. JAYITA SAHNI: Jessica Wireman. Do

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1 you want to talk about that, about contract --  
 2 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: Thank you,  
 3 Commissioner. We do, in year one, the budget  
 4 reflects a part-time special education director.  
 5 It's a half of an FTE for the proposed 80 students.  
 6 THE CHAIR: Okay. Hold on. In the -- in  
 7 net budget UCOA, where do I see that?  
 8 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: This is where us  
 9 wanting to construct the budget ourselves, just to  
 10 fully understand it, we just --  
 11 THE CHAIR: I'm looking at the budget that  
 12 you submitted. That's what we vote on.  
 13 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: So we're in  
 14 Function 2100, Object 51100. And we have --  
 15 THE CHAIR: I'm sorry. I can't hear you.  
 16 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: We have -- so  
 17 Function 2100; is that right?  
 18 THE CHAIR: Yeah.  
 19 MS. JESSICA WIREMAN: Yes. And then the  
 20 51100 line, or the 1211. We have a half FTE, a  
 21 part-time special education director, starting in  
 22 year one. They become full-time by year three when  
 23 our enrollment increases to the 198.  
 24 And then we contract interventionists --  
 25 I'm sorry. We don't. We salary part-time special

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1 ed interventionists, too. So we have a total of a  
 2 full FTE in year one for the special education  
 3 department.  
 4 And I was saying, that one of the -- some  
 5 of the feedback we received is that we may have used  
 6 the wrong objects and line items as we created this  
 7 budget ourselves without a lot of influence. That  
 8 came to us. Maybe we put it -- yeah -- in the wrong  
 9 spot on the budget.  
 10 THE CHAIR: Okay. Oh. One last thing.  
 11 In the application, you talked about how  
 12 you're in a more fortunate situation because the  
 13 school already -- the building already existed. So  
 14 there was -- there were a lot of things there.  
 15 So can you talk to me about -- because I'm  
 16 not exactly sure -- taking over another facility --  
 17 is the foundation going to donate whatever things --  
 18 I don't know if it's desks, equipment, all of that?  
 19 Is that being donated to the school?  
 20 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: I can answer that.  
 21 It will be leased for a below-market rate. The  
 22 foundation will be supporting the school. And there  
 23 will be, you know, changing hands of money for use  
 24 of the facility. But it will be at a rate that the  
 25 charter can afford. Same thing for equipment.

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1 THE CHAIR: Everything.  
 2 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: Correct.  
 3 THE CHAIR: Talk to me a little bit about  
 4 the relationship between the foundation and the  
 5 school.  
 6 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: The foundation  
 7 doesn't exist yet. We can talk about the future  
 8 foundation that we hope will exist. Right now there  
 9 is just the former school. And it's sort of in this  
 10 "waiting to see what happens" situation.  
 11 If a charter is granted, that 501(c)(3)  
 12 entity that used to operate the Santa Fe Waldorf  
 13 School will become a supporting foundation for the  
 14 charter school. It will own the campus; it will own  
 15 the equipment; and it will lease them to the charter  
 16 school at a rate the charter school can afford to  
 17 pay based on the reimbursement rates from the State.  
 18 THE CHAIR: Is there an anticipation that  
 19 that foundation will be a component unit of the  
 20 audit of the new school?  
 21 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: The anticipation is  
 22 that it be a supporting foundation for the charter  
 23 school. And it will not be part of -- I mean, it's  
 24 a separate legal entity. It's a nonprofit.  
 25 THE CHAIR: I'm aware of what a foundation

<p style="text-align: right;">102</p> <p>1 is. My question is if it's going to be set up, is 2 that foundation going to be a component unit of the 3 audit of the school? Because we -- foundations 4 usually are. But I don't know how this foundation 5 is being set up. That's where I have a question. 6 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: Right. We don't, 7 either, because it doesn't exist yet, and it can't 8 exist until the school exists as a legal matter. 9 And so we will be figuring that out. 10 I don't believe that -- the foundation 11 will be essentially a landlord, just like other 12 charter schools who lease space from landlords. 13 THE CHAIR: Foundations are component 14 units of their audits, in the public schools. 15 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: When we have a 16 foundation, we will learn all that. Right now, it 17 is hypothetical. So we can't write about a 18 hypothetical foundation. But we've hired an 19 attorney that specializes in charter education law, 20 and we know the basics, and we will certainly 21 incorporate it in all the ways it needs to by the 22 law. It just doesn't exist yet. 23 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Ingham. 24 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: First off, I want to 25 say thank you for your architect analogy. Being the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">104</p> <p>1 have so much support within that community that you 2 could attract somebody that would be willing to talk 3 to you about how they are -- what their salary looks 4 like in the first initial year. 5 So in that, I would say I would be 6 interested in giving you that opportunity. So I 7 would suggest -- or would be friendly to a motion 8 that would provide you to be -- to get past this 9 hurdle with significant conditions. 10 And the two I can think of right away are 11 that where you can come up with a head administrator 12 that you can work into your budget and that it could 13 make sense. 14 And, two, that during that time in the 15 very near future -- I think one of the elephants in 16 the room is that the reality is we work on lottery 17 admissions. And I think one of the concerns is that 18 your community would -- because there's not been the 19 outreach, that that community will take up all of 20 the spots immediately in the school, and there 21 wouldn't be any applicants. And then once they're 22 in, they're in. 23 And then the reality is then you're going 24 to have a difficult time getting that diversity. 25 So my condition would be that once you</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">103</p> <p>1 one person on the board who is a contractor, I'm 2 very familiar with that relationship. And so I just 3 want to say thank you guys for your articulate and 4 well-thought-out responses. 5 To me, that gives me a level of confidence 6 that you have considered almost -- you've been able 7 to answer articulately every question we've had. 8 And so that gives me a level of confidence. 9 I think that you're hamstrung; right? We 10 find this in a lot of situations. But the fact that 11 you can't make any commitments until you are 12 chartered, and so you're -- it makes everything 13 very, very difficult. 14 And I think the two components of that, 15 one of them is that you can't tell your -- you can't 16 tell your community that you're actually a school 17 and that this is all theoretical, and that 18 everybody -- when they're talking about their kids' 19 education, when it's theoretical, it's like, I don't 20 know. Until you're real, I can't really make a 21 determination. 22 And also with your -- your head 23 administrator, you can't -- you can talk, and you 24 can network, and you can't do anything. 25 And I would hope that this model seems to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">105</p> <p>1 have that -- that you have a charter, a conditional 2 charter, that you come back to us within a short 3 time with a list of potential people that are 4 interested that are of the communities we're -- and 5 I'm not saying that -- obviously, it's a lottery. 6 So whoever gets in gets in. 7 And I think that's what we need to see is 8 that, actually, you have a -- maybe a waiting list 9 of people that are ready to apply for your school. 10 And if I saw that, I think I would -- I would be 11 amiable to that. So that would be my suggestion is 12 that we -- that we approve this with significant and 13 kindly conditions. That would be my -- 14 THE CHAIR: So can I just say something -- 15 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Certainly. 16 THE CHAIR: -- to that? As a charter or 17 any public school, they are obligated to hire a head 18 administrator. We don't really have the authority 19 to put a condition -- correct. Correct. 20 And the lottery concern, I feel while 21 we're very challenged in we can't put a condition 22 that a school has to come back with a list of kids 23 to see. 24 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: No. My proposal is 25 a list of proposed candidates or a list of people</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">106</p> <p>1 that are willing to say they would -- they would 2 apply. 3 THE CHAIR: Yeah. We can't -- right. 4 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Huh. Okay. 5 THE CHAIR: They're obligated to do the 6 lottery system using the guidance that we have with 7 our lottery system that they have to do. But for us 8 to put a condition on that they would have to come 9 back with a list of the prospective -- number one, 10 if they give us a list of the prospective people, 11 it's -- I don't think we want to make that number 12 one. So that would be hard. 13 But for us to say, "You have to come back 14 with a list of applicants," I don't know what that 15 gets us. 16 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Okay. My naivete. 17 THE CHAIR: That's okay. That's okay. 18 But I understand what you're trying to get at. 19 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: I'm hoping you guys 20 with more experience could come up with a motion 21 that would be appropriate for that. 22 THE CHAIR: It's really -- we're 23 challenged with that. 24 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Understand. 25 THE CHAIR: We get --</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">108</p> <p>1 population from the former school was not enough to 2 make the school work well, and that we would lose 3 people from the population of the former school by 4 choosing a charter. 5 And that was a choice that was made 6 knowingly, because we, those of us on this team and 7 those who have showed up in support, wanted a more 8 accessible, equitable Waldorf-inspired educational 9 offering. 10 So there are people from the former 11 community who are more purists who want a different 12 kind of education that will not put their kids in 13 this school. And we know that. 14 As personal experience all of us have had, 15 halfway through the process, Jayita and I realized 16 our children, just because of the money and the 17 logistics, they'll be one year too old to ever go to 18 this school. So we've been doing this for the 19 future of -- just because we believe in this. 20 And the last thing I'll say is that I have 21 applied both of my children to all the charter 22 schools. There's great options. THRIVE, ATC, 23 Mandela. We were No. 200 at ATC and 150 at Mandela. 24 So I believe, just in personal experience, the 25 demand is there. And we plan to be a place for that</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">107</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: That would be my 2 preference. 3 THE CHAIR: I fully get it. That's my arm 4 being tugged. 5 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: Can I ask a 6 clarifying question? 7 THE CHAIR: Sure. 8 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: Is the concern that 9 there might not be potential students to form a 10 lottery? The diversity concern; right? Can I speak 11 to that? 12 THE CHAIR: You can. But we're not going 13 to put -- we can't put the condition on. So if you 14 want to address it. 15 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: I understand -- I 16 just -- I wanted to address something that 17 Commissioner Carrillo and Burt both spoke to, which 18 was, in the very beginning, when the four of us 19 volunteers began this process -- and none of us were 20 on the administration of the former school. We were 21 all parents and teachers, but we were not involved 22 in its leadership. 23 We did say, "If we build it, they will 24 come." That was sort of a mantra that we had. And 25 we knew that we were not -- that, A, our former</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">109</p> <p>1 demand to go so that kids don't just sit on a 2 waiting list at the great charter options we have. 3 And that's it. 4 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Just relevant to 5 what Ms. Bassler said, I know the schools you're 6 speaking of, like Mandela and ATC, but THRIVE, also, 7 because, obviously, you're going to be a K-8 -- so 8 in looking at readiness for charters with that grade 9 level, I talk to Sean all the time. 10 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: They're full. 11 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Because I love that 12 school. People are always coming to me. "I want to 13 get in at THRIVE. What do I need to do?" 14 "Let me call Sean." 15 Sometimes there will be a space. And I 16 say, "You need to call Sean today. Call him today." 17 And sometimes they will, and sometimes, 18 they won't. 19 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: Yes. 20 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: So the idea -- this 21 came up yesterday, too, with Equip. Market 22 determines need. There's a need. There's clearly a 23 need, or there wouldn't be these massive waiting 24 lists for these successful schools. 25 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: Right. Both of my</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">110</p> <p>1 kids are on a waiting list at THRIVE, a fifth-grader 2 and a rising seventh-grader. 3 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: There's waiting 4 lists at -- how many kids want to get into Carlos 5 Gilbert? They want to be in high-performing 6 elementaries. 7 I appreciate very much what you're saying. 8 Also, I think it's unfortunate that there are some 9 parents that are going to pull their kids because 10 it's not as purist as they want it to be, which is 11 really certainly not what any of the ten of us are 12 about at all. So thank you. 13 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: And it's not what 14 we're about, either. 15 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: No, I get that. 16 MS. BRIANA BASSLER: We made a deliberate 17 decision. 18 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I get that 19 completely. 20 So, Patty, can we take a break? 21 (Off-mic). 22 THE CHAIR: We're going to take a 23 five-minute break. 24 (Brief recess held.) 25 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: So I'm ready to make</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">112</p> <p>1 distortion) understand why there are state charters, 2 the innovation, the opportunity for parents and for 3 kids and communities to expand and to grow. 4 I'm not going to read the whole thing. 5 It's all here, and it's why we do this work. I 6 would remind everybody to read the first part of the 7 Charter School Act, and it's why we're here; okay? 8 So that having been said, and there's no 9 more -- there's no Colombo moment, let me go ahead 10 and bring the motions up. 11 Let me open it here. Here we go. 12 Regarding Sun Mountain Community School, I 13 move that the Public Education Commission approve 14 the application for Sun Mountain Community School 15 for a six-year term, 2025-2031, which includes a 16 planning year prior to opening. 17 During the planning year and prior to 18 commencing operations, Sun Mountain Community School 19 must: 20 1, negotiate a contract with the Public 21 Education Commission; 22 2, obtain standing as an approved Board of 23 Finance; 24 3, secure a facility that has E-Occupancy; 25 and, 4, complete the Planning Year</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">111</p> <p>1 a motion. 2 But before I do, I just want to -- there's 3 just a note that I made here, because it was a 4 comment that came in from the letters. And it just 5 really kind of -- I never use phrases like this -- 6 but made my heart sing. 7 I don't know what got into me today. 8 Yesterday was too much of caffeine, and I was a bit 9 of a jerk, and today I'm all sappy. It was in the 10 letters, and it -- 11 SECRETARY BECK: I chauffeured him 12 yesterday. 13 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: So all of his nice 14 stuff rubbed off on me. 15 Oh, man. I can't find the note. But it 16 was basically the joy of being a human being. It 17 was one of the letters that was read. And that just 18 really struck me is that is kind of core of what 19 this school is all about, you know? Okay. 20 So I'm ready to almost make a motion. 21 The -- you know what I would encourage people to do? 22 Not here, necessarily, because we do this anyway. 23 But people like -- and I'm looking at you, Margaret. 24 But people like Inez and people from the press and 25 the public, read the Charter School Act. (Audio</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">113</p> <p>1 Checklist. 2 I move that the Public Education 3 Commission approve the application for Sun Mountain 4 Community School for a six-year term, 2025-2031. 5 This will be approved with conditions -- 6 oh, whoops. You can tell I don't make these motions 7 all the time. 8 Anyhow, the Sun Mountain school is 9 approved on the condition that the school provide -- 10 I know I humor you. I'm glad that I'm able to do 11 that. 12 Sun Mountain Community School is approved 13 on the conditions -- and this is really important, 14 because you heard it from all of us -- that the 15 school provide a plan for outreach and possible 16 options for transportation in the first submission 17 of the Implementation Year Checklist. 18 The outreach shall be targeted outside of 19 the previous Waldorf community and show adequate 20 outreach to the full Santa Fe community, including 21 possible partners and tribal communities, to assist 22 in outreach. 23 A plan for adequate outreach and plan for 24 transportation shall be incorporated in the charter 25 contract.</p>

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1 SECRETARY BECK: Second.  
 2 THE CHAIR: A motion by Commissioner  
 3 Carrillo, and a second by Commissioner Beck.  
 4 Commissioner Burt?  
 5 COMMISSIONER BURT: Thanks. And I  
 6 actually really approve, like, the creativity of  
 7 getting to this. So I'm grateful for just, like,  
 8 minds melding and trying to come to solutions.  
 9 That being said, I do think you women are  
 10 the right people in the right place. I think it's  
 11 the wrong time, and I will explain myself.  
 12 I genuinely have an enormous amount of  
 13 confidence in the work you've already done  
 14 previously, the work you've done on this  
 15 application. It makes me feel like, you know what?  
 16 I do believe there's -- I have confidence that you  
 17 could run a really great charter school here in  
 18 Santa Fe. I do believe that about you all.  
 19 I think this application made me feel --  
 20 is more reflective of finding a space for these  
 21 students who love and adore their school and are  
 22 displaced right now.  
 23 I do see an enormous amount of openness  
 24 and growth in, "Okay, if we can go public, then we  
 25 can include a bigger -- a bigger group in Santa Fe.

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1 We can include more students."  
 2 But I do not see that mindset reflected in  
 3 the initial writing of this application. And so for  
 4 me, because of -- and, like I said, I think the  
 5 optics of me approving a charter that was just very  
 6 recently a failed private school is just too great  
 7 for me to be able to defend, without saying, "They  
 8 did all of this outreach to people outside their  
 9 community, and I have zero doubt that there's going  
 10 to be an enormous amount of students that were not  
 11 Waldorfians before that are going to be again this  
 12 time."  
 13 And my concern of the lottery filling up  
 14 with people who already know about your school is  
 15 just too great to approve it this year.  
 16 But I genuinely would love, love, to  
 17 support this school next year and have that year of  
 18 connecting with nonprofits in another part of town,  
 19 connecting with people further out. I mean,  
 20 Santa Fe has -- I think like, the highest per capita  
 21 of nonprofits in, like, the country. And so I would  
 22 love to see those connections not being hope, but  
 23 being, "We did them. We actually did them. Here's  
 24 the data."  
 25 And that way, I can go, and if a

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1 legislature who is not friendly to charters are,  
 2 "Like, what? What did you guys just do," I have to  
 3 be able to be, like, "This is actually the spirit of  
 4 charters is to provide more open access to  
 5 everyone."  
 6 And I just don't feel like I can do that  
 7 today. But I do believe in the four of you and in  
 8 your board, that you can -- I believe you would get  
 9 there. And I could easily support this school in  
 10 the future.  
 11 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Brauer.  
 12 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: Thank you. Thank  
 13 you, Chair Gipson. Thank you, Commissioner Burt.  
 14 I echo similar thoughts at this point. I  
 15 think you all have done a tremendous job in this  
 16 process. I think your hearts and your smarts are  
 17 all in the right place.  
 18 I -- you know. And now I've taken the  
 19 last hour and a half thinking about where am I at on  
 20 this decision. And I have to come to a decision.  
 21 I really do think that the next step for  
 22 you all is to take another year and to really fill  
 23 this room with community organizations that will  
 24 insulate a little bit of the -- some of the -- some  
 25 of the thoughts that we have had around, like, who

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1 will be coming to the school, who is the school  
 2 serving.  
 3 Like, you can only move at the speed of  
 4 trust with the community at large. And I think if  
 5 we want to have a charter school that is Waldorfian,  
 6 we need to really pay attention to getting the right  
 7 people involved and the school getting the right  
 8 students, quote, unquote, and really having a very  
 9 large, like, tent -- a large Waldorf tent for all  
 10 students who see this as an option.  
 11 I know that another year for a  
 12 potential -- not getting the news that you want  
 13 feels bad, and it's not a good consolation prize.  
 14 But I do think that there is space for this school.  
 15 I just -- I still think -- so I'm honest  
 16 and earnest with my own opinions on other decisions  
 17 we've made this week, too, that I really -- I'm very  
 18 passionate about making sure that we have true -- a  
 19 true cross-section of the community here.  
 20 Much of the same that you shared,  
 21 Commissioner Burt, you -- especially just the -- the  
 22 transitioning of this school, converting this school  
 23 from private to -- to a charter school, for lack of  
 24 a better way of saying that, there's optics around  
 25 that. And I think that there's just really a great

<p style="text-align: right;">118</p> <p>1 opportunity to move at the speed of trust-building 2 with the community so that more people can see this 3 as an option, and more students in the long run will 4 be served by (inaudible). 5 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Taylor. 6 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: So my view, really, 7 on this is that you all understand the importance of 8 this equity issue. I mean, that's been a universal 9 concept and feedback to you all from this 10 Commission. 11 But I believe that you have an 12 Implementation Year. You've got six months or so 13 before your lottery. And I feel like that's ample 14 time for you to get out into the community and make 15 your -- make your case known, especially in light of 16 the concerns that this Commission has, you know. 17 So I think that the condition that was put 18 into the -- into the motion is -- addresses that. 19 And so I -- you know, that's my feeling on it. 20 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Beck. 21 SECRETARY BECK: Yeah. I concur with 22 Commissioner Taylor. That's the reason why we put 23 that condition in. I think you're very sensitive to 24 our concerns, and I think it'll take care of it. 25 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Ingham.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">120</p> <p>1 THE CHAIR: So I'm going to say that I was 2 on the fence as long as Commissioner Brauer. And I 3 have -- I have -- I have these very lingering 4 concerns about -- because I don't think the 5 optics -- we're not the mouthpiece of charter 6 schools. We're not. We speak in favor of, and 7 people talk to us. 8 And whatever this decision is that this 9 Commission makes, I will support 100 percent, 10 because that's what we do. I don't go off and say, 11 "Yeah, but I voted no," or, "I voted yes." 12 This is -- whatever it is, I will back it 13 100 percent. 14 But I do believe that the timing is 15 challenging to me, and that the opportunity for 16 those families that were in the school, they already 17 know about the school. They're -- and the 18 opportunity for them to get into that lottery 19 quicker is -- I think there needs to be a pause 20 before this opens as a true public option. 21 That's my -- I helped craft this 22 condition. But I can't 100 percent support it, 23 because I know what goes into the Implementation 24 Year. And the expectation for all that additional 25 outreach, I don't think can happen and can happen</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">119</p> <p>1 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Yeah. I just want 2 to address the optics issue. I think that's on us, 3 and that we are the mouthpiece of the charter school 4 community, and that if there's a problem with 5 optics, we need to address it. 6 I think that the school will. I have 7 confidence that they will. And that when their 8 lottery is finalized and they have a real diverse 9 community, which I'm just going to say I'm confident 10 that they're going to have -- and we speak of 11 diversity. I -- diversity doesn't have to have a 12 real quota in it. I hate that part. 13 And so I just want to have a fair lottery, 14 and new people have an opportunity to access this 15 education, and new families that -- so I guess I 16 just feel like we -- when we address the Legislature 17 and the community at large, we need to dispel that 18 notion that we just approved -- we -- if they're 19 approved, it feels like, to me, we gave a real 20 careful consideration of this, and that I'm willing 21 to defend that decision in those -- in those realms. 22 So if somebody wants to knock us for their 23 perceptions, I'm willing to make that argument. I 24 just want to say that that, for me, is what I would 25 base it on.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">121</p> <p>1 well. 2 If we could have a two-year implementation 3 time, I think that would be great. But I do think 4 that this was more of a -- we can turn this into a 5 public school, and we can turn this around. 6 So I'm just not there at this point in 7 time. 8 Commissioner Carrillo? 9 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: I understand all 10 your concerns. I really do. And I don't agree, but 11 I understand your concerns. And I really heard 12 them. 13 I concur with Commissioner Taylor that so 14 much of this can be completed during the 15 Implementation Year, and that the minute you pull 16 the trigger and -- or if we pull the trigger -- 17 then -- I said this kind of thing to Patty 18 earlier -- that providence unfolds. All these 19 things start to happen when a decision is made. All 20 these -- whether it could be all of a sudden in this 21 national Waldorf network, there's, like, "Oh, my 22 god, they're opening a public charter, a public 23 school, a public Waldorf in Santa Fe." 24 It's, like, "Let's go"; right? You know. 25 I mean, I think stuff like that happens.</p>

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1 And whether it's, you know, a school that we  
 2 approved yesterday, finding a property that they  
 3 really want to have on the westside -- and we  
 4 actually made that a condition at this time. (Audio  
 5 distortion.) I mean, it's diametrically opposed to  
 6 where they want to be, but it's the only space  
 7 available in Santa Fe.  
 8 You have the blessing of having that space  
 9 not far (audio distortion). But I just think this  
 10 can happen.  
 11 I think the time is now to strike while  
 12 the iron is hot. And I don't want the Santa Fe  
 13 Public School community to miss this opportunity  
 14 and, for another year of kids, especially at the  
 15 very early years, to miss -- somebody spoke about  
 16 how their kids were only in kinder here -- one of  
 17 the speakers -- and how that was so formative for  
 18 them when they went on to another school. Oh, and  
 19 the school closed.  
 20 And I just don't want another year of kids  
 21 to miss that opportunity.  
 22 So I hear the concerns. And that's why  
 23 the -- I think the conditions are appropriate here.  
 24 THE CHAIR: Commissioner Beck, roll call.  
 25 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Ingham.

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1 COMMISSIONER INGHAM: Yes.  
 2 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Burt.  
 3 COMMISSIONER BURT: No.  
 4 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Manis.  
 5 COMMISSIONER MANIS: Yes.  
 6 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Brauer.  
 7 COMMISSIONER BRAUER: No.  
 8 SECRETARY BECK: Commissioner Taylor.  
 9 COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Yes.  
 10 SECRETARY BECK: Chair Gipson.  
 11 THE CHAIR: No.  
 12 SECRETARY BECK: Vice Chair Carrillo.  
 13 VICE CHAIR CARRILLO: Yes.  
 14 SECRETARY BECK: Secretary Beck, yes.  
 15 There are five votes for, three votes  
 16 against. The motion passes.  
 17 THE CHAIR: Congratulations.  
 18 Recess till 1:00 for lunch.  
 19 (Proceedings in recess at 12:15 p.m.)  
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1 BEFORE THE PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
 2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
 3  
 4  
 5 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE  
 6 I, Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR, CCR #219, Certified  
 7 Court Reporter in the State of New Mexico, do hereby  
 8 certify that the foregoing pages constitute a true  
 9 transcript of proceedings had before the said NEW  
 10 MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION, held in the State  
 11 of New Mexico, in the matter therein stated.  
 12 In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my  
 13 hand on August 26, 2024.  
 14  
 15  
 16  
 17 Cynthia C. Chapman, RMR-CRR, NM CCR #219  
 18 BEAN & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
 19 201 Third Street, NW, Suite 1630  
 20 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102  
 21 License Expires: 12/31/24  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25 Job No.: 9804N (CC)

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1 RECEIPT  
 2 JOB NUMBER: 9804N CC Date: 8/15/24  
 3 PROCEEDINGS: Open Public Meeting -- New School  
 4 Application Meeting Proceedings  
 5 CASE CAPTION: In Re: Sun Mountain Community School  
 6 \*\*\*\*\*  
 7 ATTORNEY: MS. CONSUELO CONSTANTINE, NMPED LIAISON;  
 8 CORINA CHAVEZ, DIRECTOR, CSD  
 9 DOCUMENT: Transcript / Exhibits / Disks / Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 10 DATE DELIVERED: \_\_\_\_\_ DEL'D BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
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